



HOW WE GOT THE BIBLE WORKSHOP

June 2023

Regarding the Transmission, Translation, and Canon of the Scriptures

" The law of the LORD is perfect, reviving the soul... "



PA BIBLE
TEACHING FELLOWSHIP

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Workshop Goals:

- To give confidence in the inerrancy, the sufficiency, and the consistency of the Scriptures as given, kept, and protected by God through the ages.
- To address specific concerns that may arise in regard to the copying of manuscripts, translation of texts, and potential of added or lost books to the Biblical corpus.
- To build a zeal for the Word of God leading to greater disciplines for Bible reading, Bible retention, Bible teaching, Bible memorization, Bible conversing, and Bible-believing in the church for the glory of God.

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Teaching 1: How the Bible was Given and Preserved

The Word that Comes from the Mouth of God – The Word of Life

Matthew 4:1 - 4

1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

2 And after fasting forty days and forty nights, he was hungry.

3 And the tempter came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.”

4 But he answered, “It is written, “‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”

- Jesus in these direct trials against the devil withstood him, by quoting several times from **Deuteronomy**.
 - Demonstrating that he lived, and all men should live by the “word that comes from the mouth of God.”

1st John 1:1 That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we looked upon and have touched with our hands, concerning the word of life.

- There has never been and there never will be another book like the Bible – it gives life.
 - Though the origin of the word “Bible” simply comes from the Greek word *biblía* meaning “book,” the Bible is a book like no other book.

There Is No Other Book Like the Bible:

- These holy words have been treasured through the ages...
 - Committed to memory
 - Printed onto scrolls
 - Written on the doorposts and gates of homes
 - Bound into books
 - Narrated onto recordings
 - Read while orbiting and on the surface of the moon
 - Programmed into digital apps
 - Transformed the lives of countless souls
- Every year, the Bible sells well above the hottest *New York Times* bestsellers.
 - In the United States alone, an estimated 40 million copies are sold annually.
- 82% of all American Households have at least one Bible
 - 72% have multiple.
- The full Bible is available in 670 different languages.
 - Granting access for 5,371,000,000 people to the entire Bible
- The New Testament is available in 1,521 additional languages.
 - Giving 658,000,000 additional people access
- Currently, there is translation work happening in over 2,600 additional languages.
 - The English language leads the way for versions of the Bible with over 300 English translations published since the first Wycliffe Bible produced in 1382.

- The Bible was penned by over 40 different writers: shepherds, kings, farmers, priests, songwriters, scribes, fishermen, tax collectors, and a former Pharisee.
- Writing from wildly different places: wilderness, prison, palaces
- Covering three different continents: Asia, Africa, and Europe
- Enduring the rise and fall of many nations: Egypt, Babylon, Persia, Israel
- In three different languages: Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek
- Over a 1500-year span, producing a combined: 31,102 verses, 1,189 chapters, and 66 books

The existence of the Bible is a staggering miracle!

Its overall human impact is impossible to quantify.

- *But where did this marvel come from?*
- *How did it come together?*
- *How has it lasted so long?*
- *Has it been corrupted?*
- *Can I trust it?*

In this first session, we will consider: How the Bible was given and preserved through the ages.

1. Given - Holy Men Received Inspiration from God to Write It Down
2. Preserved - Devoted Men Have Given Their Lives to Make It Available

Holy Men Received Inspiration from God to Write It Down

2 Peter 1:16 – 21

16 For we did not follow cleverly devised myths when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty.

17 For when he received honor and glory from God the Father, and the voice was borne to him by the Majestic Glory, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased,"

18 we ourselves heard this very voice borne from heaven, for we were with him on the holy mountain.

- In this section, Peter is addressing the same common dismissals of the Bible you hear today.
 - *Oh, the Bible is just a myth...*
 - *People have been adding to it and editing it for centuries...*
- Peter is going to address these accusations by three primary proofs:
 - **#1** You can trust these words because of the eyewitnesses.
 - **#2** You can trust these words because now so many of the prophecies have been fulfilled in Christ.
 - **#3** You can trust these words because of how they were given.
- So, you can be more confident today, than ever before...
 - These aren't just men's words... these are the words "from the mouth of God!"

Proof #1: You Can Trust These Words Because Of The Eyewitnesses.

- Peter, James, and John saw the preview of Christ transfigured into the image of his coming in power and glory...
 - And one day, every eye will see what the eyes of those apostles saw.
- Paul said the same thing about the witnesses of the resurrection...
 - This was all in accordance with the Scriptures.

There is testimonial proof of their validity

1st Corinthians 15:3 - 8

3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures,

4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,

5 and that he appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve.

6 Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have fallen asleep.

7 Then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles.

8 Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.

- By Paul's count here, there were over 513 eyewitnesses.
 - There were more eyewitnesses of the resurrection than most events in ancient history.
 - Proving a unified consistency, internal harmony, and fulfillment of the Scriptures.

Jesus himself claimed the same thing when he appeared to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus.

Luke 24:13 - 27

13 That very day two of them were going to a village named Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem,

14 and they were talking with each other about all these things that had happened.

15 While they were talking and discussing together, Jesus himself drew near and went with them.

16 But their eyes were kept from recognizing him.

17 And he said to them, "What is this conversation that you are holding with each other as you walk?" And they stood still, looking sad.

18 Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?"

19 And he said to them, "What things?" And they said to him, "Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, a man who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people,

20 and how our chief priests and rulers delivered him up to be condemned to death, and crucified him.

21 But we had hoped that he was the one to redeem Israel. Yes, and besides all this, it is now the third day since these things happened.

22 Moreover, some women of our company amazed us. They were at the tomb early in the morning,

23 and when they did not find his body, they came back saying that they had even seen a vision of angels, who said that he was alive.

24 Some of those who were with us went to the tomb and found it just as the women had said, but him they did not see."

25 And he said to them, "O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!

26 Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?"

27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he interpreted to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself.

- Christ was explaining that the whole scroll of the Old Testament was anticipating the suffering, the death, the resurrection, and the glorification of the Christ.
 - And now it has happened!
 - And very soon those two disciples would be added to the count of those who could testify as an eyewitness – “We saw him resurrected!” – the Bible is true!

Proof #2 You Can Trust These Words Because So Many Prophecies Have Been Fulfilled

19 And we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts,

20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone’s own interpretation.

21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

When he says in **verse 19**, “we have the prophetic word more fully confirmed...”

- he's not comparing the eyewitness testimony and the written prophetic words in terms of their reliability...
 - The eyewitness of Peter is credible, he's an apostle.
- And his record of it is credible and his words about it are, in fact, Scripture.

But what Peter is saying here is a more synthetic thought...

- He's tying the truthfulness of the eyewitness accounts to the truthfulness of the prophetic scriptures.
 - And he's saying that now the prophetic word is **more fully confirmed**.
- He's saying, **now** we have **more** reason to believe it than ever before, because more prophetic events have been fulfilled...
- So, today the Bible is a more fully confirmed word, because now Christ has come and embodied it! He is the Word made flesh (**John 1:14**)
 - Now by Christ in his life, in his death, in his resurrection, in his ascension...
 - **More promises are confirmed in the Bible than ever before!**
- And so, he says here regarding these scriptures – they are like a lamp shining and we ought to pay attention to it until the morning star rises in our hearts.
 - And then, when Jesus comes in glory, the prophetic Word will be entirely fulfilled.
 - And he will illumine our hearts with his light...
- In that day, the prophetic word will be eclipsed by the living word himself.
 - But until that day, we give attention to the written Scriptures.

Proof #3: You Can Trust These Words Because of How They Were Given

20 knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.

21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

- Note that Peter says, "**knowing this first of all**" and he doesn't give us a second or a third thing...
 - It's because he's *not* giving us a list - He's giving priority.
- He's saying: **This is primary for you to know** - that no prophecy of scripture comes from someone's own interpretation.
 - He's speaking here of the reliability of the Scriptures.
- "No private interpretation" means - it's not their "personal interpretation."
 - It's - **this happened, and I have understanding from above to tell you what it means!**
- Because the Father who is in Heaven gave Peter and the other writers the proper interpretation/understanding/explanation.
 - and then they wrote that down to share it with us.
- Therefore, the Bible is rooted in true history, not myths.
 - The prophets and Apostles were raised up, they properly recorded,
 - and properly interpreted what God gave them in understanding...
- The record was written down and the final product is the Bible, which gives us light in a dark world.

Then, he builds on this thought further in **verse 21...**

21 For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

- In other words, no prophet woke up one day and said "*You know, I think I'll write some Bible today...*"
 - It didn't originate from them, but rather men spoke from God as they were "carried along by the Holy Spirit."
- When prophets spoke, their words came from God as He commanded them what to speak.
 - So, the Bible didn't originate from man - but it was revealed to men by God.
- They were "carried along by the Holy Spirit"
 - This verb is used twice in **Acts 27** about the ship the Apostle Paul was on...

Act 27:14 – 15

14 But soon a tempestuous wind, called the northeaster, struck down from the land.

15 And when the ship was caught and could not face the wind, we gave way to it and were driven along.

Acts 27:17 After hoisting it up, they used supports to undergird the ship. Then, fearing that they would run aground on the Syrtis, they lowered the gear, and thus they were driven along.

- The writers had to participate; a ship has to raise its sails...
 - But as they did, these individuals were carried along\driven along by the spirit of God to carry them to the destination God wanted.

Why Is This So Important?

Genesis 3:1 Now the serpent was more crafty than any other beast of the field that the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God actually say...”

- If the enemy can get you to question the validity of the Bible...
 - *Did God actually say these words?*
- Then, just like Adam and Eve, we will reap destruction.

2nd Timothy 3:16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,

- Note, that it doesn’t say “some” or “most”, but it proclaims that “all” Scripture is “breathed out by God.”
 - God gave the revelation for each and every word from **Genesis 1:1** to **Revelation 22:21**.
- When God breathes it gives life.
 - These are the words from “the mouth of God” that Jesus said men are to live by.

Devoted Men Have Given Their Lives to Make It Available

Christ spoke of the shed blood of all the prophets before him:

Luke 11:46 – 54

46 And he said, “Woe to you lawyers also! For you load people with burdens hard to bear, and you yourselves do not touch the burdens with one of your fingers.

47 Woe to you! For you build the tombs of the prophets whom your fathers killed.

48 So you are witnesses and you consent to the deeds of your fathers, for they killed them, and you build their tombs.

49 Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, ‘I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,’

50 so that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the foundation of the world, may be charged against this generation,

51 from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary. Yes, I tell you, it will be required of this generation.

52 Woe to you lawyers! For you have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter yourselves, and you hindered those who were entering.”

53 As he went away from there, the scribes and the Pharisees began to press him hard and to provoke him to speak about many things,

54 lying in wait for him, to catch him in something he might say.

Emperor Diocletian's Edict

During the Diocletianic Persecution, Bibles were targeted as part of a larger program intended to wipe out Christianity. On February 24, 303, Diocletian's first "Edict against the Christians" was published. Among other persecutions against Christians, Diocletian ordered the destruction of their scriptures and liturgical books across the entire Roman empire.

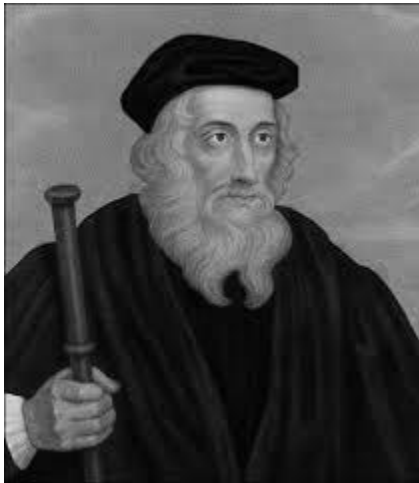
Bible Ban of Pope Innocent III

In 1199, Pope Innocent III, writing in a letter to the bishop of Metz, banned the reading of the Bible in private meetings (which he labeled as *occultis conventiculis*, or "hidden assemblies"). Effectively enacting a Roman Church Bible ban for lay people.

Order of Pope Gregory XI

In 1376, Pope Gregory XI ordered that all literature on the Bible should be placed under ecclesiastical direction. As a result, only the Vulgate (Bible in Latin) and a few poor-quality translations in national languages were tolerated.

John Wyclif (c. 1330–1384), was the renowned and brilliant master of Balliol College at Oxford



University. He was known as the "flower of Oxford scholarship" he was called in to advise England's parliament in its negotiations with Rome. The more Wyclif turned to the Scriptures to help the British throne escape the clutches of the Papacy the more his heart was transformed by them. He eventually left academia behind in order to virtuously and courageously translate the Bible into English and make it available to the common people.

On May 22nd, 1377, Pope Gregory XI issued five bulls condemning the works of John Wycliffe. He devoted the rest of his life to Bible translation and production. As well as the training and sending out of what he called "poor preachers" (laymen without scholastic training) to bring the Word of God all over England. He was famous

for saying, "*I believe that in the end truth will conquer.*"

In 1401, Archbishop Arundel fumed at Wyclif: "*The pearl of the Gospel is scattered abroad and trodden underfoot by swine. ...This pestilent and wretched John Wyclif, of cursed memory, that son of the old serpent!*" Wyclif died before he could be punished, but his Oxford colleagues were all burned alive.

Well after his death, at the Council of Constance in 1415, Wycliffe was finally proclaimed a heretic and condemned as "*that pestilent wretch of damnable memory, yea, the forerunner and disciple of anti-christ who, as the complement of his wickedness, invented a new translation of the Scriptures into his mother-tongue.*" Then, some forty years after his death in 1426, Pope Martin ordered that John Wycliffe's bones be dug up, burned, and thrown into the River Swift. And yet, after his death, Wyclif's manuscripts were twice as popular in England as Chaucer's Canterbury Tales.

William Tyndale (c. 1494–1536) is best known for working tirelessly to get the English Bible into the hands of the common people. He was strongly opposed by the Church of England as they considered the English Bible to be a threat to their power.

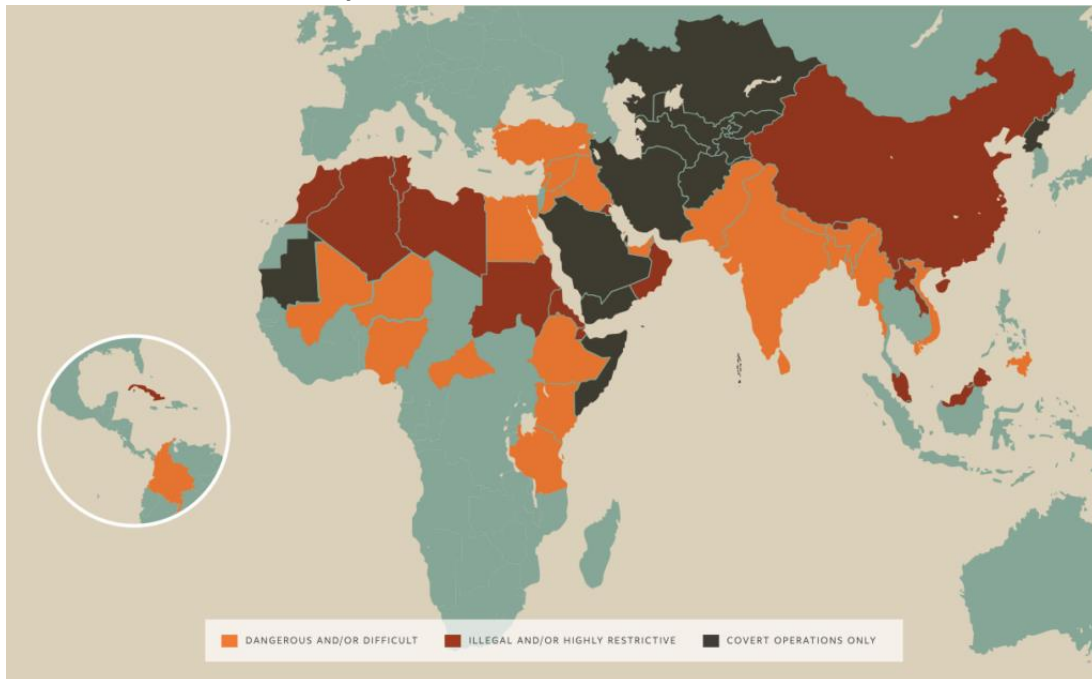


One of the bishops of the church argued with Tyndale, saying that it *"would be better for the people to have the pope's law than God's law."* To this comment, Tyndale famously replied, *"I defy the pope and his laws! If God spares my life, in a few years a plowboy shall know more of the Scriptures than you do."*

Tyndale was eventually caught and tried for heresy in the Netherlands. He was convicted and executed in August 1536. His final words before he was strangled and then burned were said by eyewitnesses to have been spoken "at the stake with a fervent zeal, and a loud voice." Tyndale turned his gaze toward heaven and cried out *"Lord! Open the King of England's eyes."*

His life ended, but his work carried on and his dying prayer was answered. It has been estimated that more than 75% of the 1611 translation of the King James Bible was Tyndale's work. This translation made it into the hands of many plow boys.

Today, the Bible is Restricted in 52 Countries



*This image a figure is from "The Voice of the Martyrs" <https://www.persecution.com/bibles/>

for "All flesh is like grass and all its glory like the flower of grass.
The grass withers, and the flower falls, but the word of the Lord remains forever."
And this word is the good news that was preached to you.

1 Peter 1:24 - 25

Teaching 2: Understanding Manuscripts and Bible Translation

1. Biblical Language Considerations

a. Evolution of language

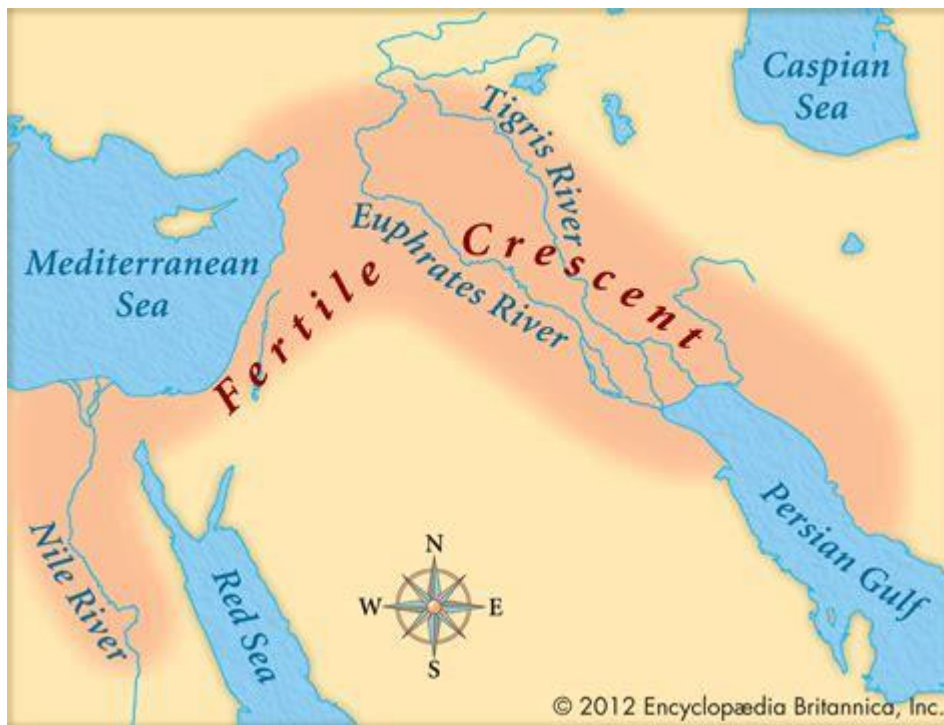
i. Initially, there was one



1. **Genesis 11:1-9**

ii. The cradle of civilization

1. The Fertile Crescent¹



2. Eden – what it was like **Genesis 2:8-14**

3. Figure 1 - Languages of Mesopotamia

a. Sumerians

b. Some Semitic (named for Shem) languages

i. Akkadians

1. Babylonians

ii. Canaanite, Moabite, Phoenician, Amorite, Arabic, Ethiopian, Hebrew, Aramaic

c. Hebrew and Aramaic in Jacob's time



i. **Genesis 31:43-48**

¹ <https://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/Fertile-Crescent/346114> accessed 6/7/23

iii. Enter the Greeks

1. The Greeks - Alexander the Great 300 BC
2. The Romans – 100 BC
3. A migration of Greek-speaking people - the Hellenists

Acts 6:1-2, 5

1 Now in these days when the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint by the Hellenists arose against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution.

Act 6:2 And the twelve summoned the full number of the disciples and said, “It is not right that we should give up preaching the word of God to serve tables.

Act 6:5 And what they said pleased the whole gathering, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch.

b. Examples of multilingual nature of people

i. Paul

Acts 22:1-3, 21:37-40

1 “Brothers and fathers, hear the defense that I now make before you.”

2 And when they heard that he was addressing them in the Hebrew language, they became even more quiet. And he said:

3 “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city, educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being zealous for God as all of you are this day.

37 As Paul was about to be brought into the barracks, he said to the tribune, “May I say something to you?” And he said, “Do you know Greek?”

38 Are you not the Egyptian, then, who recently stirred up a revolt and led the four thousand men of the Assassins out into the wilderness?”

39 Paul replied, “I am a Jew, from Tarsus in Cilicia, a citizen of no obscure city. I beg you, permit me to speak to the people.”

40 And when he had given him permission, Paul, standing on the steps, motioned with his hand to the people. And when there was a great hush, he addressed them in the Hebrew language, saying:

ii. Peter

Mark 14:69-70

69 And the servant girl saw him and began again to say to the bystanders, "This man is one of them."

70 But again he denied it. And after a little while the bystanders again said to Peter, "Certainly you are one of them, for you are a Galilean."

iii. Jesus Christ

c. The use/advantages of each language in Bible times

- i. Hebrew – schools, synagogue, scholars
- ii. Aramaic – common everyday language, local variations
- iii. Greek – language of outside tradesmen, discourse with Gentiles
- iv. The Hebrew language preserved – it is not and never was a dead language
 1. Its preservation is a testimony to the reverence for the Word of God by the Hebrews
 2. Use in 1st century
 3. Survival from 1st to 20th century
- v. Aramaic and Greek in Gospel and New Testament times
 1. The placard placed at the crucifixion

John 19:20 Many of the Jews read this inscription, for the place where Jesus was crucified was near the city, and it was written in Aramaic, in Latin, and in Greek.

2. Some Aramaic words and phrases in Gospels and New Testament

Mark 14:36 And he said, "Abba, Father, all things are possible for you. Remove this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

Luke 19:2 And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich.

Luke 24:18 Then one of them, named Cleopas, answered him, "Are you the only visitor to Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days?"

2. The Old Testament Writings

- a. Figure 2 timeline
- b. The media has affected the survivability of originals first written
 - i. Papyrus
 - ii. Membrana
- c. Protecting the sacred writings
 - i. The Sopherim
 - ii. The Massorites

3. The Gospel and New Testament Writings

- a. Figure 3: 1st to 5th centuries
 - i. The words of Christ most valued
 - ii. The revelation was given to Paul
 - iii. Written in Greek or Aramaic
 - iv. The Syriac versions
- b. Figure 3: 5th to 14th centuries
 - i. The collapse of Rome (but not the Roman Catholic Church)
 - ii. The middle ages (the dark ages)
 - iii. Effect on the Word
- c. Figure 3: 14th century to present time

4. Textual Consensus

- a. The Influence of the Roman Catholic Church
- b. The Reformation and leaders in the development of the Bible of today
 - i. People needed a Bible in their native language
 - ii. John Wycliff 1382
 - iii. Erasmus 1516

1 John 5:7-8

7 For there are three that testify:

8 the Spirit and the water and the blood; and these three agree.

- iv. Martin Luther 1522

- v. William Tyndall 1526
Condemned for stating this: “The New Testament is an everlasting covenant made unto the children of God through faith in Christ, based on the deservings of Christ. Where eternal life is promised to all who believe, and death to all that are unbelieving.”

- vi. Authorized KJV (The Authorized Version, The King James Version) 1611

- c. Critical Greek Text work

- i. In the late 18th and 19th centuries scholars became interested in the further study of Greek and Hebrew
- ii. Principle works by
 1. Johann Griesbach
 2. Karl Lachmann
 3. Friedrich Tischendorf
 4. Samuel Tregelles
 5. Westcott & Hort
 6. Nestle and Alan

- 5. [How Do the Many Manuscripts Agree or Disagree?](#)

- a. How many manuscripts are there?
- b. Can the Bible be trusted?
 - i. Does the Bible set forth doctrine, a consistent doctrine that cannot be unraveled and does not collapse under its own weight?
 - ii. Are there conflicts within the established doctrine in the Bible?
 1. Acts 15:1-12 Council is an example of how doctrine was maintained
 2. We are warned there will be those who stray from the sound doctrine and encourage others to stray as well

Acts 20:28-30

28 Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.

29 I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock;

30 and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them.

Colossians 2:8 See to it that no one takes you captive by philosophy and empty deceit, according to human tradition, according to the elemental spirits of the world, and not according to Christ.

1 Timothy 6:3-6

3 If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness,

4 he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions,

5 and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain.

6 But godliness with contentment is great gain,

2 Peter 3:17 You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability.

iii. Most fundamental question for every person – am I believing the right thing?

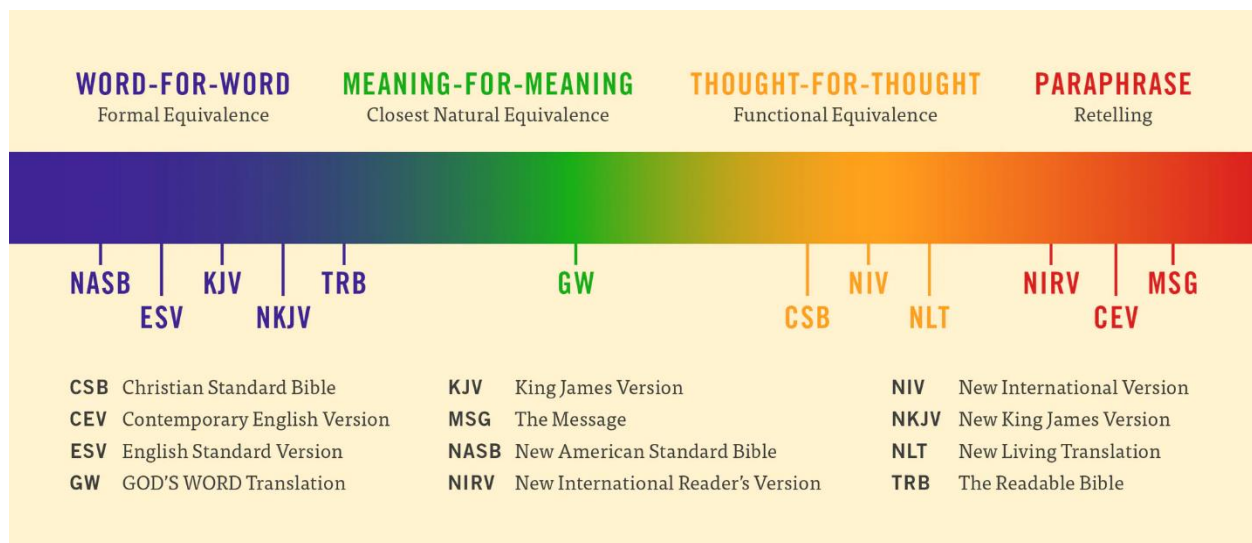
1. Does God exist?
2. Is there one god to be worshipped or many?
3. Is salvation received by believing on Jesus Christ or by some other means including good works?

iv. It is estimated that there are 8 billion people in the world

1. The approximate breakdown of beliefs
 - a. Christianity 30%
 - b. Islam 25%
 - c. Hinduism 15%
 - d. Other 14%
 - e. Buddhism 6%
 - f. Judaism 0.2%
 - g. Follow no religion 10%

- c. How has doctrine changed over time?
- i. The doctrine set forth in the Bible, the Word of God, has NOT changed for 1000's of years, such as:
 1. one God
 2. one source of salvation, Jesus Christ
 3. access to the kingdom of heaven
 4. eternal life
 - ii. These have never changed nor were even adapted

6. Bible Versions: readability vs word for word²



² <https://godsword.org/pages/bible-translation-guide>, accessed 6/7/23

Teaching 3: The Sixty-Six Books and Their Selection

Question #1: How did the Bible come together into one book?

- This is what is known as “The Biblical Canon” (only two “n’s” – not “cannon”)
 - Divinely inspired writings that have been assembled into the:
 - Old Covenant period
 - Gospel period
 - New Covenant period
- Books are authoritative because they are from God.
 - Not because they are included in a list.

Question #2: How did the Old Testament canon come together?

- Remember,
 - **Romans 3:2b** to begin with, the Jews were entrusted with the oracles of God.
- The Old Testament served as the Bible of Jesus and the apostles.
 - Neither Jesus, nor the apostles disputed the Old Testament books, in contrast, they quoted them as God’s Word.

Question #3: How did the New Testament canon come together?

- There was a strict criterion for their selection.
 - The first criteria:
 - Only those who personally knew Jesus Christ
 - Secondly - someone who personally knew Jesus Christ and vouched for the writer.
 - Paul for Mark or Luke
 - Thirdly, and of lesser importance - must answer to these questions:
 - “Is the writing in line with established beliefs in Christianity?”
 - “Does it conform to what we know to be true?”
 - “Is there a unified acceptance by all early churches?”
 - Any book written by someone else other than the name of the bearer (the *Infancy Gospels* for example) was automatically rejected.

Question #4: What about accusations of contradictions? I’ve heard this said about the book of James, for example...

- Result – no contradiction

Question #5: Are there other books of the Bible? What should I think about the Apocrypha or the Patristic writings (writings of early church fathers)?

- There certainly are other writings:
 - The Apocrypha
 - Writings that provide examples of life and instruction of manners
 - Some examples include:
 - *Book of Tobias*
 - *Book of Judith*
 - *Book of Wisdom*
 - *Baruch the Prophet*
 - *I, II, and III Maccabees*, plus others...
- There are other works never intended to be apostolic.
 - Written to encourage other Christians.
 - They were generally, after the 1st century, some of which include:
 - *Epistle of Barnabas*
 - *The Shephard*
 - The “*Infancy Gospels*”
 - *The Gospel of the Nazarenes*
 - *The Acts of Paul*
 - *The Gospel according to the Hebrews*
- The “Patristic Writings” were written as letters/helps/apologetics but were not intended nor did they claim to be divinely inspired.
 - Some examples include:
 - Clement of Rome
 - *Letter to the Corinthians* - 95 AD
 - Polycarp of Smyrna
 - *Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians* – 130 -140 AD
 - Justin Martyr
 - *First Apology* (addressed to Emperor Antoninus Pius, his sons, and the Roman Senate) - 155-157 AD
 - Irenaeus of Lyon
 - *Against Heresies* – 180 AD
 - Tertullian of Carthage
 - *Apologeticus* - 197 AD
 - Origen of Alexandria
 - *De Principiis* - late 220 AD
 - Augustine of Hippo
 - *The City of God* - 426 AD
 - Patrick of Ireland
 - *Confessio* 432 - 461 AD

Question #6: How many people were involved in the selection of the canon how long was it deliberated over?

- Initially, ancient scholars divided the New Testament books into three classes:
 - Accepted as canonical.
 - Widely accepted but some dispute
 - Spurious – false, illegitimate
- By the 3rd and 4th centuries, the Canon as we have today was agreed upon.

Question #7: I've heard there are missing books of the Bible and at times I've also heard that they've found new books of the Bible, what should I think about that?

Jeremiah 1:12 Then the LORD said to me, "You have seen well, for I am watching over my word to perform it."

The Anvil of God's Word

Last eve I passed beside a blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
Then, looking in, I saw upon the floor,
Old hammers, worn with beating years of time.

"How many anvils have you had," said I,
"To wear and batter all these hammers so?"
"Just one" said he, and then, with twinkling eye,
"The anvil wears the hammers out you know."

And so, thought I the anvil of God's Word,
For ages sceptic blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed – the hammers gone!
—attributed to John Clifford

Do we have any questions from the audience?

Figure 1 - Approximate Biblical Language Development

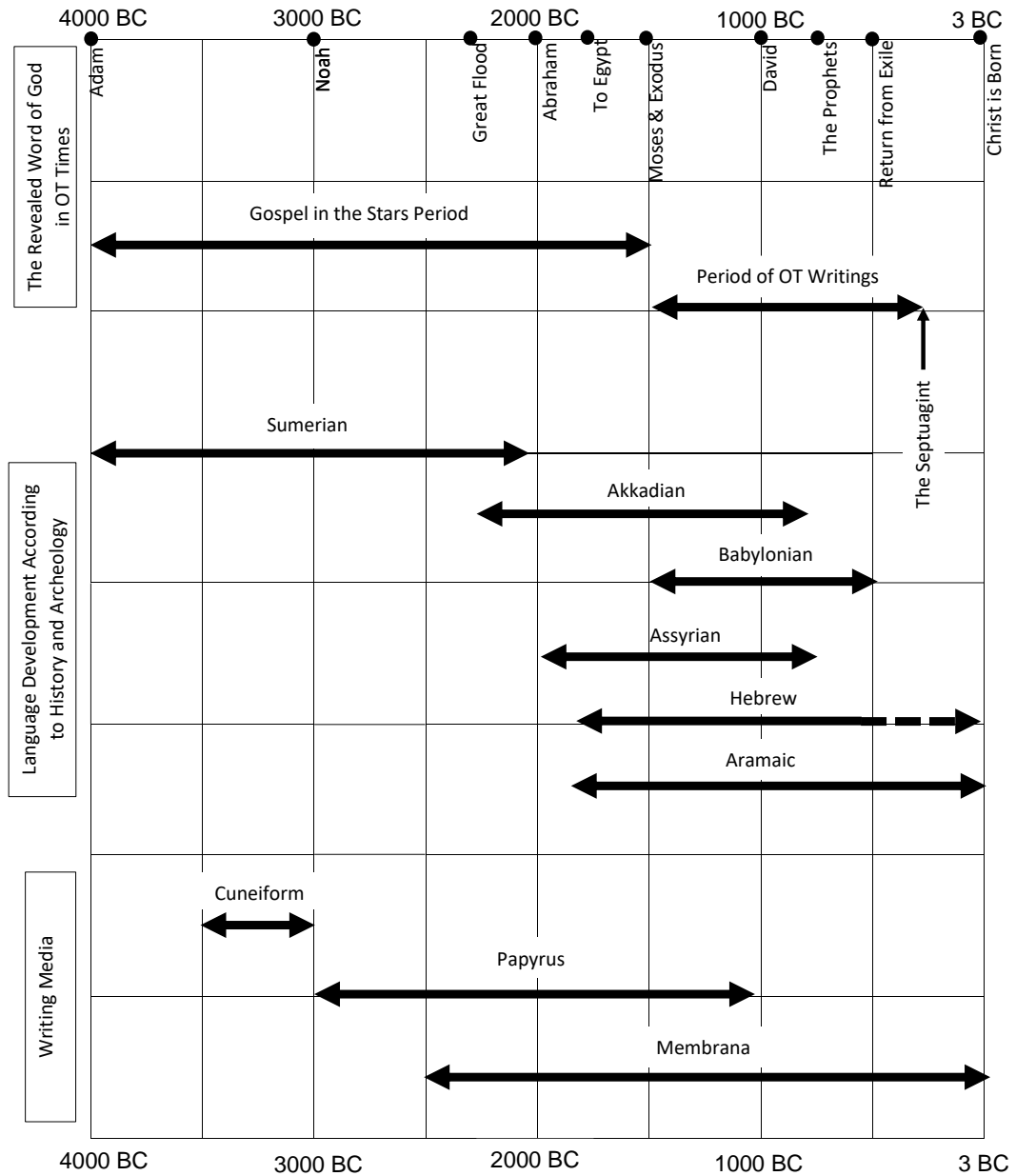


Figure 2 - Approximate Timeline Depiction
Old Testament Word of God Revealed

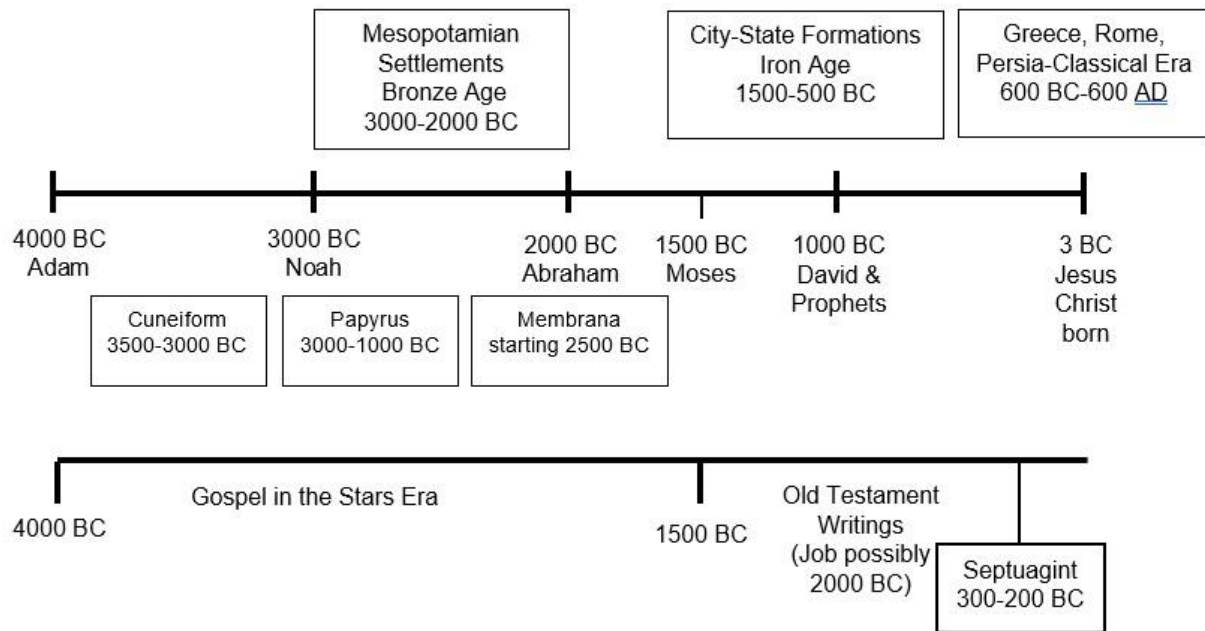


Figure 3 - Approximate Timeline Depiction
New Testament Word of God Revealed and
Development of Printed Bibles

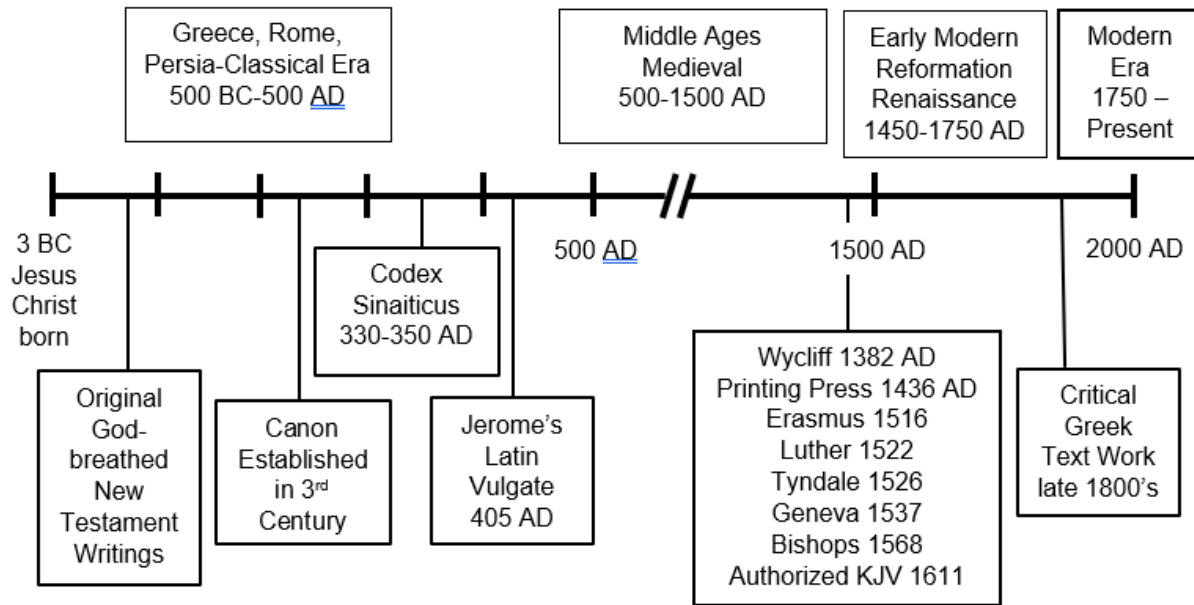


Figure 4 – How Many New Testament Manuscripts Are There?

The manuscript evidence of the New Testament is unsurpassed by any other ancient book. The sheer volume of them is quite astounding. There are more than 5,700 Greek manuscripts containing either parts or all of the New Testament text. Compare this to Homer's *Iliad*, which only has 1,757 manuscripts in existence, or *Beowulf*, which comes to us from only one manuscript.

The wealth of manuscript evidence for the New Testament provides us with a tremendously accurate rendering of the original copies. While there are some scribal variants in many of these manuscripts, most of the differences are insignificant errors such as misspellings and changes in word order (see "Grandma's Biscuit Recipe" in **Figure 5**). With so many manuscripts, biblical scholars are confidently able to determine the wording of the original text.



4,000

6,000

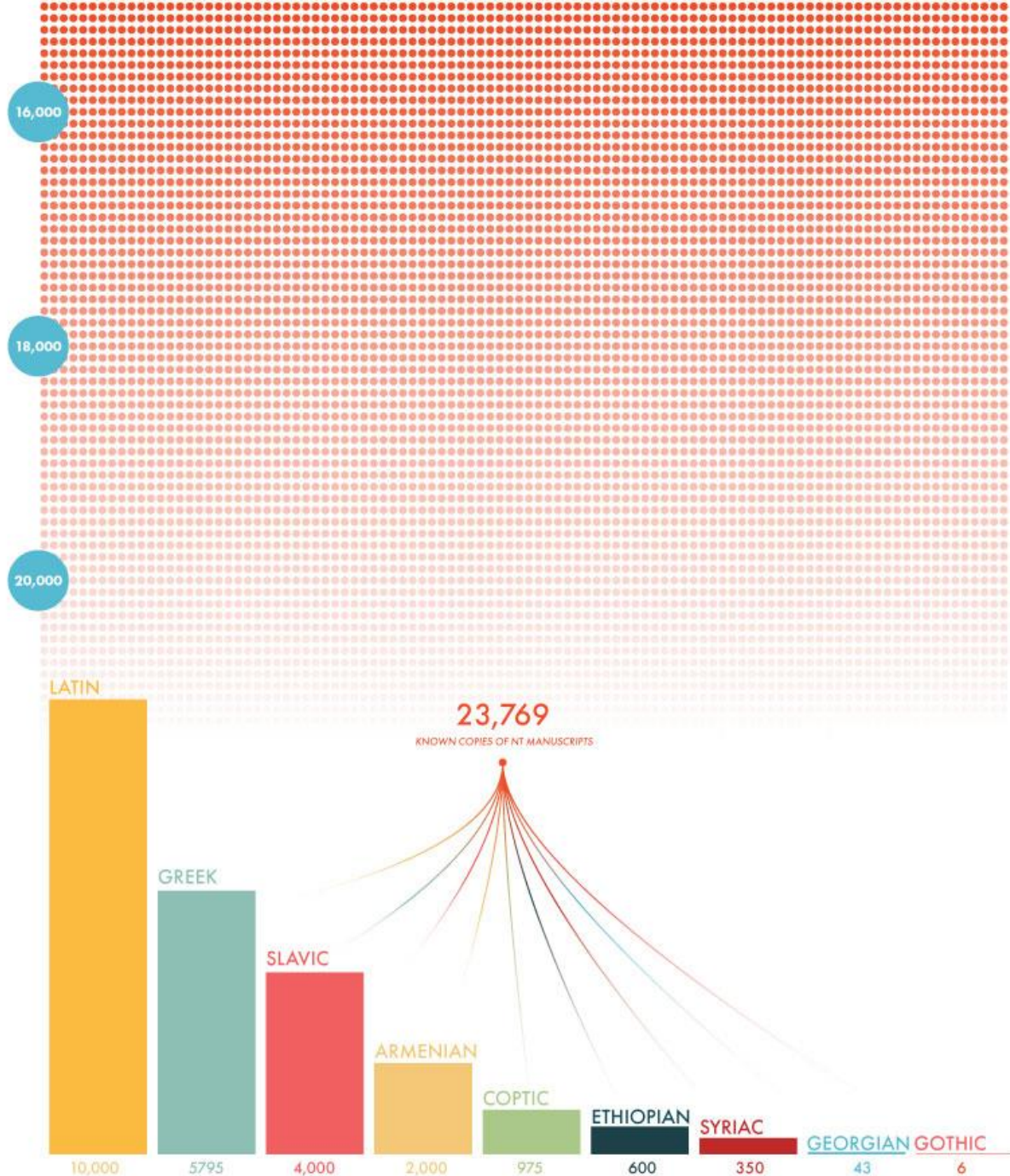
8,000

10,000

12,000

14,000

16,000



* This figure is from: <https://www.challies.com/articles/has-the-bible-been-preserved-for-us-today/>

Even though thousands of years have passed since God breathed out the Old and New Testament Scriptures, they remain the living, perfect Word of God today.

Even though the Scriptures have passed through countless scribes and forms— from ancient papyrus to medieval paper to modern phones— you can be confident that the Word you read today is the very Word that was breathed out by God and written down by the holy spirit inspired prophets and apostles.

Figure 5 – An Example of Copying Variations

Which is the original?

Grandma's Biscuits

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder

GG's Biscuits

2 cup flour
1 tsp sugar
1 tsp baking pwdr

Grandma's Biscit Recipe

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder