

**The Bernhisel Manuscript Copy of  
Joseph Smith's Inspired Version  
of the Bible**



# The Bernhisel Manuscript Copy of Joseph Smith's Inspired Version of the Bible

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The Bernhisel Manuscript is so named because it is a hand-written copy made by Dr. John M. Bernhisel<sup>1</sup> from the original manuscripts of Joseph Smith's "New Translation"<sup>2</sup> of the Bible. In order to correctly assess and analyze the Bernhisel copy, it is first necessary to survey the original documents from which it was copied.

## The Original Manuscripts of the Inspired Version: An Overview

The original manuscripts of the Inspired Version were prepared by the Prophet Joseph Smith and his scribes and consist of three manuscripts for the Old Testament and two for the New Testament. The Old Testament shows two initial manuscripts of parts of Genesis and a third manuscript extending from Genesis 1:1 through the entire Old Testament to Malachi. Each of these is also prefaced by an account of a vision once given to Moses. These three manuscripts have been conveniently catalogued by the Reorganized LDS Church as Old Testament Manuscript #1, Old Testament Manuscript #2, and Old Testament Manuscript #3, going from earliest to latest, with each succeeding manuscript containing additional revisions over the earlier. There are in all 191 pages of Old Testament manuscript, each page measuring 7 $\frac{7}{8}$  inches x 14 inches.

For the New Testament there is an initial manuscript of Matthew from 1:1 through 26:71, catalogued for convenience as New Testament Manuscript #1. A second manuscript consisting of four folios repeats and additionally revises the New Testament Manuscript #1 and continues on through the entire New Testament. This later manuscript is catalogued as New Testament Manuscript #2. There are in all 266 pages of New Testament manuscript, each page measuring 7 $\frac{7}{8}$  inches x 14 inches.

The manuscript texts of the Bible are written in full for Genesis chapters 1–24 and also for the books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and the first five chapters of John. In these books even the passages that are not revised are included and written in full. However, for the remainder of the Bible a shorter method is used in which only the verses to be revised are written in the manuscripts and in many instances only the actual words of the revision are written, rather than the entire verse or phrase. In the shorter method the' revisions are identified by chapter and verse citations, whereas

in the chapters written in full, often only the chapter is identified, with no verse designations.

In addition to the manuscript sheets, the Prophet used a large family-style edition of the King James Version of the Bible printed in Cooperstown, New York in 1828. In this Bible the Prophet placed many markings, and crossed out many words, mostly italicized words. The markings consist exclusively of check marks indicating passages to be revised. Contrary to popular opinion the words of the revision are not written in the margin or between the lines in the Prophet's Bible. The marked Bible and the manuscript sheets are held today by the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and are housed in Independence, Missouri.

### **Dr. Bernhisel's Manuscript Notes and Marked Bible**

Brother Bernhisel explained that he made his copy of the New Translation of the Bible in 1845 while living in Nauvoo, Illinois. The story as told by Bernhisel and recorded by L. John Nuttall,<sup>3</sup> on Wednesday, September 10, 1879, is as follows:

Elder John M. Bernhisel called at the request of Pres. Taylor and explained concerning his manuscript copy of the New Translation of the Bible as taken from the Manuscript of the Prophet Joseph Smith. Bro. Bernhisel stated: "I had great desires to see the New Translation, but did not like to ask for it; but one evening, being at Bro. Joseph's house about a year after his death, Sister Emma to my surprise asked me if I would not like to see it. I answered, yes. She handed it to me the next day, and I kept it in my custody about three months. She told me it was not prepared for the press, as Joseph had designed to go through it again. I did not copy all that was translated leaving some few additions and changes that were made in some of the books. But so far as I did copy, I did so as correctly as I could do. The markings in my Bible correspond precisely with the markings in the Prophet Joseph's Bible, so that all the books corrected in his Bible so far as I now know are marked in my Bible: but as I stated, the additions are not all made in my Manuscript of those books that I did not copy."<sup>4</sup>

Dr. Bernhisel arrived in Salt Lake Valley on Sunday, September 24, 1848, as a member of the Heber C. Kimball Company, and it is assumed that he brought his manuscript and marked Bible with him at that time.<sup>5</sup> President Brigham Young, Orson Pratt, George A. Smith, and others knew of the Bernhisel copy and it became the subject of a conversation in the School of the Prophets, in Salt Lake City, Saturday, June 20, 1868, the report of which states:

The School of the Prophets met at 1 P.M. President Young spoke of the new translation of the Bible and said it was not complete. Dr. Bernhisel testified that the Prophet told him he wished to revise it. Emma Smith let Dr. Bernhisel have the new translation to peruse it for three months; during this time the Doctor copied much of it.

Orson Pratt compared many of the sayings in the new and old translations [evidently referring to the “new” translation by Joseph Smith as compared to the “old” King James Version].

George A. Smith testified that he had heard Joseph say before his death that the new translation was not complete, that he had not been able to prepare it, and that it was probably providentially so.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to making a handwritten manuscript, Dr. Bernhisel said that he copied the markings from the Prophet’s Bible into his own Bible. All that the writer has been able to learn of the Bernhisel copy of the marked Bible is that there was such a Bible. We may confidently conclude that it was a King James version, but the printing date, physical description, and its present location are unknown at this time. The writer contacted several of Dr. Bernhisel’s living descendants, but was unable to learn anything further concerning it.<sup>7</sup> The Bernhisel copy of the manuscript, however, is currently in the possession of the Church in Salt Lake City, Utah.

According to Bernhisel’s testimony he made the manuscript copy in 1845, about a year after the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, and explained that it was the Prophet’s widow, Emma, who let him take the Bible and the manuscript sheets for three months in order to do the work. There seems to be no direct evidence that Dr. Bernhisel had ever spoken to the Prophet Joseph Smith about making a copy of the “New Translation.” It should be noted, therefore, that the Bernhisel copy was a private endeavor and there is no clear historical evidence that he made the copy for or at the request of the Church.

Bernhisel’s handwriting is legible, easily read, and typical of the time, with flourishes, embellishments, antiquated abbreviations, an unusual style of double “s,” and very little punctuation. There are three dates on the Bernhisel copy (all of them in the Old Testament portion) indicating when he was engaged in the work. These are May 20, 1845, May 27, 1845, and June 5, 1845. Although the original manuscripts of the New Translation contain several dates, both in the Old and New Testament portions, Bernhisel copied only one, that of July 2, 1833, which is at the conclusion of the Old Testament.

### **The Text of the Bernhisel Manuscript**

The writer carefully compared the Bernhisel Manuscript with the original manuscripts from which it had been copied and observed that:

1. The Bernhisel copy consists of excerpts from Old Testament Manuscript #3 (with a few verses from Old Testament Manuscript #2) and New Testament Manuscript #2.
2. Bernhisel generally copied correctly and accurately, but made some errors of the hand and eye, such as omitting some words, writing some words twice, misspelling some, and leaving other evidences

of human fallibility. However, when viewed as a whole, the Bernhisel copy as far as it goes, accurately represents the sense of the originals, but has the major defect of being grossly incomplete.

3. Dr. Bernhisel did not make a simple transcription of the originals, but did some adapting, interpreting, judging, and thinking for himself. He also made some explanatory comments beyond the content of the original documents he was copying.

### Bernhisel's Procedure

Comparison with the original manuscripts reveals much concerning Dr. Bernhisel's procedure in making his copy. In some respects it could be said that he made an "interpretive" or "adapted" copy. There is evidence that he was working co-operatively with both an open King James version of the Bible and the handwritten manuscript sheets.

#### *a. Adding verse Numbers*

In many places the original manuscripts contain little versification even for entries corresponding to the King James Version of the Bible. However, in the Bernhisel copy these passages are often numbered, as the following example shows:

#### 1 Kings 3:1-8

##### Inspired Version Manuscript (OT #3, p. 75)

1 And the Lord was not pleased with Solomon for he made affinity with Pharoah king of Egypt and took Pharoahs duaghter to wife and brought her into the house of David until he had made an end of building his own house and the house of the Lord and the wall of Jerusalem round about. And the Lord blessed Solomon for the peoples sake only and the people sacrificed in high places because there was no house built unto the name of the Lord until those days and because the Lord blessed Solomon as he was walking in the statutes of David his father he began to love the Lord and he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places and he called on the name of the Lord.

##### Bernhisel Copy (p. 36)

1 And the Lord was not pleased with Solomon for he made affinity with Pharoah king of Egypt, and took Pharoah's daught to wife and brought her into the house of David etc----

2 And the Lord blessed Solomon for the peoples sake only and the people sacrificed etc----

3 And because the Lord blessed Solomon as he was walking in the statutes of David his father he began to love the Lord and he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places and called on the name of the Lord.

The above passage continues through verse eight, with the original manuscript presenting the entire text, but showing no verse numbering or divisions except verse one, whereas the Bernhisel copy Numbers the verses from one to eight according to the King James version. It should be noted also that the Bernhisel copy contains only portions of each verse, but the original contains the whole of each verse.

The foregoing example demonstrates that Dr. Bernhisel had a King James version of the Bible open at the time he copied from the manuscript sheets, and used it to obtain Numbers for the verses that were not numbered on the original manuscript.

*b. Copying only part of a passage*

Of far greater importance than adding verse Numbers are the instances of interpretation and/or adaptation of the text. As observed above, Dr. Bernhisel sometimes copied only part of a verse, even though the original manuscript with which he was working contained the entire verse. In such instances the Bernhisel copy generally offers only the words of the revision plus a word or two before and/or afterward. The example of item "a" above demonstrates this situation quite well, as do also the following (the revised portion is italicized for easy identification):

2 Peter 1:20

Inspired Version Manuscript (NT #2, p. 145)	Bernhisel Copy (p. 108)
20 Knowing this first that no prophecy of the scriptures is <i>given</i> of any private <i>will of man</i> .	20 --scriptures is given of any private will of man.

And also:

1 John 2:16

Inspired Version Manuscript (NT #2, p. 147)	Bernhisel Copy (p. 110)
16 For all in the world <i>that is of</i> the lusts of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life is not of the Father but is of the world.	16 --that is of the lust--

Although this method by Bernhisel saved space and physical effort, it involved judgment-making on his part, and was a procedure that increased the possibility for error. Even if no error were made, the procedure at least caused the Bernhisel copy to differ from the original.

c. *Copying only a portion of a revision*

There is another factor which also caused the Bernhisel copy to vary from the original. It is similar and related to that described in part “b” and occurred because Dr. Bernhisel frequently recorded only the particular part of the verse in which he *saw* a significant variation from the King James Version. This sometimes meant that a verse having two or more revised parts would be only partially recorded by Bernhisel with one or more of the revised parts being omitted. Observe, for example, the following items. The points of revision are italicized to aid the comparison.

Matthew 2:4

Inspired Version Manuscript (NT #2, p. 1)	Bernhisel Copy (p. 62)
4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together he demanded of them <i>saying where is the place that is written of by the prophets in which Christ should be born for he greatly feared yet he believed not the prophets.</i>	4 saying where is the place that is written of by the prophets in which Christ --

And also:

Isaiah 65:20

Inspired Version Manuscript (OT #3, p. 111)	Bernhisel Copy (p. 62)
20 In <i>those days</i> there shall be no more thence an infant of days nor an old man that hath not filled his days for the child shall <i>not die but shall live to be</i> an hundred years old but the sinner <i>living to be</i> an hundred years old shall be accursed.	20 In those days there shall be no more thence an infant of days -- living to be

It seems that either Dr. Bernhisel failed to see all the facts of the revision or that he judged parts of the revision not important enough for him to record. Such omissions would not likely have occurred if he had simply copied the entire text of the original manuscript.

d. *Adding to the words of the original manuscript*

Items “b” and “c” above deal with circumstances in which Dr. Bernhisel failed to copy an entire entry. Sometimes just the opposite was the case, wherein he recorded *more* than is in the original manuscript.



It is evident, in such instances, that Dr. Bernhisel had an open Bible before him, and in recording the revision he sometimes copied a few words from the corresponding verse in the Bible and then inserted the manuscript portion into the verse. There is no reason to believe that he erred in doing so, but the fact is that Bernhisel went beyond the words of the original manuscripts and did some thinking on his own. For example:

## Leviticus 21:1, 11

King James Version	Insp. Ver. Manuscript (OT #3, p. 71)	Bernhisel Copy (p. 31)
1 . . . defiled for the dead . . .	1 with	1 Defiled with the dead
11 Neither shall he go in to any dead body.	11 touch	11 Go in to touch any dead body

## Judges 2:18

King James Version	Insp. Ver. Manuscript (OT #3, p. 73)	Bernhisel Copy (p. 33)
18 . . . for it repented the Lord because of their groanings.	18 For the Lord harkened	18 For the Lord heard because of their groanings

## 1 Samuel 16:16

xxx King James Version	Insp. Ver. Manuscript (OT #3, p. 73)	Bernhisel Copy (p. 34)
16 . . . when the evil spirit from God is upon thee	16 which is not of	16 —evil spirit which is not of God—

*e. Judging a passage to be unrevised*

Another example of Dr. Bernhisel's making a judgment is seen in situations wherein the original manuscripts contain an entry of several verses in length, only some of which differ from the King James Version. In some instances Dr. Bernhisel apparently scanned the entry, recorded all or portions of each of the revised verses, and simply wrote "correct" for what he thought were unrevised verses. Close examination reveals that sometimes Dr. Bernhisel was mistaken in his appraisal of a verse, and judged a verse to be the same as the King James version when in reality it contained a variant reading which he apparently failed to observe. Two such examples are given below. Variants are italicized when necessary to aid comparison.

## Jeremiah 17:5

King James Version	Insp. Ver. Manuscript (OT #3, p. 111)	Bernhisel Copy (p. 63)
5 . . . cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord.	5 -- the man--	5 -- <del>the man</del> correct

The printed Inspired Version publishes this verse as:

5 . . . cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and *the man* whose heart departeth from the Lord.

This is no doubt the proper rendering of the passage, using the revision found in the original manuscript. It appears that Dr. Bernhisel at first copied the revised portion accurately from the manuscript and then decided against the revision and lined it out. He then wrote the word “correct” to indicate that the verse was correct as it stood in the King James version.<sup>8</sup> It is very evident that Dr. Bernhisel had a King James Version open at this juncture. Since the words “the man” occur in the early part of the passage, he may have felt that the entry in the original manuscript was somehow in error, and that there was no intended revision. He would not have arrived at this conclusion had he been simply copying from the original manuscript, but in trying to understand and interpret the revision and insert it into the Biblical text, he made an error in judgment. It is unlikely that the Doctor wished to challenge the Prophet Joseph’s revision of a verse, but it is possible that he would attempt to rectify what he considered an obvious clerical error in the original manuscript. Thus Dr. Bernhisel recorded the words of his own judgment in preference to the words on the manuscript. This he no doubt did with the best of intention and in a spirit to arrive at the truth, but he did it just the same.

Another instance in which Dr. Bernhisel judged a passage to be “correct” when the original manuscript does not strictly warrant it is as follows:

## Revelation 1: 5–6

King James Version	Insp. Ver. Manuscript (NT #2, p. 149)	Bernhisel Copy (p. 112)
5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him	<i>Therefore, I John, the faithful witness, bear record of the things which were delivered me of the angel and from Jesus Christ the first begotten of the</i>	5 Therefore I John the faithful witness bear record of the things which were delivered me of the angel and from Jesus Christ--who--

that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,

6 And hath made us kings and priest unto God *and* his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

dead, and the prince of the Kings of the earth *and* unto him *who* loved us, be glory, *who* washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings & Priest unto God, his Father. To him glory and dominion, forever and ever, amen.

be glory, who washed etc

6 correct--

It appears in the above entry that Dr. Bernhisel wished to save himself the time, effort, and space of copying an entire verse which he *thought* contained no variation from the King James Version so he simply wrote “correct” for verse six. However, as can be seen by comparison with the original, he made an error of judgment and apparently failed to see that the word “and” was omitted in the Inspired Version original manuscript. It should also be observed that the original manuscript does not number the verses or separate the material into verses but is in a single unit, whereas the Bernhisel copy divides the material into verses.

An important doctrinal concept is involved in this passage. Perhaps no verse in the printed editions of the Inspired Version of the Bible has been so critically examined and has been so much the subject of discussion as Revelation 1:6. The facts of the situation are: (1) the King James Version reads, “. . . unto God and his Father.” (2) The printed Inspired Version reads, “. . . unto God, his Father” [omitting “and”]. (3) On June 16, 1844, the Prophet Joseph is reported to have said in a public discourse that the King James Version of Revelation 1:6 is “altogether correct in the translation.”<sup>9</sup>

Because the printed Inspired Version as published by the RLDS differs in the text of Revelation 1:6 from what the Prophet said was the correct translation, the RLDS have been accused of deliberately altering the text. On the surface such a conclusion seems warranted for a number of reasons: (1) the Bernhisel copy (which purports to be a copy of the original manuscript prepared by the Prophet) states that the passage is “correct” as it stands in the King James Version. (2) The word “and” suggests a plurality of Gods, whereas omitting “and” reduces the number. (3) Since the RLDS do not accept a doctrine of plurality of Gods, there exists a “motive” for them to alter the text in their favor.

All of the foregoing facets tended to support a conclusion that the RLDS altered the text of Revelation 1:6. There appeared to be both motive and evidence. Since the original manuscripts have not been available for examination, the conclusion has persisted through the years since the first

publication of the Inspired Version in 1867. However, at our most recent request, Richard P. Howard, RLDS Church Historian, graciously supplied a photocopy of the manuscript page in question to be published with this article in *BYU Studies*. It is reproduced on the next page along with a photocopy of the corresponding page of the Bernhisel Manuscript. Critical examination of the original manuscript does not give any evidence that it has been altered. The writing is relatively small and the letters are close together and neatly written and any alteration would be immediately obvious. It is this writer's conclusion that the original manuscript does not *and never did* contain the said "and" in this particular phrase of Revelation 1:6 and that the printed editions of the Inspired Version correctly represent the text of the original manuscript.

Whether or not the original manuscript is accurate at this point is a different question. In the light of the Prophet's June 16, 1844, address, it appears that the manuscript is not accurate. How to account for this discrepancy the writer does not know, but several explanations can be offered. It may be that there occurred an unintentional omission of "and" in the mechanical process as the scribe recorded what the Prophet dictated. It may also be that the scribe recorded what he heard, but that the Prophet did not possess as much knowledge about the plurality of Gods when he dictated the Bible revision in 1833 as he did eleven years later in 1844 when he delivered a special discourse on the subject.

Apparently Dr. Bernhisel either failed to observe the missing "and" in his unique (and almost careless) method of transcription, or he exercised his judgment in the matter and labeled the verse correct by virtue of his acquaintance with the Prophet's June 16, 1844, discourse on the subject, which was only a year before the time in which Dr. Bernhisel was making the copy.

It should be observed that Bernhisel had earlier judged a verse to be "correct" when it was not, as in the example from Jeremiah. It just so happens that Jeremiah 17:5 does not contain an important doctrinal concept such as is found in Revelation 1:6 and so is of much less consequence. However, as a precedent it is extremely impressive.

In the important sermon of June 16, 1844, so oft referred to in this article, the Prophet Joseph explained that he had increased his knowledge of the plurality of Gods while translating the Egyptian papyri of the Book of Abraham.<sup>10</sup> This would have to have been between 1835 and 1842. It may well be that the form of Revelation 1:6 as prepared in 1833 is one of the passages that the Prophet intended later to bring into greater clarity as time progressed; and which in its present form is an example of the unfinished and "restricted" condition referred to by President Brigham Young and George Q. Cannon, as quoted earlier in this article (see footnote 6).

The foregoing examples from Jeremiah and from Revelation are significant for a number of reasons and illustrate several of the situations in which Dr. Bernhisel added verse Numbers, copied only part of an entry, and also made judgments concerning the text.

*f. Acknowledging a revision, but not recording it*

Still another factor of Bernhisel's procedure manifests itself in his frequent acknowledgment that a certain verse is revised in the original manuscript, but he does not record the revision. For example:

Psalms

Inspired Version Manuscript (OT #3, p. 83–84)	Bernhisel Copy (p. 43)
[In the original ms. the entire text of Psalms XI, XII, and XIII is written in full]	XI, XII, and XIII chapters not correct.
Psalms XIV	Chapter XIV: 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 not correct
[verses 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 are written in full]	

Exodus

Inspired Version Manuscript (OT #3, p. 66)	Bernhisel Copy (p. 24)
[Chapter VI, verses 3, 4, 8, 13, 14, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30, are written in full.]	Chapter VI: Correct except 3, 4, 8, 13, 14, 26, 27, 28, 29, and 30.

Although entries such as those in the above example are not very rewarding they contain usable information. For the most part they are harmless and are not nearly as crucial as the entries in which Dr. Bernhisel actually performed interpretive judgments.

The foregoing discussion might lead the reader to conclude that the Bernhisel copy is not a very reliable document. However, a study of the kind presented here tends to emphasize only the problems and it must be remembered that these are matters of detail. There are hundreds of passages in the Bernhisel copy that read exactly as the original manuscripts from which it was copied.

### **Explanatory Comments by Dr. Bernhisel**

Dr. Bernhisel made several explanatory comments throughout his manuscript. Some of these comments are easily discernible as not part of the original, and are for the purpose of clarifying obscure passages, or otherwise giving aid to a reader. Other insertions, however, are elusive,

and can only be identified by comparison with the original manuscript. For example:

Inspired Version Manuscript (OT #3, p. 9) Chapter 2nd	Bernhisel Copy (p. 9) Chapter 2nd
A revelation concerning Adam after he had been driven out of the garden of Eden.	This revelation comes next the 3rd chapter Genesis in the Bible. A Revelation concerning Adam after he had been driven out of the Garden of Eden.

A significant comment by Dr. Bernhisel occurs in relation to Genesis chapter 24 (Bernhisel copy, page 20). At this point the Bernhisel copy contains the remark, "Re-written to the XXIV chapter inclusive, corresponding with the chapters in the Bible." And in another place Bernhisel reports: "The whole rewritten to the 24th chapter inclusive." These remarks have reference to Old Testament Manuscript #2, which contains a revision of Genesis chapters 1–24:42. However, it appears that Dr. Bernhisel judged the document to be a partial "re-writing" of the longer manuscript (OT #3) rather than an earlier writing.

Another comment by Bernhisel is also instructive because it amply demonstrates that he was working with an open Bible as well as with a manuscript, and was attempting to fit the words of the revision into the corresponding verse of the Bible:

1 Corinthians 9:24

Inspired Version Manuscript (NT #2, p. 128) Chapter IX	Bernhisel Copy (p. 95) Chapter IX
24 all run - only -	24 all run -- only (These words I do not know where to place.)

### Incompleteness of the Bernhisel Manuscript

It was noted earlier that the Bernhisel Manuscript is a partial copy of the originals. The writer has discovered that the printed Inspired Version of the Bible has at least 3,400 verses differing from the King James version. Of these the Bernhisel copy contains at least 1,463 verses. Notable omissions are the 24th chapter of Matthew, and the extensive material about Enoch now published as Moses, chapter 7 in the Pearl of Great Price.

The Bernhisel copy naturally reflects the general form of the originals. That is, the texts for the early chapters of Genesis are written rather fully, while the texts for the prophets and the epistles contain only the chapter and verse citations accompanied by the word or phrase constituting the revision.

In comparison with the original manuscripts the Bernhisel copy is very incomplete. It has some representation for every book of the revision, but lacks many of the longer portions of the revision. It is the most complete for those portions of the Bible wherein the Prophet made only brief notations of revision, and is the least complete for the books wherein the text was written in full in the original manuscript. It seems to have been a matter of time and labor involved. Since part of the Bernhisel copy consists of loose, unnumbered sheets, it is possible that it was once more extensive than it is at present, and that certain chapters have become separated from the remaining sheets. However, since what is now available is continuous and sequential, it is unlikely that much could have been lost. Bernhisel said that he did not make an entire copy, and the manuscript verifies his statement.<sup>11</sup>

The rigors of transcribing many pages of manuscript by hand seemed to have led Dr. Bernhisel to copy the shorter revisions with greater frequency and completeness than the longer revisions. We remember also that Bernhisel was engaged in making a personal copy and hence selected passages that appealed the most to him. Had he known in 1845 that the original manuscripts would not remain with the Church when the Church came to the West, and that his copy would reside in the official archives, he might have produced a more extensive work.

### **The Bernhisel Manuscript Not a Basic Source for the Pearl of Great Price**

There are two conditions that preclude the Bernhisel copy from being a basic source for the Pearl of Great Price. The first is the incompleteness of the Bernhisel Manuscript. As stated earlier, the Bernhisel Manuscript does not contain the 24th chapter of Matthew nor does it have most of the Enoch material identified today as Moses, chapter 7. If these chapters were ever part of the Bernhisel copy they would have had to exist on separate sheets which have since been removed from the collection. The regular sequence of the Bernhisel copy jumps from what is currently Moses 6:68 to Moses 8:25, within the limits of 1\_ pages (pages 13–14), and from Matthew chapter 18 to chapter 27 within the limits of one page (page 73). The evidence from the manuscript is that Dr. Bernhisel did not record this information.

Even more convincing is the evidence that the Moses materials in the 1851 edition of the Pearl of Great Price are related genealogically to Old Testament Manuscript #2 and seem to have reached the Pearl of Great Price (1851) through the *Evening and Morning Star* and *Times and Seasons*, whereas the Bernhisel Manuscript is a copy of Old Testament Manuscript #3, which contains extensive revision over and beyond the text of the 1851 edition of the Pearl of Great Price. Some examples follow:

## Moses 4:14

Genesis 3:8 KJV	and Adam and his wife hid themselves from
1830 OT Ms. #1:	and Adam and his wife hid themselves from
1830 OT Ms. #2:	and Adam and his wife hid themselves from
	went to hide
1830 OT Ms. #3:	and Adam and his wife <sup>^</sup> hid themselves from
1845 Bernhisel	And Adam and his wife went to hide themselves from
1851 P of GP	and Adam and his wife hid themselves from

## And also:

## Moses 6:52

1830 OT Ms. #1:	children of men and ye shall ask all things in his name and whatsoever ye shall ask it shall be given
1830 OT Ms. #2:	children of men and ye shall ask all things in his name and whatsoever ye shall ask it shall be given
	receive the gift of the Holy Ghost
	ing
1830 OT Ms. #3:	children of men and ye shall <sup>^</sup> ask <sup>^</sup> all things in his name and whatsoever ye shall ask it shall be given <sup>you</sup> <sup>^</sup>
1835 <i>E &amp; M Star</i>	children of. men. And ye shall ask all things in his name, and whatever ye shall ask, it shall be given.
1845 Bernhisel	children of men and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, asking all <i>this</i> in his name and whatsoever ye shall ask it shall be given you.
1851 P of GP	children of men; ye shall ask all things in His name and whatsoever ye shall ask it shall be given.

It is quickly ascertained from the examples above, that the Bernhisel Manuscript was copied from Old Testament Manuscript #3, whereas the 1851 Pearl of Great Price reflects the text of Old Testament Manuscript #1 or #2, probably through the immediate use of the *Evening and Morning Star*.<sup>12</sup> The foregoing examples are only two of many similar textual comparisons that could be made attesting to the same conclusion. There is evidence that the Bernhisel copy might have had a slight connection with the 1878 edition of the Pearl of Great Price, but at best it is a slim relationship and the Bernhisel copy cannot be said to have been a basic textual source for the Pearl of Great Price.

### Value of the Bernhisel Manuscript

The Bernhisel Manuscript is a valuable document for a number of reasons. First, it attests to the interest and importance placed on the Prophet's



work with the Bible. Second, for over one hundred years it has been the only “early” source for the Inspired Version that the Church has had, since the originals were kept by the Prophet’s widow and were given by her to the RLDS and have been unavailable for examination. Third, its early date of 1845 is important for the special purpose of verifying the present accuracy of the original manuscripts. For instance, Old Testament Manuscript #3 and New Testament Manuscript #2 have many interlinear revisions. Also, in several instances a few lines have been ruled out and a revised account, written on a scrap of paper has been pinned over the lined-out portions. These various revisions of Old Testament Manuscript #3 and New Testament Manuscript #2 are generally in a different colored ink than the remainder of the manuscript and appear to have been added after the original draft. The exact date when these later revisions were entered on the original manuscripts is not known, but inasmuch as the Bernhisel copy contains these same revisions it is evident that they were there when Dr. Bernhisel used the manuscripts in 1845 and therefore are authentic. Without the evidence of the Bernhisel copy, it might be conjectured that such revisions were added to the original manuscripts by the RLDS. But the Bernhisel copy, being of the 1845 date, attests to the present integrity of the original manuscripts. An example involving a very familiar verse is as follows:

## Moses 1:39

1830 OT Ms. #1:	for behold this is my work to my glory to the immortality and eternal life of man
1830 OT Ms. #2:	for behold this is my work to my glory to the immortality and eternal life of man
1830 OT Ms. #3:	for behold this is my work <sup>^</sup> <del>to</del> my glory to <sup>^</sup> <del>the</del> immortality and eternal life of man and bring to pass the
1843 T & S	Behold this is my work to my glory to the immortality and eternal life of man.
1845 Bernhisel	for behold this is my work and my glory to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man.
1851 P of GP	Behold this is my work to my glory to the immortality and eternal life of man.

It is evident that the *Times and Seasons* and the 1851 Pearl of Great Price descended from Old Testament Manuscript #1 or #2, whereas the Bernhisel came from Old Testament Manuscript #3.

And further:

## Moses 6:5

1830 OT Ms. #1:	[Manuscript is torn, this passage missing]
1830 OT Ms. #2:	to write with the finger of inspiration spirit

1830: OT Ms. #3:	to write with the <sup>spirit</sup> <del>finger</del> of inspiration
1845 Bernhisel	to write with the spirit of inspiration

An excerpt in which a pinned-on note is involved is as follows:

Romans 4:16

Inspired Version Manuscript (NT #2, p. 123)	Bernhisel Copy (p. 89)
[1st revision]	16 Therefore ye are justified of faith and works through grace to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed not to them only who are off the law but to them also who are of the faith of Abraham who is the father of us all.
<del>16th And ye are justified them of work them them</del>	
[2nd revision, pinned over the above entry:]	
16 Therefore ye are justified of faith and works through grace to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed not to them only who are of the law but to them also who are of the faith of Abraham who is the father of us all.	

Since the Bernhisel Manuscript has the exact text of the pinned-on note, it is certain that the pinned-on notes, the cross-outs, and interlinear additions to Old Testament Manuscript #3 and New Testament Manuscript #2, were there in 1845 when Dr. Bernhisel made his copy.

These conditions make the Bernhisel Manuscript important to the RLDS as well as to the LDS Church and establishes it as a valuable historical document pertaining to the divinely inspired mission of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

### Summary and Conclusions

Comparing the Bernhisel Manuscript with the original manuscripts from which it was copied has resulted in the following observations:

1. Dr. Bernhisel made his copy in the spring of 1845, nearly a year after the death of Joseph Smith. It seems to have been a private endeavor on his part.
2. The Bernhisel Manuscript is a partial copy of Old Testament Manuscript #3 (with scant mention and copy from Old Testament Manuscript #2) and New Testament Manuscript #2.
3. Dr. Bernhisel did not make a simple transcription of the originals but rather made an “interpretive” copy, using a King James Version of the Bible in cooperation with the written manuscripts.

4. The Bernhisel copy, insofar as it goes, is essentially accurate in substance even though it is not an exact reproduction of the original manuscripts. Bernhisel made a few errors and a great many omissions.
5. The Bernhisel copy could not have been the basic source for the Moses and Matthew materials in either the 1851 or the 1878 editions of the Pearl of Great Price.
6. The Bernhisel copy has significant value as a witness to the present integrity of the original manuscripts, and as such is an important historical document of special interest to both RLDS and LDS people.
7. Through this study, hitherto unknown background information has been obtained regarding the Pearl of Great Price and several items relative to Church history, as well as much valuable information about the Inspired Version of the Bible.

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1. John Milton Bernhisel was born in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, on June 23, 1799. He was baptized a member of the Church in New York at an early date and later became a bishop. He received the degree of doctor of medicine at the University of Pennsylvania in 1827 and came to Nauvoo in April 1843, where he became a friend of the Prophet Joseph Smith. In Salt Lake City he was a close neighbor and friend of Orson Pratt, residing on the corner of North Temple and West Temple Streets. He was an active physician in Salt Lake City, was Utah's first delegate to Congress, and is perhaps best known in the Church for his political activities. He died on September 18, 1881, in Salt Lake City.

2. The Prophet Joseph Smith consistently referred to his revision of the Bible as a "translation." In almost every reference to it in the *History of the Church* and in the Doctrine and Covenants, the word "translation" is used. The work came to be known as the "New Translation" of the bible, and it is so identified on the manuscripts of the revision in certain letters of the Prophet, and in the *Lectures on Faith*. The cover sheet of the Bernhisel copy also calls it the "New Translation." Early leaders of the Church referred to the work as the "new translation," but in later years it has come to be known

as the “Inspired Version” and as the “Inspired Revision.” In this article the term “Inspired Version” is used.

3. Leonard John Nuttall (1834–1905) was private secretary to President John Taylor and later to President Wilford Woodruff.

4. L. John Nuttall, “Diary,” Vol. 1 (Brigham Young University Library, Provo, Utah), entry for September 10, 1879.

5. It is erroneously reported by Andrew Jensen, *LDS Bibliographical Encyclopedia*, Vol. 1 (Salt Lake City, 1901), p. 723–24, that Bernhisel did not arrive in the Salt Lake Valley until July 18, 1851. However, this was the date of a second visit to the Valley. That Bernhisel arrived on September 24, 1848, and stayed until May 6, 1849, is documented by many sources which tell of the arrival of the Kimball Company, list Bernhisel as a member of that company and tell of his activities not only during the journey but also in the Salt Lake Valley during the winter of 1848–49. See B. H. Roberts, *Comprehensive History of the Church*, Vol. 3 (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints), p. 319; Juanita Brooks, *On the Mormon Frontier: The Diary of Hosea Stout*, Vol. 1 (Salt Lake City: Utah State Historical Society, 1964), p. 311, entry for Monday, May 15, 1848; Ross G. Cleland and Juanita Brooks, *A Mormon Chronicle: The Diaries of John D. Lee, 1848–1876*, Vol. 1 (San Marino, California: The Huntington Library, 1955), pp. 31–40.

6. “Journal History of the Church,” April–June, 1868, Church Historian’s Library, Salt Lake City, entry for June 20, 1868, p. 1. The above reference to the statements of President Young and George A. Smith are in agreement with a similar comment by George Q. Cannon wherein he wrote, “We have heard President Brigham Young state that the Prophet, before his death, had spoken to him about going through the translation of the Scriptures again and perfecting it upon points of doctrine which the Lord had restrained him from giving in plainness and fulness at the time of which we write [February 2, 1833].”—*Life of Joseph Smith the Prophet* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1958), p. 148n.

7. The writer had privilege of examining the Prophet’s marked Bible (the same Bible referred to by Bernhisel) and copied the markings into his own edition of the King James Version. The huge number of markings can be illustrated by the fact that to copy them required a total of 17 hours.

8. The word “correct” is very frequently used in both the original manuscripts and the Bernhisel copy to signify that a verse, passage, chapter, or entire book is correct as it stands in the King James Version. In so doing Bernhisel was following a procedure already established in the original manuscripts. The question is whether he should exercise the liberty to do this himself.

9. Joseph Fielding Smith (comp.), *Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith* (Salt Lake City: Deseret News Press, 1938), p. 369.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 373.

11. The writer one time made a verse-by-verse comparison showing the relative incompleteness of the Bernhisel copy compared to the published Inspired Version. This is contained in his doctoral dissertation and its extensive length made it impossible to include in this article. See Robert J. Matthews, “A Study of the Text of the Inspired Revision of the Bible” (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, BYU, 1968), pp. 133–190.

12. Portions of the Moses material in the 1851 edition of the *Peal of Great Price* had not appeared in any of the church publications prior to 1851. The source for these is not clear, but cannot be traced to the Bernhisel copy because of strong textual differences.