

God's Inspired Word

The Bible, Its Transmission and Translation

Wikipedia.org

Newadvent.org

[Gospel Parallels; Throckmorton](#)

[Complete Guide to Bible Versions; Comfort](#)

The Baptist Faith and Message (2000)

I. The Scriptures

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.

SOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT THE BIBLE

- Over 8,000 “copies” or “fragments” in existence
- In the Old Testament, there are:
 - 39 books
 - Written over 1,000 years; by many inspired authors
 - 929 chapters
 - 23,179 verses
 - 706,875 words (Chinese)
- In the New Testament, there are:
 - 27 books
 - Written within 70 years; by a few inspired authors
 - 260 chapters
 - 8,040 verses
 - 224,823 words (Chinese)

THE BIBLE OF JESUS AND THE APOSTLES

- Old Testament

- Mostly in Hebrew
- Septuagint 七十士譯本

- New Testament

- Mostly in Greek
- Formation completed around 300 CE
- Closed

路 24:44 耶穌對他們說：「這就是我從前與你們同在之時所告訴你們的話說：**摩西的律法、先知的書，和詩篇**上所記的，凡指著我的話都必須應驗。」⁴⁵ 於是耶穌開他們的心竅，使他們能明白聖經

- 七十士譯本 (LXX): 傳說是由七十二位祭司把全本舊約從希伯來文翻譯成為**希臘文**；大約在主前第三世紀；成於埃及 (Alexandria)
- "Official Bible"; quotation by NT authors
- Currently, no extant copy has been found

CHURCH AND ROMAN EMPIRE

Conquering the Empire 征服帝國

Constantine the Great 君士坦丁大帝 (285 – 337 CE)

The Edith of Milan 米蘭詔書 (313 CE)

The Fall of Rome (476 CE) 羅馬城淪陷

Byzantine “Empire” 拜占庭, 東羅馬帝國
(Fall of Constantinople: 1543)



EARLY CHURCH AND BELIEVERS

- Believers

- Social status: Peasant or noble?; poor or wealthy?
- Education level: Good or poor?; Able to read and write?

- Languages:

Aramaic; Hebrew; Greek; Latin; Local Dialects

- Christian Gathering:

- Open or close?; public or private?
- Program?

Col 4:15 請問老底嘉的弟兄和寧法，並他家裡的教會安。16 你們念了這書信，便交給老底嘉的教會，叫他們也念；你們也要念從老底嘉來的書信。

2Pe 3:15 ……就如我們所親愛的兄弟保羅，照著所賜給他的智慧寫了信給你們。16 他一切的信上也都是講論這事。信中有些難明白的，那無學問、不堅固的人強解，如強解別的經書一樣，就自取沉淪。

CHURCHES AND THE BIBLE: THE EARLY YEARS

- Palestine
 - Jerusalem
 - Antioch
- Middle East
 - Alexandria
 - Cities evangelized by Paul
- Europe
 - Rome
 - Constantinople

RECOVERY OF THE “ORIGINAL TEXT” PARAMOUNT

Copy, copy and more copies.....
Errors; Comments; Glosses – “Variants”
Geographical differences in language
Emphases and omissions
Language development:
ALL CAPITAL
No punctuation

CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE BIBLE: VULGATE

武加大譯本 Vulgate (Latin)

- Jerome 耶柔米; around 400 CE
- Commissioned by the “Pope” (Rome)
- Using existing texts in Rome (Western)
- “Official Bible” of the Church (> 1,000 years)
- Important influences in culture, art and life in Europe
- Helped unified the Catholic Church
- Celebration of Mass in Latin
- Major revisions
 - Popes Sixtus VI & Clementine VIII
Counter-Reformation
1598; last printing
 - Nova Vulgata: 1979(?); Vatican II

Imperial Churches

- Rome: Latin
- Constantinople: Greek

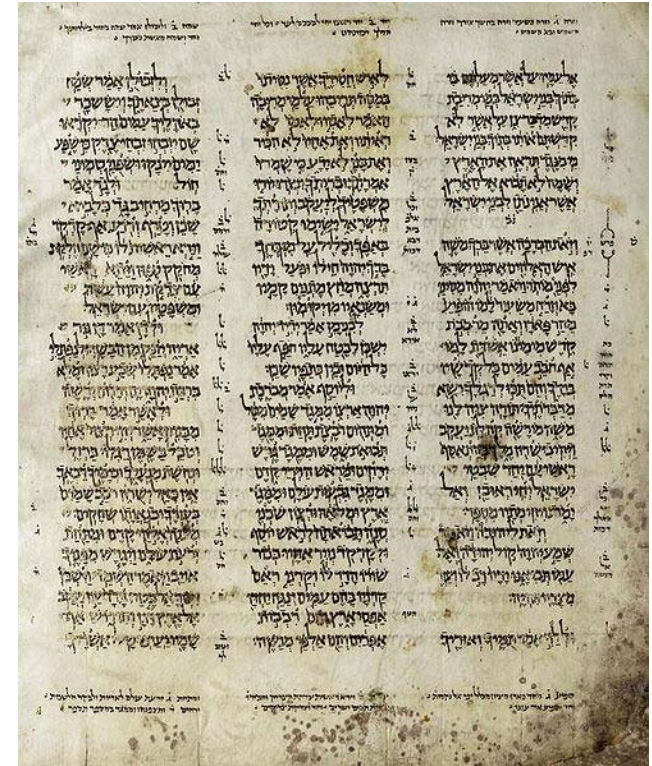


Prologue of the gospel of John, Clementine Vulgate, 1922 edition

JUDAISM AND THE BIBLE: MASORETIC TEXT

Masoretic Text 馬索拉書

- Masorah; meaning “transmission”
- A group of scribes (Masorites) responsible for the accurate copying and transmission of the Jewish Bible (OT & more) and tradition
- Between 6th and 10th century
- Meticulously careful in copying
- Aleppo Codex: oldest (10th century) copy



Shrine of the Book

BIBLE TRANSLATION AND REFORMATION

- Copying / studying the Bible: by Clergy Only
 - Education level of the public
 - Difficulty in “transmission”
 - Control of the Catholic Church
- Celebrating Mass in Latin
- Early Translators (pre-reformation movement)
 - Invention of the “Press”
 - Bible in local languages
 - Wycliffe; Tyndale; Huss



Gutenberg Press: around 1442 CE

Reformation:

- *Martin Luther 1517 CE*
- *95 Theses: finance & indulgence*
- *Corruption & stagnation*
- *Away from the Bible*

Sola gratia (by grace alone)

Sola fide (by faith alone)

Sola scriptura (by scripture alone)

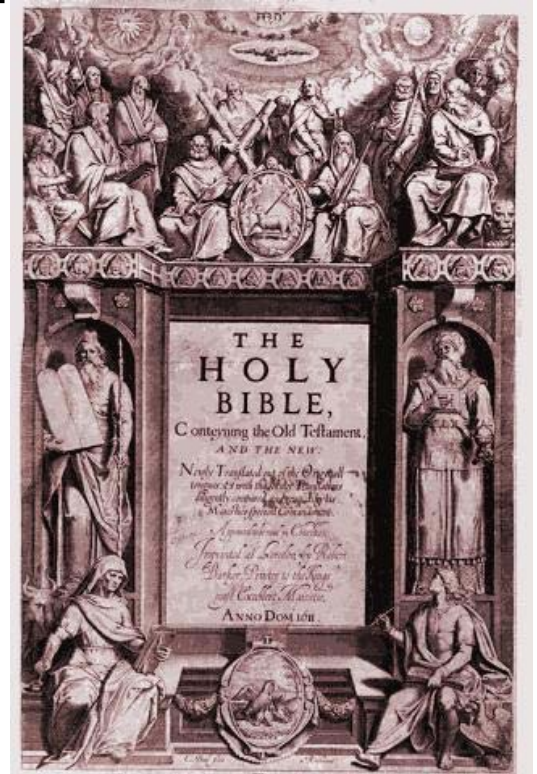
Solus Christus (in Christ alone)

Soli Deo gloria (glory to God alone)

KING JAMES VERSION AND RECEIVED TEXT

欽定版聖經（英王欽定版、詹姆士王譯本）

- Commissioned by James I
- Published in 1611
- Literal translation using “Received Text”
- “Beautiful” English
- Unchallenged until 20th century



Received Text / Textus Receptus

- Initiated by Erasmus early 16th Century (reformation)
- In Greek
- Incorporating Greek texts (mainly Byzantine or “majority”) compared to Vulgate from Rome (or Western)
- “Critical” approach

BIBLE TRANSLATION: LITERAL TO PARAPHRASTIC

- *ALL TRANSLATIONS ARE INTERPRETATION*

- Formal Equivalence (Literal) 直譯: accuracy more than meaning
KJV; NASB
- Free Translation (Paraphrase) 意譯: meaning more than accuracy
The Message
- Functional Equivalence: thought for thought
Good News Translation, New Living Translation
- Dynamic Equivalence
NIV
- Different Classification

NIV**NASB 95****King James
Version****Good News
Translation****New Living
Translation****The Message**

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

1 In the beginning the Word already existed; the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

1 In the beginning the Word already existed. The Word was with God, and the Word was God.

1 The Word was first, the Word present to God, God present to the Word. The Word was God,

2 He was with God in the beginning.

2 He was in the beginning with God.

2 The same was in the beginning with God.

2 From the very beginning the Word was with God.

2 He existed in the beginning with God.

2 in readiness for God from day one.

3 Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made.

3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.

3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

3 Through him God made all things; not one thing in all creation was made without him.

3 God created everything through him, and nothing was created except through him.

3 Everything was created through him; nothing—not one thing!— came into being without him.

4 In him was life, and that life was the light of men.

4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

4 In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

4 The Word was the source of life, and this life brought light to humanity.

4 The Word gave life to everything that was created, and his life brought light to everyone.

4 What came into existence was Life, and the Life was Light to live by.

5 The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it.

5 The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

5 And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out.

5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness can never extinguish it.

5 The Life-Light blazed out of the darkness; the darkness couldn't put it out.

CHINESE BIBLE: THE UNION VERSION

聖經 (和合本)

- Published in 1921
- Missionaries using KJV as primary source
- **五四運動**: 1919; political; culture; philosophy; **白話文**
- Most common Bible in Chinese churches
- New versions available
 - e-sword.net (Jian Ming Sheng Jing) 簡明聖經
 - New Chinese Version 新譯本



Portion of the Chinese text on the Nestorian Stele at Hsi-an-fu, commemorating the propagation of the "Luminous Religion" (i.e. Christianity) in the Middle Kingdom.

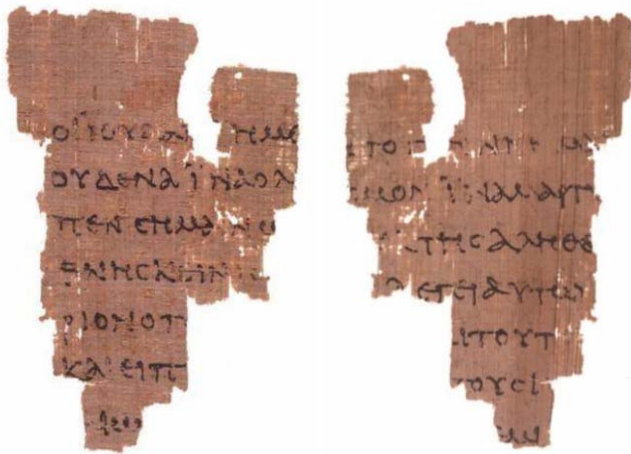
DISCOVERY OF ANCIENT TEXTS

Death Sea Scroll 死海古卷

- Discovered 1956 by a shepherd near Qumram
- Compiled 100 BCE to 100 CE
- Containing all books of OT (except Esther)
- Oldest text for OT
- Remarkably similar to existing OT



Oldest NT Fragment



P52 - John 18:31-34; 37-38



DISCOVERY OF ANCIENT TEXTS

Codex Sinaiticus 西乃抄本

- “Copied” in the 4th Century
- Containing all books of OT & NT (missing sections)
- In Greek on vellum
- Discovered by Tischendorf in mid-19th century
- Monastery of Saint Catherine at Sinai Peninsula
- Controversy between Tischendorf and Monastery
- Additional “pages” in early 20th century
- Currently in British Library (most)



DISCOVERY OF ANCIENT TEXTS

Codex Vaticanus 梵蒂冈抄本

- “Copied” in early 4th Century
- Containing almost all books of OT & missing some NT books
- Always in Vatican Library (built 1448 CE)
- Unknown for over 1,000 years
- Collated but not studied until 19th Century



DISCOVERY OF ANCIENT TEXTS

Others

- Chester Beatty Papyri
- Codex Alexandrinus
- A total of >8,000 copies and fragments
- Some more important than others (amount of “variants”)

ANCIENT TEXTS AND THE BIBLE

- Remarkable similarity
- Textual Criticism
 - Studying manuscripts and fragments
 - Recovery of “original” text
 - Older, more valuable
- Minor “Adjustments” in new versions
- Examples
 - 2 Ki 23:29
 - The ending of Mark (16:9 – 18)
 - John 7:53 – 8:11

約西亞年間，埃及王法老尼哥上到伯拉大河攻擊亞述王；約西亞王去抵擋他。埃及王遇見約西亞在米吉多，就殺了他。

(KJV) In his days Pharaoh Nechoh king of Egypt went up against the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates: and king Josiah went against him; and he slew him at Megiddo, when he had seen him.

(NASB 95) In his days Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt went up to the king of Assyria to the river Euphrates. And King Josiah went to meet him, and when Pharaoh Neco saw him he killed him at Megiddo.

(NIV) While Josiah was king, Pharaoh Neco king of Egypt went up to the Euphrates River to help the king of Assyria. King Josiah marched out to meet him in battle, but Neco faced him and killed him at Megiddo.

INTERESTING STORIES, BUT.....

- The remarkable word of God: Inspiration & preservation
- Bible study / interpretation / application

- 2 Peter 3:15 – 18 並且要以我主長久忍耐為得救的因由，就如我們所親愛的兄弟保羅，照著所賜給他的智慧寫了信給你們。16他一切的信上也都是講論這事。信中有些難明白的，那無學問、不堅固的人強解，如強解別的經書一樣，就自取沉淪。親愛的弟兄啊，你們既然預先知道這事，就當防備，恐怕被惡人的錯謬誘惑，就從自己堅固的地步上墜落。你們卻要在我們主救主耶穌基督的恩典和知識上有長進。願榮耀歸給他，從今直到永遠。阿們！

- 2 Timothy 3:16 – 17 聖經都是神所默示的，於教訓、督責、使人歸正、教導人學義都是有益的，17叫屬神的人得以完全，預備行各樣的善事。

- Use of more than one English version, if possible

1Co 4:8 你們已經飽足了！已經豐富了！不用我們，自己就作王了！我願意你們果真作王，叫我們也得與你們一同作王。9 我想神把我們使徒明明列在末後，好像定死罪的囚犯；因為我們成了一臺戲，給世人和天使觀看。10 我們為基督的緣故算是愚拙的，你們在基督裡倒是聰明的；我們軟弱，你們倒強壯；你們有榮耀，我們倒被藐視。

NASB 8 You are already filled, you have already become rich, you have become kings without us; and indeed, / wish that you had become kings so that we also might reign with you. 9 For, I think, God has exhibited us apostles last of all, as men condemned to death; because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to men. 10 We are fools for Christ's sake, but you are prudent in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are distinguished, but we are without honor.

NIV 8 Already you have all you want! Already you have become rich! You have become kings—and that without us! How I wish that you really had become kings so that we might be kings with you! 9 For it seems to me that God has put us apostles on display at the end of the procession, like men condemned to die in the arena. We have been made a spectacle to the whole universe, to angels as well as to men. 10 We are fools for Christ, but you are so wise in Christ! We are weak, but you are strong! You are honored, we are dishonored!

孝悌忠信禮義廉

一二三四五六七

QUESTIONS / DISCUSSION?