



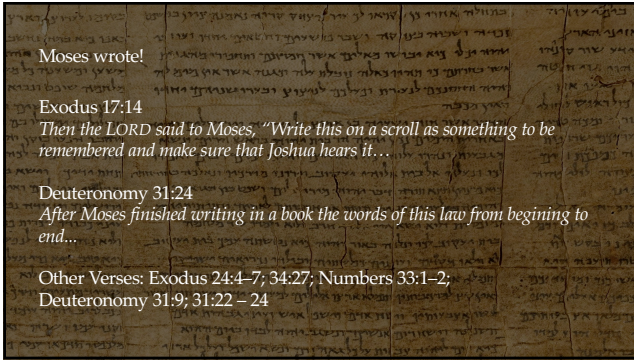
COMMON CHALLENGES

1. The text was corrupted over time.
2. A book translated so many times cannot be trusted.
3. Jesus was declared divine by the Church at the Council of Nicea (325 CE).

*OVERVIEW OF OLD
TESTAMENT TEXTUAL
TRANSMISSION*

HISTORY

- ~1405 BC Moses completes the Pentateuch/Law (1 Kings 6:1; Deuteronomy 1:1-3)
- 1400-400 BC Remainder of the Old Testament books written and copied, ending with Malachi
- 605-586 BC Exile and destruction of Solomon's Temple necessitates development of different text types
- 300 BC-AD 135 Apocrypha, Sopherim, Septuagint (LXX), Targums, and Dead Sea Scrolls



Moses wrote!

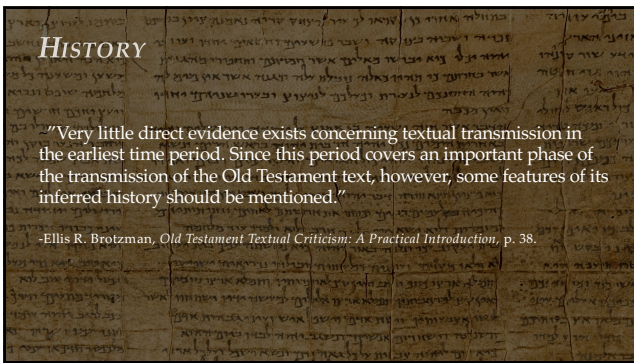
Exodus 17:14

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Write this on a scroll as something to be remembered and make sure that Joshua hears it..."

Deuteronomy 31:24

After Moses finished writing in a book the words of this law from beginning to end...

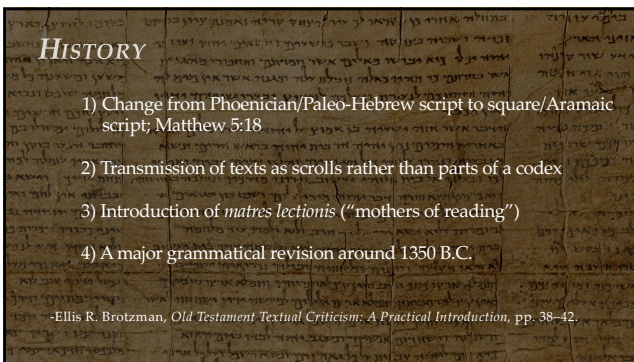
Other Verses: Exodus 24:4-7; 34:27; Numbers 33:1-2; Deuteronomy 31:9; 31:22 - 24



HISTORY

"Very little direct evidence exists concerning textual transmission in the earliest time period. Since this period covers an important phase of the transmission of the Old Testament text, however, some features of its inferred history should be mentioned."

-Ellis R. Brotzman, *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*, p. 38.

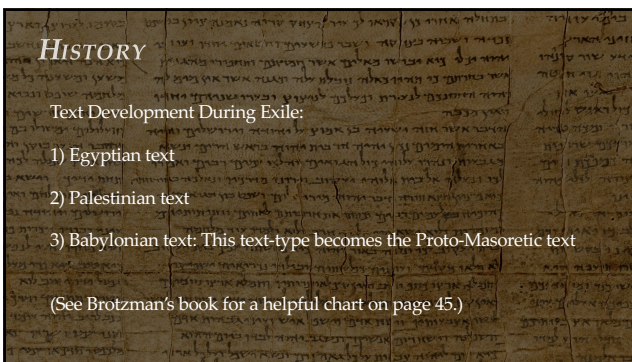


HISTORY

- 1) Change from Phoenician/Paleo-Hebrew script to square/Aramaic script; Matthew 5:18
- 2) Transmission of texts as scrolls rather than parts of a codex
- 3) Introduction of *matres lectionis* ("mothers of reading")
- 4) A major grammatical revision around 1350 B.C.

-Ellis R. Brotzman, *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*, pp. 38-42.







HISTORY
Apocrypha

- 1) Also called Deutero-Canon in Roman Catholic circles
- 2) 14 Books written in intertestamental period
 - 1 and 2 Esdras
 - Tobit
 - Judith
 - Esther (additions)
 - Wisdom of Solomon
 - Ecclesiasticus/Ben Sirach/Sirach
 - Baruch
 - Daniel (additions)
 - Prayer of Manassas
 - 1 and 2 Maccabees
- 3) Rejected as canonical

HISTORY
The Sopherim

- 1) The "teachers of the law" or "scribes" (Matthew 23) who copied OT Scriptures
- 2) Often called hypocrites
- 3) Yet God used their work to help transmit the OT Scriptures!

HISTORY
The Septuagint (LXX)

- 1) Greek translation of the OT completed around 150 B.C.
- 2) Translated in Alexandria, Egypt by command of Ptolemy Philadelphus
- 3) Quoted sometimes in the New Testament

HISTORY
Targums

- 1) Aramaic translations of certain books or sections of Old Testament
- 2) More paraphrastic in nature
- 3) Need arose because Aramaic common language, Hebrew fell out of use

HISTORY

AD 200-500 The Talmud is completed

AD 500-950 Masoretes. During this period these scholars gave the OT its final form (Masoretic Text). Birth of OT textual criticism.

AD 900 Old Testament text division and versification becomes standard. Aleppo Codex.

AD 1008 Leningrad Codex. Oldest known complete manuscript of the OT; basis for the BHS edition.

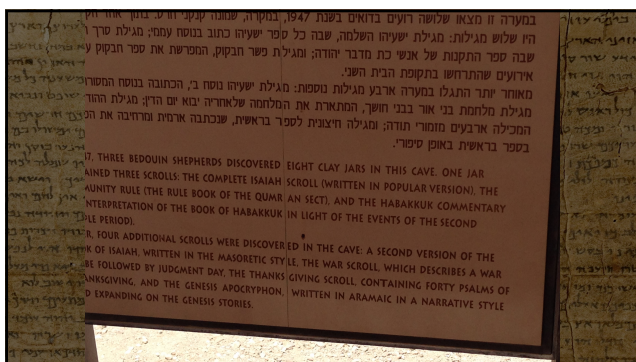
AD 1440 Gutenberg invents the printing press

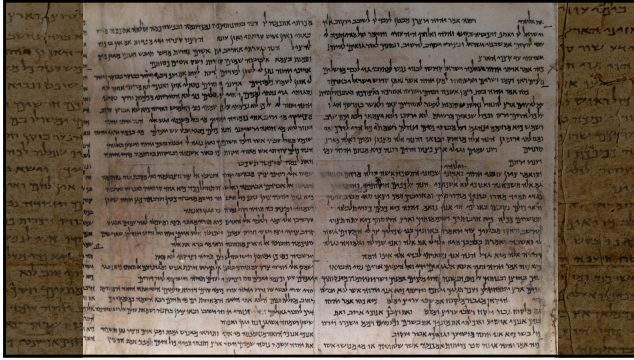
HISTORY

AD 1947 Dead Sea Scrolls discovered (approx 1,000 texts), confirms the integrity of the Masoretic Text.













HISTORY

- AD 70 New Testament (minus Revelation) written in uncial letters using papyrus and parchment
- AD circa 90 Church Fathers (1 Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp)
- AD circa 100 Codex form of book invented, probably by the early church
- AD 100 Oldest known manuscript (P⁵²)
- AD 120-130 Formation of the Alexandrian and Western text-types.
- AD 200-250 Formation of the Caesarean text-type
- AD 300-330 Formation of the Byzantine text-type

PAPYRI & PARCHMENT

Papyrus is a plant that grows primarily in northern Egypt, along the Nile. Strips of fiber from the plant would be peeled away and laid vertically side by side, then strips would be placed horizontally across the vertical fibers. After being pressed together the combined fibers formed a sort of paper. Papyrus has been used for millennia, but is not very strong, so the papyri manuscripts we have remaining are mostly fragments and are extremely fragile.

Parchment, or vellum, is scraped animal skin . . . much more durable than papyrus. Sometimes the vellum would be dipped in a purple dye then have gold and silver letters written on them, usually for royalty or wealthy patrons. Parchment is known to have curly edges and wormholes.



TEXT-TYPES

Alexandrian texts are characterized by careful copying and shorter, more difficult readings.

Western texts are characterized by scribal liberty. Words or clauses are frequently changed for emphasis. Codex Bezae (D) is the foremost Western text.

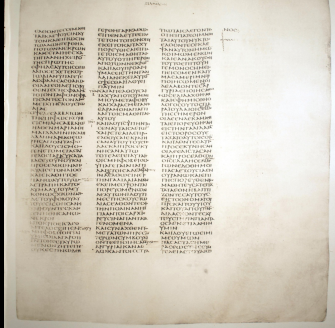
The Caesarean text-type only shows up in the gospels and is characterized by a mixture of Alexandrian and Western forms.

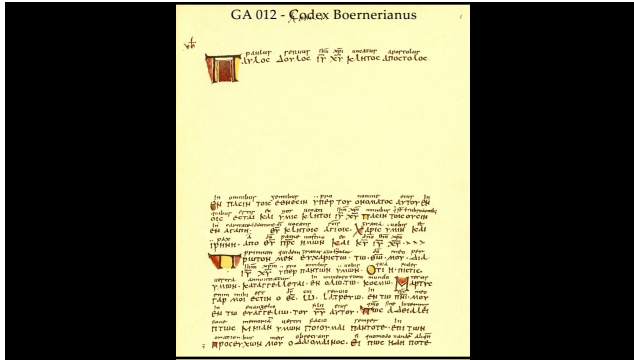
Byzantine is characterized by smoother, longer readings that are meant to be read out loud to an audience.

HISTORY

- AD 313 Constantine recognizes Christianity, orders 50 mss be professionally copied, including Codices Sinaiticus (GA 01) and Vaticanus (GA 03). Lectionaries begin to be used by the Church
- AD 383 Jerome revises the Old Latin version of the four Gospels, later called the Vulgate
- AD 1400 Paper replaces parchment as the primary material for writing
- AD 1440 Johann Gutenberg invents the printing press

GA 01 / Codex Sinaiticus – Matthew 28



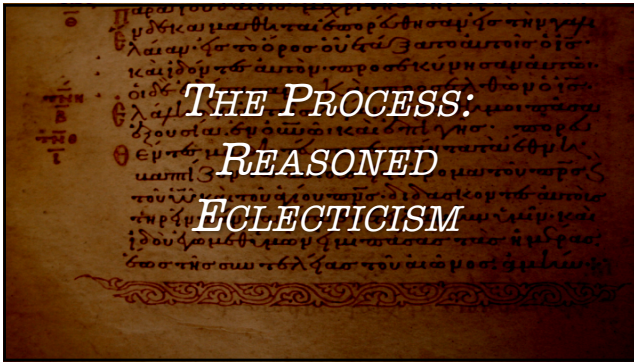


HISTORY

- AD 1453 Muslims invade and conquer Byzantium
- AD 1458 Ancient Greek offered for the first time as a course in a University . . . University of Paris
- AD 1516 Desiderius Erasmus publishes the first Greek New Testament / Latin diglot, primarily from a few late Byzantine manuscripts. Altogether Erasmus' Greek New Testament went through 5 editions . . . later called the *Textus Receptus*
- AD 1611 King James Version of the English Bible. Based on Erasmus' Greek / Latin edition

MUSLIM INVASION OF BYZANTIUM

Muslims invade and conquer Byzantium, renaming the city Istanbul. During the invasion, Greek Orthodox priests take off to Eastern Europe with a large cache of mss, preserving them by stashing them in fortresses, monasteries, and churches all over the place, making the Greek text available to people in Europe for the first time. Prior to this the Biblical text available to people was in Latin (called the "Vulgate"), but the unchurched did not know Latin and the Roman Catholic Church did nothing to remedy this. However, when these Greek texts arrived in Europe they allowed Martin Luther to translate the Biblical text directly from the original language into German, allowing a literate man to read the text really for the first time. These texts incited the Catholic Reformation and birthed the Renaissance, renewing interest in intellect and arts all across Europe.



TEXT-TYPES

Alexandrian texts are characterized by careful copying and shorter, more difficult readings. **OKLAHOMA**

Western texts are characterized by scribal liberty. Words or clauses are frequently changed for emphasis. Codex Bezae (D) is the foremost Western text. **CALIFORNIA**

The Caesarean text-type only shows up in the gospels and is characterized by a mixture of Alexandrian and Western forms. **DALLAS**

Byzantine is characterized by smoother, longer readings that are meant to be read out loud to an audience. **NEW YORK**

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

INTRINSIC EVIDENCE:
Which variant explains the rise of the next?
Which is a more difficult reading?

EXTRINSIC EVIDENCE:
Which text-type did it come from?
Which is earlier?

WEIGH THE EVIDENCE:
What was most likely original?
How sure are we?

NEW TESTAMENT WITNESSES

Greek Manuscripts 5,800+
 Latin Manuscripts 10,000+
 Other ancient versions 10,000-15,000
 Church Father quotations 1,000,000+

Compared to other Ancient Documents:

History	Oldest MSS	Number Surviving
Livy (59 BC – AD 17)	4th Century AD	27
Tacitus (AD 56-120)	9th Century AD	3
Suetonius (AD 69-140)	9th Century AD	200+
Thucydides (460-400 BC)	1st Century AD	20
Herodotus (484-425 BC)	1st Century AD	75

IS THE TEXT CORRUPTED?

There are 140,000 words in the Greek New Testament
 There are at least 400,000 textual variants in the Greek New Testament.

- 99% of textual variants make no difference at all . . . such as spelling differences or minor scribal errors (haplography, dittography, metathesis, etc.)
- Approximately ¼ of 1% could viably affect the meaning of the text, but **no** essential truth is impacted by *any* variant . . . ie. Rev 13:18, John 7:53-8:11.

IS THE TEXT CORRUPTED?

2 Attitudes to Avoid:

1. Absolute certainty
2. Total despair

2 Questions to Answer:

1. How certain are we about the wording of the NT?
2. What issues are at stake?

IS THE TEXT CORRUPTED?

“Essential Christian beliefs are not affected by textual variants in the manuscript tradition of the New Testament.”

Bart Ehrman, Appendix to *Misquoting Jesus*

COMMON CHALLENGES

1. The text was corrupted over time.
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3. Jesus was declared divine by the Church at the Council of Nicea (325 CE).

WHAT ABOUT TRANSLATIONS?

1. Based on the critical editions: Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia 4th ed., United Bible Societies 4th ed., Nestle-Aland 28th ed.
2. Typically done in committees.
3. Translated for various audiences / purposes.
4. Has to do with style, not reliability.

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DID NICEA DEIFY JESUS?

Witnesses that reference Jesus' deity prior to the 4th Century:

- | | |
|-------------|---|
| John 1:1 | "the Word was God." |
| John 20:28 | "my Lord and my God." |
| Romans 9:5 | "the Messiah, who is God over all." |
| Hebrews 1:8 | "Your throne, O God, will last forever and ever." |
| 2 Peter 1:1 | "our God and Savior, Jesus Christ." |

I am trying here to prevent anyone from saying the really foolish thing that people often say about him: "I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God." That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic – on a level with the man who says he is a poached egg – or else he would be the Devil of hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon; or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God. But let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to.

C. S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

