

APOLOGETICS

DEFENDING THE

BIBLE



QUESTIONS

- ▶ What is the Bible?
- ▶ Where does the Bible come from?
- ▶ How do we know that this is the inspired word of God?
- ▶ Is the entire Bible authoritative? Or only parts of it?
- ▶ **Are there any mistakes in the Bible? Is the Bible accurate?**
- ▶ How do we know that other books shouldn't be included as well?
- ▶ Who collected the writings, and on what principles?
- ▶ What circumstances led to the fixing of a list, or canon, of authoritative books?

PROCESS USED BY SCRIBES

- ▶ They could only use clean animal skins
- ▶ Each column of writing could have no less than forty-eight, and no more than sixty lines.
- ▶ The ink must be black, and of a special recipe.
- ▶ They must verbalize each word aloud while they were writing.
- ▶ They must wipe the pen and wash their entire bodies before writing the word “Jehovah,” every time they wrote it.

PROCESS USED BY SCRIBES

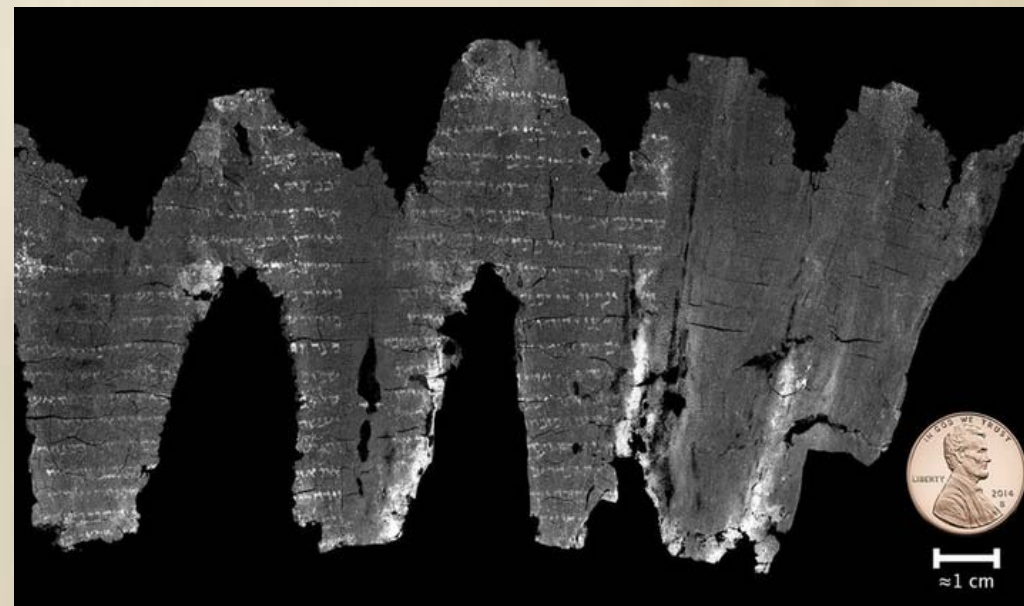
- ▶ There must be a review within thirty days, and if as many as three pages required corrections, the entire manuscript had to be redone.
- ▶ The letters, words, and paragraphs had to be counted, and the document became invalid if two letters touched each other. The middle paragraph, word and letter must correspond to those of the original document.
- ▶ The documents could be stored only in sacred places
- ▶ As no document containing God's Word could be destroyed, they were stored, or buried. These were usually kept in a synagogue or sometimes in a Jewish cemetery.

KEY REMINDERS

- ▶ We don't have originals, only hand-written copies
- ▶ Over 5,000 manuscripts

Dead Sea Scrolls

En-Gedi Scroll



Author	Work	Date Written	Earliest MSS	Time Gap	Number of MSS
Greek NT	Greek NT	AD 50–100	AD 130	40	5,795
Homer	<i>Iliad</i>	800 BC	c. 400 BC	400	1,757
Herodotus	<i>History</i>	480–425 BC	10th C	1350	109
Sophocles	Plays	496–406 BC	3rd C BC	100–200	193
Plato	Tetralogies	400 BC	AD 895	1300	210
Caesar	<i>Gallic Wars</i>	100–44 BC	9th C	950	251
Livy	<i>History of Rome</i>	59 BC–AD 17	Early 5th C	400	150
Tacitus	<i>Annals</i>	AD 100	AD 850	750–950	33
Pliny, the Elder	<i>Natural History</i>	AD 49–79	5th C fragment: 1; Rem. 14–15th C	400	200
Thucydides	<i>History</i>	460–400 BC	3rd C BC	200	96
Demosthenes	Speeches	300 BC	Some fragments from 1 C BC	1100+	340

KEY REMINDERS

- ▶ We don't have originals, only hand-written copies
- ▶ Over 5,000 manuscripts
- ▶ There are minor variations in spelling, word order, and sentence structure
- ▶ Out of ~500 pages in the Greek New Testament, the manuscript variations represent only about half of a page.
- ▶ No key doctrine of the Christian faith is changed by these textual variants

Why didn't God preserve the original text?

- ▶ Possibly because...

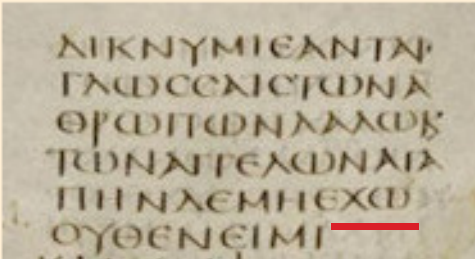
1. We might idolize it

2. If one person had the original, they could manipulate it

- ▶ Having multiple copies actually preserves the original text better than only having the original

Issue #1: From Codex Sinaiticus

1 Cor. 13:1-2



εαν ταις γλωσσαις των αθρωπων
λαλω κ(αι) των αγγελων αγαπην δε
μη εχω γεγωνα χαλκος ηχων η
~~κυμβαλον αλααζον και εαν εχω~~
~~προφητειαν και ειδω τα μυστηρια~~
~~παντα και πασαν την γνωσιν και εαν~~
~~εχω πασαν την πιστιν ωστε ορη~~
~~μεθιστανειν αγαπην δε μη εχω ουθεν~~
ειμι

Though I speak with the tongues of men
and of angels, and have not charity, I
~~am become as sounding brass, or a~~
~~tinkling cymbal. And though I have the~~
~~gift of prophecy, and understand all~~
~~mysteries, and all knowledge; and~~
~~though I have all faith, so that I could~~
~~remove mountains, and have not~~
charity, I am nothing.

Here the scribe had copied the verse up to the end of the first occurrence of the phrase αγαπην δε μη εχω “and have not charity,” but when he looked up to his example again to continue copying, his eye fell upon the *second* occurrence of the phrase, from which he continued, omitting all of those words between the two occurrences of the phrase.

How can we overcome this?

- ▶ This is only one of several “variations” or “mistakes” due to copying.
- ▶ However, since we have thousands of copies, some of which are much better quality, we are able to detect and identify these copying mistakes and determine what the original text said with certainty.

Issue #2 – Deuteronomy 34

- ▶ Who wrote the book of Deuteronomy?
 - Moses – Deuteronomy 31:9, 24; Matt. 19:8
- ▶ If it was Moses, how do you explain Deuteronomy 34 where it talks about his death?
- ▶ Possible Answer #1: Moses wrote it through divine inspiration
- ▶ Possible Answer #2: Written by Joshua or Ezra, also being divinely inspired
- ▶ Conclusion: We can still be confident that these verses are the inspired Word of God.

Issue #3: Mark 16:9–20 & John 7:53–8:11

- ▶ *[The earliest manuscripts and some other ancient witnesses do not have Mark 16:9–20]*
- ▶ Footnote: “Serious doubt exists as to whether these verses belong to the Gospel of Mark. They are absent from important early manuscripts and display certain peculiarities of vocabulary, style and theological content that are unlike the rest of Mark. His Gospel probably ended at 16:8, or its original ending has been lost.”

Issue #3: Mark 16:9–20 & John 7:53–8:11

- ▶ Should these passages be included in the Bible?
- ▶ Do you have any doubts about these passages?
- ▶ If the early manuscripts didn't have these verses, where did they come from?

Codex Vaticanus (c. 325–350 AD)

Matthew -> Mark

No column gap

Mark - Luke

Entire column gap
This is the only time we see this in the Vaticanus

Beginning of Luke



Codex Vaticanus:
the Last Page of Mark
with verses 9-20 added in the copyist's script

ΕΧΘΡΟΝ ΤΙΣ ΗΦΑΠΘΑΡΙ
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