A close-up photograph of an ancient manuscript, likely a Hebrew Bible, with a wooden pointer resting on the page. The text is written in Hebrew characters on aged, yellowed parchment. The lighting is warm and focused on the central part of the page, creating a sense of historical depth and reverence. The title "How We Got The Bible" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

How We Got The Bible

Introduction to Our Study

**The Bible is the Perfect, Inspired,
and Complete Word of God**

Introduction to Our Study

**The Bible is a Library of Books
on a Variety of Topics**

Introduction to Our Study

**The Bible Involved Over 40 Men,
was Produced over 1,600 Years,
and was Written in 3 Languages**

Introduction to Our Study

**Prior to the 1300s, Scriptures were
Manually Copied by Scribes, Yet
are Nearly Error-Free**

Introduction to Our Study

**The Bible is the Most Historically
Well-Preserved Document of Its
Kind**

Introduction to Our Study

**The Bible is the Most-Translated
Book in the History of the World**

Introduction to Our Study

**The Bible is in No Danger of
Disappearing or Being Destroyed**

Introduction to Our Study

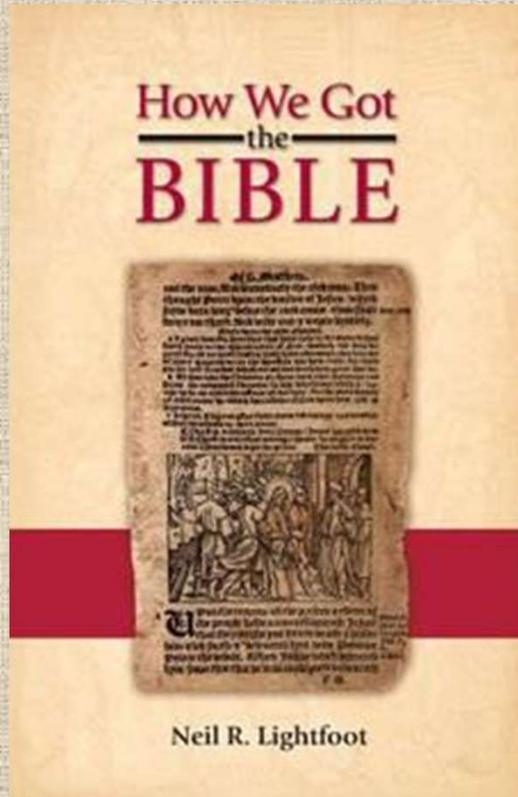
Because...

Introduction to Our Study

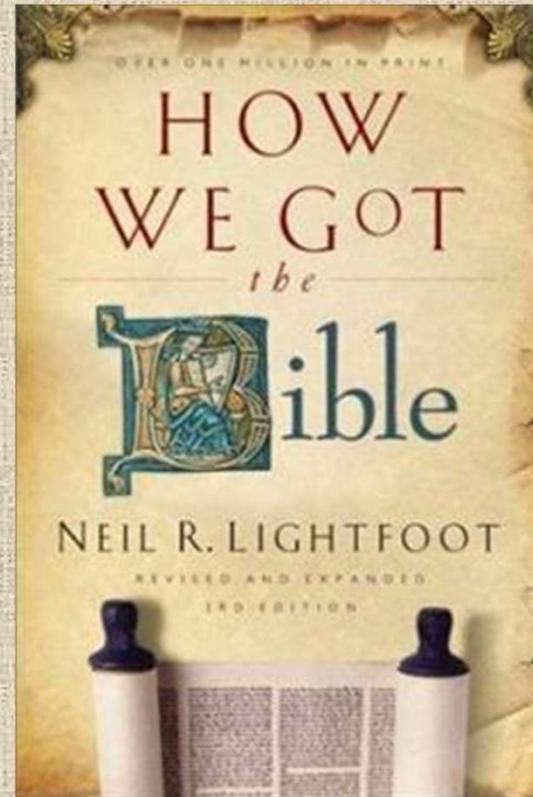
**The Bible is the Perfect, Inspired,
and Complete Word of God**

Our Study Guide

1986



2003



Dr. Neil R. Lightfoot

- **Author, preacher, lecturer**
- **47-year professor at ACU**
 - **Biblical languages**
 - **Bible apologetics & evidences**
- **Greek-text editor/translator**
- **Various academic awards and accolades**





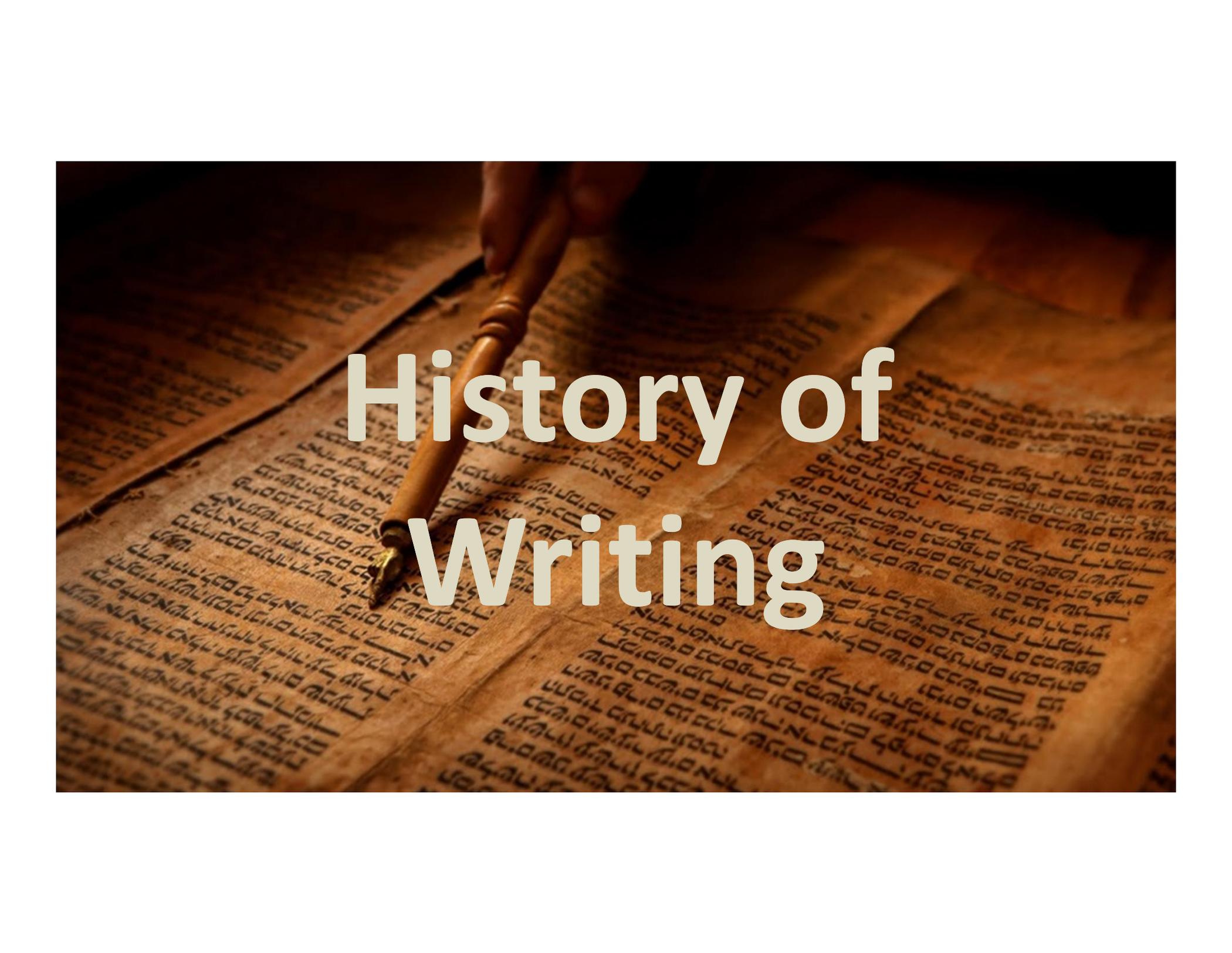
LESSON 1: The Making of Ancient Books

Introduction

- The story of how we got the Bible is a fascinating one of faith, devotion, and personal cost
- It is vast, complex, and *not by chance!*

Introduction

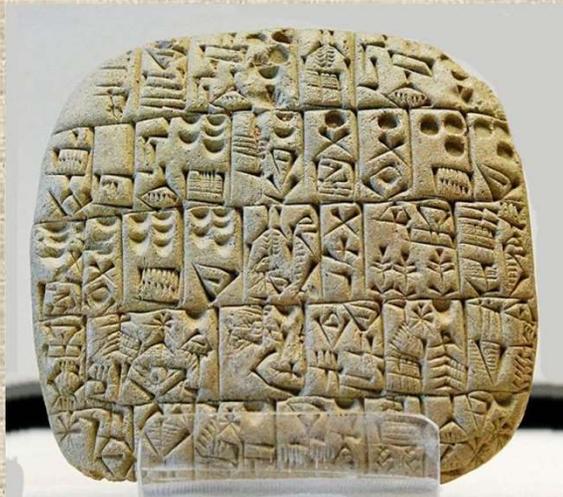
- **Questions you may have...**
 - **How and when did the books originate?**
 - **How are these books different from other books?**
 - **How have they been preserved through the ages, such that they are available to us today?**
- **We begin with a brief study of writing and ancient books**

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a wooden quill pen over an open book. The book's pages are filled with dense, handwritten text in a cursive script, likely Hebrew. The lighting is warm and focused on the pen and the text, creating a sense of historical depth and scholarly work. The title 'History of Writing' is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

History of Writing

History of Writing

- **No one knows when writing began**
 - **Clay tablet with cuneiform writing, ca. 5,000 BC**



History of Writing

- **No one knows when writing began**
 - **“Kish” Sumerian limestone tablet, ca. 3,500 BC**



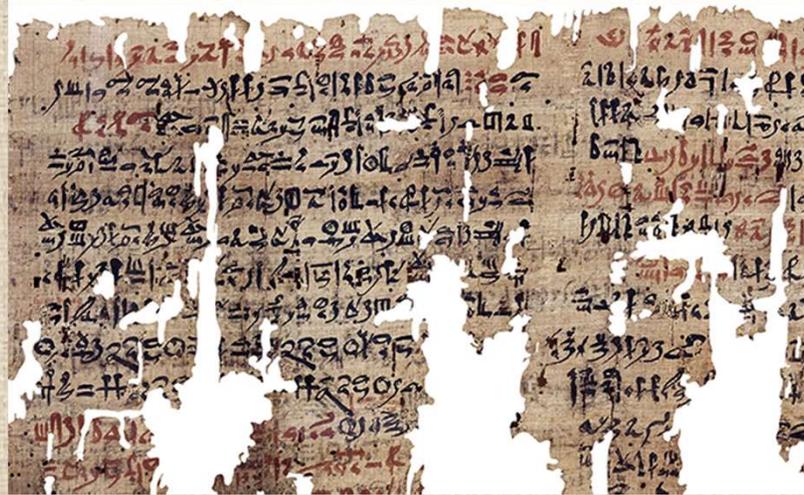
History of Writing

- **No one knows when writing began**
 - **Egyptian hieroglyphics developing, ca. 3,000 BC**



History of Writing

- No one knows when writing began
 - Palestinian correspondence, ca. 1,400 BC



History of Writing

- **Why is this important?**
 - **Skeptics believed Moses pre-dated the invention of writing**
 - **If so, Moses could not have authored Genesis through Deuteronomy**

History of Writing

- **We see quite the opposite!**
 - **Writing pre-dates Moses by many centuries!**
 - **At least 5 writing systems existed in Moses's day**
 - **It is entirely reasonable to believe...**
 - **Israel had a written language**
 - **The Israelites, including Moses, could read and write it**

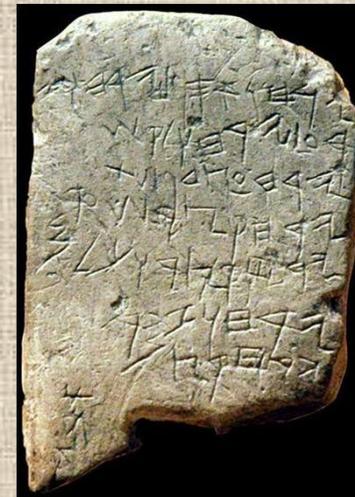
A close-up photograph of a hand holding a quill pen, writing on an ancient manuscript. The manuscript is made of aged, yellowed parchment and features dense, handwritten text in a cursive script. The lighting is warm and focused on the writing area, creating a sense of historical depth and craftsmanship. The quill is positioned diagonally across the page, with the hand visible at the top left.

History of Materials Used in Writing

History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Stone**

- One of the oldest and most durable materials



History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Stone**
 - **Agrees with various Bible accounts**
 - **The 10 Commandments (Ex 31:18, 34:1,28)**
 - **The Jordan River Crossing (Deut 27:2-3, Josh 8:30-32)**
 - **Recent plaster-covered stone discovery mentions Baalam son of Beor, referenced in Num 22-24**

History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Clay**
 - Easier to “carve” than stone
 - Predominant in Assyria and Babylonia, where huge clay tablet libraries have been discovered



History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Clay**

- **Tablets are sometimes called “tiles” or “bricks”**
- **Ezekiel 4:1 instructs a plan of Jerusalem to be drawn on a “brick” of clay...possibly a clay tablet of some sort**

History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Wood**
 - **Common material that preserved well in arid climates**
 - **Whitened boards often used by Greeks and Romans to post public notices**



History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Wood**
 - A Roman iPad?
 - Sometimes the surface was coated with wax, making it reusable



History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Wood**

- The “tablets” mentioned in Isaiah 30:8 and Habakkuk 2:2 may have been wood or wood with a wax-coated surface
- Numbers 17:2-3 and Ezekiel 37:16-17 mention writing on wooden rods (staffs) and sticks

History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Wood**

- The “title” affixed to the cross of Jesus was likely made of wood covered in gypsum, called a “titulus”
- Romans used a titulus to proclaim a prisoner’s charges leading to his execution

History of Materials Used in Writing



History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Leather**
 - **Animal hides of various kinds were used**
 - **Significantly predates vellum and parchment**



History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Leather**

- **Jeremiah 36:23 describes cutting off portions of a scroll using a scribe's knife**
- **Knife used for erasures on non-delicate surfaces**
- **Likely that the Jeremiah 36 scroll was leather**

History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Papyrus**
 - **The most important and longest-lived writing material of the ancient world**
 - **Highly versatile plant also used for fuel, food, boats, ropes, baskets, sandals, clothing, and furniture**

History of Materials Used in Writing

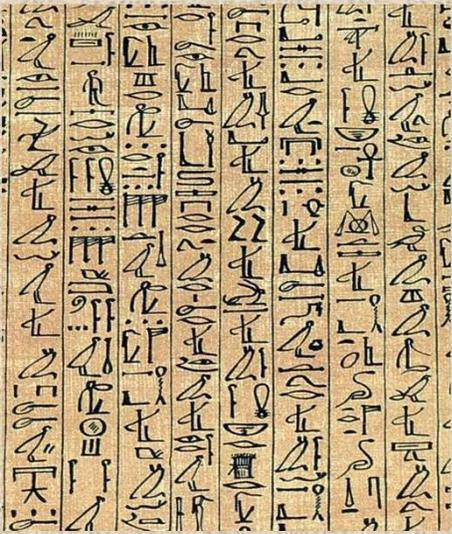


History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Papyrus**

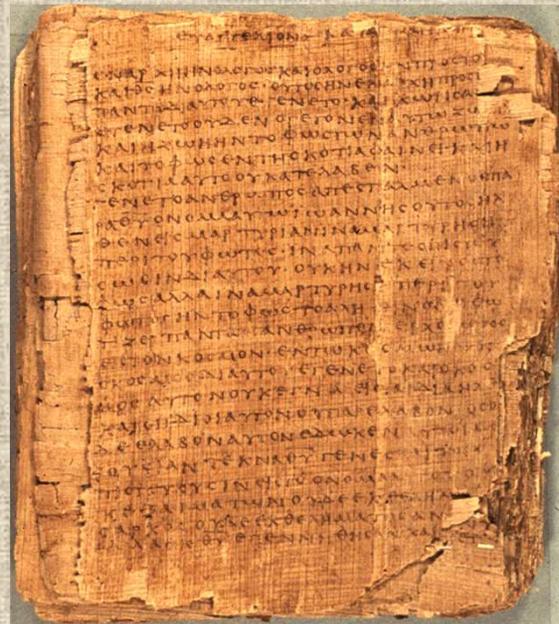
- **Egypt adopted papyrus as early as 3,000 BC**
- **Universal book material in Greece and Rome**
- **So ubiquitous by the 1st century that it is nearly certain that the original New Testament letters were written on papyrus**

History of Materials Used in Writing



**Egyptian
Hieroglyphs**

Greek



Amazon.com



History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Papyrus**

- **Early handling and storage was via a *scroll*, which was often stored in a box for safekeeping**



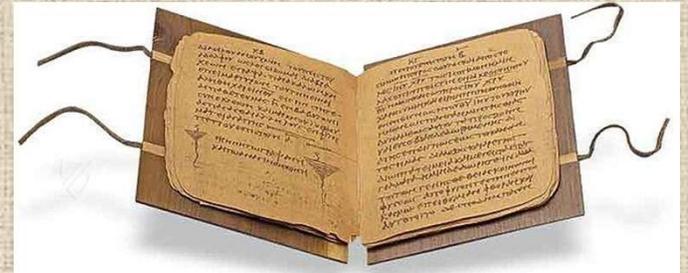
History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Papyrus**
 - **Common document size was 30 feet x 10 inches**
 - **Writing laid out in 3-4-inch columns**
 - **Writing was typically only on one side, but sometime on both (cf. Revelation 5:1)**

History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Papyrus**
 - **By the early 1st or 2nd century, the scroll had given way to the *codex*, which shared many features of modern-day books**

History of Materials Used in Writing



History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Papyrus**

- **By the early 1st or 2nd century, the scroll had given way to the *codex*, which shared many features of modern-day books**
- **The codex format was easier to transport, more quickly referenced, and could contain more information**

History of Materials Used in Writing

Scroll vs Codex – Same Concept / Different Medium



History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Vellum and Parchment**
 - Rose to prominence in the 2nd century BC due to supply restrictions of papyrus to King Eumenes II of Pergamum



History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Vellum and Parchment**
 - **Made from animal hide, like leather, but much more refined and delicate...and significantly more expensive**
 - **Vellum: Calf or antelope hide**
 - **Parchment: Lamb or goat hide**

History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Vellum and Parchment**

- Paul requests his “parchments” from Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:13
- Beginning in the 4th century, vellum and parchment became the primary materials used to make copies of the New Testament for nearly 1,000 years...through the Middle Ages

History of Materials Used in Writing

- **Other Materials and Equipment**
 - **Gold, silver, lead, linen, and potsherds were used**
 - **A scribe's writing utensil varied with the material**
 - **Stylos – for writing in wax and clay**
 - **Reed – for papyrus, vellum, and parchment**
 - **Inks varied; vellum inks were permanent**



LESSON 2: The Birth of The Bible

Introduction

- **An exact time and date can't be known**
- **“Library” was developed over 1,600 years, using 3 languages, via >40 men**
- **God has seen to its preservation through the ages for man's benefit**

A close-up photograph of an ancient manuscript, likely a Hebrew Bible, with a quill pen resting on the page. The text is written in Hebrew characters on aged, yellowed parchment. The quill is positioned diagonally across the center of the frame, pointing towards the bottom left. The lighting is warm and focused, highlighting the texture of the parchment and the details of the script. The background is softly blurred, emphasizing the foreground text and the quill.

The Early Form of The Bible

The Early Form of The Bible

- **Development of the collection was slow**
 - **Over 1,600 years total**
 - **Initial communication from God was oral (e.g., Adam, Noah, Abraham, Joseph)**
 - **God's ultimate intent was to provide His will through the *written record***

The Early Form of The Bible

- **The Old Testament**
 - **Moses is the first “writer”**
 - **Moses possibly lived around 1,500 BC**
 - **Writing in Egypt pre-dated Moses by ~ 1,500 years**
 - **Moses is generally thought to have written Genesis through Deuteronomy**

The Early Form of The Bible

- **Items biblically attributed to Moses:**
 - **Memorial concerning Amalek (Ex 17:14)**
 - **Covenant made at Sinai (Ex 24:4)**
 - **The Ten Commandments (Ex 34:27-28)**
 - **Starting points for the wilderness journeys (Num 33:2)**
 - **Law to be kept with the Ark of the Covenant (Deut 31:9,24)**
 - **The “Song of Moses” (Deut 32:1-43 [31:22])**

The Early Form of The Bible

- **The Old Testament**
 - **Others directed to record revelations, such as**
 - **Joshua (Josh 24:26)**
 - **Samuel (1 Sam 10:25)**
 - **Jeremiah (Jer 36:1-2)**

The Early Form of The Bible

- **The Old Testament**
 - **Later generations of God's people consulted their predecessors' writings**
 - **Daniel studied "Jeremiah" (Dan 9:2)**
 - **Ezra read from "the book of the law" (Neh 8:1)**

The Early Form of The Bible

- **The Old Testament**
 - **By 400 BC the various books comprising the Old Testament were assembled into a collection**
 - **1,500 BC to 400 BC = about 1,100-year process**
 - **Then, 400 “silent” years before Christ...**

The Early Form of The Bible

- **The New Testament**
 - **Came together much more quickly**
 - **50 AD to 100 AD = about 50-year process**
 - **Afterward, no more revelations were made, because none were necessary (Jude 3)**

The Early Form of The Bible

- **The New Testament**
 - **Works written by various inspired men:**
 - Letters to individuals, churches, and Christians at large
 - Accounts of key events in Christ's life
 - Account of the church's growth and development
 - A prophetic revelation of things to come

The Early Form of The Bible

- **The New Testament**
 - **These works were considered authoritative, and were shared variously with others**
 - **All brothers (1 Thess 5:27)**
 - **Among churches (Col 4:16)**
 - **Soon, they were assembled into a collection**



The Form of The Bible Today

The Form of The Bible Today

- **Two main divisions called “testaments”**
 - **Better word might be “covenants”**
 - **God’s two covenants form the foundation for dividing scripture into “old” and “new”**

The Form of The Bible Today

- **The Old Covenant in an English Bible**

- **Law (5) – Genesis-Deuteronomy**

- **History (12) – Joshua-Esther**

- **Poetry (5) – Job-Song of Solomon**

- **Major Prophets (5) – Isaiah-Daniel**

- **Minor Prophets (12) – Hosea-Malachi**



**39
Books
Total**

The Form of The Bible Today

- **The Old Covenant in a Hebrew Bible**
 - **Luke 24:44 – “Law, prophets, and psalms”**
 - **Hebrew Bibles include three divisions (vs five), with the psalms being part of “writings”**
 - **Book grouping and order are different, but content is identical to English Bibles**

The Form of The Bible Today

- **The New Covenant**

- **History (5) – Matthew-Acts**

- **Doctrine/Epistles (21) – Romans-Jude**

- **Prophecy (1) – Revelation**



**27
Books
Total**

The Form of The Bible Today

- **The History Group**

- **Four Gospels – Sketches of Christ’s life**

- Matthew-Luke: “Synoptic”; similarity of content
- John’s perspective and style differ from the others

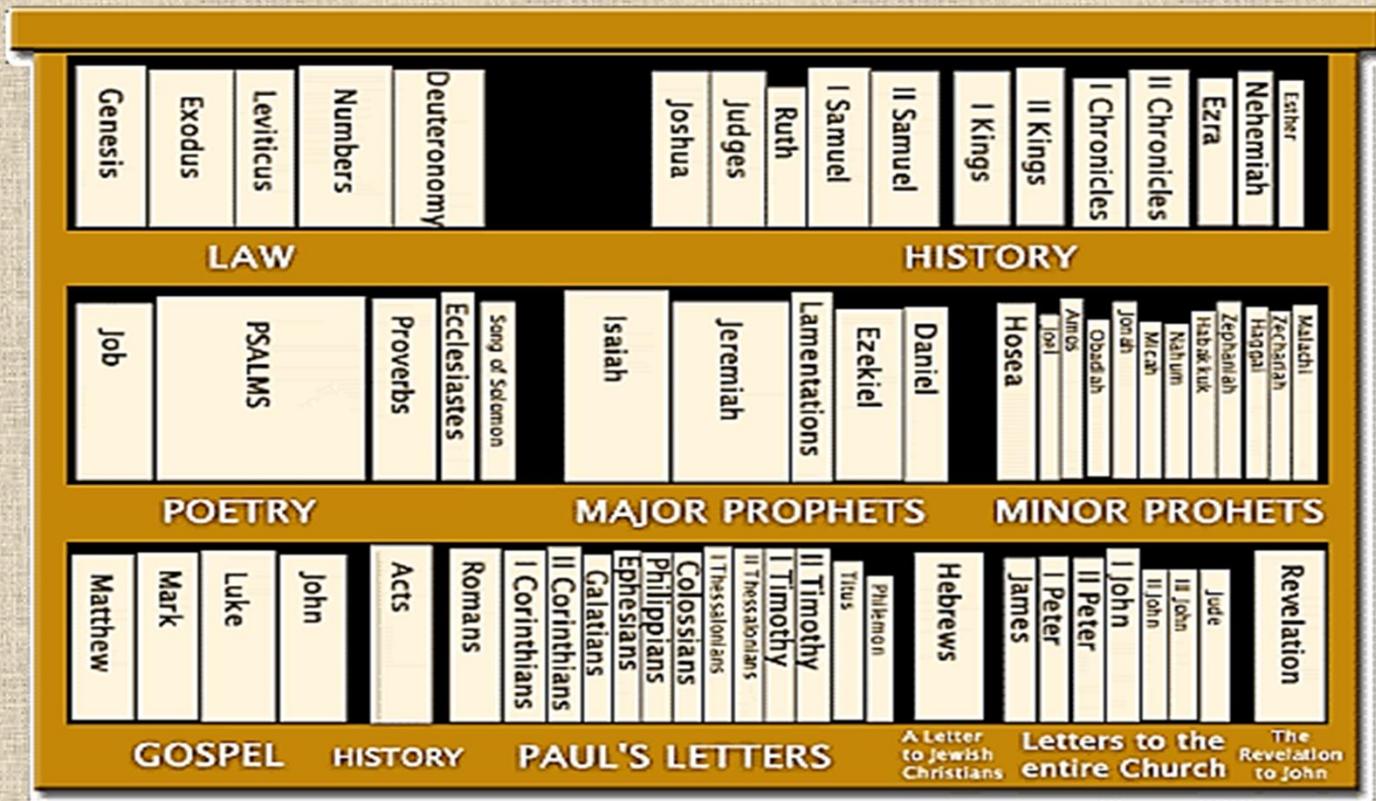
- **Acts – History of the early church**

- Written by Luke
- Sometimes considered a continuation of Luke’s gospel account

The Form of The Bible Today

- **The Doctrine/Epistles Group**
 - **13 “Pauline” epistles**
 - Most written before 2-year Roman imprisonment (Acts 28:30)
 - Letters to Timothy and Titus came later
 - Hebrews sometimes considered “Pauline”
 - **8 general epistles**
 - Letters from James, Peter, John, and Jude; Hebrews

The Form of The Bible Today





The Languages of The Bible

The Languages of The Bible

- **Original works were composed in three languages**
 - **Hebrew – Official language of Israel**
 - **Aramaic – Still spoken in Damascus**
 - **Greek – Official language of Greece**

The Languages of The Bible

- **Hebrew**
 - Part of “Semitic” family of languages
 - “Foreign” to us for many reasons

The Languages of The Bible

וידבר יהוה אל משה לאמר דבר אל בני ישראל
לאמר אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר וטמאה שבעת
ימים כימי נדת דוּתהּ תטמא וביום השמיני ימול
בשר ערלתו ושלשים יום ושלשת ימים תשב
בדמי טהרה בכל קדש לא תגע ואל המקדש
לא תבא עד מלאת ימי טהרה ואם נקבה תלד

The Languages of The Bible

וידבר יהוה אל משה לאמר דבר אל בני ישראל
לאמר אשה כי תזריע וילדה זכר וטמאה שבעת
ימים כימי נדת דותה תטמא וביום השמיני ימול
בשר ערלתו ושלשים יום ושלשת ימים תשב
בדמי טהרה בכל קדש לא תגע ואל המקדש
לא תבא עד מלאת ימי טהרה ואם נקבה תלד
וטמאה שבעים כנדתה ושלשים יום ושלשת
ימים תשב על דמי טהרה ובמלאת ימי טהרה
לבן או לבת תביא כבש בן שנתי לעלה זבן יונה
או תר לחטאת אל פתח אהל מועד אל הכהן
והקריבו לפני יהוה וכפר עליה וטהרה ממקד
דמיה זאת תורת הילדת לזכר או לנקבה ואם
לא תמצא ידה די ששה ולקחה שתי תרים או
שני בני יונה אחד לעלה ואחד לחטאת וכפר

- Written right to left
- Sounds not in English
- Vocabulary unrelated
- Different syntax
- Different alphabet
- All consonants

The Languages of The Bible

- **Hebrew**
 - Part of “Semitic” family of languages
 - “Foreign” to us for many reasons
 - Nearly all of the Old Testament was written in Hebrew

The Languages of The Bible

- **Aramaic**
 - Also part of “Semitic” family of languages
 - Uses the Hebrew alphabet, but a distinct language
 - Only a small fraction of the Old Testament was written in Aramaic

The Languages of The Bible

- **Aramaic – Bible examples**
 - **Genesis 31:47 – “Jegar-sahadutha”**
 - **Jeremiah 10:11 – Quote found in this verse**
 - **Ezra 4:8-6:18 and 7:12-26 (cf. Ezra 4:7)**
 - **Daniel 2:4-7:28**

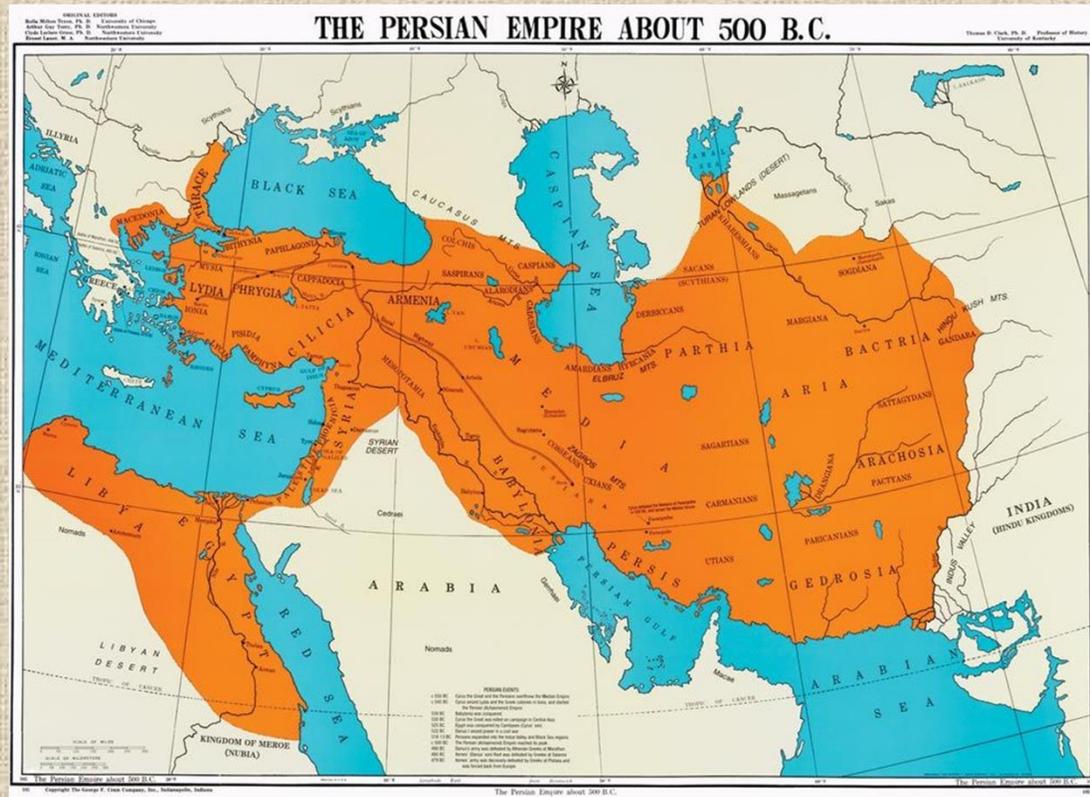
The Languages of The Bible

- **A closer look at Daniel 2:4**
 - **Begins in Hebrew**
 - **Switches to Aramaic with Chaldeans' reply**
 - **Recent Dead Sea Scroll discoveries reflect this exact same change in language, just like other available texts**

The Languages of The Bible

- **Aramaic**
 - **The common tongue in Palestine by 500 BC**

The Languages of The Bible



The Languages of The Bible

- **Aramaic**

- **The common tongue in Palestine by 500 BC**

- **Jesus spoke Aramaic:**

- **Mark 5:41 – *Talitha cumi***

- **Mark 7:34 – *Ephphatha***

- **Matthew 27:46 – *Eli, eli, lama sabachthani***

The Languages of The Bible

- **Greek**
 - **Essentially unquestioned that the books of the New Testament were written in Greek**
 - **It was the universal language of the first century**
 - **It would accommodate the spread of the gospel as broadly and as quickly as possible...and it did**

The Languages of The Bible

- **Greek**
 - **Technically, the Greek used was “Koine”, or common, Greek**
 - **Greek seems more “English-like” than either Hebrew or Aramaic**

The Languages of The Bible

ΤΩΝ ΔΕΝΤΑΙΣ ΑΔΤΟΜΑΙΣ ΩΣ
ΧΡΟΝΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΝΟΣ ΔΙΗΛΘΕΝ ΤΑ
ΑΠΕΡΟΥΝΤΩΝ ΑΣΙΩΘΕΙΣ
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΙΝΑ ΠΡΟΣΚΑΤΑΛΥΣΙΝ
ΑΥΤΟΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΚΕΠΗΝ ΑΠΟ ΜΕΡΙΣ
ΤΗΝ ΤΟΤΕ ΤΩΝ ΦΟΙΜΕΝΩΝ ΕΡΗΜ
ΩΘΕΙΣ ΑΝ ΠΟΛΙΝ ΑΥΑΡΙΝΣΥΝΕΧ

The Languages of The Bible

ΤΩΝ ΔΕΝ ΤΑΙΣ ΑΔΟΜΑΙΣ ΩΣ
ΧΡΟΝΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΝΟΣ ΔΙΗΛΘΕΝ ΤΑ
ΑΠΩΡΟΥΝΤΩΝ ΑΣΙΩΘΕΙΣ
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΙΝΑ ΠΡΟΣΚΑΤΑ
ΑΥΤΟΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΚΕΠΗΝ ΑΠΟ
ΤΗΝ ΤΟΤΕ ΤΩΝ ΠΟΙΜΕΝΩΝ ΕΡΗΜ
ΩΘΕΙΣ ΑΝ ΠΟΛΙΝ ΑΥΑΡΙΝΣΥΝΕΧ

POIMEN =
"SHEPHERD"

The Languages of The Bible

ΤΩΝ ΔΕΝ ΤΑΙΣ ΔΑΤΟΜΑΙΣ ΩΣ
ΧΡΟΝΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΝΟΣ ΔΙΗΛΘΕΝ ΤΑ
ΛΙΠΩΡΟΥΝΤΩΝ ΔΞΙΩΘΕΙΣ
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΙΝΑ ΠΡΟΣ ΚΑΤΑΛΥΣΙΝ
ΑΥΤΟΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΚΕΠΗΝ ΑΠΟ ΜΕΡΙΣ
ΤΗΝ ΤΟΤΕ ΤΩΝ ΠΟΙΜΕΝΩΝ ΕΡΗΜ
ΩΘΕΙΣ ΑΝ ΠΟΛΙΝ ΑΥΑΡΙΝ ΣΥΝΕΧ
ΩΡΗΣΕΝ ΕΣΤΙ ΔΗ ΠΟΛΙΣ ΚΑΤΑ
ΤΗΝ ΘΕΟΛΟΓΙΑΝ ΔΝΩΘΕΝ ΤΥΦΩ
ΝΙΟΣ ΟΙ ΔΕ ΕΙΣ ΤΑΥΤΗΝ ΕΙΣΕΛΘ
ΟΝΤΕΣ ΗΓΕΜΟΝΑ ΑΥΤΩΝ ΤΗΝ Δ
ΤΩΝ ΗΛΙΟΠΟΛΙΤΩΝ ΠΕΡΕΩΝ ΘΣ
ΑΡΧΗΦΟΝ ΛΕΓΟΜΕΝΟΝ ΕΣΤΗΣ
ΔΝΤΟ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΥΤΩ ΠΕΙΘΑΡΧΗΣΟΝ
ΤΕΣ ΕΝ ΠΑΣΙΝ ΩΡΚΩΜΟΤΗΣΑΝ
Ο ΔΕ ΠΡΩΤΟΝ ΜΕΝ ΑΥΤΟΙΣ
ΜΟΜΟΝ ΕΘΕΤΟ ΜΗΤΕ ΠΡΟΣΚΥΝ
ΕΙΝ ΘΕΟΥΣ ΜΗΤΕ ΤΩΝ ΜΑΛΙΣΤΑ

- Written left to right
- Similar sounds
- Some related vocabulary
- Different alphabet, but some characters similar
- Consonants and vowels



LESSON 3: Manuscripts of the New Testament

Introduction

- **Written NT letters appeared in the 2nd half of the 1st century**
- **Papyrus autographs would have soon disappeared**
- **Manuscripts preserved God's word**

A close-up photograph of an ancient manuscript, likely a scroll, with a wooden galleus (pointing stick) resting on the text. The text is written in a cursive script, possibly Greek or Latin, and is arranged in columns. The lighting is warm and focused on the central part of the scroll, creating a sense of historical depth and scholarly study.

Overview of NT Manuscripts

Overview of NT Manuscripts

- **Manuscript age**
 - **Some tell us – they specify the date**
 - **Undated manuscripts must be evaluated by other means: by evaluating the handwriting**

Overview of NT Manuscripts

Handwriting Features

- Letters large or small
- Words together or with spaces
- Number of columns and their appearance
- Punctuation marks; paragraph divisions
- Letters simple or complex

Overview of NT Manuscripts

- **Manuscript type**
 - **Two major types, based on form of the letters**
 - **Uncials**
 - **Earliest and most important; all capital letters**
 - **Cursives**
 - **Mixed upper/lower-case; running style**
 - **Not in manuscripts until 9th century**

Overview of NT Manuscripts

- **Manuscript quantity**
 - **Over 5,300 NT documents exist**
 - **Most are not complete (all 27 books)**
 - **Hand-written documents were very large**
 - **A complete NT codex would be extremely bulky**

Overview of NT Manuscripts

- **Manuscript quantity**

- **Generally produced in 4 groups (volumes)**

- **Gospels**

- **Acts and General Epistles**

- **Pauline Epistles**

- **Revelation**



**Sometimes bound
together in a single
volume**

Overview of NT Manuscripts

- **Manuscript quantity**
 - ***Best-attested* book of the ancient world**
 - 4,650 cursives from 9th to 15th century
 - 650 uncials
 - 95 papyri from 2nd to 4th century
 - 270 lectionaries
 - 280 parchments/vellums from 4th to 10th century

Overview of NT Manuscripts

- **Earliest manuscripts**
 - **Uncial and cursive both existed in the 1st century**
 - **Some letters were dictated, and likely initially written in cursive**
 - **Romans 16:22 – Tertius “wrote this letter”**
 - **1 Peter 5:12 – Letter written “through Silvanus”**
 - **Galatians 6:11 – Paul mentions “my own handwriting”, suggesting it may have been atypical**

Overview of NT Manuscripts

- **Earliest manuscripts**
 - **Letters were ultimately copied as books, which would have featured:**
 - **Uncials only**
 - **No spaces between words**
 - **No punctuation**
 - **No hyphenation...partial words spilled onto next line to preserve evenness of column edges**

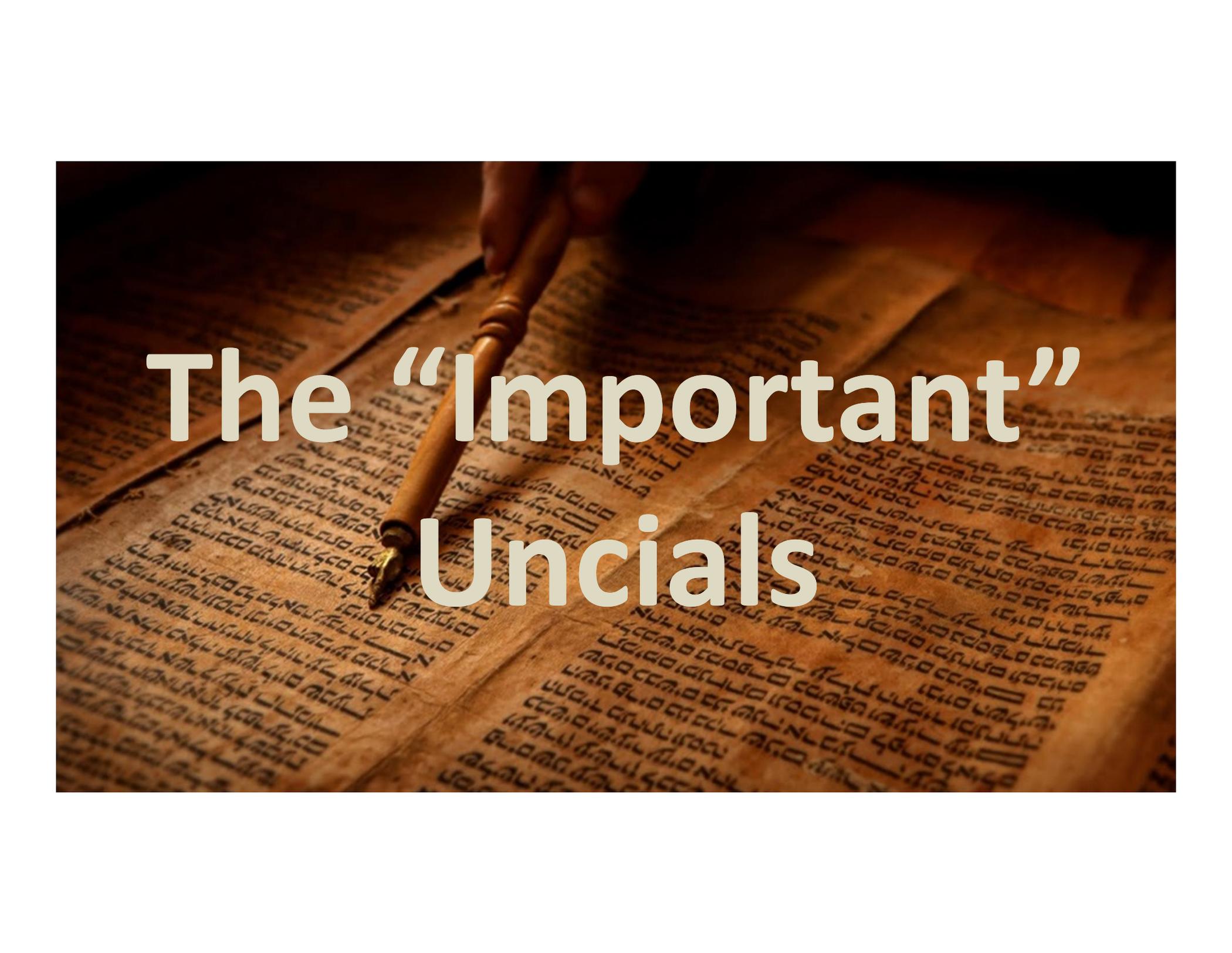
Overview of NT Manuscripts

LONG AGO GODS POKE TO THE FATHERS BY THE PROPHETS AT DIFFERENT TIMES AND IN DIFFERENT WAYS IN THESE LAST DAYS SHE HAS SPOKE TO US BY HIS SON GOD HAS APPOINTED HIM HEIR OF ALL THING

Overview of NT Manuscripts

LONG AGO GODSPOKE TO THE FATHERS BY THE PROPHETS AT DIFFERENT TIMES AND IN DIFFERENT WAYS IN THESE LAST DAYS SHE HAS SPOKE TO US BY HIS SON GOD HAS APPOINTED HIM HEIR OF ALL THING

Hebrews 1:1-2



The “Important” Uncials

The “Important” Uncials

- **The most “important” copies of scripture are the oldest ones**
 - **Some papyri date back to the 2nd century**
 - **Three of the oldest vellum manuscripts are complete or nearly-complete copies of the New Testament**

The “Important” Uncials

- **The Vatican Manuscript (Codex B)**
 - Dated to the 4th century (early 300s)
 - Often considered the most important “witness”
 - Located in Vatican Library since 1481 (540 years)

The “Important” Uncials

- **The Vatican Manuscript (Codex B)**
 - **Strictly guarded by Roman Catholic officials**
 - **Early efforts by text critics to study it were tightly controlled**
 - **Only recently (1889-1890) were its exact contents revealed to the world**

The “Important” Uncials

- **The Vatican Manuscript (Codex B)**
 - A nearly-complete Greek copy of the entire Bible

Missing

- Genesis 1:1-46:28
- Psalms 106-138
- Hebrews after 9:13
- Letters to Timothy and Titus, and Revelation

The “Important” Uncials

- **The Vatican Manuscript (Codex B)**
 - **Physical features**
 - Bound in book (codex) form
 - 759 leaves (individual sheets) @ 10” square
 - Finest vellum
 - Still extremely legible

The "Important" Uncials



The “Important” Uncials

Close-Up From a Reproduction of Codex B

ΙΝΟΦΟΛΛΑΜ
ΩΗΝΕΙΣΕΛΟΓ
ΟΛΛΜΟΥΣΕΧ
ΝΑΙΕΙΣΤΗΝΓΕ
ΟΥΠΥΡΟΣΟΡΑ
ΤΑΦΡΟΝΗΣΗ
ΩΝΜΕΙΚΡΩΝ
ΛΕΓΩΓΑΡΥΜΓ
ΕΛΟΙΑΥΤΩΝ
ΡΑΝΩΔΙΑΠΑΝ
ΙΟΥΣΙΤΟΠΡΟ

ΣΗΑΥΤΩΝΕΙΠΕΤΗΕΚ
ΚΑΗΣΙΑΕΑΝΔΕΚΑΙΤΗΣ
ΕΚΚΑΗΣΙΑΣΠΑΡΑΚΟΥ
ΕΣΤΩΣΟΙΩΣΠΕΡΘΕΟΝΙ
ΚΟΣΚΑΙΟΤΕΛΩΝΗΣ
ΑΜΗΝΛΕΓΩΥΜΙΝΟΣΑ
ΑΝΔΗΣΗΤΕΕΠΙΤΗΣΙΗΣ
ΕΣΤΑΙΔΕΔΕΜΕΝΑΕΝΟΥ
ΡΑΝΩΚΑΙΟΣΑΕΑΝΑΥΣΗ
ΤΕΕΠΙΤΗΣΓΗΣΕΣΤΑΙ

ΛΟΥΝΑΙΕΡ
ΤΟΝΟΚΣΠ
ΤΗΝΓΥΝΑ
ΚΝΑΚΑΙΠ
ΚΑΙΑΠΟ
ΣΩΝΟ
ΠΡΟΣΕΚΥ
ΓΩΝΜΑΚ
ΕΠΕΜΟΙΚ
ΔΩΣΩΣ

The “Important” Uncials

- **The Sinaitic Manuscript (Codex \aleph “Aleph”)**
 - Dated to the mid-4th century (mid-300s)
 - Nearly equal in importance to Codex B
 - Located in British Library since 1933

The “Important” Uncials

- **The Sinaitic Manuscript (Codex \aleph “Aleph”)**
 - **Discovered by Tischendorf in St. Catharine’s Monastery in Mt. Sinai in 1844**
 - **Tischendorf given some leaves; balance of leaves gifted to Czar of Russia in 1859**
 - **Part of OT; complete NT...all 27 books**

The “Important” Uncials

- **The Sinaitic Manuscript (Codex \aleph “Aleph”)**
 - **Physical features**
 - Larger leaves than Codex B – 15” square
 - Large, clear writing
 - Four columns per page
 - Outstanding quality of vellum

The "Important" Uncials



The "Important" Uncials

<p> ΛΕΓΟΝΤΕΣ ΟΦΘΕΛΟΝ ΑΠΘΕΛΝΟΜΕΝΤΗ ΑΠΩΛΕΙΧΩΝ ΑΔΕΛ ΦΩΝΗΜΩΝ ΕΝΑΝ ΤΙΚΥΚΑΙ ΠΝΑΠΑΝΗ ΓΑΓΕΤΑΙ ΤΗΝ ΣΥΝΑ ΓΩΓΗΝ ΚΥΕΙΣΤΗΝ ΡΗΜΟΝ ΤΑΥΤΗΝ Α ΠΟΚ ΤΙΝΑΙΡ ΜΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΤΑΤΗΝ ΑΝΗΜΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΙΝΑ ΤΙΑΝΗΙ ΛΙΣΤΑΙ ΗΜΑΣ ΕΣ ΔΙΓΥΤΤΟΥ ΠΑΡΑΓΕΝΕΣ ΟΧΙΕΙ ΤΟ ΠΟΝΤΟΝ ΠΟΝΗ ΡΟΝ ΤΟΥ ΤΟΝ ΤΟΠ ΟΥΣ ΠΕΙΡΕΤΑΙ ΟΥΑ ΣΥΚΑΙ ΟΥΔΕ ΑΜΠΕ ΟΥΔΕ ΡΟΛΙΟΥ ΛΕΥ ΔΩΡ ΕΣΤΙΝ ΠΙΕΙΝ ΚΑΙ ΗΘΕΝ ΜΩΥΗ ΚΑΙ ΑΔΡΩΝΑ ΠΟ ΠΡΟΣΩΠΟΥ ΤΗ ΝΑΓΩΓΗ ΣΕ ΠΙΤΗΝ ΟΥΡΑΝΤΗΣ ΣΚΗΝΗ ΤΟΥ ΜΑΡΤΥΡΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΕΣΑΝ ΕΠΙ ΠΡΟ ΣΩΠΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΩΦΟΝ ΗΛΟΣΑ ΚΥΤΡΟΣΑ </p>	<p> ΚΑΙ ΕΣΚΚΛΗΣΙΑ ΜΩΥΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΑΔ ΡΩΝ ΤΗΝ ΣΥΝΑΓ ΓΗΝ ΑΠΕΝΑΝΤΗ ΠΕΤΡΑ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΙΝ ΠΡΟΣΧΥΤΟΥΣ ΑΚΟ ΣΧΕΜΟΥ ΟΙ ΔΙΠΘ ΜΗΕΚΤΗΣ ΠΕΤΡ ΤΑΥΤΗΣ ΕΣΑΣΩΜΕΝ ΥΛΩΡ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΑΡΧ ΜΩΥΣΗΣ ΤΗΝ ΧΙ ΡΑΛΥΤΟΥ ΕΤΑΔΑΖ ΤΗΝ ΠΕΤΡΑΝ ΠΑΡΧ ΚΑΙ ΕΣΗΛΘΕΝ ΥΑ ΠΟΛΥ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΙΕΝΗ ΣΥΝΑΓΩΓΗ ΚΑΙ ΤΑ ΚΤΗΝΗ ΛΥΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΕΝ ΚΣ ΠΡ ΜΩΥΣΗΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΔ ΟΤΙ ΟΥΚ ΕΠΙΣΤΕΥ ΣΑΤΕ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΜΕ ΝΑΝΤΙΟΝ ΥΙΩΝ ΤΑ ΔΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΤΟΟΥ ΚΕΙ ΖΕΤΕ ΥΜΕΙΣ ΕΙΣ ΤΗ ΣΥΝΑΓΩΓΗΝ ΤΑΥ ΤΗΝ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΓΗΝ ΗΝ ΔΕΛΩ ΚΑΛΥΤ </p>	<p> ΟΙΑΙ ΓΥΠΤΙΟΙ ΚΑΙ Τ ΠΑΤΕΡΑ ΣΗΜΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΝΕΚΟΙ ΣΑΜΕΝ Π ΚΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΙΣ ΗΚΟΥΣ ΚΣ ΤΗΣ ΦΩΝΗΣ ΜΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΠΟ ΣΤΙ ΛΑΣ ΑΓΕΛΟΝ ΕΣΗ ΓΑΓΕΝ ΗΜΑΣ ΕΣ ΓΥΠΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΝΥΝ Ε ΚΛΘΙΣ ΑΜΕΝ ΕΝ ΚΑ ΛΗ ΣΤΙΟΛΕΙ ΕΚ ΜΕ ΡΟΥ ΣΤΩΝ ΟΡΙΩΝ ΣΟΥ ΠΑΡΕΛΕΥΣΟΜ ΘΑ ΔΙΑ ΤΗΣ ΓΗΣ ΟΥΔΙ ΕΛΕΥΣΟΜΕΘ ΔΙΑ ΓΡΩΝ ΟΥΔΕ ΛΙ ΑΜ ΠΕΛΩΝΩΝ ΟΥ ΛΕ ΠΙΟΜΕΘΑ ΔΩΡ ΕΚ ΚΑΚΚΟΥ ΣΟΥ ΔΩΒΑΣΙΑΙΚΗ ΠΟ ΡΕΥΣΟΜΕΘΑ ΟΥΚ Ε ΚΛΙΝΟΥΜΕΝ ΛΕΣΙ ΛΟΥΔΕ ΑΡΙΣΤΕΡΑ ΩΣ ΑΝ ΠΑΡΕΛΘΩ ΜΕΝ ΤΑ ΟΡΙΛΣΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΙ ΤΗ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΟΥΔΙ ΕΛΕΥΣΗ </p>	<p> ΕΔΩΜΛΟΥΝ ΑΙΤ ΙΣ ΑΠΑΡΕΛΘΕΙΝ ΛΙ ΑΤΩΝ ΟΡΙΩΝ ΑΥ ΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΕΣΚΛΙΝ ΙΣ ΑΠΑΡΧΥΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΑΠΗΡΑΝΕΚ ΚΑΛΗ ΚΑΙ ΠΑΡΕΓΕΝΟΝ ΤΟ ΟΥΙΟΝ ΕΣΤΑ Η ΣΥΝΑΓΩΓΗ ΕΙ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΕΝ ΚΣ ΠΡ ΜΩΥΣΗΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΔ ΒΩΝ ΕΝΩΡΤΩ Ο ΡΕΙ ΕΠΙ ΤΩΝ ΟΡΙ ΓΗΣ ΕΔΩΜΛΕΓΩΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΕΘΗΤΩ ΑΡΩΝ ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΛΑΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΟΤΙ ΜΗ ΕΙΣΕΛΘΗΤΕ ΓΗΝ ΗΝ ΔΕΛΩ ΚΑ ΤΟΙΣ ΥΙΟΙΣ ΙΣΑΙ ΤΙ ΠΑΡΩΣ ΗΝ ΑΤΕ ΜΕ ΕΠΙ ΤΟΥ ΥΑ ΤΗΣ ΛΟΙΔΟΡΙΑΣ ΛΑΒΕΤΟΝ ΑΑΡΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΕΛΕΧΑΡ ΤΟΝ ΥΙΟΝ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΝΑΒΙΒΑΣΟΝ ΑΥΤ </p>
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The “Important” Uncials

- **The Alexandrian Manuscript (Codex A)**
 - **Dated to the 5th century (400s)**
 - **Lower overall quality (based on technical distinctions) vs Codex B and Codex χ**
 - **Previously existed in Alexandria before being gifted to England’s Charles I in 1627**

The “Important” Uncials

- **The Alexandrian Manuscript (Codex A)**
 - **Fairly complete Bible, with the NT sustaining the majority of loss of leaves**
 - **Presentation to Charles I created excitement akin to discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls in recent times**

The “Important” Uncials

- **The Alexandrian Manuscript (Codex A)**
 - **Physical features**
 - Leaves @ 12.5” x 10.5”
 - Two columns per page
 - Heavier handwriting vs Codex B and Codex κ

The “Important” Uncials

- **The Alexandrian Manuscript (Codex A)**
 - **Physical features – new in 5th century**
 - **Use of serifs on some letters**

The “Important” Uncials

Sans Serif vs Serif

H H

The “Important” Uncials

Sans Serif vs Serif

A large, bold, black sans-serif capital letter 'T'. The letter has a thick vertical stem and a horizontal top bar with flat, straight edges. There are no decorative flourishes or serifs.A large, bold, black serif capital letter 'T'. The letter has a thick vertical stem and a horizontal top bar. The top bar features decorative serifs: a small, curved hook on the left side and a small, curved hook on the right side. The bottom of the stem also has a small, decorative serif.

The “Important” Uncials

Sans Serif vs Serif



The “Important” Uncials

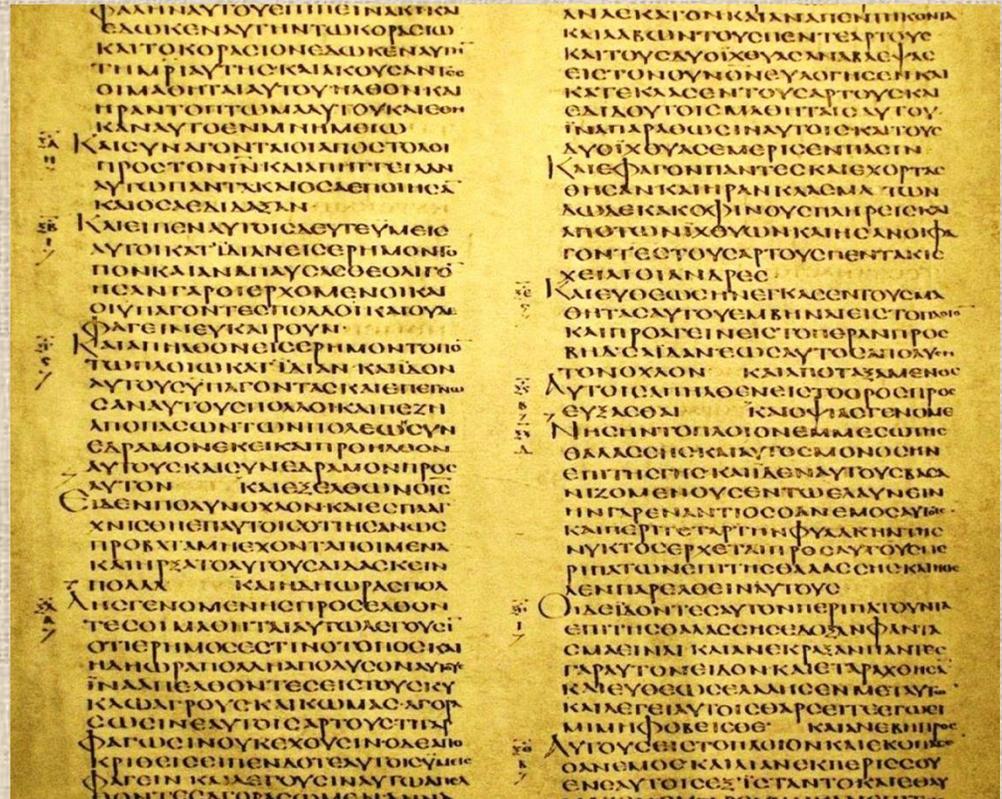
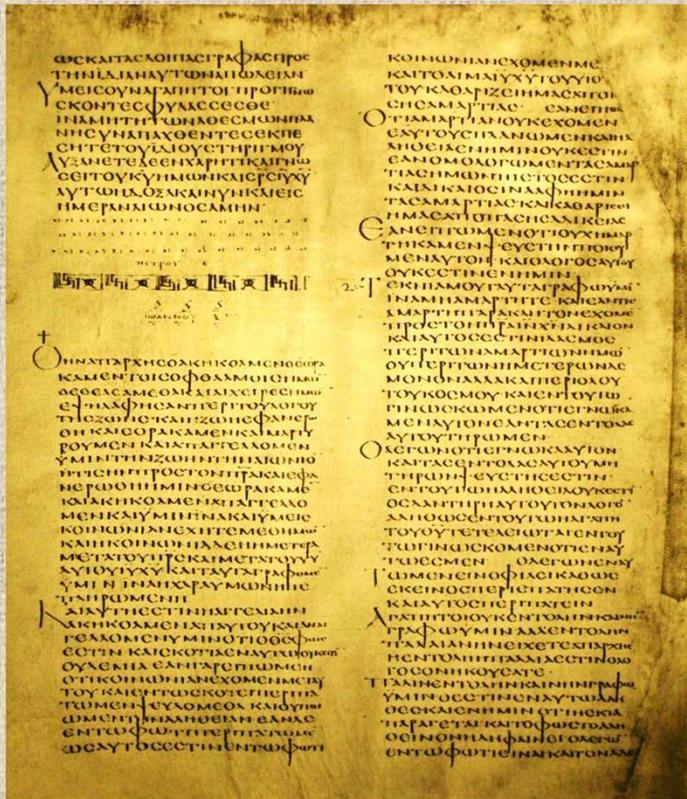
Sans Serif vs Serif

E E

The “Important” Uncials

- **The Alexandrian Manuscript (Codex A)**
 - **Physical features – new in 5th century**
 - Use of serifs on some letters
 - Large letters to mark paragraph beginnings
 - Red ink used on the first line of each book

The "Important" Uncials



The "Important" Uncials

ΠΑ 7. cap. / 24. Μην

ΚΥΣΟΥ ΠΡΟΣΕΛΘΩΝ ΛΕΚΛΙ
Ο ΤΑΛΥΟΤΑΛΑΝΤΑΣ ΕΙΠΕΝ ΚΕ ΜΥΟ
ΤΑΛΑΝΤΑ ΜΟΙ ΠΑΡΕΔΩΚΑΣ ΙΔΕ ΑΛΛΑ
ΜΥΟΤΑΛΑΝΤΑΣ ΕΚΕΡΑΗΣ ΕΠΗΥΤΟΙΣ.
ΕΦΗΛΥΤΩ ΟΚΣ ΜΥΤΟΥ ΕΥ ΔΟΥΚΕ
ΑΡΘΟ ΕΚΛΗΠΙΣΤΕ ΕΠΙΘΛΙΓΑΗΣ ΠΙ
ΣΤΟΣ ΕΠΙ ΠΟΛΛΩΝ ΣΕΚΚΙΧΣΤΗΩ
ΕΙΣ ΕΛΘΕ ΕΙΣ ΤΗΝ ΧΑΡΑΝ ΤΟΥ ΚΥΣΟΥ.
ΠΡΟΣΕΛΘΩΝ ΛΕΚΛΙ ΟΤΟ ΘΕΝΤΑΛΑΝ
ΤΟΝ ΕΙΛΗΦΩΣ ΕΙΠΕΝ ΚΕ ΕΓΝΩΝ
ΣΕ ΟΤΙ ΣΚΗ ΠΡΟΣΕΙΛΗΝΟΣ ΘΕΡΙΖΩΝ
ΟΠΟΥ ΟΥΚ ΕΣΠΕΙΡΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΣΥΝΑΛΩΝ
ΚΑΙ ΚΟΡΗΙΟΧΟ ΚΑΙ ΦΟΡΗ

The “Important” Uncials

INTERESTING NOTE:

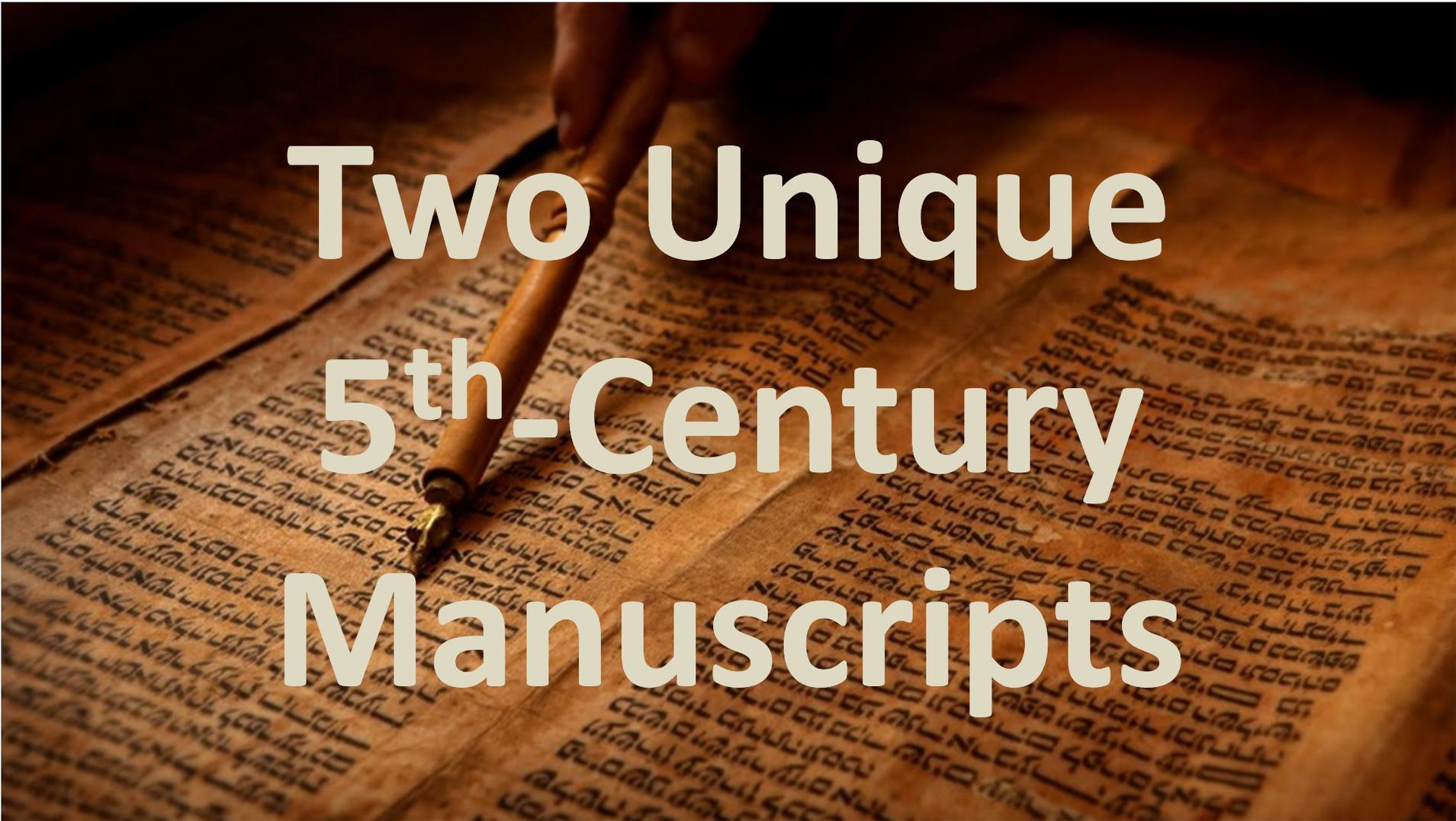
None of these three great manuscripts were known to the King James translators!



LESSON 4:
Other Manuscripts
and NT Witnesses

Introduction

- **The Vatican, Sinaitic, and Alexandrian Codexes are “important” due to their proximity to the original autographs**
- **Many other ancient documents in Greek and other languages are also of significant value**



Two Unique 5th-Century Manuscripts

Two Unique 5th-Century Manuscripts

- **The Manuscript of Ephraem (Codex C)**
 - **A “palimpsest”**
 - **Also called “rescript”**
 - **When supplies were hard to come by, parchments would be “recycled”**
 - **Recycling did not totally obliterate the original writing**

Two Unique 5th-Century Manuscripts

- **The Manuscript of Ephraem (Codex C)**

- **Features**

- Top layer is a 12th-century work by Ephraem of Syria
- Original layer is a 5th-century copy of the scriptures
- Nearly-complete copy of the New Testament, with only 2 Thessalonians and 3 John missing

Two Unique 5th-Century Manuscripts

- **The Codex Bezae (Codex D)**
 - **Earliest known bi-lingual presentation of the scriptures, containing Greek and Latin**
 - **Theodore Beza gave the document to the University of Cambridge in 1581**

Two Unique 5th-Century Manuscripts

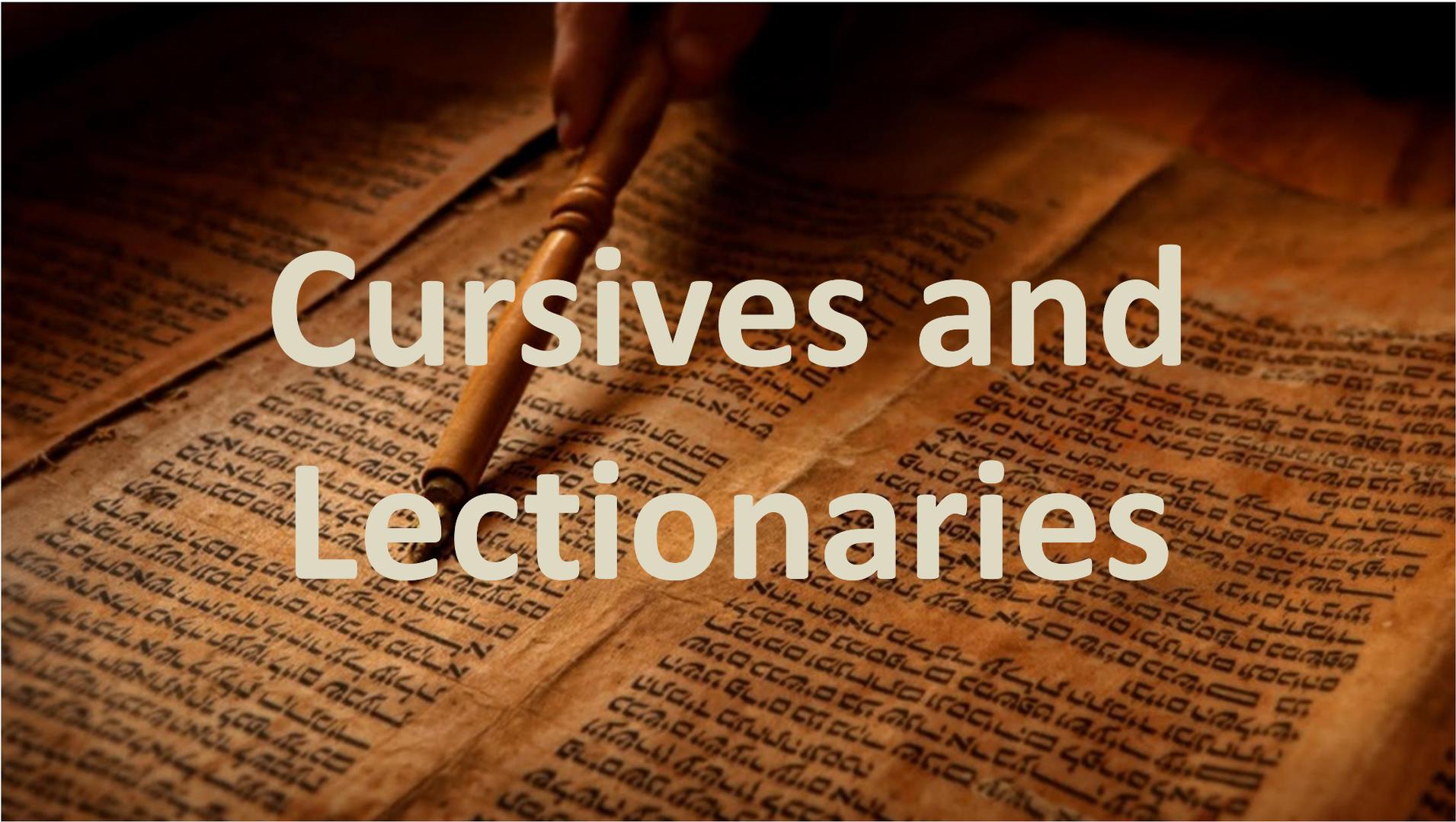
- **The Codex Bezae (Codex D)**
 - **Various additions and omissions made the document suspect to Beza and his contemporaries**
 - **Only “important” uncial available in 1611, but little used by KJV translators due to speculation surrounding it**

Two Unique 5th-Century Manuscripts

- **The Codex Bezae (Codex D)**

- **Features**

- **Leaves 10"x8" with one column per page**
- **Greek and Latin presented interlinearly**
- **Only Gospels and Acts in both languages**
- **Fragment of 3 John in Latin**



Cursives and Lectionaries

Cursives and Lectionaries

- **Cursives (miniscules) form the largest group of ancient documents**
- **Value is somewhat limited, as they date from the 9th to the 16th centuries**

Cursives and Lectionaries

λάσαν τοῖμα τομίμ δόλοισι
σωσι αἰάποκ τεῖμοσιμ δόλοισι
δομίμ δόλοισι εὐροπὴ ἰμαίμ θόρμωσ
γόνκτα γόνκτα γόνκτα γόνκτα
Γ Ερομδίου δόλοισι θαμιάμ ἰμοίμ
μωμοσ τοῦ γόνκτα, ποροσὴ γόνκτα
πὴμωσ ἰμαίμ ποροσὴ γόνκτα
ποροσὴ γόνκτα ποροσὴ γόνκτα

Cursives and Lectionaries

- **Two notable cursives contain text highly similar to the Vatican Codex**
 - **Codex 33 (9th century) – Complete NT except Revelation**
 - **Codex 1739 (10th century) – Acts and Epistles only**

Cursives and Lectionaries

- **9th-16th-century cursives were much more elaborate than earlier manuscripts**
 - **Richly stamped covers**
 - **Ornamented headings and initial letters**
 - **Multi-colored illustrations, especially of the Gospel writers**

Cursives and Lectionaries



Cursives and Lectionaries



Cursives and Lectionaries



Cursives and Lectionaries



Cursives and Lectionaries



Cursives and Lectionaries

- **“Lectionary” derives from “lection”, a passage designed and arranged to be read in a public worship service**
- **Accordingly, lectionaries are scripture passages collected together, rather than an entire book, testament, etc.**

Cursives and Lectionaries

- **Typical lectionary features**
 - **Very carefully copied**
 - **Typically passages from the Gospels; occasionally also include passages from Acts and the Epistles**
 - **Uncial and cursive types**



The Versions

The Versions

- Recall that a “manuscript” is a copy of the scriptures in its originally-written language
- A “version” is a translation of the scriptures into a language other than its original

The Versions

- **A version is of secondary rank among historical documents, yet still valuable**
 - **Translation was necessary for the Gospel's spread...not everyone spoke Greek**
 - **Translated works were not uncommon in Jesus' day; Jesus quoted from the Septuagint**

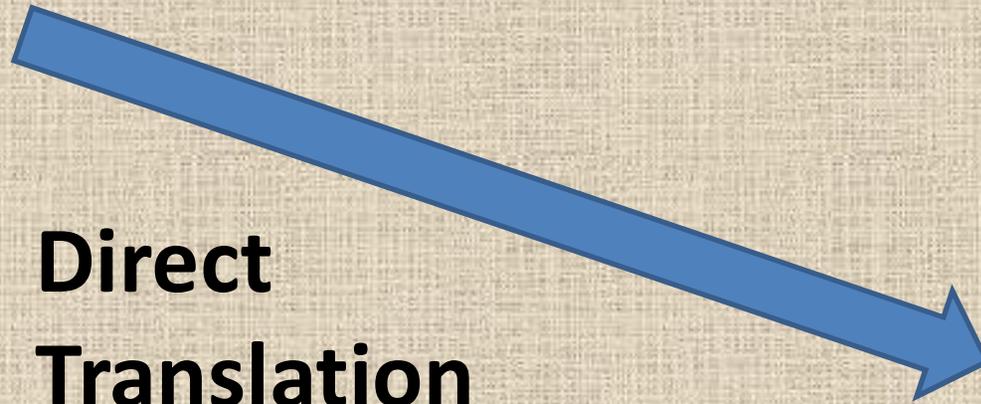
The Versions

The “Filter” of a Version

Greek

Direct
Translation

English



The Versions

The “Filter” of a Version

Greek  *Latin*

Direct Translation

The Versions

The “Filter” of a Version



The Versions

The “Filter” of a Version

Latin



Greek

Back to the
Correct, Original Greek?

The Versions

The “Filter” of a Version

English (1)

The weatherman said, “It is very warm and dry today.”

German

Der Wetterprophet sagte, «Heute ist es sehr warm und trocken.»

The Versions

The “Filter” of a Version

German

Der Wetterprophet sagte, «Heute ist es sehr warm und trocken.»

English (2)

The meteorologist said, “Today, it’s quite warm and arid.”

The Versions

The “Filter” of a Version

English (1)

The weatherman said, “It is very warm and dry today.”

English (2)

The meteorologist said, “Today, it’s quite warm and arid.”

The Versions

- **The Syriac versions**
 - **Syriac was spoken in Syria and Mesopotamia**

The Versions



The Versions

- **The Syriac versions**
 - **Syriac was spoken in Syria and Mesopotamia**
 - **Nearly identical to Aramaic (the second universal language)**
 - **Jews would have been able to speak it...handy if they didn't speak Greek**

The Versions

- **The “Old Syriac” version**
 - **Not discovered until the 19th century**
 - **Two copies; compare very favorably to much older Greek documents**

The Versions

- **The “Old Syriac” version**
 - **Curetonian – 5th-century copy of the Gospels**
 - **Sinaitic – 4th or 5th century**
 - **Palimpsest of the Gospels**
 - **Discovered in St. Catharine’s Monastery at Mt. Sinai**

The Versions

- **The “Peshitta” version**
 - **Written in common (peshitta) Syriac**
 - **The standard Syriac translation since the 5th century**
 - **Only a revision of the Old Syriac, but via the use of Greek texts to support the revisions**

The Versions

- **The Latin versions**
 - **The Bible in Latin was the “official” Bible of Great Britain and Western Europe**
 - **The very first English translation of the Bible was from Latin...thus, a translation from a translation**

The Versions

- **The “Old Latin” version(s)**
 - **Oldest copies date to the 2nd century**
 - **Predecessors of the Vatican and Sinaitic Codexes**
 - **About 35 copies exist**
 - **Took a very “idiomatic” approach to translation vs more “Greek-like” approach**

The Versions

- **The Latin Vulgate**
 - **Produced in an effort to...**
 - **Standardize various independent Latin versions**
 - **Eliminate/prevent textual variations and corruption**
 - **Create an “official” benchmark Latin edition**

The Versions

- **The Latin Vulgate**
 - **“Vulgate” indicates “commonly accepted”**
 - **Commissioned by Damasus of Rome in 382**
 - **Like Syriac Peshitta, Vulgate was a revision of various Old Latin translations with Greek-manuscript assistance**

The Versions

- **The Latin Vulgate**
 - **Opened scriptures to Latin-speaking people**
 - **Springboard for translations into other European languages, including English**
 - **First to be mechanically printed (Gutenberg Bible, circa 1456)**

The Versions

- **The Latin Vulgate**
 - **Considered by scholars as second only to the Septuagint in important translations**
 - **Remains the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church, and is the source of its translation into all other languages of the Roman Bible**

The Versions

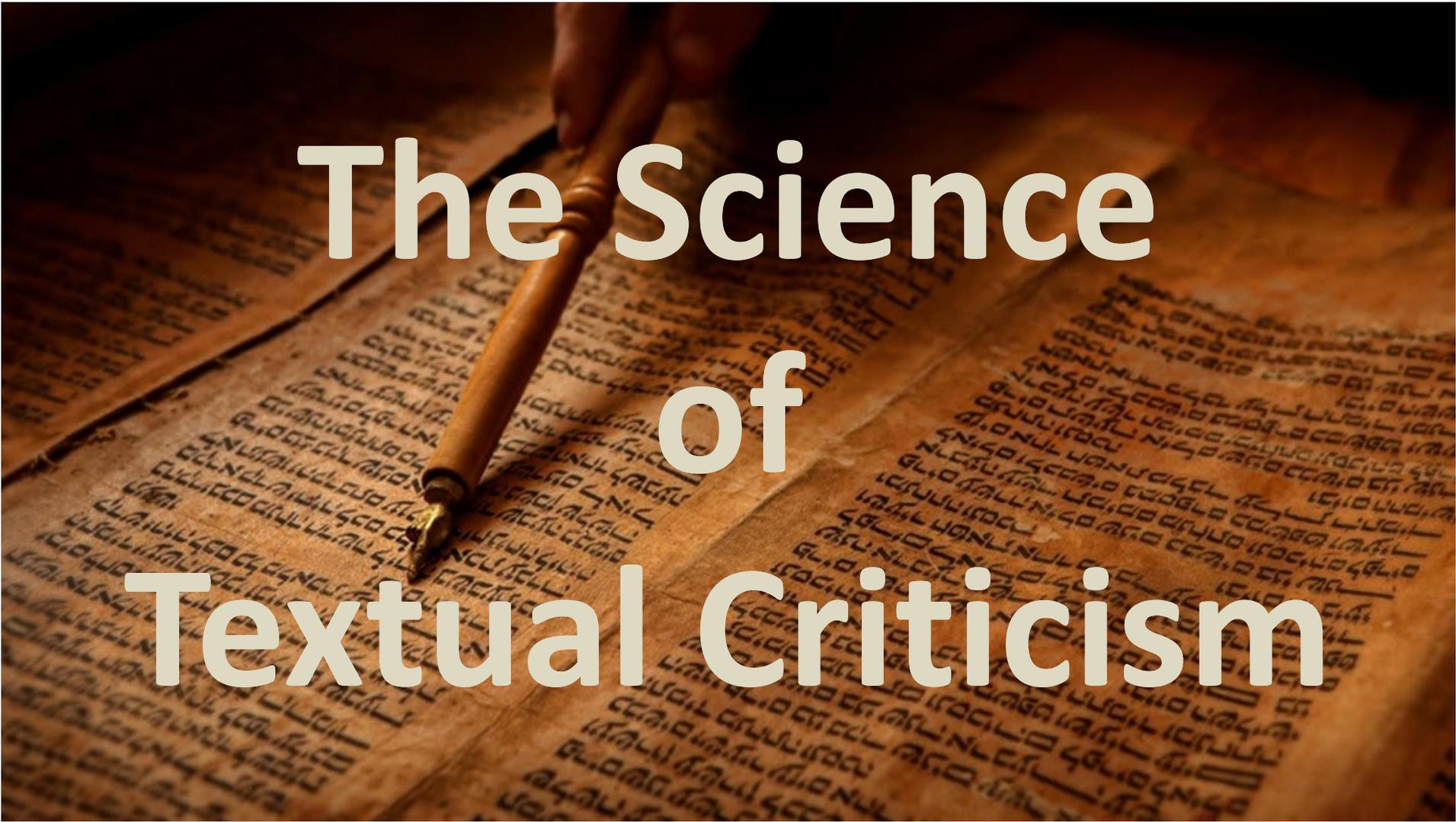
- **Other ancient versions**
 - **Numerous ancient translations exist in other languages**
 - **Most are only recently being discovered, and many pre-date the Vatican and Sinaitic Codexes**



**LESSON 5:
The Text of the
New Testament**

Introduction

- **Problems have always existed in the making of books...even printed ones**
- **Scripture has not been immune**
- **The challenge is to weed out error and produce the purest Greek baseline as possible**

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a wooden quill pen over an open book. The book's pages are filled with dense, handwritten text in a cursive script, likely Hebrew. The lighting is warm and focused on the pen and the text, creating a scholarly atmosphere. The title 'The Science of Textual Criticism' is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

The Science of Textual Criticism

The Science of Textual Criticism

- **Two key sciences surround the study of biblical text (and other ancient texts)**
 - **Higher Criticism – Macro items: authorship, composition date, historical value, etc.**
 - **Lower (a.k.a. Textual) Criticism – Micro items: the details of the written words themselves**

The Science of Textual Criticism

- The role of the textual critic is to work to recover the exact words of the author's original document, by focusing on the form of the words of that document

The Science of Textual Criticism

- **The work of a textual critic**
 - **Compare / study all available evidence**
 - **Consider new evidence when available**
 - **Create a Greek text that is as faithful to the original as possible**

The Science of Textual Criticism

- **The United Bible Societies**
 - **Produces Greek NT editions designed for translators and for the casual reader**
 - **Periodically issues new editions as additional evidence becomes available**
 - **Technical support via translation consultants and various computer services for text study**

The Science of Textual Criticism

The UBS Greek New Testament

5th revised edition

B. Aland, K. Aland, J. Karavidopoulos, C. M. Martini, and B. M. Metzger, editors.

This Greek text, established by an international and interconfessional committee, is identical with that of the 28th edition of [Novum Testamentum Graece](#) by Nestle Aland except for some minor punctuation differences. Similar to changes in that edition, changes in UBS GNT5 include:

- For the first time with the reading of Papyri 117 - 127
- Displaying all instances where modern Bible translations are based on the reading of a variant
- Special focus of the revision on the Catholic Epistles, with more than thirty modifications to the running text
- With a new, aesthetically appealing and readily legible Greek font



The Science of Textual Criticism

The UBS Greek New Testament: A Reader's Edition

Running Dictionary compiled by Barclay M. Newman; textual notes by Florian Voss. Greek text edited by B. Aland, K. Aland, J. Karavidopoulos, C. M. Martini, and B. M. Metzger.

This edition combines the Bible text of the 5th revised edition of the UBS *Greek New Testament* with the following reading helps:

- Every vocabulary word occurring 30 times or less in the New Testament translated at the bottom of the page on which it occurs
- Idiomatic word combinations defined
- Difficult verb forms parsed
- Textual notes highlighting the most important differences between major Greek manuscripts
- OT references in the margin
- Appendix including vocabulary words occurring more than 30 times in the New Testament
- With the maps of the UBS Greek New Testament



A close-up photograph of a hand holding a quill pen, writing on a scroll of ancient text. The scroll is filled with dense, handwritten characters in a cursive script, likely Hebrew or Aramaic. The lighting is warm and focused on the writing process, with the background slightly blurred. The text on the scroll is arranged in horizontal lines, and the quill is positioned over one of the lines, ready to write.

Mistakes of Copyists (Scribes)

Mistakes of Copyists (Scribes)

- **Mistakes and scribal errors were not uncommon events**
 - **Scribes are people too, and people make mistakes**
 - **The textual critic's challenge is to weed out mistakes in order to produce the purest Greek text possible**

Mistakes of Copyists (Scribes)

- **Unintentional errors**
 - **Accidental mistakes of the hand, eye, or ear**
 - These occur frequently, but are easy to identify
 - Most are inconsequential
 - Some manuscripts show a scribe making an error and also correcting it

Mistakes of Copyists (Scribes)

- **Unintentional error resolution**
 - **The textual critic's process of comparing all available manuscripts allows such mistakes to be quickly and confidently identified, explained, and corrected**
 - **In so doing, the Greek text is advanced toward greater purity**

Mistakes of Copyists (Scribes)

- **Unintentional errors include...**
 - **Reading errors – writing down the wrong word**
 - **Writing down a similar word (effect / affect)**
 - **Spelling errors**
 - **Losing track of progress (especially with uncials)**

Mistakes of Copyists (Scribes)

LONGAGOGODSPOKETOTHEFATH
ERSBYTHEPROPHETSATDIFFER
ENTTIMESANDINDIFFERENTWA
YSINTHESELASTDAYSHEHASSP
OKENTOUSBYHISSONGODHASAP
POINTEDHIMHEIROFALLTHING

Mistakes of Copyists (Scribes)

- **Unintentional errors include...**
 - **Reading errors – writing down the wrong word**
 - **Writing down a similar word (effect / affect)**
 - **Spelling errors**
 - **Losing track of progress (especially with uncials)**
 - **Incorporating margin notes into the text body**

Mistakes of Copyists (Scribes)

- **Intentional errors**
 - **Deliberate revisions from the source document**
 - Far less frequent than unintentional errors
 - Usually more serious and more challenging to resolve
 - Typically appear to be the result of “good intentions” on the scribe’s part (e.g., bringing two accounts of the same event into textual harmony)

Mistakes of Copyists (Scribes)

- **Intentional error example**
 - **Bringing two passages into textual harmony**
 - **Words of Jesus recorded in both Matthew 11:19 and Luke 7:35**
 - **Two different authors are separately writing about the same event**
 - **Both are inspired by the Holy Spirit**

Mistakes of Copyists (Scribes)

	KJV
Matthew 11:19	"...of her children."
Luke 7:35	"...of all her children."

- The two passages are in textual harmony
- But...some earliest and best manuscripts were not available at the time the KJV was produced

Mistakes of Copyists (Scribes)

	KJV	ASV	ESV	HCSB
Matthew 11:19	"...of her children."	KJV	Early 17th Century	
		ASV	Late 19th / Early 20th Century	
Luke 7:35	"...of all her children."	ESV	Late 20th / Early 21st Century	
		HCSB	Late 20th / Early 21st Century	

Mistakes of Copyists (Scribes)

	KJV	ASV	ESV	HCSB
Matthew 11:19	"...of her children."	"...by her works. "	"...by her deeds. "	"...by her deeds. "
Luke 7:35	"...of all her children."	"...of all her children."	"...by all her children."	"...by all her children."

Mistakes of Copyists (Scribes)

- **Intentional error example**
 - **Bringing two passages into textual harmony**
 - The earliest and best manuscripts show “works” / “deeds” in Matthew 11 and “children” in Luke 7
 - “Children” appeared in Matthew in later manuscripts, apparently from a scribe’s misguided (but well-intentioned) effort to harmonize Matthew and Luke

Mistakes of Copyists (Scribes)

- **Intentional error resolution**
 - **The textual critic's challenge can be greater than resolving unintentional errors, but the objective of quickly identifying, explaining, and correcting the error is the same**
 - **Once again, the Greek text is advanced toward greater purity**

A close-up photograph of an open book with Hebrew text. A hand is holding a quill pen, pointing it at the text. The lighting is warm and focused on the book. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew script.

Rules of Textual Criticism

Rules of Textual Criticism

- **Textual criticism operates within a set of fundamental rules**
- **These rules are numerous, serving as guidelines, and many are quite technical**
- **For this study, we will consider three basic rules**

Rules of Textual Criticism

- **Rule #1: The more difficult reading is to be preferred**
 - ...except in instances of obvious scribal blunders
 - **Why more difficult preferred?**
 - Natural tendency of scribes over time was to smooth out textual differences in an effort to improve the text

Rules of Textual Criticism

- **Rule #2: Textual witness quality is more important than quantity**
 - The majority doesn't always rule
 - Textual authorities must be *weighed* rather than *just counted*
 - *E.g., Vatican Manuscript (4th C.) vs Codex 1739 (10th C.)*

Rules of Textual Criticism

- **Rule #3: In parallel texts, different readings are usually preferred**
 - Different writers involve different vocabulary, perspective, and small details
 - Like Rule #1, the tendency of scribes would be to harmonize parallel passages, rather than leave them alone

Rules of Textual Criticism

- **Applying to Matthew 11 and Luke 7**
 - **Rule #1: The more difficult reading is to be preferred**
 - Having “works” vs “children” in Matthew is certainly more difficult, and would therefore be the preferred reading

Rules of Textual Criticism

- **Applying to Matthew 11 and Luke 7**
 - **Rule #2: Textual witness quality is more important than quantity**
 - **Vatican and Sinaitic (+ a few others) contain “works”**
 - **Later Greek manuscripts and various versions (Syriac, Latin, etc.) contain “children”**
 - **Versions are of secondary value; may have been smoothed**

Rules of Textual Criticism

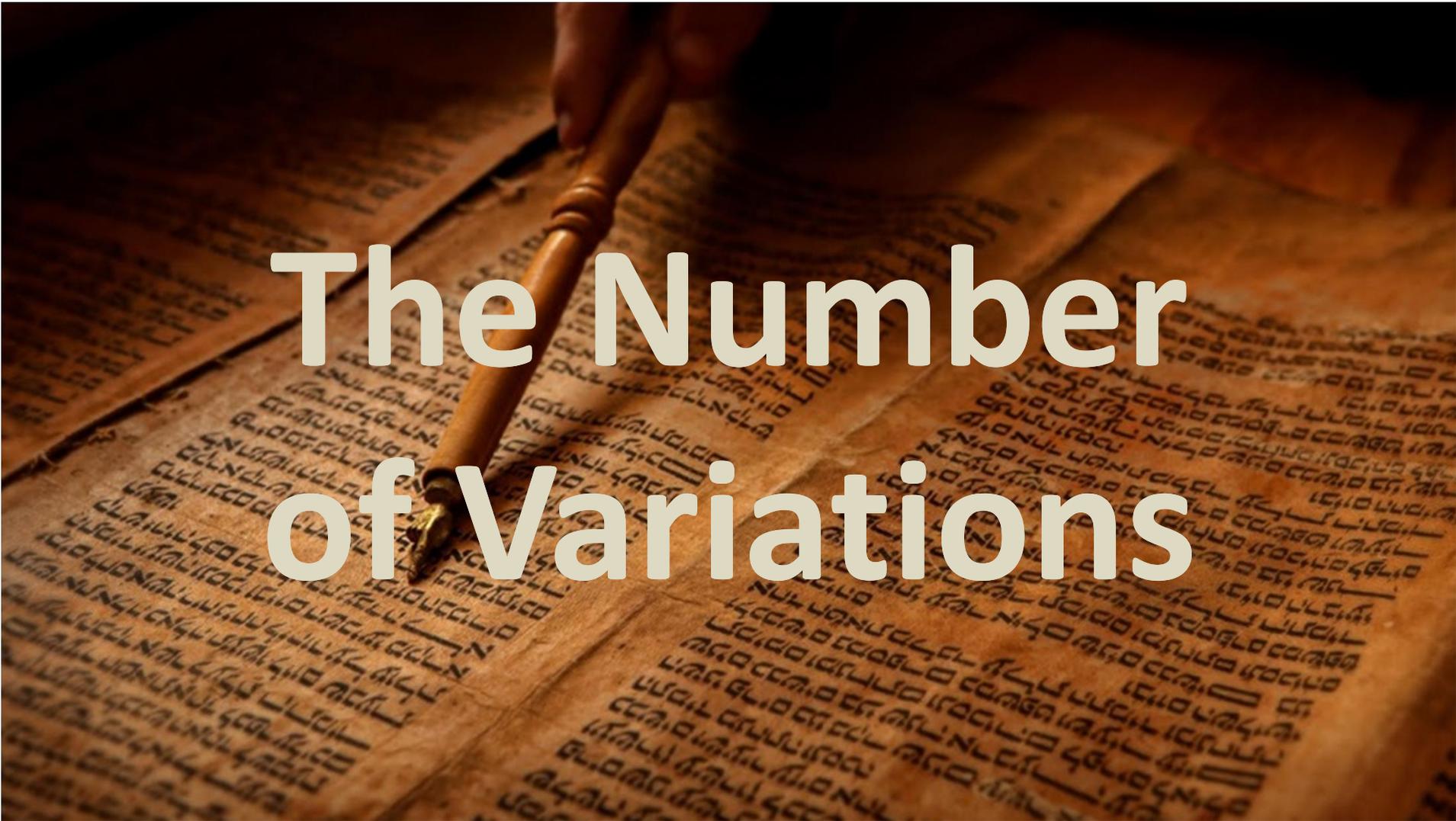
- **Applying to Matthew 11 and Luke 7**
 - **Rule #3: In parallel texts, different readings are usually preferred**
 - **Matthew and Luke are different writers**
 - **Their vocabulary and perspective would have been different**
 - **These facts could easily yield a different word**



LESSON 6: Significance of Textual Variations

Introduction

- **Scripture variations have been incurred by human error and efforts to correct**
- **Variations are assessed through the textual criticism process**
- **The impact of such variations may be non-existent or potentially significant**

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a wooden quill pen over an open book. The book's pages are filled with dense, handwritten text in a cursive script, likely Hebrew. The lighting is warm and focused on the pen and the text, creating a sense of historical or scholarly work. The title 'The Number of Variations' is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

The Number of Variations

The Number of Variations

- **How some tally up textual variations...**
 - **# of Variations x # of Manuscripts = “Error” Count**
 - **1 Variation in 4,000 Manuscripts = 4,000 “Errors”**
 - **Illustration of Philemon**
 - **570 manuscripts and about 335 words**
 - **If only 10 variations, then 5,700 “errors”!!!**

The Number of Variations

- **Some use this to try to undermine the credibility of the New Testament!**
 - **The presence of so many manuscripts naturally magnifies the “count” of variations**
 - **At the same time, the presence of so many manuscripts amplifies the ability for variations to be cross-checked and resolved**

The Number of Variations

- **The correct approach is to count the number of variants attested by the manuscripts...not the other way around**
- **A simple count says nothing about any variant's significance: Variations must be *weighed*, not just *counted***

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a wooden quill pen over an open book. The book's pages are filled with dense, handwritten text in Hebrew script. The lighting is warm and focused on the quill and the text it is pointing to, creating a sense of historical or scholarly study. The background is softly blurred, emphasizing the foreground action.

Consequences of Variations

Consequences of Variations

- **Like manuscripts, not all variations are created equal**
 - **Some are simple, easily resolved by context or upon examination of other manuscripts**
 - **Others are more challenging to resolve, and can present difficulties for both textual critics and translators**

Consequences of Variations

- **Type #1: Trivial variations with no textual consequence**
 - **The vast majority of variations are this type**
 - **Some may not flow into another language**
 - **Certain word order / syntax differences**
 - **Misspellings, alternate spellings, spelling evolution**

Consequences of Variations

- **The evolution of English illustrates spelling changes that count as variants**
- **What might a comparison look like between two English manuscripts that were 400 years apart?**

Consequences of Variations

17th Century KJV – Matthew 2:1-5

- 1 Now when Iesus was borne in Bethlehem of Iudea, in the dayes of Herod the king, behold, there came Wise men from the East to Hierusalem,
- 2 Saying, Where is he that is borne King of the Iewes? for we haue seene his Starre in the East, and are come to worship him.
- 3 When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled, and all Hierusalem with him.
- 4 And when he had gathered all the chiefe Priests and Scribes of the people together, hee demanded of them where Christ should be borne.
- 5 And they said vnto him, In Bethlehem of Iudea: For thus it is written by the Prophet;

Consequences of Variations

21st Century KJV – Matthew 2:1-5

- 1 Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem,
- 2 Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.
- 3 When Herod the king had heard *these things*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.
- 4 And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born.
- 5 And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet,

Consequences of Variations

- **The tally for the two manuscripts:**
 - **16 spelling differences in 5 verses (5/5/1/3/2)**
 - **If capitalization differences are also included, an additional 6 differences appear (1/1/0/2/2)**
 - **IN TOTAL: Up to 22 variations in 5 verses comprised of 109 words – a 20% “error” rate**

Consequences of Variations

- **The impact of these variations:**
 - **NONE:** These variations result in absolutely no textual consequence nor impact to the truth
 - The same is true of such differences when found among Greek manuscripts

Consequences of Variations

- **The context of Matthew 11:19**
 - Discussed “works” vs “children” in Lesson 4
 - Context (vv 10-23) contains 9 variant readings
 - Over half are +/- of “the”, “and”, “for”, etc.
 - Others concern variant forms of the same Greek word
 - Verse 19 contains the only “challenging” variant

Consequences of Variations

- **Type #2: Substantial variations with no textual consequence**
 - Not all variations are small or “trivial”
 - Yet, “substantial” doesn’t always equate to a textual consequence
 - Authority of textual witnesses is key!

Consequences of Variations

- **Illustration #1: Luke 6:5**

- **Most manuscripts and versions read:**

*And he said unto them, That the Son of man is
Lord also of the Sabbath.*

(or something similar)

Consequences of Variations

- **Illustration #1: Luke 6:5**

- **ONLY Codex Bezae adds:**

On the same day, seeing one working on the Sabbath day, he said unto him, Man, if you know what you are doing, you are blessed; but if you do not know, you are accursed and a transgressor of the law.

Consequences of Variations

- **Illustration #1: Luke 6:5**
 - **As studied, Codex Bezae had numerous problems, and was virtually never used by the KJV translators**
 - **While the Codex Bezae variant is substantial (+41 words in English), it is rejected without hesitation by modern textual criticism**

Consequences of Variations

- **Illustration #2: John 7:53-8:11**
 - **The account of the adulterous woman**
 - **Early English versions contained this account without qualification or explanation**
 - **ASV and RSV separate it from the main body and use brackets, indicating doubt by the translators**

Consequences of Variations

- **Illustration #2: John 7:53-8:11**
 - **Missing from most early versions and all early manuscripts...except for Codex Bezae**
 - **Absent in manuscripts until the 8th century**
 - **Some with margin notes questioning authenticity**
 - **Some place the account after Luke 21:38**

Consequences of Variations

- **Illustration #2: John 7:53-8:11**
 - Note that this story is not out of character with Jesus, the way He taught, His expressions of mercy, and the way He was trying to get people to think about one another
 - However, the best and earliest evidence attests that it was not part of John's original gospel

Consequences of Variations

- **Type #3: Substantial variations with a textual consequence**
 - These variations are very few and far between
 - However, they can present significant challenges for textual critics and translators alike, and can't simply be ignored

Consequences of Variations

- **Mark 16:9-20 – Resurrection Day +**
 - This passage presents an especially difficult textual challenge
 - Evidence for Luke 6:5, John 7:53-8:11, and 1 John 5:7 all look in one direction
 - Evidence for Mark 16:9-20 looks both ways

Consequences of Variations

Evidence Against and For vv 9-20

Against

Vatican MS

Sinaitic MS

Oldest Old Syriac VS

Consequences of Variations

Evidence Against and For vv 9-20

Against

Vatican MS

Sinaitic MS

Oldest Old Syriac VS

For

Alexandrian MS

Ephraem MS

Bezae MS

Other Early Uncials

All Later Uncials & Cursives

Various Latin VS (incl. Vulgate)

One Old Syriac VS

Syriac Peshitta

Various Other Versions

Irenaeus' Quote in 2nd Century

Consequences of Variations

Irenaeus' Quote – 177 AD

In 177 AD Irenaeus wrote a defense titled *Against Heresies*. In it he cites from Mark 16:19, establishing that the longer reading was in existence at this time and was considered canonical, at least by Irenaeus...

Consequences of Variations

Irenaeus' Quote – 177 AD

Also, towards the conclusion of his Gospel, Mark says: "So then, after the Lord Jesus had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God;" confirming what had been spoken by the prophet: "The LORD said to my Lord, Sit Thou on My right hand, until I make Thy foes Thy footstool."

Consequences of Variations

- **Mark 16:9-20 – Resurrection Day +**
 - **The ASV and RSV separate these verses (like John 7:53-8:11)**
 - **The UBS and NA Greek NTs contain these verses in “double brackets”**
 - **[[]] = Not in the original text**

Consequences of Variations

- **Mark 16:9-20 – Resurrection Day +**
 - **The Vatican Manuscript contained a blank column where 16:9-20 would belong**
 - **10th-12th Century margin notes:**

“In some of the copies the Evangelist is completed at this point. But in many, these are also present...”

Consequences of Variations

- **Mark 16:9-20 – Resurrection Day +**
 - **The proper treatment of this passage continues to be discussed, and will probably always present a challenge to textual critics and translators**
 - **Even in its absence, doctrine is not compromised**
 - **Moreover, parallel passages cover much of it...**

Consequences of Variations

- **Mark 16:9-20 Parallel Passages**

Mark	"Parallel" Passage		
	Matthew	Luke	John
Mark 16:9-11			John 20:11-18
Mark 16:12-13		Luke 24:13-32	
Mark 16:14		Luke 24:36-43	John 20:19-23
Mark 16:15-18	Matt 28:16-20		
Mark 16:19		Luke 24:50-51	
Mark 16:20		Luke 24:52-53	



LESSON 7: Restoring the NT Text

Introduction

- **Despite mistakes and variations in NT manuscripts, almost none affect the present-day Greek New Testament text**
- **The Greek NT has been reconstructed using all available evidence and through the textual criticism process**

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a quill pen over an open book. The book's pages are filled with dense, handwritten text in Hebrew script. The lighting is warm and focused on the pen and the text, creating a sense of historical scholarship and restoration. The text is arranged in columns, and the quill is positioned as if about to write or correct a word.

Authorities for Restoring the Text

Authorities for Restoring the Text

- **Manuscripts**
 - **Documents in the original Greek**
 - **Vary in weight / quality (good / better / best)**
 - **Agreement among manuscripts leads to greater textual certainty**

Authorities for Restoring the Text

- **Versions**
 - **Scriptures in other languages (Syriac, Latin, etc.)**
 - **Earliest must have come from some kind of Greek source text**
 - **Especially helpful in understanding what may have been in Greek texts that no longer exist**

Authorities for Restoring the Text

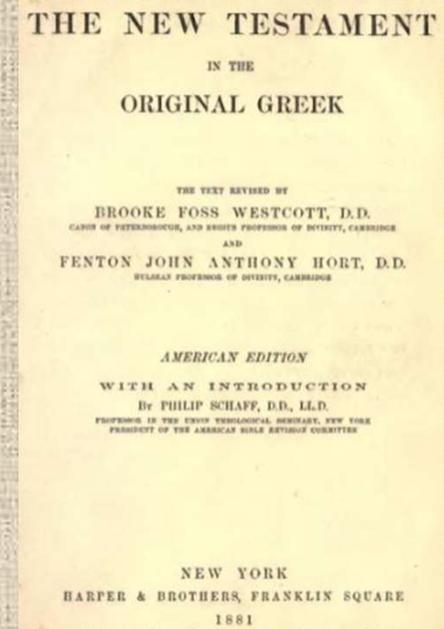
- **Early Religious Writers**
 - **Many religious writers' works contain Bible quotations, using the exact words of the texts available to them**
 - **These “extra-biblical” materials can reveal much about the earliest Bible texts, even those pre-dating the best available manuscripts**



The Westcott-Hort Greek Text

The Westcott-Hort Greek Text

- **Brand-new Greek New Testament published in 1881 by two Cambridge scholars**
 - **Brooke F. Westcott**
 - **Fenton J.A. Hort**



The Westcott-Hort Greek Text

- **Product of a 30-year endeavor**
 - **Revolutionary for their focus on thoroughness, and soundness of the principles of their methods**
 - **Took a “clean sheet” approach, focusing heavily on the Vatican and Sinaitic Manuscripts as their foundation, yet considering all available information**

The Westcott-Hort Greek Text

- **The work of Westcott and Hort was so thorough and meticulous, it has withstood the test of time**
- **Consider these attestations...**

The Westcott-Hort Greek Text

“The text produced by Westcott and Hort is still to this day, even with so many more manuscript discoveries, a very close reproduction of the primitive text of the New Testament...The Westcott and Hort text is extremely reliable...In many instances where I would disagree with the wording in the Nestle / UBS text in favor of a particular variant reading...”

(continued on next slide)

The Westcott-Hort Greek Text

“...I would later check with the Westcott and Hort text and realize that they had often come to the same decision...Of course, the manuscript discoveries of the past one hundred years have changed things, but it is remarkable how often they have affirmed the decisions of Westcott and Hort.”

Dr. Philip W. Comfort, Ph.D., 2005

The Westcott-Hort Greek Text

“All editions of the Nestle-Aland remain close in textual character to the text WH. Aland reports that...it contains only 558 differences from WH text.”

Wikipedia; Aland & Aland, 1995

The Westcott-Hort Greek Text

“The International committee that produced the United Bible Societies’ Greek New Testament, not only adopted the Westcott and Hort edition as its basic text, but followed their methodology in giving attention to both external and internal consideration.”

Bruce Metzger (an editor of the UBS GNT), 1981

The Westcott-Hort Greek Text

- **Thus, Westcott and Hort are key, pivotal men in the modern history of textual criticism and that the current Greek New Testaments continue to reflect, for the most part, the decisions made by Westcott and Hort.**



Important Discoveries After Westcott-Hort

Important Discoveries After W-H

- **As discussed in Lesson 5, both the UBS and NA Greek New Testaments are continually updated based on an ever-expanding body of new evidence**
- **Several significant post-W-H discoveries deserve to be highlighted**

Important Discoveries After W-H

- **Sinaitic Syriac Palimpsest (1892) 5th C**
 - 10 years after W-H published
 - Does not contain Mark 16:9-20
- **Washington Manuscript (1906) 4-5th C**
 - Does contain Mark 16:9-20

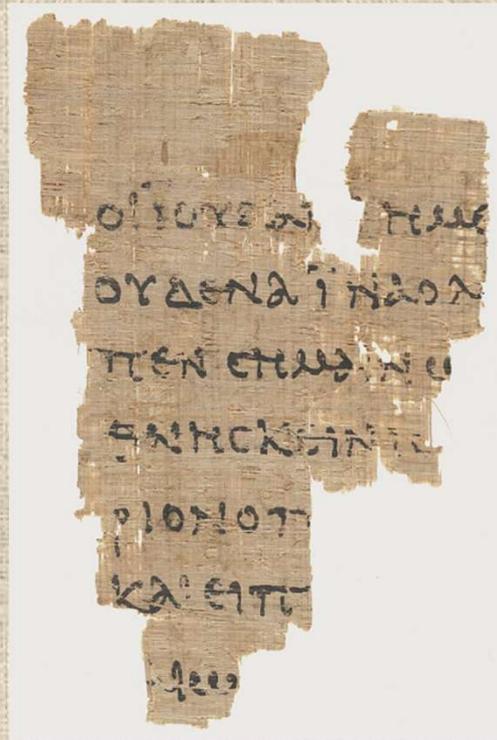
Important Discoveries After W-H

- **Chester Beatty Papyri (1931) 3rd C or earlier**
 - **Three manuscripts from an Egyptian graveyard**
 - 30 leaves of the Gospels and Acts
 - 86 leaves of Pauline epistles
 - 10 leaves from the middle of Revelation

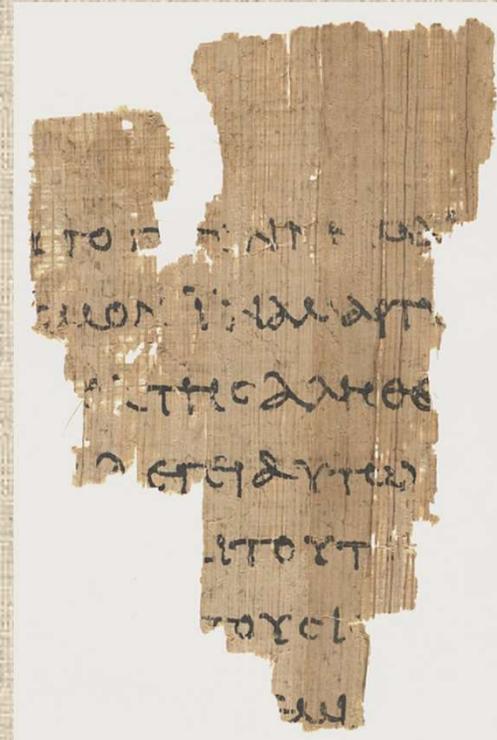
Important Discoveries After W-H

- **John Rylands Papyrus, first half of the 2nd C**
 - **Only a small codex fragment of John's Gospel (18:31-33 and 37-38)**
 - **Apparently the earliest-known manuscript of any part of the New Testament...the 100s AD!**

Important Discoveries After W-H



οἱ τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἡμέτεροι
οὐδὲν ἄλλο ἢ τὸ αὐτὸ
πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ ἡμέτεροι
ἐπισημασθέντες
πρὸς τὸ αὐτὸ
καὶ εἰς τὸ
αὐτὸ



ὅτι οἱ αὐτοὶ ἡμέτεροι
ἐπισημασθέντες
ἐπισημασθέντες
ἐπισημασθέντες
ἐπισημασθέντες
ἐπισημασθέντες
ἐπισημασθέντες
ἐπισημασθέντες

Important Discoveries After W-H

- **Papyrus Bodmer II (1956) 200 AD**
 - Contains much of John's Gospel
- **P. Bodmer XIV-XV (1961) early 3rd C**
 - Most of the Gospel of Luke; part of John's Gospel
 - Oldest known copy of Luke's Gospel

Important Discoveries After W-H

- **Many other very important discoveries exist, and continue to be made every year**
- **Older discoveries such as the Dead Sea Scrolls continue to yield their secrets via new technologies**

Important Discoveries After W-H

- **Most of the oldest manuscripts are significantly similar to the Vatican and Sinaitic Manuscripts**
- **They also continue to support the success of the W-H text, as evidenced in the alignment of modern Greek texts**

A close-up photograph of an open book with Hebrew text. A hand is visible at the top, holding a wooden pointer that rests on the pages. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew script. The lighting is warm and focused on the book, creating a sense of study and tradition.

What We Can Conclude

What We Can Conclude

- **The New Testament rests on solid ground...new discoveries continually strengthen this foundation**
- **Most of the New Testament has never been questioned, because there is no reason to do so**

What We Can Conclude

- Substantial variations are extremely rare
- These variations do not involve principles of faith, doctrine, or divine command

A close-up photograph of an ancient scroll with Hebrew text. A quill pen is resting on the scroll, and a hand is pointing to a line of text. The text is written in a cursive script, likely Hebrew. The background is a warm, golden-brown color, suggesting the scroll is made of parchment or leather. The lighting is soft, highlighting the texture of the scroll and the quill.

LESSON 8: The Text of the Old Testament

Introduction

- **Our faith based on the New Testament message stands secure, thanks to a reliable, reconstructed Greek text**
- **A brief study of the Old Testament text will demonstrate the certainty of the modern, restored Hebrew text**

A close-up photograph of an ancient manuscript, likely a scroll, with Hebrew text written in black ink on aged, yellowish parchment. A hand is visible at the top, holding a wooden pointer that rests on the text. The lighting is warm and focused on the central part of the scroll, creating a sense of historical depth and scholarly study.

Overview of OT Manuscripts

Overview of OT Manuscripts

- **Text data for the NT is impressive...**
 - **1,000s of manuscripts (in whole or in part)**
 - **Best manuscripts date to 4th C; other materials to the 2nd C (NT papyri, versions, Iranaeus' writing)**
- **In contrast, available material in support of the OT is much more abbreviated**

Overview of OT Manuscripts

- **The Cairo Codex of the Prophets**
 - **Contains the “Former” and “Latter” prophets: Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the 12 minor prophets**
 - **Colophon indicates Moses ben Asher copied it in 895 AD in the city of Tiberias (on the western shore of the Sea of Galilee)**

Overview of OT Manuscripts

- **The Cairo Codex of the Prophets**
 - Document is in rather rough shape, but is still quite useful
 - Was given to the Hebrew University of Jerusalem in 1983, where it currently resides

Overview of OT Manuscripts



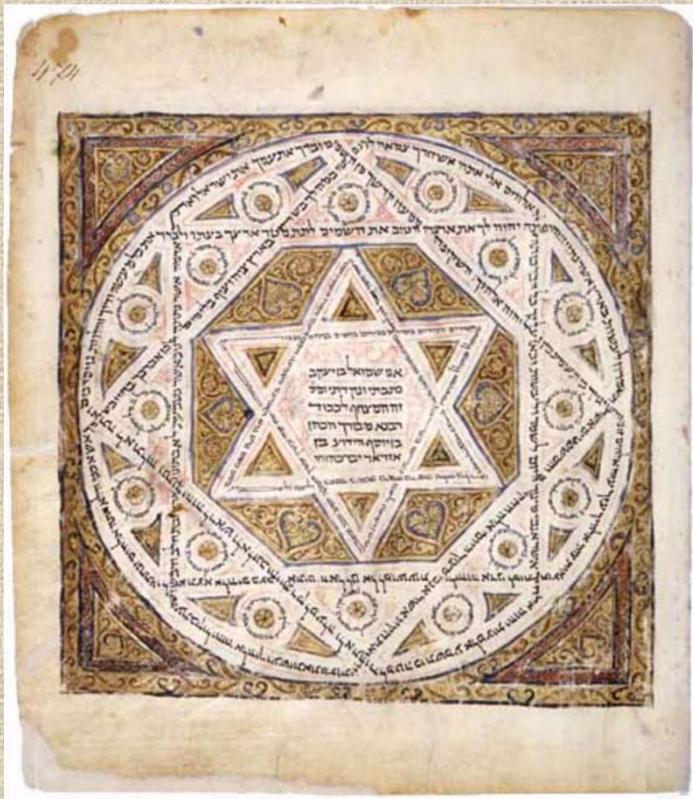
Overview of OT Manuscripts

- **The Leningrad Codex**
 - **The oldest complete manuscript of the Hebrew Bible known to exist**
 - **Colophon indicates it was produced in 1008 AD in Cairo, Egypt**
 - **Parchment bound in leather, and in extraordinarily pristine condition**

Overview of OT Manuscripts

- **The Leningrad Codex**
 - **In the National Library of Russia since 1863**
 - **Comparison to the modern Old Testament:**
 - **Book order and divisions are different**
 - **Total content is identical**

Overview of OT Manuscripts



צאן כלחפשים
כנתא הנהא סוסורנכ
למיססוף ויצא ואל
ס ונבאו מלקה ולא
אמה מרה וילטחעס
ויחוד עץ וישלך אל
חו ויאמר אם שמע
האנת למצותי
ס לא אשים עליך
מח ושם שתנס
צמיס ויס עמאלס
אלס וביו סינע
רצמ צנים וילע
זל ויאמרו אלס
בשנת עלסו

ג
ויד
ובע
קדוש
בשמים

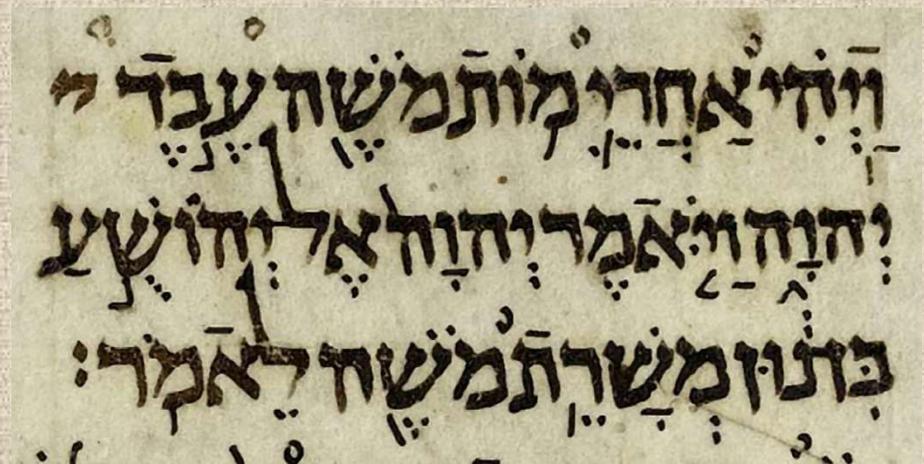
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וילכו
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Overview of OT Manuscripts

- **The Aleppo Codex**
 - **Contemporary of the Leningrad Codex, and initially a complete Hebrew Bible**
 - **During anti-Jewish riots in 1947, about 40% of the codex went missing (destroyed or stolen)**
 - **Surviving leaves in exceptional condition**

Overview of OT Manuscripts



Overview of OT Manuscripts

- **The British Museum Codex of the Pentateuch**
 - **Genesis through Deuteronomy only (The Law)**
 - **Dated to the 10th C**
 - **Produced on vellum and paper**
 - **Somewhat rough condition in spots**

Overview of OT Manuscripts



Overview of OT Manuscripts

- **Today's modern Hebrew texts rely heavily on these four manuscripts**
- **The Leningrad Codex is especially valuable due to its completeness**

Overview of OT Manuscripts

- **Modern Hebrew Bibles published by the German Bible Society:**
 - **Biblia Hebraica – Three editions from 1937**
 - **B. H. Stuttgartensia – Fourth edition in 1977**
 - **B. H. Quinta – Fifth edition begun in 2004, released in installments; still in process**

Overview of OT Manuscripts

◆	Fascicle	Editor	University / Institute	Country	◆	Publication
1	Genesis	Avraham Tal	Tel Aviv University	Israel		2016 (published, Fascicle 7)
2	Exodus	Peter Schwagmeier	University of Zurich	Switzerland		<i>in preparation</i>
3	Leviticus	Innocent Himbaza	University of Fribourg	Switzerland		2021 (published)
4	Numbers	Martin Rösel	University of Rostock	Germany		<i>in preparation</i>
5	Deuteronomy	Carmel McCarthy	University College Dublin	Ireland		2007 (published, Fascicle 3)
6	Joshua	Seppo Sipilä	University of Helsinki	Finland		<i>in preparation</i>
7	Judges	Natalio Fernandez Marcos	CSIC Madrid	Spain		2011 (published, Fascicle 6)
8	Samuel	Stephen Pisano	Pontificio Istituto Biblico Rome	Italy		<i>in preparation</i>
9	Kings	Adrian Schenker	University of Fribourg	Switzerland		<i>in preparation</i>
		Carmel McCarthy	University College Dublin	Ireland		
10	Isaiah	Arie van der Kooij	Leiden University	Netherlands		<i>in preparation</i>
11	Jeremiah	Richard D. Weis	Lexington Theological Seminary	United States		<i>in preparation</i>
12	Ezekiel	Johan Lust	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven	Belgium		2022 (forthcoming)
13	Twelve Prophets	Anthony Gelston	Durham University	United Kingdom		2010 (published, Fascicle 5)
14	Chronicles	Zipora Talshir	University of Beer Sheva	Israel		<i>in preparation</i>
15	Psalms	Gerard J. Norton	University College Dublin	Ireland		<i>in preparation</i>
16	Job	Robert Althann	Pontificio Istituto Biblico Rome	Italy		2021 (forthcoming)
17	Proverbs	Jan de Waard	University of Strasbourg	France		2008 (published, Fascicle 4)
18a	General Introduction to Megilloth					2004 (published, Fascicle 1a)
18b	Ruth	Jan de Waard	University of Strasbourg	France		2004 (published, Fascicle 1b)
18c	Canticles	Piet B. Dirksen	Leiden University	Netherlands		2004 (published, Fascicle 1c)
18d	Qoheleth	Yohanan A. P. Goldman	University of Fribourg	Switzerland		2004 (published, Fascicle 1d)
18e	Lamentations	Rolf Schäfer	German Bible Society Stuttgart	Germany		2004 (published, Fascicle 1e)
18f	Esther	Magne Sæbe	MF School of Theology Oslo	Norway		2004 (published, Fascicle 1f)
19	Daniel	Agustinus Gianto	Pontificio Istituto Biblico Rome	Italy		<i>in preparation</i>
20	Ezra and Nehemiah	David Marcus	JTS New York	United States		2006 (published, Fascicle 2)

- 23 Editors
- 13 Countries

Overview of OT Manuscripts

- The absence of a multitude of older manuscripts raises “the big question”:

Why??

Overview of OT Manuscripts

- **The result of an interesting Jewish practice surrounding the name of God**
 - **Highly revered God's name – as they should!**
 - **Would not even pronounce YHWH**
 - **Ceremonially buried old/worn scriptures to prevent improper use**

A close-up photograph of an open book with Hebrew text. A hand is visible at the top, holding a wooden pointer that rests on the text. The text is written in black ink on aged, yellowish paper. The lighting is warm and focused on the center of the book. The title 'The Massoretes' is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif font across the middle of the image.

The Massoretes

The Massoretes

- **Hebrew manuscripts were copied by hand until printing was invented**
 - **Mistakes and scribal variations were inevitable**
 - **Hebrew was more challenging than Greek due to the similarity of several Hebrew letters**

The Massoretes

- **Guarding against such issues was critical to various Jewish scholars**
 - **Schools dedicated to Old Testament purity and preservation began to spring up**
 - **The Massorete School, based in Tiberias, was probably the best-known, and made significant contributions to the modern Hebrew text**

The Massoretes

- **Diacritic system to assure correct pronunciation of the text**

The Massoretes

acute	á Á	dot	ž Ž
bar	đ Đ	double acute	ő Ő
breve	ă Ă	grave	à À
caron (hacek)	č Č	macron	ā Ā
cedilla	ç Ç	ogonek	ą Ą
circumflex	â Â	ring (krouzek)	å Å
comma	ş Ş	slash	ø Ø
diacresis (umlaut)	ö Ö	tilde	ñ Ñ

The Massoretes

- **Diacritic system to assure correct pronunciation of the text**
 - **All Hebrew characters are consonants...no problem when Hebrew is widely spoken**

The Massoretes



The Massoretes

- **Diacritic system to assure correct pronunciation of the text**
 - **All Hebrew characters are consonants...no problem when Hebrew is widely spoken**
 - **As spoken Hebrew waned, there was a danger of losing the proper pronunciation of words**

The Massoretes

ENGLISH WITHOUT VOWELS

NW THS R TH NMS F TH CHLDRN
F SRL, WHCH CM NT GPT; VRY
MN ND HS HSHLD CM WTH JCB.

(XDS 1:1, KJV)

The Massoretes

- **Diacritic system to assure correct pronunciation of the text**
 - Massoretes invented “vowel points” and “accents” to accompany consonants
 - The consonant-based text was not changed...only a means to assure proper pronunciation was introduced

The Massoretes

Niqqud • Diacritics • נקוד

Shuruk (oo)	Cholam (oh)	Kubutz (oo)	Chirik (ee)	Tsere (eh long)	Chataf Segol (eh short)	Chataf Patach (ah short)	Chataf Kamatz (ah short)	Segol (eh)	Patach (ah)	Kamatz (ah long)	Sh'va (silent or e)
שורוק	חולם	קבוץ	חיריק	צירי	חטף סגול	חטף פתח	חטף קמץ	סגול	פתח	קמץ	שוא


 +
 
 = "BEE"

Bet חיריק


 +
 
 = "BOO"

Bet קבוץ

The Massoretes

וְהָיָה אַחֲרֵי מוֹת מֹשֶׁה עֲבַד יְיָ
וַיְהִי וַיֹּאמֶר יְהוָה אֶל יְהוֹשֻׁעַ
בְּנוֹ מִשְׁרֵת מֹשֶׁה לֵאמֹר:

בִּזְ

= "BEE"

Overview of OT Manuscripts

**What About
YHWH?**

The Massoretes

Chapter and verse	Masoretic Text display	Close transcription of the display
Genesis 2:4	יְהוָה	Yəhwāh
Genesis 3:14	יְהוָה	Yəhōwāh
Judges 16:28	יְהוָה	Yəhōwih
Genesis 15:2	יְהוָה	Yəhwih
1 Kings 2:26	יְהוָה	Yəhōwih
Ezekiel 24:24	יְהוָה	Yəhwih

The Massoretes

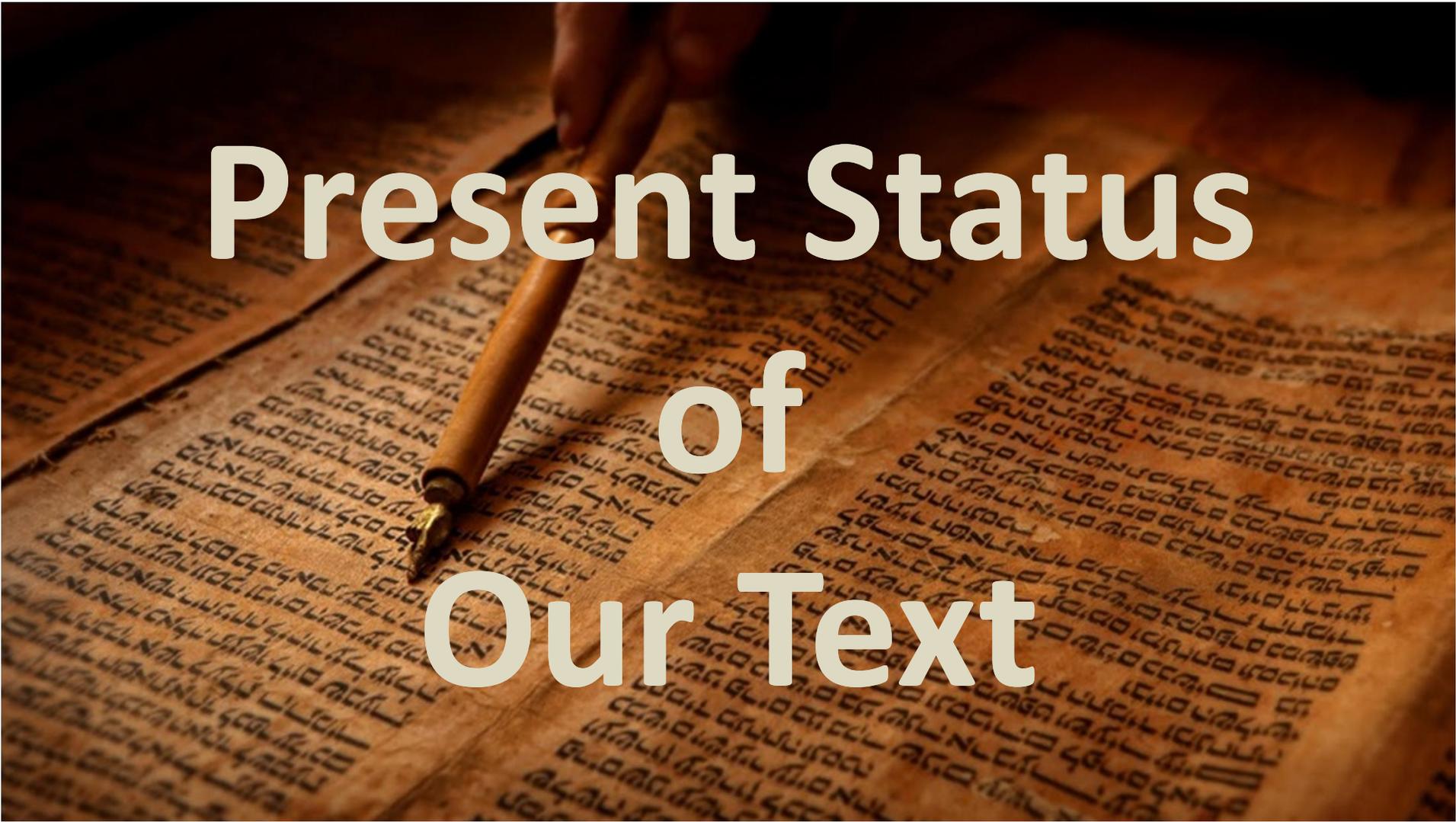
- **Audit system to eliminate scribal additions or omissions**
 - **Key to preserving the accuracy of the written word of God**
 - **Safeguards allowed a finished work to be audited for accuracy before being used**

The Massoretes

- **Audit system to eliminate scribal additions or omissions**
 - **System of intricate counting procedures**
 - # of verses, words, letters per book
 - # of times each letter was used per book
 - Various unique events per book

The Massoretes

- **Performed textual criticism activities by evaluating available materials and preserving an accurate Hebrew text**
- **Due to their great contributions, today's Hebrew text is often called "the Massoretic text"**

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a quill pen over an open book. The book's pages are filled with dense, handwritten text in Hebrew script. The lighting is warm and focused on the pen and the text, creating a sense of historical or scholarly work. The title 'Present Status of Our Text' is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

Present Status of Our Text

Present Status of Our Text

- **Mostly, our earliest and best manuscripts date from the 9th C**
- **Long before the Massoretes, extreme care was taken by Jewish scribes**
- **The Talmud strictly regulated the process of producing a Pentateuch**

Present Status of Our Text

- **Such regulations from the Talmud, combined with the rigorous processes of the Massoretes would...**
 - **Eliminate major variations in the Hebrew text**
 - **Provide assurance that the current text is accurate**

Present Status of Our Text

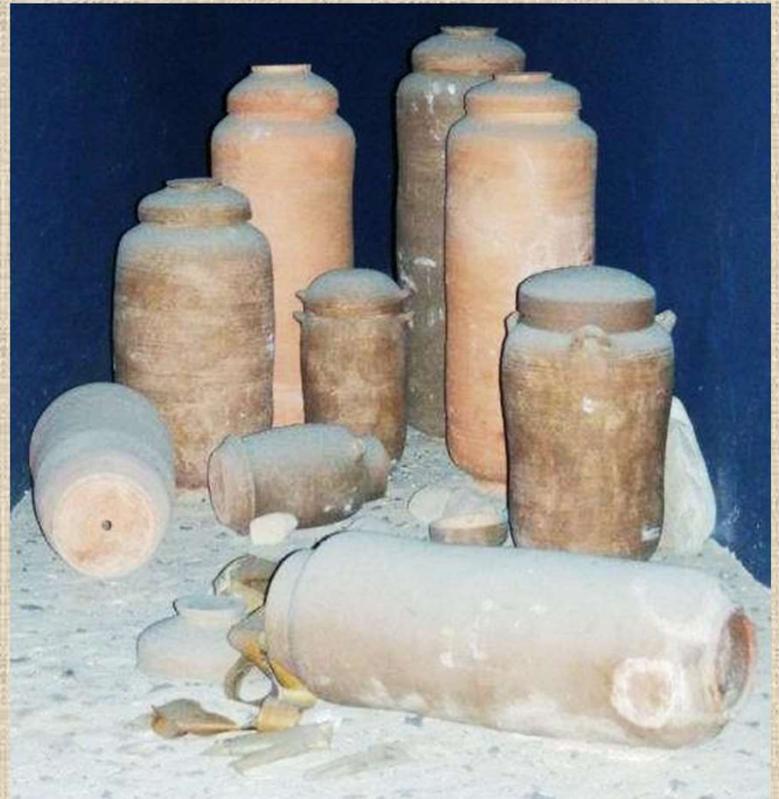
- **Examples of other supporting materials**
 - **Scripture quotations in the Talmud and other Jewish writings**
 - **Latin Vulgate Old Testament (ca. 400 AD)**
 - **Greek Septuagint (ca. 250 BC)**
 - **Samaritan Pentateuch (ca. 200 BC)**

A close-up photograph of an ancient scroll, likely a Dead Sea Scroll, with Hebrew text written in black ink on aged, yellowish parchment. A hand is visible at the top, holding a wooden pointer that rests on the scroll. The lighting is warm and focused on the scroll, creating a sense of historical significance. The text is arranged in columns, and some words are written in larger, bolder characters, possibly indicating a title or a significant passage.

The Dead Sea Scrolls

The Dead Sea Scrolls

- **Initially discovered in March 1948**
- **Qumran caves of the Judean desert near the Dead Sea**



The Dead Sea Scrolls

- **Discovery yielded 100s of rolls and 1,000s of fragments**
- **Mix of contents**
 - **Some contain non-biblical writing**
 - **Others contain portions of nearly every book of the Old Testament**

The Dead Sea Scrolls

- **DSS content significantly confirms the soundness of the current Hebrew text**
 - **“Isaiah A” – ca. 100 BC or earlier**
 - **“Isaiah B” – slightly younger**
 - **Both 1,000 years older than the oldest Massoretic texts (9th C)**

The Dead Sea Scrolls

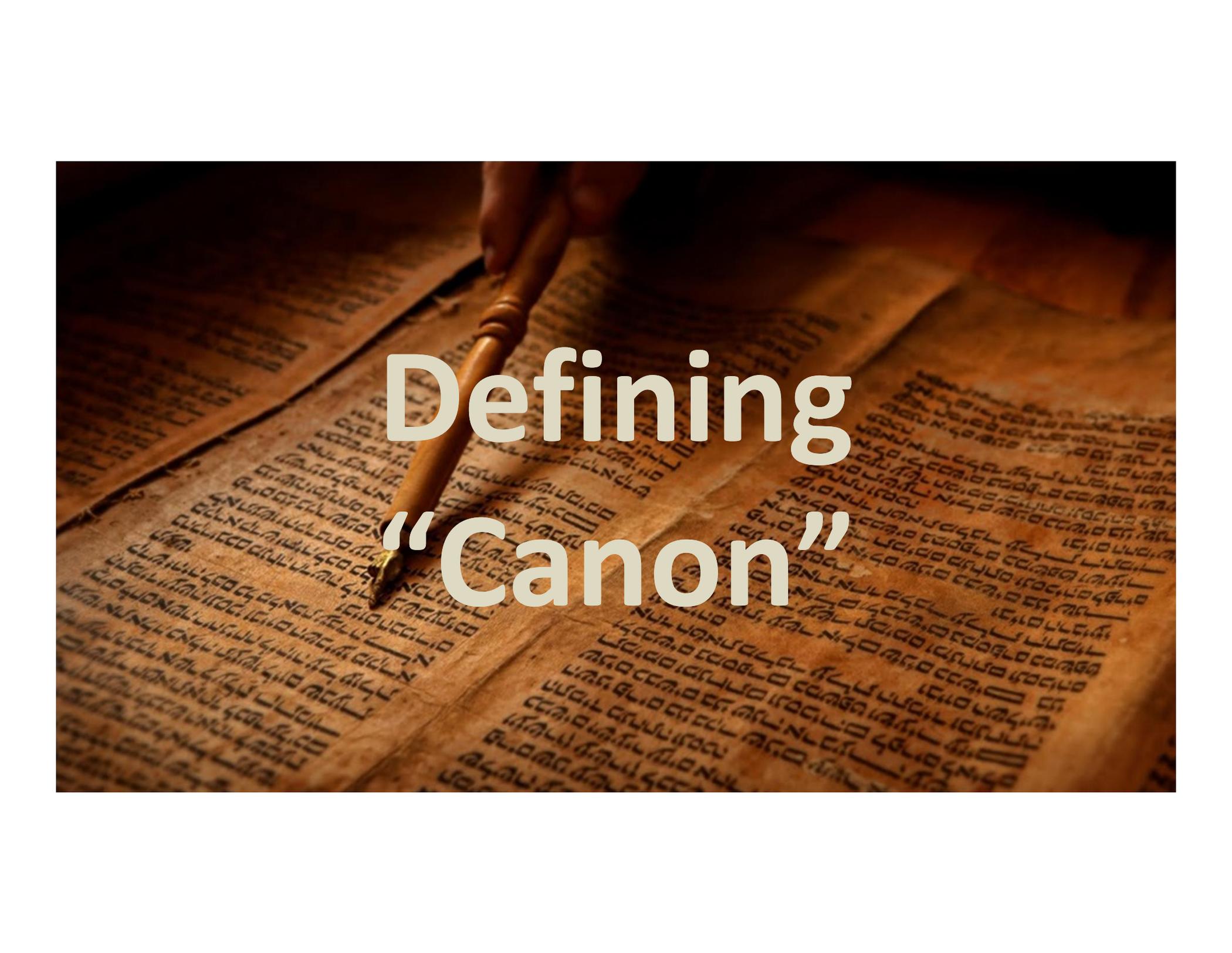
- **DSS content significantly confirms the soundness of the current Hebrew text**
 - **Consider chapter 6 from Isaiah A vs modern text**
 - **37 variations, most of which are spelling differences**
 - **Only 3 appear in an English translation**
 - **None are significant**



LESSON 9: The Canon of the Scriptures

Introduction

- **So far, we have studied the transmission and preservation of the text, and how we can be assured of its accuracy**
- **We now explore the subject of Bible “canon” – which texts belong in the Bible, and which should be excluded**

A close-up photograph of an open book with Hebrew text. A hand is holding a quill pen, pointing it at the text. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew script. The lighting is warm and focused on the book, with the background being dark and out of focus. The title "Defining 'Canon'" is overlaid in large white text on the center of the image.

Defining "Canon"

Defining “Canon”

- **Similar in English (canon), Greek (kanon), and Hebrew (qaneh); originally translated as “reed”**
- **Since reeds were frequently used as measuring rods, the meaning evolved to mean “standard” or “rule”**

Defining “Canon”

- **Also refers to a standard list or index of works that “belong”**
 - ***Star Wars* “canon” – Officially-sanctioned stories and storylines vs “fan fiction”**
 - **Bible “canon” – Books that are indeed inspired scripture and have their rightful place in a complete set of the Word of God**

Defining “Canon”

- We have heard: “In order for something to be expedient, it must first be lawful”
- The point is that there must be divine authority behind something done in an expedient way
- “Canonicity” is the same (2 Tim 3:16-17)

Defining “Canon”

- The one issuing the authority is declaring a work’s canonicity, even if others don’t consider it to be so
- The author describes “canonicity” as acceptance by men, because we must determine what has been inspired

A close-up photograph of an open book with Hebrew text. A hand is holding a quill pen, poised to write on the page. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew script. The lighting is warm and focused on the pen and the text.

The Canon of the Old Testament

The Canon of the Old Testament

- **The NT provides evidence of what was considered “scripture”...authoritative Old Covenant writings (a.k.a. canon)**
 - **Jesus and apostles often quoted or referred to passages and events from the Old Testament**
 - **Jesus refers to the “scope” of “scripture”**

The Canon of the Old Testament

- **References by Jesus to the “scope” of “scripture”**
 - **Luke 24:44 – “...the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms...”**
 - **Luke 11:51 – “...from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah...”**

The Canon of the Old Testament

- **Extra-biblical evidence also exists**
 - **Josephus (1st C) speaks of 22 “divine” books, correct as the Jews would have divided them**
 - **Origen (3rd C) confirms Josephus with a published listing of the 22 books**
 - **Jerome (5th C) also confirms with the Latin Vulgate translation directly from the Hebrew**

The Canon of the Old Testament

- | | | | |
|-----------|----------------------|-----------|------------------------------------|
| 1 | Genesis | 12 | Psalms |
| 2 | Exodus | 13 | Proverbs |
| 3 | Leviticus | 14 | Ecclesiastes (Qoheleth) |
| 4 | Numbers | 15 | Song of Solomon (Canticles) |
| 5 | Deuteronomy | 16 | Isaiah |
| 6 | Joshua | 17 | Jeremiah-Lamentations |
| 7 | Judges-Ruth | 18 | Daniel |
| 8 | Samuel | 19 | Ezekiel |
| 9 | Kings | 20 | Job |
| 10 | Chronicles | 21 | Esther |
| 11 | Ezra-Nehemiah | 22 | The 12 Prophets |

A close-up photograph of an open book with Hebrew text. A hand is holding a quill pen, poised to write on the page. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew script. The lighting is warm and focused on the pen and the text.

The Canon of the New Testament

The Canon of the New Testament

- **First-century Christians had no NT at their disposal...they were living it!**
- **Even after John's exile, the New Testament as we know it was not immediately available**

The Canon of the New Testament

- **It took time for...**
 - **Books and letters to be written**
 - **Letters to be sent and shared when directed**
 - **Other books to be circulated**
 - **Writings to be identified as inspired**
 - **Writings to be assembled into one document**

The Canon of the New Testament

Matthew
Galatians
James

1-2 Thessalonians
Luke
1-2 Corinthians
Romans

Acts
Ephesians
Colossians
Philemon
Philippians
Mark
1-2 Timothy
Titus
1-2 Peter
Hebrews
Jude

John
1-3 John
Revelation



The Canon of the New Testament

- **Writings underwent a process of assessment to determine their authenticity and whether they were inspired...thus assessing their “canonicity”**

The Canon of the New Testament

- **Things to note:**
 - **Not all writings were inspired**
 - **Not all letters written to NT churches became part of the NT (cf. Colossians 4:16)**
 - **Some books presented assessment challenges**
 - **But...God KNOWS what is canon!**

The Canon of the New Testament

- **Evidence showing NT “assembly”**
 - **Justin Martyr (early 2nd C) mentions “memoirs of apostles” read alongside “writings of prophets”**
 - **Muratorian Fragment (late 2nd C) specifies 20 of the 27 books and implies 2 others (Matthew and Mark); damaged condition of document seems to account for missing books**

The Canon of the New Testament

- **Evidence showing NT “assembly”**
 - **Origen (3rd C) lists all 27 books, but indicates that Hebrews, James, 2-3 John, and Jude were questioned by some**
 - **Eusebius (4th C) lists 27 books, and indicates that they are accepted by the majority**
 - **Athanasius (367 AD) lists the current 27 books**

A close-up photograph of an open book with Hebrew text. A hand is holding a quill pen, pointing it at the text. The lighting is warm and focused on the book. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew script.

Related Observations

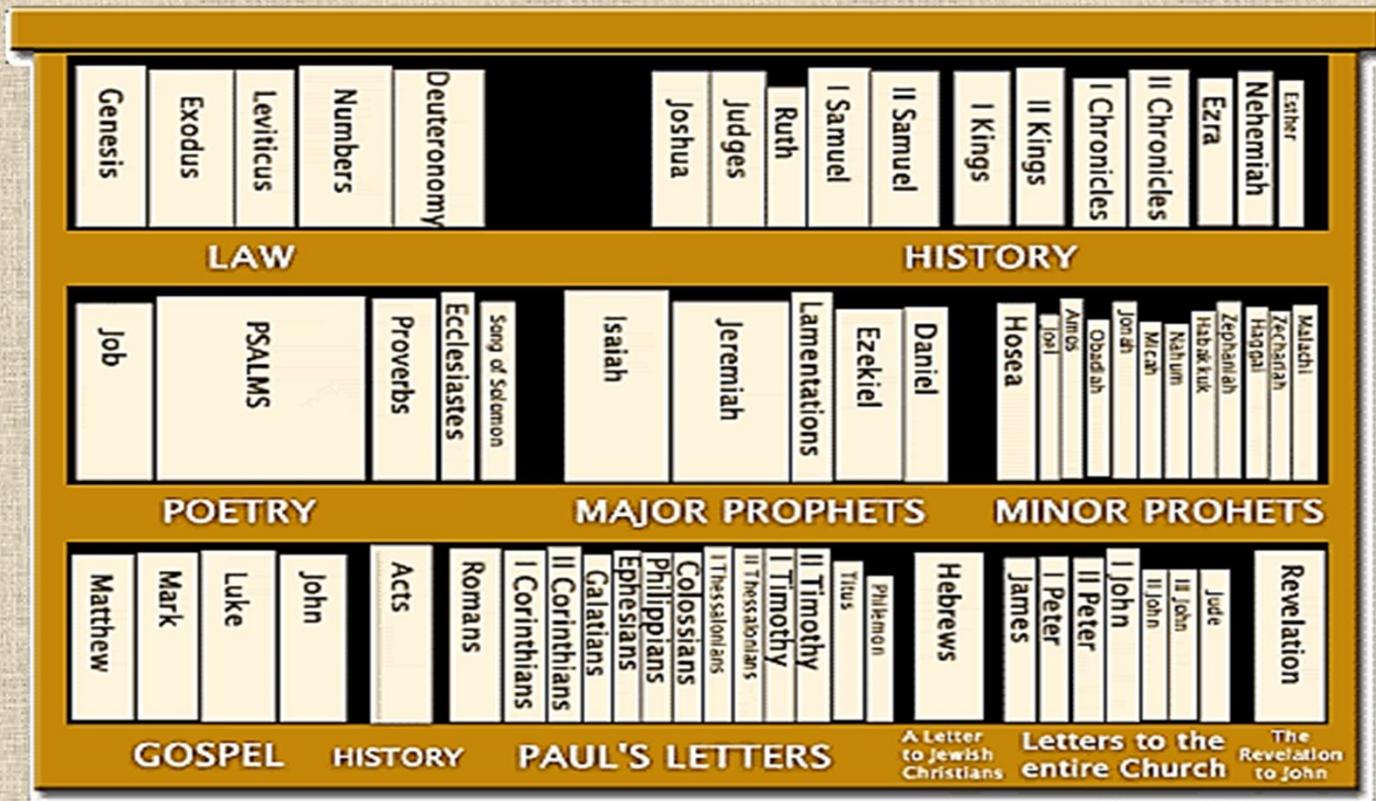
Related Observations

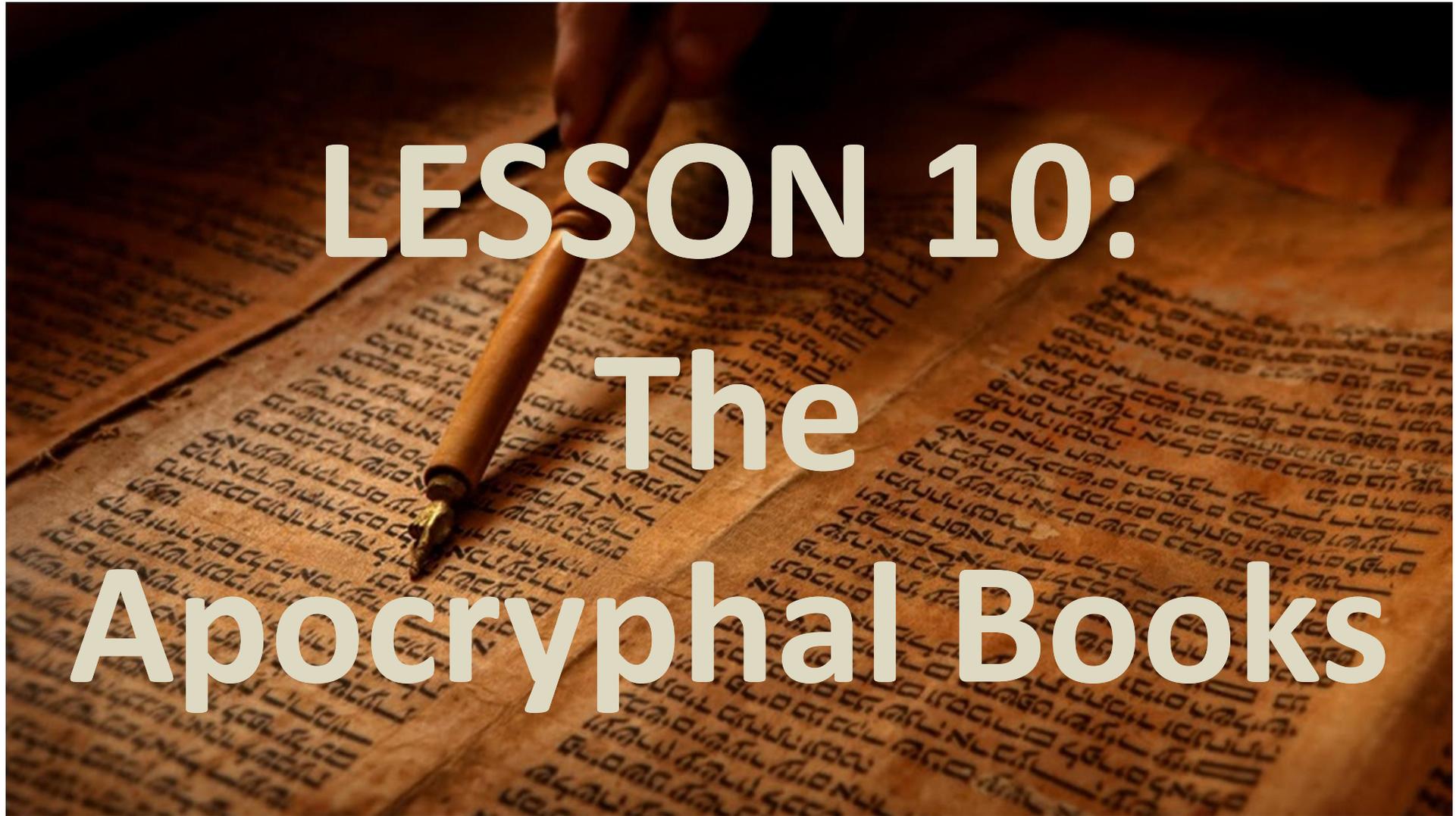
- **Various non-inspired books circulated among churches, including:**
 - **Epistle of Barnabas (70-132 AD)**
 - **The Shepherd (by Hermas; 140-170 AD)**
- **These were never above suspicion and are not on par with genuine inspired works**

Related Observations

- **The Bible in its entirety is the inspired word of God**
- **Each book inherently bears the divine authority of God**
- **This authority declares each book's right to be part of the Bible canon**

The Form of The Bible Today





LESSON 10:

The

Apocryphal Books

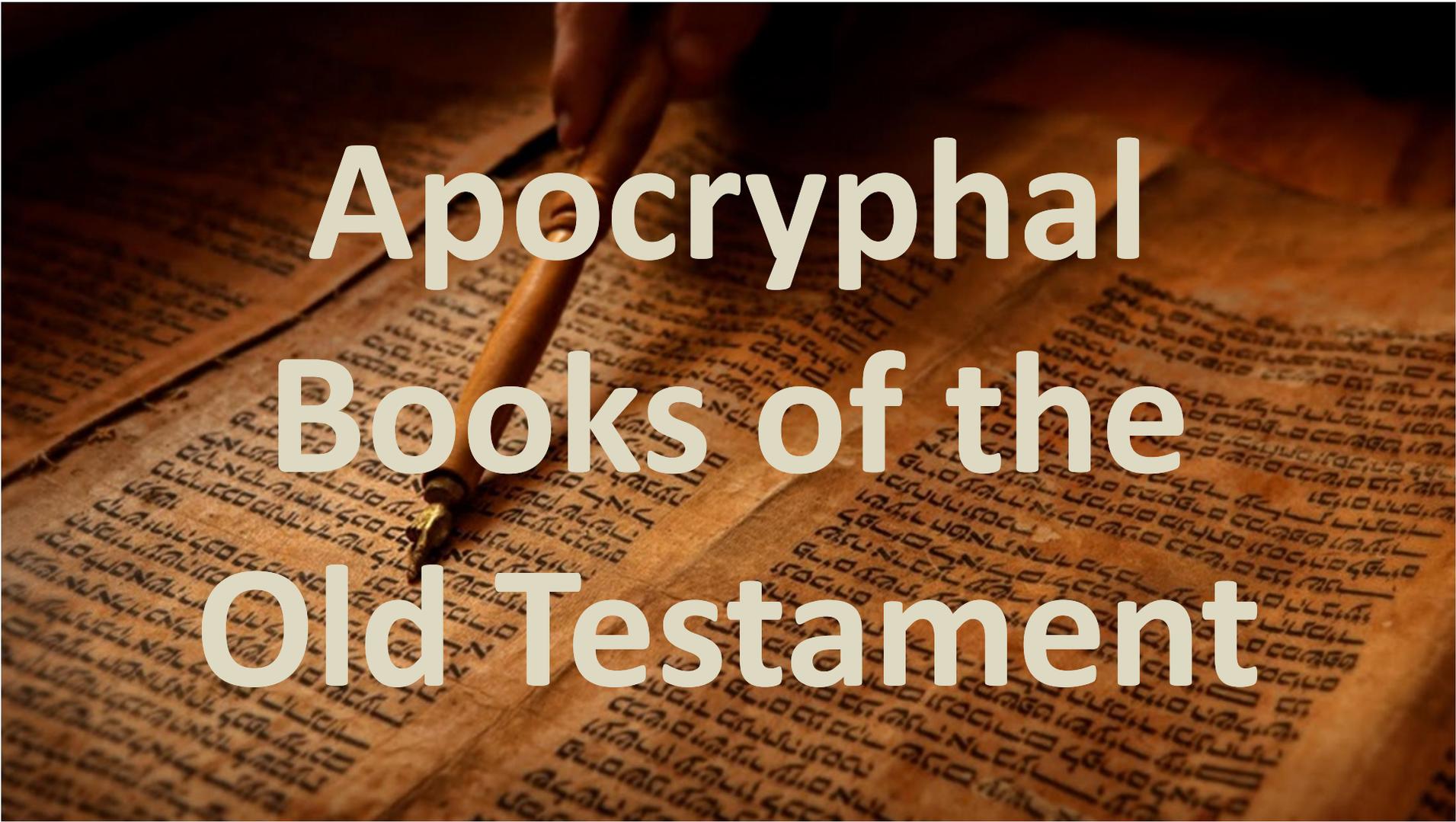
Introduction

- **God's authority declares what works are truly scripture, or Bible canon**
- **Man's study has discovered that this spans 66 books in all (in English)**
- **What about the collection of books called "Apocrypha"?**



Apocrypha

- **From a Greek word meaning “hidden”**
 - **Books with unknown or doubtful origins**
 - **Eventually used to mean “non-canonical” (and therefore not inspired)**
- **Now refers to extra books found in the Catholic version of the Old Testament**

A close-up photograph of an ancient scroll with Hebrew text. A hand is visible at the top, holding a quill pen and writing on the scroll. The scroll is unrolled, showing several lines of text in a cursive Hebrew script. The lighting is warm and focused on the central part of the scroll, creating a sense of historical depth and scholarly work.

Apocryphal Books of the Old Testament

Apocryphal Books of the OT

- **15 books in total, with most written between 200 BC and 200 AD**
- **12 are included in the Roman Catholic bible, spread throughout the OT**
- **Some non-Catholic bibles (including early KJVs) place all 15 after Malachi**

Apocryphal Books of the OT

Apocryphal Books Considered Canon by the Roman Catholic Church

1 Maccabees	The Additions to the Book of Esther	The Letter of Jeremiah
2 Maccabees	The Wisdom of Solomon	The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men
Tobit	Ecclesiasticus	Susanna
Judith	Baruch	Bel and the Dragon

Other Apocryphal Books of the Old Testament

1 Esdras	2 Esdras	The Prayer of Manasseh
----------	----------	------------------------

Apocryphal Books of the OT

- **Historical Group**

- **1 Esdras – Significantly overlaps Ezra; includes material not supported by scripture**
- **1 Maccabees – Account of Jewish history during the 2nd C**
- **2 Maccabees – Similar to 1 Maccabees**

Apocryphal Books of the OT

- **Legendary Group**

- **Tobit – Stories of a fictional character designed to encourage keeping the Law**
- **Judith – Fictional account of a widow delivering her city from destruction by charming and killing the leader of an enemy army**

Apocryphal Books of the OT

- **Legendary Group (continued)**
 - **Additions to Esther – Stories that expand on the book of Esther**
 - **Additions to Daniel – Various folk tales:**
 - **Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the 3 Young Men**
 - **Susanna**
 - **Bel and the Dragon**

Apocryphal Books of the OT

- **Prophetic Group**

- **Baruch – Claims to be written by Jeremiah's friend Baruch, but actually written after 70 AD**
- **Letter of Jeremiah – Vanities of idolatry**
- **Prayer of Manasseh – Written in 200 BC**
- **2 Esdras – Writings from 100 BC – 200 AD**

Apocryphal Books of the OT

- **Ethical Group**

- **Ecclesiasticus (or, the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach) – Collection of sayings after the style of the Proverbs, written about 200 BC**
- **Wisdom of Solomon – Book of ancient Jewish philosophy, traceable to about 100 AD**



Why These Books Are Rejected

Why These Books Are Rejected

- **Some books, whether inspired or not, may have some value**
 - **1 Macabees – Jewish History**
 - **Ecclesiasticus – Words of Wisdom**
- **But value is not the question... inspiration is!**

Why These Books Are Rejected

- If these works are inspired, they belong with the Bible's other 66 books...even if man chooses to reject them
- However, several things indicate that these are not inspired, and have no right to be counted among God's Word

Why These Books Are Rejected

- **Reason #1: The Hebrew Bible never included them, and there is no evidence that they were ever accepted by any Jewish community anywhere**

Why These Books Are Rejected

- **Reason #2: There is no evidence that Jesus or his apostles accepted them**
 - Not included in “Law / Prophets / Writings”
 - Never quoted anywhere in the New Testament

Why These Books Are Rejected

- **Reason #3:** These were not accepted by any 1st-C Jewish writers (e.g., Josephus), nor by NT-era writers (Origen, Jerome)
- In fact, Jerome argued the apocryphal (uncertain) nature of these books, and rejected their inclusion as Bible canon

Why These Books Are Rejected

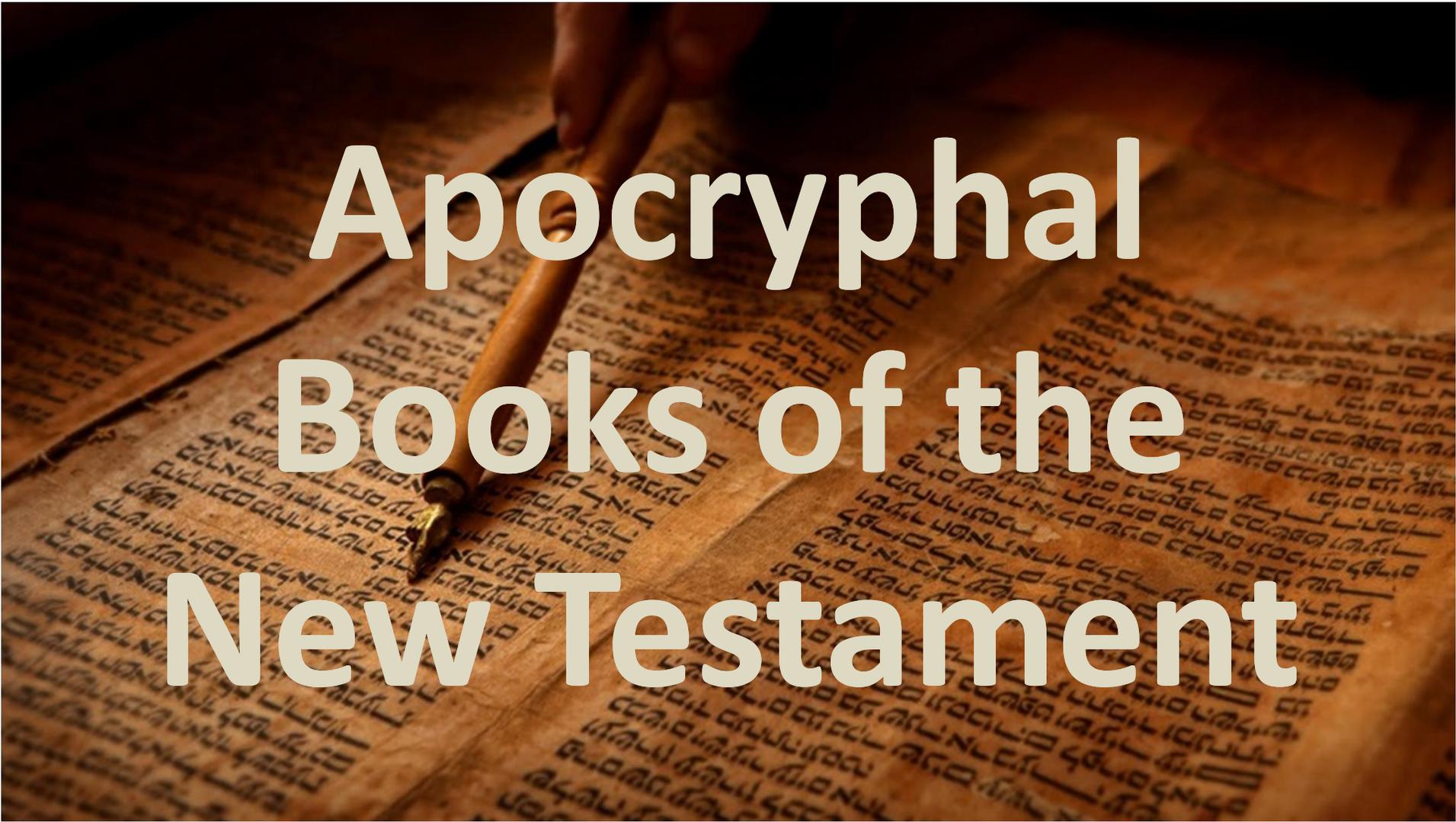
- **Reason #4: These books lack the intrinsic qualities of inspired works:**
 - Full of factual error (history, chronology, geography, etc.)
 - Contradict themselves and genuine scripture
 - Exhibit other qualities foreign to inspired works

Why These Books Are Rejected

- **Reason #5: They have always been immersed in uncertainty**
- **Although some early Greek OT translations included them, they were not regarded as authoritative by the Jews (see Reason #1)**

Why These Books Are Rejected

- **The Bottom Line:** There is no evidence or indication that these works are inspired, and therefore they do not belong in the Bible, *even if some – such as the Roman Catholic Church – want them to be!*

A close-up photograph of an ancient manuscript with Hebrew text, a quill pen, and a hand writing. The text is written in a cursive script on aged, yellowed parchment. A hand is visible at the top, holding a quill pen and writing on the document. The lighting is warm and focused on the central part of the page.

Apocryphal Books of the New Testament

Apocryphal Books of the NT

- **Various apocryphal books relating to New Testament times are less well-known**
- **Sometimes these are called “the lost books of the Bible”...which is quite a mischaracterization!**

Apocryphal Books of the NT

- **Characteristics of apocryphal NT books:**
 - **Varous types: Gospels, Acts, Epistles, Apocalypses**
 - **Authors assumed names of apostles and others**
 - **Written in 2nd C or later**
 - **Full of fanciful stories, such as Jesus as a temperamental youth causing friends' deaths, etc.**

Apocryphal Books of the NT

- **Like the rejected apocryphal books of the Old Testament, these books do not stand the test of inspirational credibility, and therefore are rejected as part of the Bible's canon**



LESSON 11:
The English Bible
to 1611

Introduction

- **Although “Christianity” spread to Britain by the 4th C, the Bible wasn’t in English**
- **Latin was the language of the learned, and early Bibles were in Latin (e.g., Latin Vulgate)**

Introduction

- **Most Britons could not read Latin, so could not read Scripture for themselves**
- **It was in England where the “local-language Bible battle” was fought and won**

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a wooden quill pen over an open book. The book's pages are filled with dense text in a Gothic script, likely a medieval manuscript. The lighting is warm and focused on the quill and the text it is pointing to. The title 'Wycliffe and Tyndale' is overlaid in large white text.

Wycliffe and Tyndale

Wycliffe and Tyndale

- **John Wycliffe (1328-1384; 56 yrs)**
 - English scholar, philosopher, theologian, Bible translator, reformer, Catholic priest, and professor at Oxford
 - Became an influential dissident within the Roman Catholic priesthood

Wycliffe and Tyndale

- **John Wycliffe (continued)**
 - “Late” in life, Wycliffe undertook efforts to translate the Latin Bible into English
 - Completed 1382; revised 1388 by John Purvey
 - First offering of the entire Bible in English
 - Stood until the 16th C

Wycliffe and Tyndale

- **William Tyndale (1494-1536; 42 yrs)**
 - **Considered the true “father” of the English Bible, despite Wycliffe’s important work**
 - **English scholar and translator who studied at Oxford and Cambridge**
 - **Highly-skilled linguist who was fluent in 8 languages, including Greek and Hebrew**

Wycliffe and Tyndale

- **William Tyndale (continued)**
 - Religious convictions were at odds with Roman Catholicism (prayer to saints, Scriptures only interpretable by approved “clergy”, etc.)
 - Life’s goal became to give the English people a translation based on Hebrew and Greek, rather than on Latin

Wycliffe and Tyndale

- **Tyndale Bible Timeline: 1516**
 - **Erasmus (Greek professor at Cambridge) publishes the first printed Greek New Testament in England**

Wycliffe and Tyndale

- **Tyndale Bible Timeline: 1524**
 - Tyndale leaves England for Hamburg, Germany to work on his translation, after finding England an inhospitable environment in which to do his work

Wycliffe and Tyndale

- **Tyndale Bible Timeline: 1525**
 - Tyndale completes the English translation of Erasmus' Greek NT, and seeks to have it printed
 - Tyndale's translation efforts associate him with Germany's Martin Luther; they share many enemies who were against local-language translations and Catholic church reformation

Wycliffe and Tyndale

- **Tyndale Bible Timeline: 1526**
 - Finished copies printed in Germany are smuggled into England, and eagerly bought by the masses
 - Roman Catholic Church condemns it and holds public burnings of Tyndale's New Testament
 - Tyndale turns his attention to translating the Old Testament from Hebrew

Wycliffe and Tyndale

- **Tyndale Bible Timeline: 1530-1535**
 - **Various works are published:**
 - Pentateuch (1530)
 - Jonah (1531)
 - Revised Genesis (1534)
 - Revisions of the New Testament (1534-1535)

Wycliffe and Tyndale

- **Tyndale Bible Timeline: 1535-1536**
 - **1535 – Tyndale is imprisoned by Romanist zealots who consider his work to be heresy, despite “official” opposition beginning to wane**
 - **1536 – Tyndale is convicted of heresy, strangled to death, then burned at the stake**

Wycliffe and Tyndale

Tyndale's Final Plea:

*Lord, open the
King of England's eyes!*

Wycliffe and Tyndale

- **Tyndale's work was revolutionary:**
 - **First English translation from Greek and Hebrew**
 - **First English Bible to use the printing press**
 - **First to use the term "Jehovah" for God's name**
 - **First English Bible of the "Reformation" movement**



Other 16th Century Translations

Other 16th-Century Translations

- **Coverdale Bible (1535)**
 - **Produced by Miles Coverdale, a friend and associate of Tyndale**
 - **Partially based on Tyndale's work**
 - **First to circulate in England without official hindrance**

Other 16th-Century Translations

- **Matthew's Bible (1537)**
 - Produced by John Rogers, another friend of Tyndale
 - "Matthew's" due to Rogers's pseudonym of "Thomas Matthew"
 - Blended Tyndale and Coverdale together

Other 16th-Century Translations

- **Taverner's Bible (1539)**
 - Independent revision of Matthew's Bible by Rychard Taverner
 - Yielded a number of rendering improvements in various New Testament passages

Other 16th-Century Translations

- **Great Bible (1539)**
 - Edited by Miles Coverdale
 - First English Bible authorized (by Henry VIII) to be read during worship services
 - Presence of the Great Bible in church buildings created a great stir among the people

Other 16th-Century Translations

- **Geneva Bible (1560)**
 - **Printed in Geneva, Switzerland**
 - **First to print each verse as a paragraph (a la KJV)**
 - **First to italicize words not specifically represented in the original texts**
 - **Commentary tainted with John Calvin's views**

Other 16th-Century Translations

- **Geneva Bible (1560)**
 - **Became “the” family Bible due to its:**
 - **Legible type and small form**
 - **Commentary and illustrations**
 - **Verse citations and cross-references**
 - **Maps, tables, and indices**

Other 16th-Century Translations

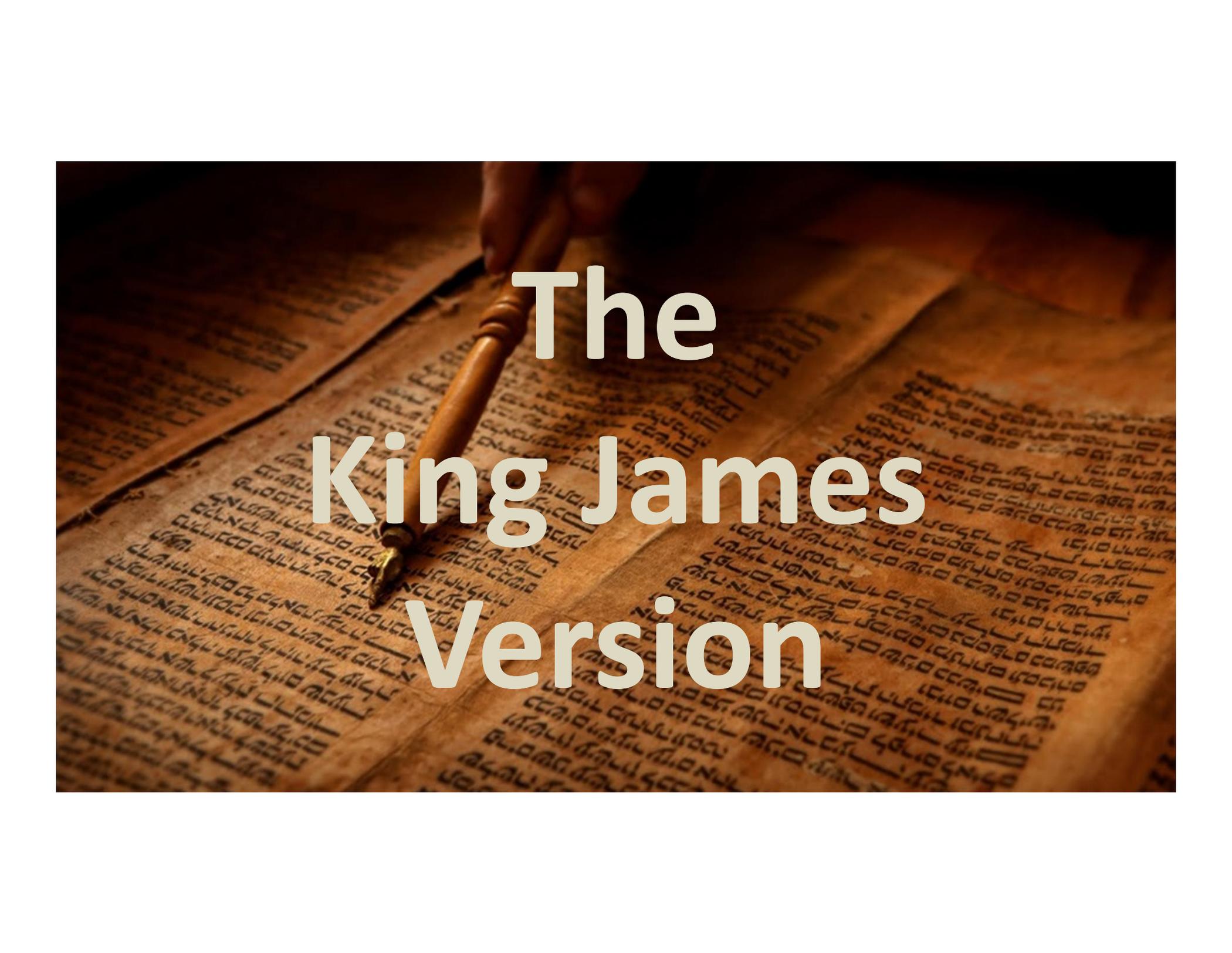
- **Bishop's Bible (1568 and 1572)**
 - Revisions of the Great Bible to attract people away from the Geneva Bible (due to its Calvinistic content)
 - Both revisions failed in their attempt at private conversion, but the Bishop's Bible became the new Bible in use for public worship services

Other 16th-Century Translations

- **Roman Catholic English Bible (1582 NT and 1609-10 OT)**
 - **Forced into being by the popularity of English Bibles from sources outside the Catholic Church**
 - **Not translated from Greek and Hebrew, but from the Latin Vulgate (similar to Wycliffe)**

Other 16th-Century Translations

- **Roman Catholic English Bible (1582 NT and 1609-10 OT)**
 - **Called the Rheims-Douai (or Douay) translation**
 - NT produced at the English college of Rheims
 - OT produced at the college of Douai

A close-up photograph of an open book with Hebrew text. A hand is holding a quill pen, poised to write on the page. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew script. The lighting is warm and focused on the pen and the text.

The King James Version

The King James Version

- **Considered by many to be the CROWN JEWEL of English Bible translations**
- **Although not perfect, the KJV was far superior to other available translations in many ways**

The King James Version

- **The KJV arose out of a need for a single translation that was:**
 - **Satisfactory to all of various religious factions**
 - **Deemed appropriate for both public and private use**

The King James Version

- **KJV Bible Timeline: 1604**
 - King James hosts “Hampton Court Conference” to discuss religious tolerance
 - Attendee John Rainolds of Oxford proposes a new translation, an idea welcomed by the king

The King James Version

- **KJV Bible Timeline: 1604-1607**
 - King James himself develops the 15 rules for the new translation
 - A key rule includes a near-prohibition on notes of comment (unlike the popular and one-sided Geneva Bible), to minimize the expression of private viewpoints

The King James Version

- **KJV Bible Timeline: 1607-1610**
 - Translation work begins in earnest, leveraging Greek and Hebrew manuscripts, but not beginning from a clean slate
 - Objective is instead to revise the 1602 version of the Bishop's Bible, itself an often-revised revision of the Great Bible

The King James Version

- **KJV Bible Timeline: 1607-1610 (cont'd)**
 - **48 Hebrew and Greek scholars are divided into 6 teams, with specific books assigned**
 - **Each team's work is reviewed and revised by all five other teams**
 - **Final translation reflects input of all scholars**

The King James Version

- **KJV Bible Timeline: 1611**
 - **First edition of the “Authorized Version” printed**
 - **Title page includes “To be read in Churches”, signifying replacement of the Bishop’s Bible**
 - **Also includes 11-page preface from the translators, explaining their work and objectives**

The King James Version – Title Page

The HOLY BIBLE,

Containing the Old Testament AND THE NEW,

**Newly Translated out of the Original tongues: & with
the former Translations diligently compared and
revised by his Majesty's special Commandment**

Appointed to be read in Churches

The King James Version

- **KJV Bible Timeline: Beyond 1611**
 - Numerous revisions, editions, and modernizations take place over the next 400 years
 - Not long after 1611, an edition with >400 changes is issued
 - Now have KJV, KJVA, KJV + Apocrypha, NKJV, etc.

The King James Version

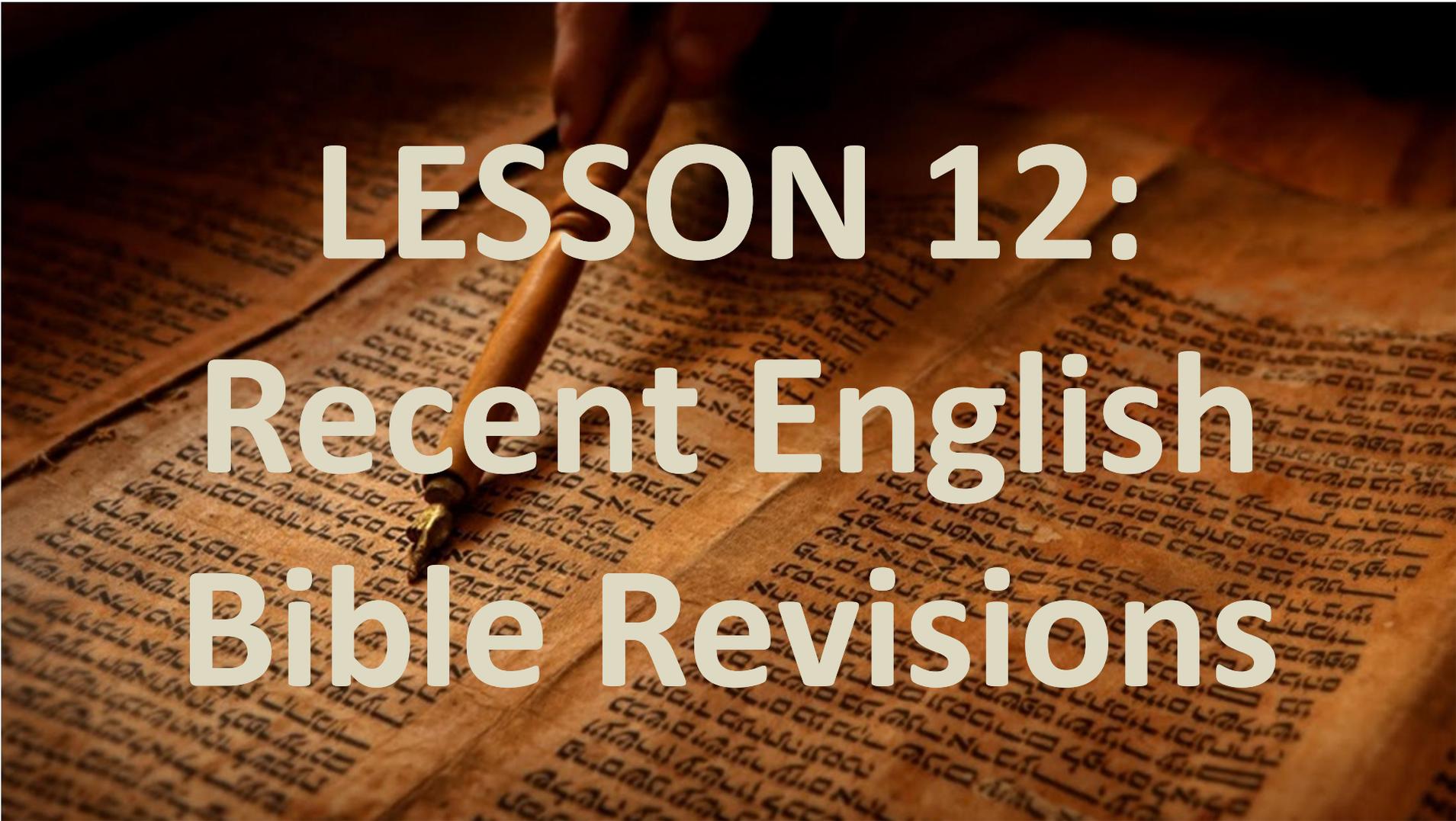
- **KJV Bible Timeline: Beyond 1611 (cont'd)**
 - **Adoption for public use takes place immediately: The king commanded that it replace the Bishop's Bible in all public worship services**
 - **Private acceptance takes about a generation, as the Geneva Bible is wildly popular among the people**

The King James Version

- **KJV was superior to prior translations**
 - **Significant advances in Greek and Hebrew scholarship, jump-started by Tyndale**
 - **Growth in literary scholarship led to a translation in a familiar and classic English style**

The King James Version

- **KJV was superior to prior translations (cont'd)**
 - **Timing was right...a new translation was needed and the KJV was able to capitalize on the successes and failures of prior translations**
 - **It was not a partisan work (e.g., Geneva Bible), but a product of a diverse team of scholars**



LESSON 12:
Recent English
Bible Revisions

Introduction

- **The KJV was extremely successful in achieving its objectives**
- **As a result, it enjoyed unquestioned supremacy for centuries**

Introduction

- **Yet, there is always room for improvement in any translation**
- **Factors include human, source materials, knowledge/skill, and “language of the time”**



Weaknesses of the King James Version

Weaknesses of the King James Version

- **Despite its overwhelming success, and near-veneration by some, the KJV is not a perfect translation**
- **Various weaknesses made further revisions inevitable**

Weaknesses of the King James Version

- **An inadequate textual base**
 - **Medieval texts available contained many scribal mistakes, errors, and revisions**
 - **Significant manuscript material has become available since 1611 that has been useful in “firming up” scripture translations**

Weaknesses of the King James Version

- **An inadequate textual base (cont'd)**
 - **This material includes:**
 - **Vatican Manuscript (publicly released 1889)**
 - **Sinaitic Manuscript (discovered 1844)**
 - **Alexandrian Manuscript (gifted to England 1644)**
 - **Recent discoveries of early papyrus documents**

Weaknesses of the King James Version

- **An inadequate textual base (cont'd)**
 - **The KJV did not benefit from the clarity that these earlier manuscripts would have provided**
 - **Yet, as we noted in Lesson 2, the KJV compares favorably to them, attesting to the success of the preservation of God's word through the ages**

Weaknesses of the King James Version

- **Archaic words**
 - Much has changed in English in 400 years
 - Cumbersome terms include:
 - **Howbeit** = **Nevertheless / However** (John 16:13)
 - **Peradventure** = **Perhaps / Suppose** (Genesis 18:24)
 - **Aforetime** = **In the Past / Previously** (Romans 15:4)

Weaknesses of the King James Version

- **Archaic words (cont'd)**
 - **Words with different meanings include:**
 - **Allege** = **Prove** (Acts 17:3)
 - **Communicate** = **Share** (Hebrews 13:16)
 - **Suffer** = **Allow** (Matthew 19:14)
 - **Prevent** = **Precede** (1 Thessalonians 4:15)

Weaknesses of the King James Version

- **Archaic words (cont'd)**
- **There are at least 436 such terms in the KJV, including:**
 - **Astonied, bruit, concupiscence, discomfit, emerods, firkin, glister, holpen, implead, jeopard, knop, latchet, meteyard, noisome, overlive, provender, quick, ringstraked, sith, tache, unicorn, victual, winefat, etc.**

Weaknesses of the King James Version

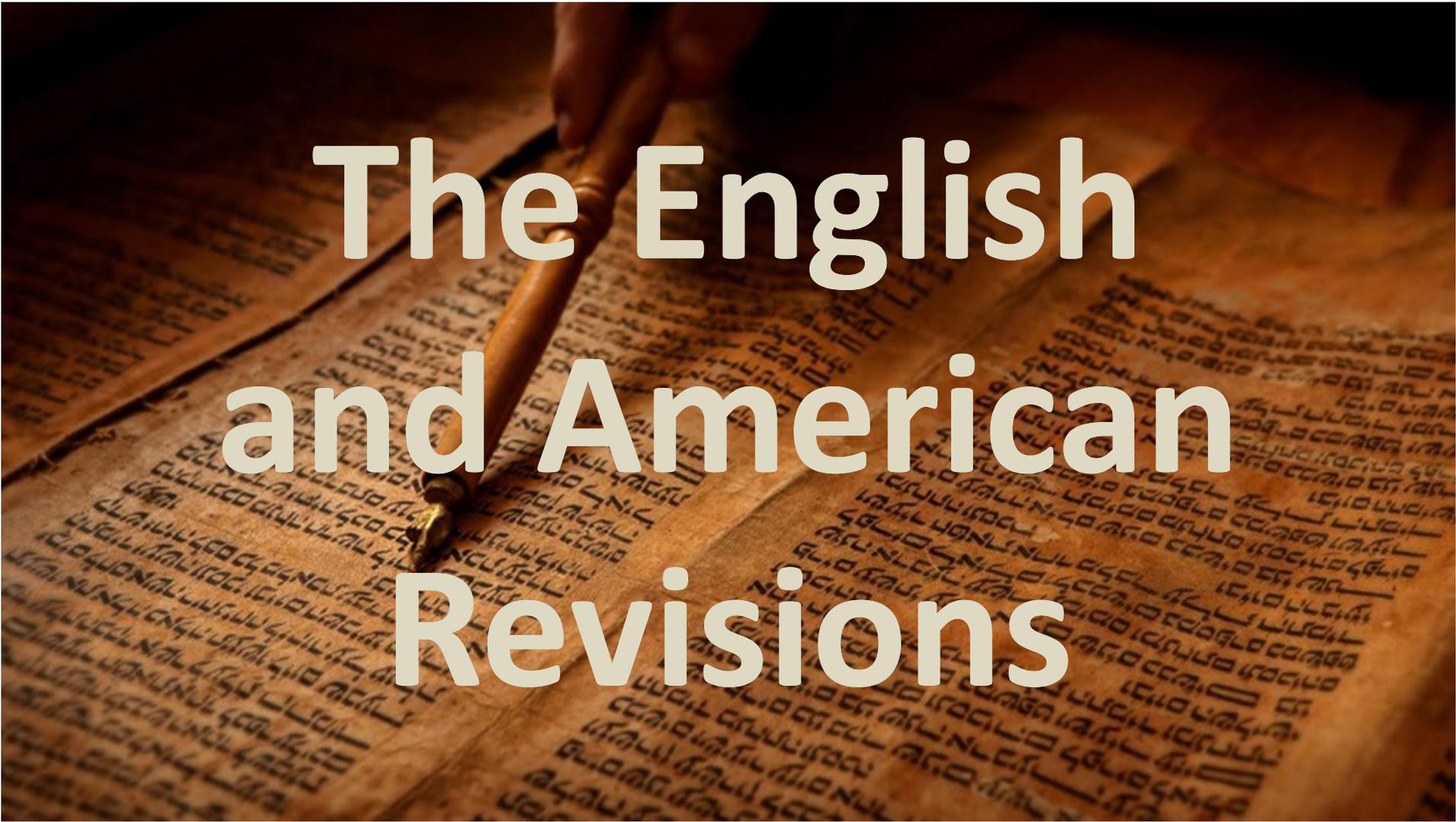
- **Translation errors**
 - **Although there was a renaissance of Greek and Hebrew study, it was still in somewhat of an infancy in the early 17th C**
 - **This created translation challenges from time to time...some were solved, and some were not!**

Weaknesses of the King James Version

- **Translation errors (cont'd)**
 - **Examples of translation errors include:**
 - **Observed him** vs **kept him safe** (Mark 6:20)
 - **All appearance** vs **every form** (1 Thessalonians 5:22)
 - Transliteration of **βαπτίζω** into **baptize** rather than **immerse/plunge**

Weaknesses of the King James Version

- **Translation errors (cont'd)**
 - **Other transliterations:**
 - **Adam** rather than **man**
 - **Angel** rather than **messenger**
 - **Christ/Messiah** rather than **anointed king**
 - **Deacon** rather than **servant/minister**
 - **Seraph/seraphim** rather than **fiery serpent(s)**

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a wooden quill pen over an open book. The book's pages are filled with dense, handwritten text in Hebrew script. The lighting is warm and focused on the quill and the text it is about to write, creating a sense of traditional scholarship and writing.

The English and American Revisions

The English and American Revisions

- **The English Revised Version**

- **Despite the KJV's shortcomings, it went virtually uncontested for 250 years**
- **In 1870 in England, two committees of scholars (OT / NT) undertook the task of revising the KJV**
- **Included Westcott and Hort of Greek NT fame**

The English and American Revisions

- **The English Revised Version (cont'd)**
 - **The English committees were joined by two American committees intent on achieving the same objective; they reviewed the work of the English and provided detailed input**
 - **The ERV NT was published in 1881, followed by the OT in 1885**

The English and American Revisions

- **The American Standard Version**
 - **Even with American involvement in the ERV, decisions of the English committees prevailed**
 - **Primary differences surrounded British vs American idioms and spellings, and a desire by the Americans for greater variation from the KJV**

The English and American Revisions

- **The American Standard Version (cont'd)**
 - **A two-part compromise solved the dilemma:**
 - ERV included American preferences in an appendix
 - America delayed publication of the ASV for 14 years
 - **The ASV was published in 1901, and was virtually identical to the ERV except for idioms/spellings**

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a quill pen over an open book. The book's pages are filled with dense, handwritten text in Hebrew script. The lighting is warm and focused on the pen and the text, creating a scholarly and historical atmosphere. The title text is overlaid in a large, white, sans-serif font.

Evaluation of the American Standard Version

Evaluation of the ASV

- **ERV and ASV were vast improvements over the KJV**
 - **The Greek text foundation was far superior**
 - **Important uncials and other manuscripts that were not available in the 1600s**
 - **Westcott & Hort had published their Greek NT in 1881 (discussed in depth in Lesson 7)**

Evaluation of the ASV

- **ERV and ASV were vast improvements over the KJV (cont'd)**
 - **Translation was more technically correct due to:**
 - **Greater translation skill based on a fuller knowledge of the original languages**
 - **Deep commitment to meticulously exact translations**

Evaluation of the ASV

- **ERV and ASV were vast improvements over the KJV (cont'd)**
 - **KJV archaisms cleared up, such as:**
 - **Matthew 17:25 – prevented him to spake first to him**
 - **Acts 21:15 – carriages to baggage**
 - **Acts 28:13 – fetched a compass to made a circuit**

Evaluation of the ASV

- **However, the ASV was not without its critics**
 - **Some criticism was due to the fact that the familiar text of the KJV had been altered...and this made people uncomfortable**
 - **Other criticism was justified...**

Evaluation of the ASV

- **However, the ASV was not without its critics (cont'd)**
 - **Many archaisms were retained, including:**
 - Matthew 6:2 – kept **glory** instead of using **praise**
 - Mark 9:34 – kept **dispute** instead of using **discuss**
 - Acts 17:3 – kept **allege** instead of using **prove**

Evaluation of the ASV

- **However, the ASV was not without its critics (cont'd)**
 - **Others were expanded to keep a “biblical flair”**
 - Luke 15:16 – **would fain** (2x KJV; 6x ASV)
 - Philippians 3:7 – **howbeit** (64x KJV; 103x ASV)
 - Romans 8:18 / 2 Peter 3:9 – **you-ward** (6x KJV; 10x ASV)

Evaluation of the ASV

- **However, the ASV was not without its critics (cont'd)**
 - **While technically accurate in its translation, many felt that it was stiff and unnatural to read**
 - **Charles Spurgeon: “Strong in Greek, weak in English”**

Evaluation of the ASV

- **Despite such criticisms, the English-speaking world was closer than ever before to the original Bible text**

A close-up photograph of an open book with Hebrew text. A hand is holding a quill pen, positioned over the text. The lighting is warm and focused on the book, creating a sense of historical or scholarly work. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew script, and the book's pages are slightly aged.

The Revised Standard Version

The Revised Standard Version

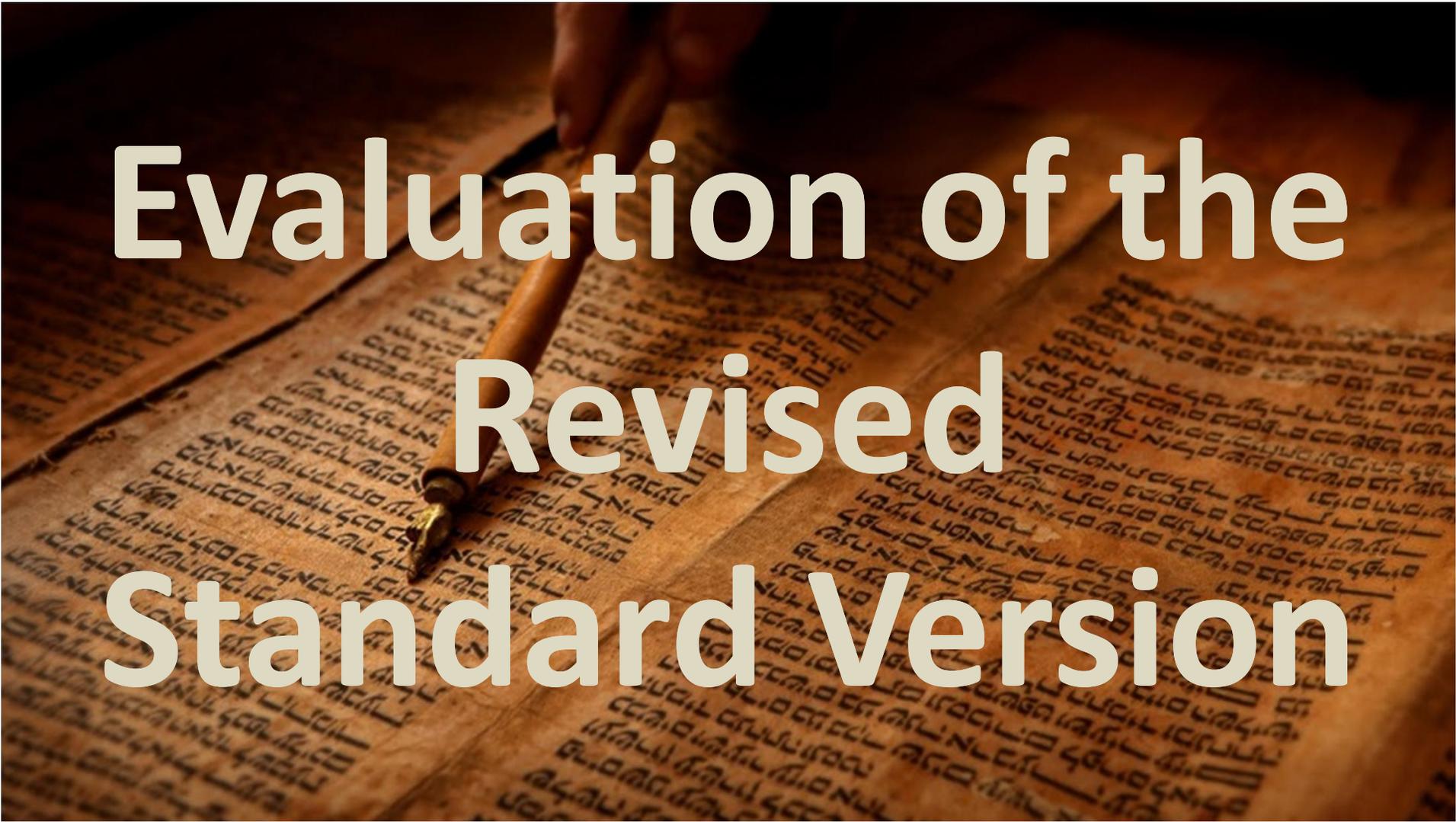
- **Reasons for the appearance of the RSV**
 - **Recognition of the KJV's inadequacies**
 - **Failure of the ERV and ASV to overcome these inadequacies**
 - **New manuscripts and secular documents that aided in creating a more accurate translation**

The Revised Standard Version

- **Plans for revising the ASV began in 1929, after its copyright expired**
- **Major work was delayed until 1936 due to a lack of funds following the Great Depression**

The Revised Standard Version

- **Work on the NT was completed in 1943, but publication was delayed until 1946 due to war-time restrictions**
- **Work on the OT was finished in 1952, when the complete Revised Standard Version Bible was published**

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a quill pen over an open book. The book's pages are filled with dense, handwritten text in Hebrew script. The lighting is warm and focused on the pen and the text, creating a sense of historical or scholarly work. The background is slightly blurred, emphasizing the foreground action.

Evaluation of the Revised Standard Version

Evaluation of the RSV

- **Although the ASV was a major improvement over the KJV, the RSV took it to the “next level”**
- **The RSV was able to take full advantage of Westcott & Hort’s work on the Greek NT (Lesson 7)**

Evaluation of the RSV

- **More precise renderings**
 - Matthew 13:22 – **delight in** vs **deceitfulness of**
 - Matthew 27:34 – **fraud** vs **error**
 - Luke 4:13 – **until an opportune time** vs **for a season**
 - 2 Thessalonians 3:6 – **in idleness** vs **disorderly**

Evaluation of the RSV

- **Smoothen and less awkward to read**
 - **Matthew 21:41 – he will put those wretches to a miserable death vs he will miserably destroy those miserable men**
 - **Luke 7:7 – therefore I did not presume to come to you vs wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee**

Evaluation of the RSV

- **However, challenging translation choices were still made**
 - **Matthew 3:3 – wilderness better as desert**
 - **Matthew 12:40 – whale better as sea creature**
 - **Hebrews 6:17 – interposed better as guaranteed**

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a wooden quill pen over an open book. The book's pages are filled with dense, handwritten text in a cursive script, likely Hebrew. The lighting is warm and focused on the pen and the text, creating a sense of historical or scholarly work. The background is softly blurred, showing more of the book's pages.

Other English Translations

Other English Translations

- **Since the 1880s, various translations, revisions, and paraphrases have appeared**
 - **Some good, some bad, some ugly**
 - **Although none is perfect, many can be quite helpful in a “commentary” sort of way**

Other English Translations

- **Approaches to translating God's Word**
 - **Word-for-Word**
 - **Thought-for-Thought**
 - **Balanced**
 - **Paraphrase**

Other English Translations

- **Word-for-Word (Formal Equivalence)**
 - **Scholars translate each word based upon the word usage at the time of writing**
 - **While never absolutely perfect, the objective is to come as close as possible to the actual meaning of each word**

Other English Translations

- **Thought-for-Thought (Functional Equivalence)**
 - **Scholars translate the meaning of each thought**
 - **Objective is to give the “sense” of the thought without being bound by translating each specific word**

Other English Translations

- **Balanced (Optimal Equivalence)**
 - **Scholars attempt to strike a balance between word-for-word and thought-for-thought**
 - **Objective is to provide word-level accuracy with thought-level readability**
 - **Nehemiah 8:7-8 may describe this approach**

Other English Translations

- **Paraphrase (Free Translation)**
 - Not technically a translation, but a restatement of a translation in colloquial terms
 - Often involves an expanded text in an attempt to get the message across
 - Least “faithful” to the original word!

Other English Translations

- **Illustration Using Matthew 4:19**
 - **Word-for-Word: King James Version**

***“Follow me, and I will make you
fishers of men.”***

Other English Translations

- **Illustration Using Matthew 4:19**
 - **Thought-for-Thought: Good News Translation**

***“Come with me, and I will teach you
to catch people.”***

Other English Translations

- **Illustration Using Matthew 4:19**
 - **Balanced: Christian Standard Bible**

***“Follow me, and I will make you
fish for people.”***

Other English Translations

- **Illustration Using Matthew 4:19**
 - **Paraphrase: The Message**

“Come with me. I’ll make a new kind of fisherman out of you. I’ll show you how to catch men and women instead of perch and bass.”

Other English Translations

- **Word-for-Word Translations**

- **King James**
- **American Standard**
- **Revised Standard**
- **Amplified***
- **New American**
- **New American Standard**
- **New King James**
- **New Revised Standard**

Other English Translations

- **Thought-for-Thought Translations**
 - **Good News Translation**
 - **New Century Version**
 - **Contemporary English Version**
 - **New International Reader's Version**
 - **New Living Translation**

Other English Translations

- **Balanced Translations**
 - **New International Version**
 - **God's Word Translation**
 - **Christian Standard Bible**
 - **Common English Bible**
 - **New English Translation**

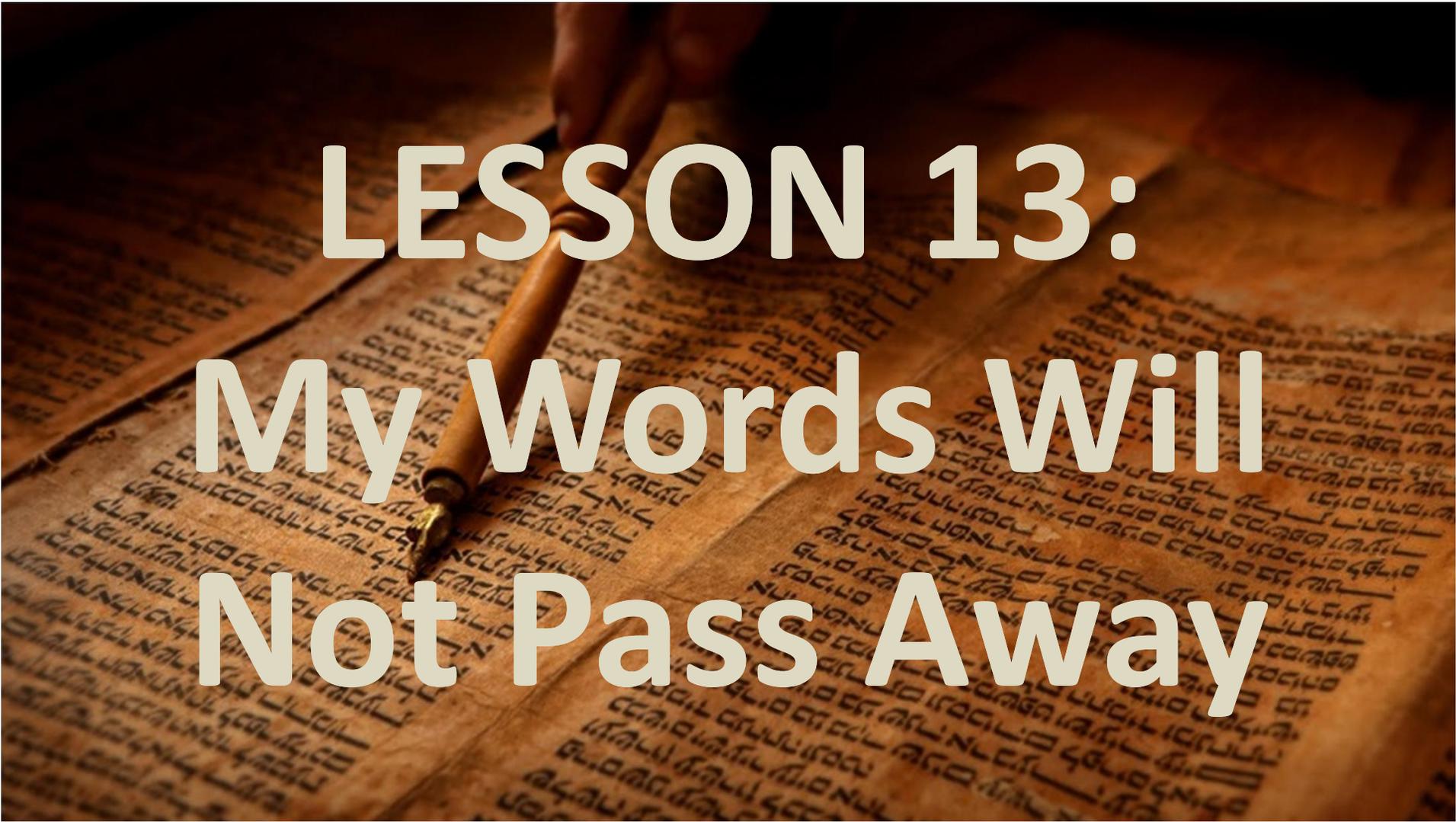
Other English Translations

- **Paraphrases – DANGER AHEAD!!**
 - The Living Bible
 - The Message
 - The Word on the Street – **Horribly irreverent!**

Other English Translations

- **The Word on the Street: Genesis 1:1-2**

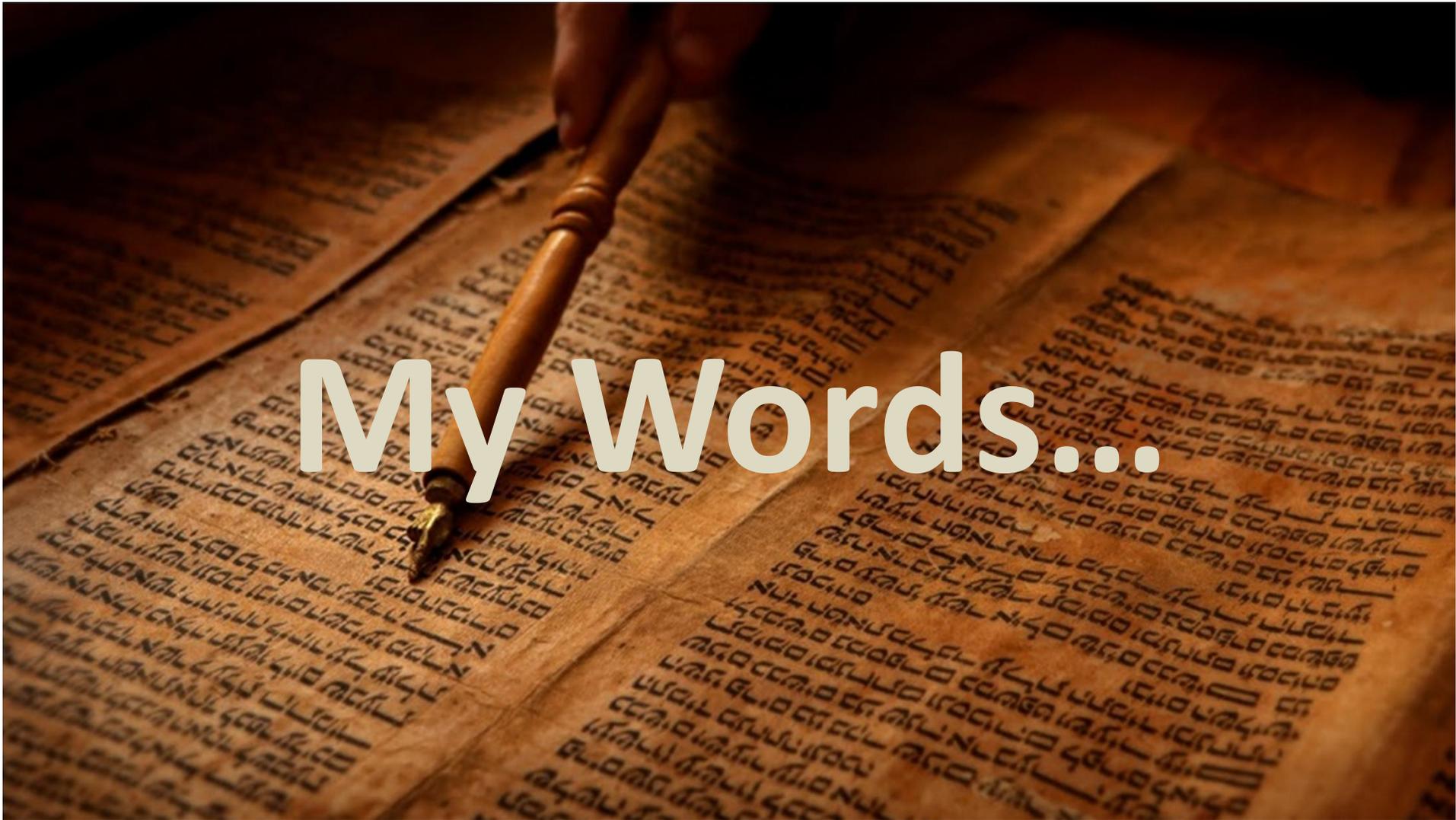
“First off, nothing...but God. No light, no time, no substance, no matter. Second off, God says the word and WHAP! Stuff everywhere! The cosmos in chaos: no shape, no form, no function – just darkness...total. And floating above it all, God’s Holy Spirit, ready to play.”

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a quill pen over an open book. The book's pages are filled with handwritten text in Hebrew script. The lighting is warm and focused on the pen and the text, creating a sense of historical or religious significance. The text on the pages is dense and appears to be a religious or scholarly work.

LESSON 13:
My Words Will
Not Pass Away

Introduction

- **Throughout this series, we have seen the physical side of how we got the Bible**
- **Jesus claimed both the divine and eternal natures of God's Word (Mark 13:31)**



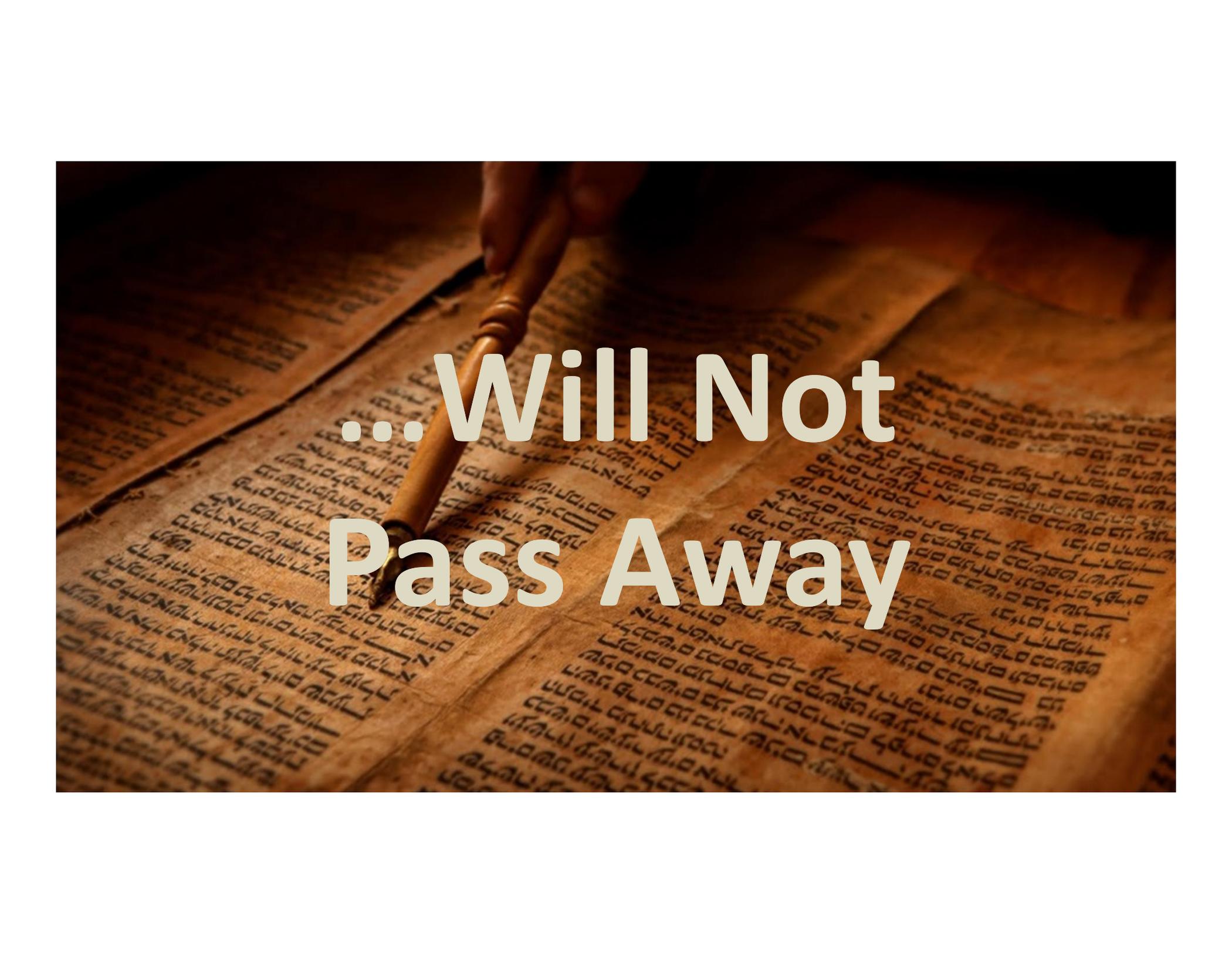
My Words...

My Words...

- **The Bible itself declares its divine nature**
 - **Concerning the Old Testament...**
 - **2 Timothy 3:16-17**
 - **2 Peter 1:19-21**

My Words...

- **The Bible itself declares its divine nature**
 - **Concerning the New Testament...**
 - **Matthew 5:27-48**
 - **Matthew 16:19; 18:18**
 - **1 Corinthians 14:37**
 - **1 Thessalonians 2:13**

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a wooden quill pen over an open book. The book's pages are filled with dense, handwritten text in Hebrew script. The lighting is warm and focused on the quill and the text it is pointing to. The text on the pages is arranged in columns, typical of a traditional manuscript.

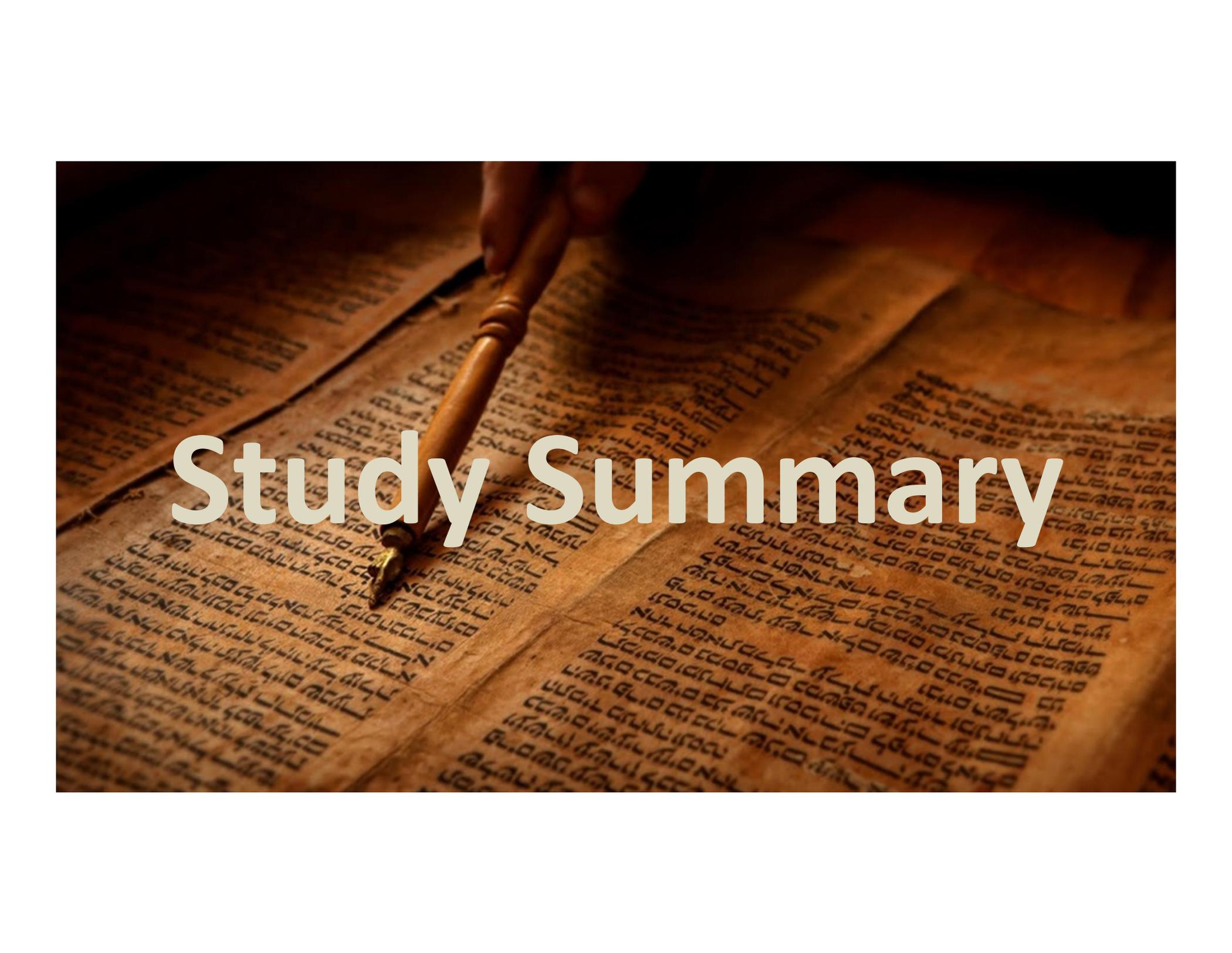
...Will Not
Pass Away

...Will Not Pass Away

- **Jesus Himself declares the eternal nature of His Word**
 - **God's entire nature is eternal, including His Word**
 - **We have seen God's providence working to make this so in the physical world**

...Will Not Pass Away

- **Evidence abounds!**
 - **Staggering quantities of Bible texts as compared to other ancient texts**
 - **Incomparable quality of Bible text materials**

A close-up photograph of an open book with Hebrew text. A hand is holding a wooden quill pen, positioned over the text. The lighting is warm and focused on the pen and the text it is pointing to. The text is written in a traditional Hebrew script.

Study Summary

Study Summary

- **Writing Materials**
 - **Leather, papyrus, and vellum were the most important**
 - **Leather was primarily an OT medium**
 - **NT was likely initially recorded on papyrus, and later on vellum**
 - **Nearly all NT manuscripts are on vellum**

Study Summary

- **The Bible Itself**
 - **A collection of books**
 - **Various arrangements, but always in a logical manner**
 - **Written in Hebrew and Aramaic (OT), and Greek (NT)**

Study Summary

- **Manuscripts**
 - **Manuscripts are copies of Scripture in the original languages**
 - **Uncials – Large capital letters; earliest dates**
 - **Cursives – Smaller, long-hand style; later dates**
 - **Vatican, Sinaitic, and Alexandrian Manuscripts are the three “Important Uncials”**

Study Summary

- **Other Sources**
 - **Codex Ephraim and Codex Bezae**
 - **Versions – Translations of Scripture in other languages**
 - **Scripture quotations in extra-biblical writings**

Study Summary

- **Textual Criticism**
 - **Copying mistakes and intentional changes occurred**
 - **Textual Criticism is the art and science of identifying such departures from the original**

Study Summary

- **Textual Variants**
 - **Obvious scribal slips – no real impact**
 - **Text not found in the most reliable sources – no real impact**
 - **Substantial variations with potential impact**
 - **Even with items with potential impact, no unique Biblical teaching or divine command is involved**

Study Summary

- **The New Testament Greek Text**
 - **A reconstructed Greek text**
 - **Westcott and Hort played a major role**
 - **Nestle-Alland and United Bible Society both publish current GNTs**
 - **Recent discoveries continue to confirm the Westcott/Hort text**

Study Summary

- **The Old Testament Hebrew Text**
 - **Massoretes and other early Jewish scribes created carefully-copied manuscripts**
 - **The Dead Sea Scrolls and other discoveries attest to the accuracy of their work**

Study Summary

- **Canon**
 - **Books included as Scripture because they have the authority to be so**
 - **Significant clear evidence supports the current 66 books as canonical**

Study Summary

- **Apocrypha**
 - **Generally, 15 additional books in the Catholic OT**
 - **Significant evidence supports their exclusion from canon**
 - **The same is true for several NT-era books not found in the New Testament**

Study Summary

- **The Bible in English**
 - **William Tyndale was considered the “father” of the Bible in English, translating the NT from Greek, rather than Latin**
 - **His efforts led to the appearance of various translations in the 16th century, and ultimately to the King James Version in 1611**

Study Summary

- **Post-KJV**
 - **Hebrew and Greek scholarship has advanced substantially since 1611**
 - **Additional manuscripts and other materials have also been discovered, including the Vatican and Sinaitic manuscripts**

Study Summary

- **Post-KJV (cont'd)**
 - **Such advances have been leveraged to produce key translations like the American Standard Version and Revised Standard Version**
 - **Various translations exist, following a word-for-word, thought-for-thought, or balanced approach, each with its own pluses and minuses**

Study Summary

**The Bible is the Perfect, Inspired,
and Complete Word of God**

Study Summary

**The Bible is a Library of Books
on a Variety of Topics**

Study Summary

**The Bible Involved Over 40 Men,
was Produced over 1,600 Years,
and was Written in 3 Languages**

Study Summary

**Prior to the 1300s, Scriptures were
Manually Copied by Scribes, Yet
are Nearly Error-Free**

Study Summary

**The Bible is the Most Historically
Well-Preserved Document of Its
Kind**

Study Summary

**The Bible is the Most-Translated
Book in the History of the World**

Study Summary

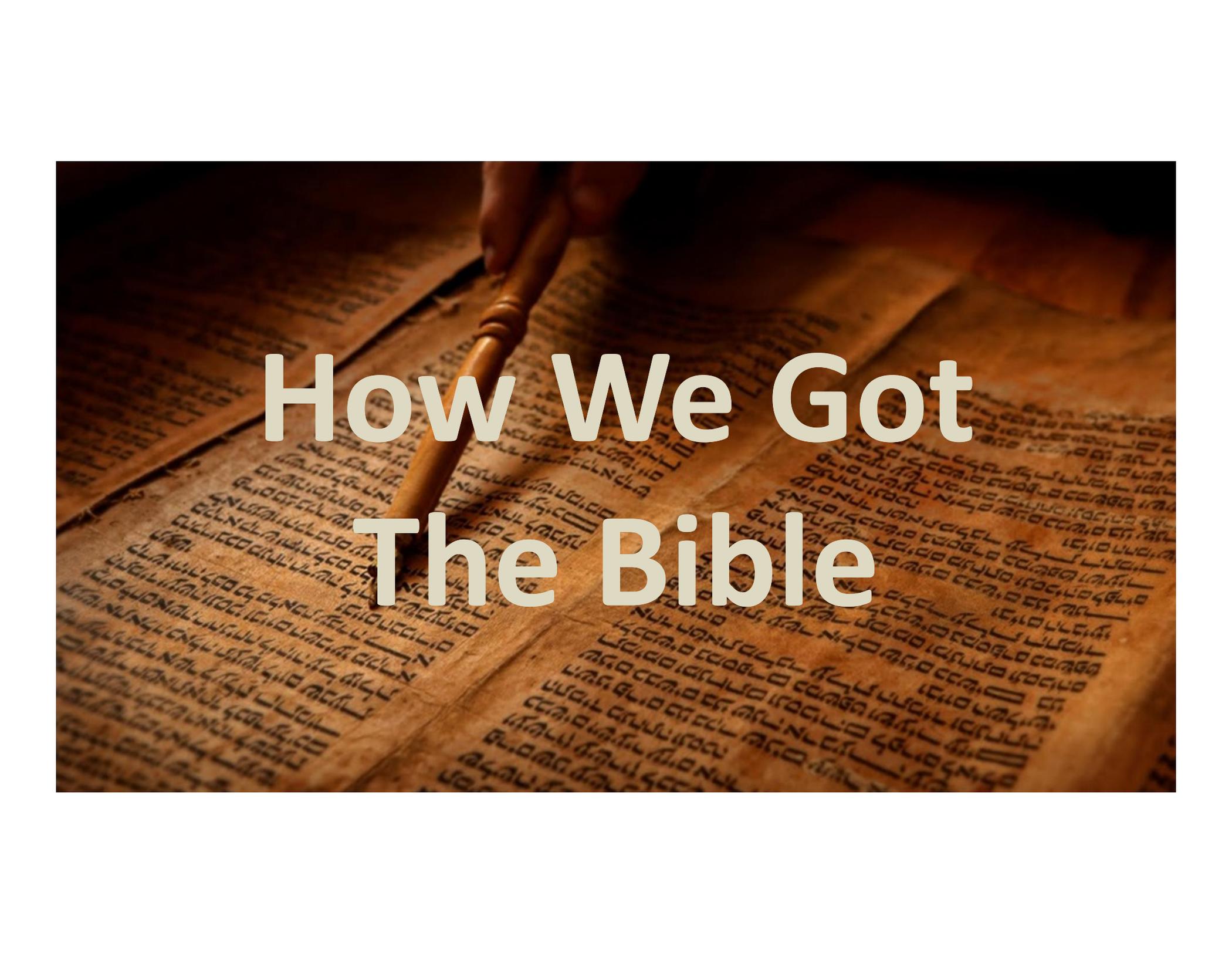
**The Bible is in No Danger of
Disappearing or Being Destroyed**

Study Summary

Because...

Study Summary

**The Bible is the Perfect, Inspired,
and Complete Word of God**

A close-up photograph of an ancient manuscript, likely a Hebrew Bible, with a wooden pointer resting on the page. The text is written in Hebrew characters on aged, yellowed parchment. The lighting is warm and focused on the central part of the page, creating a sense of historical depth and reverence. The title "How We Got The Bible" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif font across the center of the image.

How We Got The Bible