



# **Bible**

## **Transmission of the Text and The Dead Sea Scrolls**

# [www.fbclex.org](http://www.fbclex.org)

- **Latest News**
- **[Touching Davidson County with Love 2014](#)**
- The Eighth Annual Day of Touching Davidson County ...  
[\[Click here to learn more...\]](#)
- **The Composition of the Bible powerpoint #2**
- Dr. Ray Howell III is leading a Bible Study about ... [\[Click here to learn more...\]](#)
- **More News**

# The Original Texts

- OT written in Hebrew between approximately 1400 - 400 BC
- NT written in Greek between approximately 50-90 AD
- The original copies were called the autographs
- None of the originals are in existence

# Copied by Hand

- Professional Scribes known as Sopherim (men of the book)
- One Scribe copying one book
- Several Scribes listening to a reader (Scriptorium)
- Both have the potential for errors
- Hebrew was only consonants, no division of words or chapters

# Examples

- The Hebrew "n" and "r" (nun and resh) look alike.
- Nebuchadnezzar or Nebuchadrezzar
- Psalm 100:3 (KJV): "Know ye that the Lord, he is God, it is he that hath made us, and . . ."
- "Not we ourselves"
- (NIV) Know that the Lord is God, it is he who made us, and . . .

# We Are His

- The Hebrew word for "not" is "lo"
- The Hebrew word for "his" is "lo"
- Pronounced differently
- No way to know the difference if you only have consonants
- By the end of the first century the Sopherim had established a standard consonantal text

# The Masoretes

- Hebrew scholars who had a school in Tiberias
- Worked on dividing the words and chapters and adding a system of vowels between 600-1000 AD
- The result was the Masoretic Text (MT) that served as the standard OT text until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls

---

אבגדהוזהחטי  
כך למסנוסע  
פפציץקשת

---

**SOPHERIM TEXT**

# Masoretic Text

שִׁמְעֵ יִשְׂרָאֵל, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ אֶחָד:

פרוה שם כבוד מלכותו לעולם ועד:

וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָ, בְּכָל לִבְבְּךָ, וּבְכָל  
גַּפְשְׁךָ, וּבְכָל מְאֹדְךָ: וְהָיוּ  
הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה, אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם, עַל  
לִבְבְּךָ: וְשָׁנַנְתָּם לְבִנְיָד וּדְבַרְתָּ בָם, בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ  
בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִכְתְּךָ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשֹׁכְכָךָ וּבְקוֹמְךָ:  
וּקְשַׁרְתָּם לְאוֹת עַל יָדְךָ, וְהָיוּ לְטַמְּפַת בֵּין  
עֵינֶיךָ: וּכְתַבְתָּם עַל מְזוֹזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:

# Scribal Corrections

- Saul's son "Ishbaal" (Son of Baal)
- Scribe changed the name to "Ishbosheth" (son of shame)
- 2 Kings 4: 26 (KJV) Solomon had forty thousand stalls of horses for his chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen
- 2 Chronicles 9: 25 (KJV) And Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots, and twelve thousand horsemen; whom he bestowed in the chariot cities, and with the king at Jerusalem.

# Words that Sound Alike

- 1 Thessalonians 2: 7 (KJV) But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children
- (NIV) we were like young children among you just as a nursing mother cares for her children,
- Gentle "epioi"
- Little Children "nepioi"
- Horses "hippoi"

# How Do We Know?

- With all the potential for mistakes, how do we know the Bible we have is trustworthy?



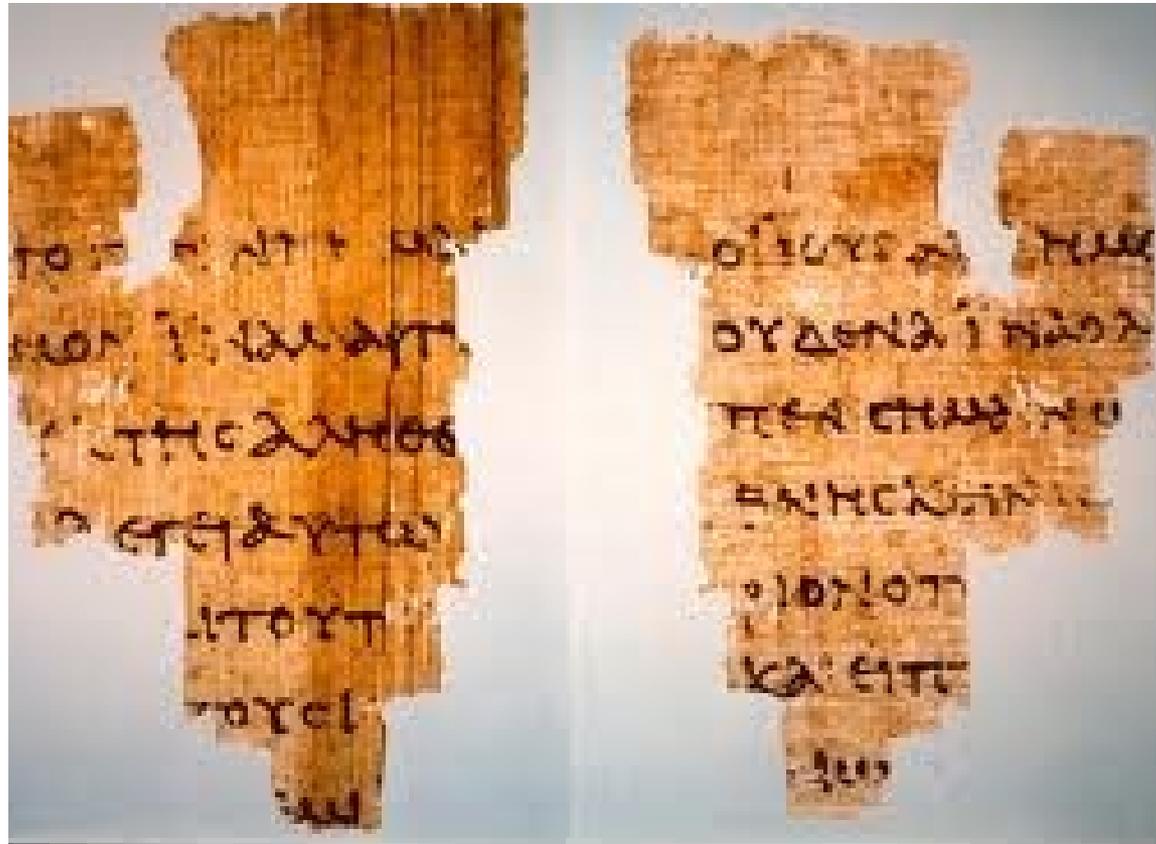


### **The Oldest Form of the Bible Ever Discovered**

Discovered near Jerusalem in 1979 it is 2,600 years old. Older than any book in the Bible

# Translation

- YHW ...
- [...]
- the grea[t ... who keeps]
- the covenant and
- [G]raciousness towards those who love [him] and (alt: [hi]m;)
- those who keep [his commandments ...
- ...].
- the Eternal? [...].
- [the?] blessing more than any
- [sna]re and more than Evil.
- For redemption is in him.
- For YHWH
- is our restorer [and]
- rock. May YHWH bles[s]
- you and
- [may he] keep you.
- [May] YHWH make
- [his face] shine ...



## **Oldest Fragment of NT (Ryland's Fragment)**

Discovered in Egypt in the 1920s it is a portion of John's Gospel (18: 31-33, 37-38) and dates to 125 AD

Around 30 years after the Gospel was written!

# Oldest Complete Manuscripts

- (OT) Codex Leningradensis Around 1000 AD  
(MT)
- Housed in Russian Public Library in St. Petersburg
- Earliest complete manuscripts of the NT is Codex Sinaiticus (Contains entire Christian Bible—OT is in Greek)
- Dates back to 4<sup>th</sup> Century. Located at St. Catherine's Monastery at the foot of Mt. Sinai and the British Library

# Discovery

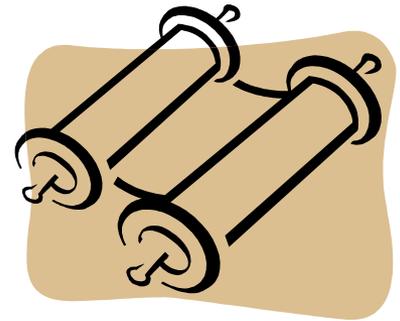
- 1947 a teenage Bedouin shepherd looking for a lost goat threw a rock into a cave and heard a shattering sound
- He discovered a clay pot containing several ancient scrolls
- He had just made the most significant archaeological discovery of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century

# Tremendous Discovery!

- Eleven Caves over next 20 years
- 28 complete manuscripts
- 100,000 fragments of another 875 manuscripts (Hebrew, Greek, Aramaic)
- Portions of every book of the Hebrew Bible except Esther
- Complete Isaiah Scroll measuring 24 feet in length

# OT Scholar W.F. Albright

- “The Dead Sea Scrolls are the greatest archeological find of our time” “the greatest manuscript discovery of modern times”
- If anything, this may have been an understatement



# Indiana Jones

- The initial discovery led to a mad-dash to the caves between Bedouin shepherds, archaeologists, and treasure hunters
- Athanasius Yeshue Samuel, a Syrian Orthodox archbishop of Jerusalem, bought four of the original Dead Sea Scrolls from a cobbler who dabbled in antiquities, paying less than \$100.
- When the Arab-Israeli War broke out in 1948, Samuel traveled to the United States and unsuccessfully offered them to a number of universities, including Yale. He didn't want the Scrolls to fall into Israeli hands

# 1954 Wall Street Journal

- Miscellaneous Items for Sale
- "Biblical Manuscripts dating back to at least 200 B.C. are for sale. This would be an ideal gift to an educational or religious institution by an individual or group."
- Israeli archaeologist Yigael Yadin, whose father had obtained the other three scrolls from the initial collection in 1947, secretly negotiated their purchase on behalf of the newly established State of Israel.

# \$250,000

- A Bill of Sale was not properly executed
- Most of the money went to the IRS!



# The Qumran Community



# The Essenes



# Jewish Sects in Ancient Palestine

- Sadducees-Aristocratic and theologically conservative
- Pharisees-Theologians and strict legalists
- Essenes-No mention in NT
- They held all property in common, followed a fairly ascetic discipline, and held to a lofty moral code, and lived on the west side of the Dead Sea at Qumran

# Proto-Christians?

- Founded in Maccabaeae times by the "Teacher of Righteousness"
- This was an eschatological community looking for the "Kingdom of God"
- Revived the concept of "Holy War" and organized themselves into a "Salvation Army"
- Entrance into the community meant renouncing one's former ties and undergoing a period of training



# Like the New Testament

- Chosen leaders were 12
- All property was held in common (Acts 4: 32-37)
- The center of their life was the study of Scripture
- And the sacrament of a common banquet in which the priest invoked a blessing on the first of the bread and the wine

# Matthew 18: 15-17

- <sup>15</sup> "If another member of the church<sup>[a]</sup> sins against you,<sup>[b]</sup> go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one.<sup>[c]</sup>  
<sup>16</sup> But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. <sup>17</sup> If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector.

# Acts 9: 2

- Meanwhile Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest <sup>2</sup> and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any who belonged to the Way, men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem
- The Essenes called themselves people of "The Way"

# Matthew 1: 21-23

- She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." <sup>22</sup> All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet:
- <sup>23</sup> "Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel," which means, "God is with us."

# Essene Commentaries

- The Essenes were the first to interpret historical events as foretold in the Old Testament
- They had a list of texts that foretold the coming of the Messiah
- Many believe Matthew had a copy of this list
- Matthew quotes the OT 60 times
- 16 times he speaks of the OT prophecies being fulfilled in Jesus

# Favorite Books

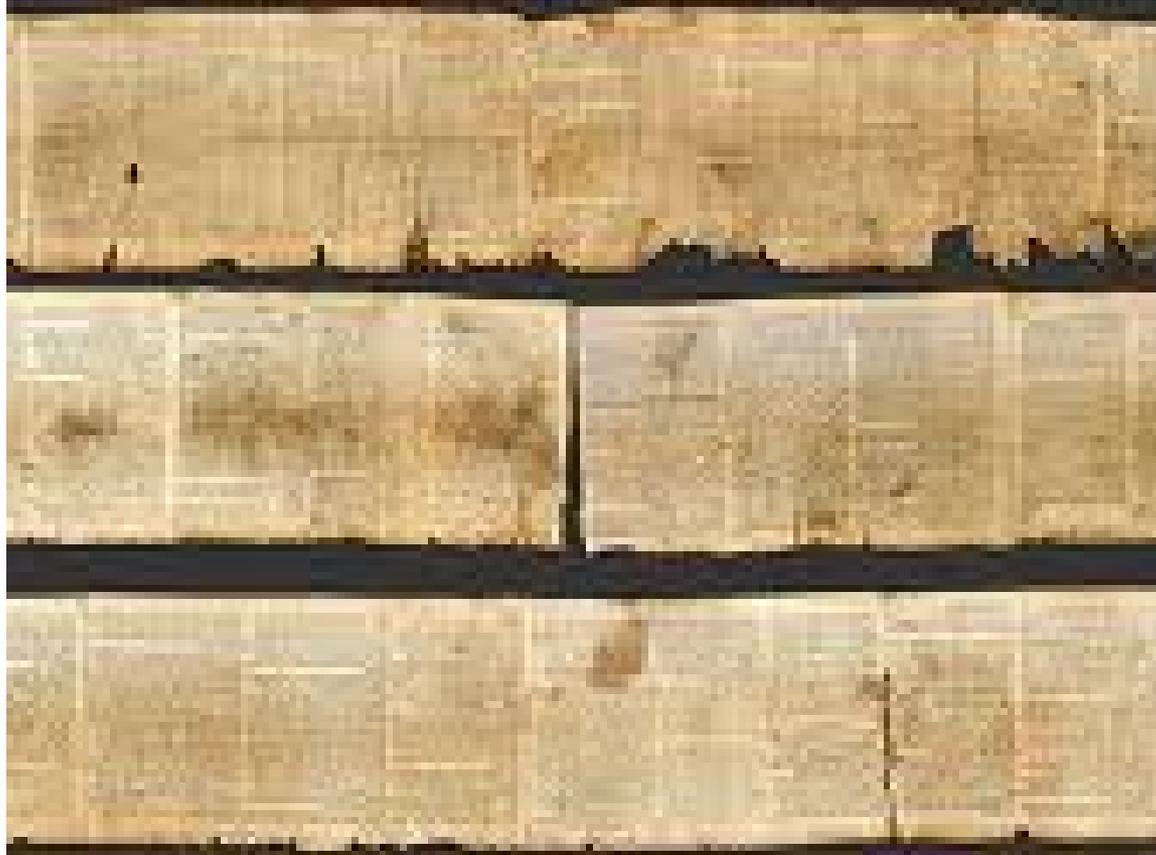
- Based on the number of copies, the three favorite books of the Qumran Community were Isaiah, Psalms, and Deuteronomy
- The three most quoted books in the New Testament are Isaiah, Psalms, and Deuteronomy
- In Luke 4, when Jesus was handed the scroll at the synagogue in Nazareth, it was the prophet Isaiah

# Differences outweigh Similarities

- The Essenes were conservative legalists who sought salvation in the Mosaic Law
- They saw the coming of the Messiah in political terms
- The "New Wine" of the Gospels cannot be contained in the "Old Wineskins" of the law
- Their greatest gift to us was the preservation of Holy Scripture

# Importance of Dead Sea Scrolls

- They affect our understanding of Scripture
- They Confirm the accuracy of Scripture
- They enhance our understanding of Jesus
- They help us interpret the New Testament



**GREAT ISAIAH SCROLL**

# The Great Isaiah Scroll

- Predated the Leningrad Scroll by over 1,000 years
- Yet, the RSV only made 13 changes
- One of the most significant is Isaiah 53: 11
- Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.
- <sup>11</sup> He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. (KJV)

# Isaiah Scroll

- Old Text: He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. (KJV)
- Qumran Text: Out of his anguish he shall see light;<sup>[c]</sup> he shall find satisfaction through his knowledge. The righteous one,<sup>[d]</sup> my servant, shall make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities.

# Isaiah 9: 2-3 (KJV)

- The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined.
- <sup>3</sup> Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not increased the joy: they joy before thee according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.

# Isaiah 9: 2-3 (NRSV)

- The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.  
<sup>3</sup> You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.

# Accuracy of Scripture

- Dr. Peter Flint: The Bible we possess is 99% accurate. Based on the Dead Sea Scrolls, the NRSV has adopted 85 different readings, the NIV has adopted 22.
- The Great Isaiah Scroll, and all the Dead Sea Scrolls, are faith-affirming, life-giving, and historically accurate

# Can We Trust the Bible?

- Factual Evidence
- Faith
- **Psalm 46:1** *God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.*
- *Jeremiah 1: "Ah, Lord GOD! Truly I do not know how to speak, for I am only a boy."*

# Words of Comfort

- **Lamentations 3:22-23** (KJV) *It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.*
- **Psalms 30:5** ... *Weeping may tarry for the night, but joy comes with the morning.*
- **Psalms 71:20-21** *You who have made me see many troubles and calamities will revive me again; from the depths of the earth you will bring me up again. You will increase my greatness and comfort me again.*
- **John 16:22** *So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. (Jesus' words)*

# Trustworthy and True

- **Revelation 21:5** *And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."*
- 

