# The Bible in *King Lear*

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King Lear *is unique to the big four Shakespearean tragedies in its lack of supernatural activity. This has prompted much critical debate and confusion over the nature of both the divine in the play and the play's relationship to the Bible and Christianity. Critics have commonly employed a top-down methodology, starting first with a theme that* Lear *seems to be concerned with and then finding passages to support the theme. In this essay, I will employ a bottom-up method, starting with a comprehensive analysis of all the biblical references in the play. I argue that Shakespeare uses the Bible in* King Lear *to contrast characters, set up a typological Christ-figure, and investigate eschatological themes—creating and then ultimately subverting expectations for a redemptive ending.*

## Introduction

In the initial centuries after its release, *King Lear* tended to receive more optimistic readings from critics; in the 1960s, critics began to give more pessimistic readings. However, within the past few decades of scholarship, there has been significant variation in the critical interpretation of *King Lear.* Even Foakes notes, two decades ago, that "for many critics there can be no return to simple optimistic or pessimistic readings of the play" (84). He also notes that this new generation of critics has been more acutely aware that "generations of critics and producers [before them]… have chosen to emphasize some elements, and ignore or cut others, to suit their particular interpretations" (85). Now, more than two decades later, the proliferation of different subjective readings of the play (new historicist, feminist, psychoanalytic, deconstructionist, etc.) has not only grown comfortable with this fact, but has largely embraced it, seeking not to provide an objective reading, but a wholly subjective reading of *King Lear.* However, these new subjective readings wholly disregard that "some forms of evidence are more verifiably objective than others" (Kronenfeld 11). If one wishes to truly contextualize *King Lear* within its religious milieu, one must carefully account for its relationship to the Bible. In this essay, I will analyze this relationship in-depth.

In accounts of the religious in *King Lear,* there have historically been two types of readings caused by two opposing facts of the play—there are many invocations of the divine, but there is no supernatural activity. Lawrence has chronicled these two types as "'optimistic' and 'pessimistic' or 'Christian' and 'atheist,'" akin to Foakes's categories, mentioned earlier (144). A higher awareness of this critical impasse has led to more nuanced readings in the past few decades. Some scholars explain the impasse by noting a possible influence of pagan notions of the divine. Moore argues that there is a dualism in the play: "Lear and his daughters illustrate the Christian side, while pagan nature emerges through Gloucester and his sons" (170). Fisch calls it a "phenomenological duality," but sees Gloucester's plot as Christian and Lear's as pagan instead (132). Other critics contextualize the religious within Shakespeare's cultural milieu. Both Lawrence and Hamlin argue that the seeming absence of the divine can be contextualized within a *deus absconditus* (hidden god) framework by Descartes, Montaigne, or Luther (Lawrence 144; Hamlin 327).

This critical confusion about the divine has impacted critics' analyses of the relationship between *King Lear* and the Bible. A dominant critical option is to see the play employing the book of Job, but scholars disagree on who and how many Job figures there are, as well as how and where Shakespeare employs Job in the play (Marx 59–78; Fisch 126; Hamlin 310–19). Many have noted Cordelia's portrayal as a Christ figure, especially in the early centuries of this play's release (Shaheen 605–06), but more recently, Marx adds that Edgar is a God-figure, and Hamlin adds that Lear is also a Christ-figure (Marx 76; Hamlin 325–26). The biblical apocalyptic tradition is also mentioned as an influence; Wittreich argues that Shakespeare uses the Book of Revelation as a "biblical counterpart" to make a "political apocalypse" in *King Lear* (44–48). In addition to all of these, Wittreich discusses potential allusions to Judges and 1 Corinthians, and Fisch argues for the story of Esau and Jacob as a subtext, yet of the forty potential biblical references and allusions in Shaheen's 1987 list of in *King Lear,* many have not been seriously considered by critics (Wittreich 52, 79; Fisch 137; Shaheen 607–20).

Most critics thus far have started from a top-down method, starting first with a theme that *Lear* seems to be concerned with, and then finding passages to support the theme. In this essay, I will follow a bottom-up methodology, starting first from Shaheen's list of biblical references. I have categorized these references into different groups, which are listed in full in "Appendix A" and will be referred to throughout this paper. These categories are mine

and will show how Shakespeare's use of the Bible changes as the play progresses. This essay will offer a thorough analysis of the biblical references in the play, focusing on what I judge are the more important references, though all are categorized in the appendix. The essay will also critically appraise the dominant conversations on the Bible in *Lear.* I will argue that Shakespeare, in *King Lear,* uses the Bible to offer pointed character contrasts, set up a typological Christ-figure, and investigate eschatological themes, to create and then subvert expectations for a redemptive ending.

## PROVERBIAL, COMMON, HYPERBOLIC, AND COMPARATIVE REFERENCES IN ACTS 1 3

Common and proverbial language are the most common, and also usually the least interesting, form of biblical allusions or quotations in Shakespeare, and this is no exception in *King Lear*. Common references are merely biblical phrases that have made their way into common usage in Shakespeare's culture. For example, when Gloucester says, "Our flesh and blood, my lord, is grown so vile," Shakespeare employs a phrase in the Bible, "flesh and blood," that has entered into the general English vocabulary (3.4.130).[1] Here, Shakespeare means nothing more than what the face-value "flesh and blood" means.[2]

Proverbial references are merely biblical proverbs, many times taken straight out of the biblical Book of Proverbs. For example, the Fool tells of the proverbial industrious ant, a reference to Proverbs 6:6-8, and two different characters mention the proverbial sharpness of a serpent's tongue, found in Psalm 140:3 (2.4.63-64; 1.4.255; 2.4.153-54). In this case, Shakespeare is taking a metaphor from the Bible to illustrate the same proverbial point that the Bible says. In this sense, it is technically uninteresting, for Shakespeare is just employing familiar imagery to the audience for descriptive purposes.[3]

Another category of references is hyperbolic references, employing biblical language for hyperbolic effect. Shakespeare's use of the word "pluck" is a good example. In a dramatic line of act 1, Lear says that he would "pluck" and "cast" his "old fond eyes," referencing Jesus's instruction in Matthew 5:29: "Wherefore if thy right eye cause thee to offend, pluck it out and cast it from thee" (1.4.271-72). However, this reference gains new meaning when Gloucester's eyes are actually plucked out in 3.7. This eye-plucking in 3.7 is no longer a direct reference to the Bible anymore, and only through 1.4 is it drawing upon Jesus's original words. Additionally, the distance of this scene from the Bible is not just verbal; Jesus tells one to pluck their own eye out, but Gloucester loses his eyes from Cornwall. Thus, Shakespeare builds dramatic tension—what was only an exaggeration of act 1 becomes reality in act 3, showing the growth of dramatic tension in the play.

Some references are also employed to contrast situations in the play with situations in the Bible. In 3.1.5-6, a gentleman describes the King, who "Bids the wind blow the earth into the sea, / Or swell the curlèd waters 'bove the main." Here, there is a reference to Psalm 46:1-3:

> God is our hope and strength,
> and help in troubles, ready to be found.
> Though the earth be moved,
> and though the mountains fall into the midst of the sea,
> Though the waters thereof rage and be troubled,
> and the mountains shake at the surges of the same.

This passage is not portraying Lear as God, nor as the Psalmist; in using Psalm 46, Shakespeare compares the psalmist with Lear with striking irony—the Psalmist has a calmness, "though the mountains fall into the midst of the sea," but King Lear, though also unafraid, "contends with the elements," and is not mentally or physically calm. This biblical reference depicts Lear in the opposite scenario as the Psalmist.

In act 3 scene 4, Shakespeare quotes the Bible at least five times within sixty lines. Shakespeare first employs the Bible as a comparative device in Edgar's jumbled version of biblical commandments in 3.4.74-76. Edgar's plain language contrasts with the high, lofty language of the Biblical commandments given by Moses, Jesus, and Paul, language that the audience readily knows, setting the audience up for Edgar's introduction of himself to Lear in the following lines as a thoroughly unrighteous "unaccommodated man." Edgar describes himself as "proud in heart" and "serv[ing]…the lust," biblical references to Proverbs 18:25 and Titus 3:3 respectively; here, he applies negative biblical verses to himself positively. Lear responds to Edgar with a reflection on the nature of humanity: "Is man no more than this? Consider him well" (3.4.94-95). Shaheen's reference to Hebrews 2:6 is at most an allusion, for the two passages only share in theme, and not in wording (612). The remaining two references, "Prince of Darkness" and "flesh and blood" are both

[1] All quotes, line numbers, and indicated notes from *King Lear* taken from Greenblatt et al., *The Norton Shakespeare.* All quotes from the Bible from *The 1599 Geneva Bible.*

[2] Other "common use" references include "prince of darkness" (3.4.128), "proud in heart" (3.4.78), and "hourly die" (5.3.177).

[3] Other proverbial references include "You will say they are Persian, but let them be changed" (3.6.38) and "His anointed flesh" (3.7.58).

common expressions in English culture at the time, and most likely do not carry more biblical meaning than what can be plainly understood in the text.

### ACT 4 AND TYPOLOGY

As the play moves into acts 4 and 5, the density of substantive biblical references increases; this is especially the case in 4.6 and 5.3: both have five biblical references in a very small number of lines. In act 4, the majority of the references are not common usage, hyperbolic, comparative, or proverbial references; instead, there are thematic references that bring out biblical themes in the text, and typological references that bring out character relationships in the text.

#### *King Lear and The Book of Job*

Gloucester's biblical quotation in 4.1.33-36 has caused much discussion:

> I'th' last night's storm, I such a fellow saw
> Which made me think a man a worm. My son
> Came then into my mind, and yet my mind
> Was then scarce friends with him.

Since line 33 refers back to events in 3.4, line 34 is a reference back to Lear's "Is a man no more than this?" from 3.4.94-95, discussed earlier. Shaheen aptly pairs this with both Job 25:6 "How much more man, a worm, even the son of man, which is but a worm?" and Psalm 22:6 "But I am a worm, and not a man" (614). Like the quote in 3.4, this quote is a thematic reference, but with more pointed biblical language than 3.4. Many commentators see a typological connection between the story of Job and *King Lear*, a connection which Hamlin notes as a "critical commonplace," possibly starting with G. Wilson Knight in 1949 (306). However, this specific reference only shows that the two stories are concerned with similar themes of human nature and is inconclusive on the typological connection between Job and *Lear*.

To explore the possibility of typology between Job and *Lear* further, it would be helpful to clarify what typology is. As Marx explains, "typology is a method of noting similarities and correspondences between texts. On the basis of those similarities, one thing or event is claimed to stand for or represent another" (14). For Marx, the stories of Lear and Job share similar plots—they have similar beginning, middle, and endings; they both have Aristotelian reversals and recognitions; they both include different types of suffering (62–69). In addition, the stories have similar elements—they both include an arbitrary, cruel divine figure, and characters that insist that the divine is just; they both have an idea of a redeemer; they both contemplate questions about the nature of humanity, suicide, and justice (69–75).

However, there are many reasons why this typological connection does not make sense. Firstly, there are many major plot differences between the two stories, as even Marx acknowledges; for example, strictly speaking, there is no divine figure in *Lear* (75). Secondly, many of Marx's categories are so broad that many biblical stories and many characters in *Lear* fall into his criteria. Fisch argues for an influence of the story of Esau and Jacob because of many of the same reasons (137), but why not the story of Joseph, or Joshua, etc. too? Fisch also sees not only Lear, but Gloucester and Edgar as Job figures as well (126), but why not the rest of the cast with them? Hamlin employs a more promising methodology of finding allusions to the book of Job through contemporaneous texts like Golding's introduction to Calvin's *Sermons on Job*, but the references are tentative at best and inconclusive of a direct typological link (310–19). It seems like critics are afraid to admit the obvious about this "critical commonplace"—there is no typological link between Job and *Lear*.

#### *King Lear and Jesus Christ*

Probably the most important and discussed set of *King Lear* biblical quotations is the ones suggesting a possible typological relationship between Cordelia and Jesus:

> Fairest Cordelia, that art most rich being poor,
> Most choice forsaken, and most loved despised
> (1.1.248-49)
>
> …
>
> O dear father,
> It is thy business that I go about! (4.4.23-24)
>
> …
>
> Thou hast a daughter
> Who redeems nature from the general curse,
> Which twain have brought her to. (4.6.197-99)

Shaheen notes that the first quotation references "[Jesus Christ] being rich, for your sakes became poor" from 2 Corinthians 8:9 (608). Other references could be added: "He is despised and rejected of men" in Isaiah 53:3 and a potential allusion to Psalm 22:1's "why hast thou forsaken me" passage, which is highly likely given to the possible reference to Psalm 22 in 4.1.34 mentioned before. Both Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22 are used directly by Christ to describe his own sufferings in Mark 9:12 and 15:34 and has been interpreted typologically to refer to Christ by Christian readers since. The second quotation is also a definite reference to Jesus's words in Luke 2:49, "knew ye

not that I must go about my Father's business?" The third reference is not actually to any specific biblical text, but to general theological concepts. In Christian theology, Adam brings a "general curse" upon all of nature, and the second Adam, Christ, redeems nature (see Romans 5:12; 8:22).

From these three quotes, Shakespeare is noticeably linking Cordelia with Christ. This kind of connection does not seem to be present, at least on a verbal level, for any other biblical characters in this play. These overt references have led many early interpreters to read *King Lear* as a spiritual allegory, with Cordelia redeeming Lear. However, Shaheen points to another biblical reference found in act 4, when Edgar says, "O thou side-piercing sight!" upon seeing Lear, a reference to Jesus's side being pierced in John 19:34 (4.6.87). He argues that "it is hardly logical that both Cordelia and Lear…should be portrayed as Christ figures. These discrepancies indicate that Shakespeare's borrowings from Scripture had no theological intent, nor were they meant to convey a religious allegory" (617).

Shaheen is right in noting the implausibility of a Christian allegorical interpretation, but does this actually exclude any type of theological reflection? Firstly, this reference is not as direct of a reference as any of the three Cordelia references. Secondly, the "side-piercing" itself is not actually referring to Lear's suffering, but to Edgar's suffering as he looks upon Lear. Thirdly, typology allows for more than one character to be related to Jesus. It is plausible that Shakespeare did not intend allegory but did intend a typological function with all four of these references. With the suffering motif of both Lear and Gloucester, it is highly likely that Shakespeare had Jesus, the paradigmatic suffering servant, in mind in forming the characters of the play. However, it is likely that, for the sufferers of the play, Jesus is used more of a character contrast with the divine sufferer Jesus, than of a typological relationship, though the three references for Cordelia forms an obvious typological connection to Jesus. This also provides an explanation for the themes found by scholars who see a Joban influence, for Job was oft interpreted as a typological figure for Jesus's suffering in England.

*King Lear and the Parable of the Prodigal Son*

Another reference to the Bible in act 4 is in 4.7.33-35, where Cordelia laments on the unfortunate events to her father:

> And wast thou fain, poor father,
> To hovel thee with swine and rogues forlorn
> In short and musty straw?

This reference is more of a plot parallel than a verbal parallel to the Parable of the Prodigal Son, told by Jesus in Luke 15. This reference is covered extensively by Snyder, who notes that the parable is the most-mentioned parable in Shakespearean plays (361–62). Snyder notes the similarities between both Lear's and Gloucester's plot and the parable's plot, arguing that the reference sharpens "the picture of Lear and Gloucester as immature old men educated through suffering" and speaks to the play's concern with justice (362–65). In comparison to the aforementioned typological connection to the Book of Job, the plot of the parable is not only directly mentioned by the play, but also has more in common with *Lear*'s plot, like the absence of the supernatural in both stories. Additionally, there might be significance that the parable speaker is Cordelia, who is already compared to Jesus in earlier passages. However, since he does not reference this parable again in the play, Shakespeare most likely uses the parable not as a typological connection, but rather as a singular point of character contrast between the prodigal and Lear, highlighting the irony of the inversion of the roles of father and child in the two plots.

*Religious Thematic References in Act 4*

In act 4, there are many invocations or references to the divine. Interestingly, in at least two instances, Shakespeare employs biblical language for the divine:

> You justices, that these our nether crimes
> So speedily can venge. (4.2.49–50)
>
> …
>
> Think that the clearest gods, who make them honors
> Of men's impossibilities, have preserved thee.
> (4.6.75–76)

I categorize these references as thematic because the verbal references draw thematic parallels to the Bible, without parallels to any plot (typological). Shaheen links the first quote with "Now shall not God avenge his elect…I tell you he will avenge them quickly" in the Parable of the Unrighteous Judge in Luke 18:7-8. Though the two passages do not share any verbal connections except "venge," it seems highly likely that Shakespeare had this passage in mind because of the connection between "speedily" and "quickly" (615). Shaheen links the second quote to Matthew 19:26: "With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (616). This quote has direct verbal connection, as well as thematic connection, with the biblical reference. These two thematic references fit into the larger context of the invocations of the "gods" in the play, where the two plot lines of Lear and Gloucester meet. Many characters invoke the "gods" throughout the play, calling them "gods that

we adore," "revenging gods," "the blest gods," "great gods," "kind gods," "mighty gods," "clearest gods," and "gentle gods." These "gods" that are invoked are not characteristic of the arbitrary, fateful pagan gods, but of the just and merciful Christian God. With the two additional thematic references, Shakespeare reinforces that the characters in *Lear,* though in a pre-Christian era, believe in a divine realm that is modeled off of the Christian God.

### APOCALYPTIC TYPOLOGY IN ACT 5

In act 5, there are three references to the Bible that are apocalyptic, which link with other apocalyptic themes in the other parts of the play, including an apocalyptic reference in 1.2. Here are the relevant references in the play:

> Love cools, friendship falls off, brothers divide; in cities, mutinies; in countries, discord; in palaces, treason; and the bond cracked twixt son and father. This villain of mine comes under the prediction: there's son against father. (1.2.96-100)
>
> …
>
> He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven
> And fire us hence like foxes. Wipe thine eyes.
> The good years shall devour them, flesh and fell,
> Ere they shall make us weep.
> We'll see 'em starved first. (5.3.22-26)
>
> …
>
> KENT: Is this the promised end?
> EDGAR: Or image of that horror.
> ALBANY: Fall and cease. (5.3.237-38)

Shaheen notes that "comes under prediction" "evidently refers to Jesus' prediction about the signs that would foretell the end of the world," especially when paired with apocalyptic imagery from Luke 12:51: "The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father" (608). Following the quote from Gloucester, Edmund repeats the same fulfilled prophecy of "unnaturalness between the child and the parent" to Edgar in highly astrological terms. This prophetic theme is brought back in act 3.2.79-94, where the Fool "speak[s] a prophecy" modeled off of the pseudo-Chaucerian 12th-century "Merlin's Prophecy" (3.2.80n). The Fool tells of apocalyptic events that will cause "the realm of Albion come to great confusion," like Jesus's prophecy, which tells of events that will happen before, or cause, "the day of judgment" of the world. Weimann (qtd. in Wittreich) argues that the Fool's prophecy "provides both a vision of Utopia and an inversion of it…the theme of Utopia…is *expressed* structurally in terms of inversion" (72). This vision of Utopia becomes more poignant in Act 5.

5.3.22-26 references two biblical passages. First, "brand from heaven / And fire us hence like foxes" is a reference to Judges 15:4-5, when Samson

> took three hundred foxes, and took firebrands, and turned them tail to tail, and put a firebrand in the midst between two tails. And when he had set the brands on fire, he sent them out into the standing corn of the Philistines and burnt up both the ricks and the standing corn, with the vineyards and olives.

Wittreich argues that the Samson reference connotes a "political apocalypse," and Samson figures "the tragic impulses that had earlier devastated the Lear universe and that will continue to threaten the history of the world" (79). However, in the context, Lear is saying that it will require nothing short of divine intervention to "part" Lear and Cordelia. This reference seems less a "political apocalypse" and more a proverbial hyperbole.

In the following lines, Shakespeare references Genesis 41, when Pharaoh has a dream where seven "evil favored and lean fleshed" cows ate seven "goodly…and fat-fleshed" cows, which was interpreted by Joseph as symbolic of seven years of famine following seven years of plenty. This reference shows a likeness of Lear to Joseph, who can interpret prophetic dreams; however, for Lear, the good years devour the bad; instead of famine following plenty, there is plenty following famine. As Brady points out, while Cordelia thinks that she and Lear have "incurred the worst," Lear "goes on to describe…a continuation of the Pharaoh's dream," where the bad years are devoured by the good years, showing that he thinks the future, in the jail cell, is "the best" and not "the worst" (497). This reference, unlike the former Samson reference, is clearly eschatological and apocalyptic; the lines are forward-looking, like Lear's famous "birds i'th'cage" speech a few lines earlier (5.3.8-18). Like the Fool's prophecy, Lear has a vision of utopia that is an inversion of what utopia is usually thought of as.

At the end of the play, Cordelia is brought in dead, and Kent exclaims, "is this the promised end?" Here, Shakespeare employs "end" as a paronomasia, signifying both a prophesied end-times, as well as the end of the play. Edgar asks if it is a foreshadowing, an "image," of the "horror" of the apocalyptic end times. The Norton glosses Albany's following line, "fall and cease," as "let the world collapse and end" (5.3.238n). Though none of these lines are verbal echoes of biblical texts, these lines bring out a theme of apocalypse at the end of this play, echoing back to previous prophetic and apocalyptic moments, like 1.2 and 3.2. These lines, paired with the previous ones as

well, show that the characters not only have a Christian view of the divine, but also a Christian view of eschatology. For Kent and company, there is both an acknowledgement that this is what the end times looks like, but also a shock that, after all, this is what the end times looks like. Is "the promised end" of the play the end where Cordelia, the Christ-figure who "redeems nature from the general curse," dies? Additionally, this quote engages with the apocalyptic/prophetic references earlier. Is this, after all, the "promised" Utopia of the Fool and of Lear? The death of Cordelia, and then of Lear, once again inverts the expectation of all involved; there will be no "sing[ing] like two birds i'th'cage."

## CONCLUSION

In *King Lear*, Shakespeare employs the Bible many times and in many ways to accomplish many different goals: build dramatic tension, contrast characters, form Christ-figures, and ask meta-level questions about the play itself. The play engages with the Bible more often in scenes of higher dramatic tension, like 4.6 and 5.3, and interacts with the whole biblical corpus, from stories of Joseph and Samson, proverbs and psalms, parables of Jesus, gospel narratives, apocalyptic themes, and theological themes. Though it is set in pre-Christian times, the characters show a full awareness of not only biblical narratives, but also Christian theology of God, sin, and the end times, influencing how the characters act, and the audience's perception.

Of the references, three groups are of especial note. The most notable group portrays Cordelia as a Christ-figure. The audience at the time would have understood the references as setting up a typological relationship between Cordelia and Jesus. Thus, there is an expectation of redemption by the end of the play. The second group of references compare Lear to other biblical figures. Lear is compared to the psalmist of Psalm 46, Jesus, the prodigal son, and Joseph. These references, found throughout the play, show the development of the character of Lear. For all four comparisons, there is redemption for the biblical character after suffering. These references set up an expectation for a similar redemption for Lear. The third group of references are apocalyptic and heighten the subversive ending. The first two groups set up an expectation for a hopeful tragicomedy ending that gets supplanted first by Cordelia's death, and then Lear's as well. The apocalyptic references prompt both the characters in the play, as well as the audience, to reflect on the tragic nature of the "promised end."

**Appendix**[4]

| *Lear* | Bible | Category | Quote or summary |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1.1.248 | 2 Cor 8:9; 6:10 | Typological; Christological | "rich being poor" |
| 1.1.249 | Is 53:6; Ps 22:1 | Typological; Christological | "despised" and "forsaken" |
| 1.2.96-98, (131.1) | Lk 12:51 (Mk 13:12; Mt 10:21) | Apocalyptic | "brothers divide" "Comes under prediction" |
| 1.4.255 | Ps 140:3 | Proverbial | Serpent tongues |
| 1.4.271-72 | Mt 5:29 | Hyperbolic | "Old fond eyes ill pluck you out and cast you away" |
| 2.4.63-64 | Pv 6:6-8 | Proverbial | Industrious ants |
| 2.4.153-54 | Ps 140:3 | Proverbial | Serpent tongues |
| 3.1.5-6 | Ps 46:2-3 | Comparative; Hyperbolic | "Earth be moved into the sea" |
| 3.4.74-76 | Ex 20; Mt 5; 1 Tm 2:9 | Comparative | "Poor Tom's garbled version of the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, and related Scriptures" (Shaheen 611) |
| 3.4.78 | Pv 16:5; 21:4; 28:25 | Common | "Proud in heart" |
| 3.4.94-95 | Hb 2:6, Ps 8:4 | Thematic | "is man no more than this? Consider him well" |
| 3.4.128 | Eph 6:12 | Common | "Prince of darkness" |
| 3.4.130 | | Common | "flesh and blood" |
| 3.6.38 | Dn 6:8 | Proverbial | "You will say they are Persian, but let them be changed" |
| 3.7.58 | Kings are anointed | Common | "His anointed flesh" |
| 4.1.34 | Jb 25:6; Ps 22:6 | Thematic | "man a worm" |
| 4.2.34 | Mt 5:39 | Common | "Bearest a cheek for blows" |
| 4.2.48-50 | Luke 18:7-8 | Thematic | "You justices, that these our nether crimes / So speedily can venge." |
| 4.4.23-24 | Luke 2:49 | Typological; Christological | "Oh dear father, / It is thy business that I go about!" |
| 4.6.75-76 | Mt 19:26 | Thematic | "the clearest gods, who make them honors / Out of man's impossibilities" |
| 4.6.87 | Jn 19:34 | Typological; Christological | "side-piercing sight" |
| 4.6.99-100 | 2 Cor 1:18-19 | Comparative | "ay and no" |
| 4.6.110 | Lv 20:10; Dt 22:22 | Comparative | death penalty for adultery |
| 4.6.197-99 | Christian theology | Typological; Christological | "Thou hast a daughter / Who redeems nature from the general curse" |
| 4.7.34 | Luke 15:15-16 | Comparative | "To hovel thee with swine" |
| 5.3.22-23 | Judges 15:4-5 | Proverbial; Hyperbolic | "He that parts us shall bring a brand from heaven / And fire us hence like foxes" |
| 5.3.24-25 | Gn 41:1-36 | Apocalyptic | "The good years shall devour them" |
| 5.3.177 | 1 Cor 15:30-31 | Common | "Hourly die" |
| 5.3.238 | | Apocalyptic | "is this the promised end?" |
| 5.3.283 | Job 7:9-10 | Common | "Thou'lt come no more" |

[4] All references are from Shaheen 2011, except for 1.1.249, which I discovered myself. I have not included all of Shaheen's references, only the ones that I judge are references. I have also adjusted the line numbers to match with the Norton edition employed.

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