

The Bible: “From Heaven or
From Men?”

There are only two choices:

- a) Either the Bible is the inspired, inerrant Word of God containing all the truths necessary for man's salvation.
- b) Or, the Bible **is not** the inspired Word of God and is thus of human origin, not divine.

2 Tim 3:16 All Scripture is
inspired by God and profitable for
teaching, for reproof, for
correction, for training in
righteousness; 17 that the man of
God may be adequate, equipped
for every good work.

Jude 3 Beloved, while I was making every effort to write you about our common salvation, I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

There are basically three views
held under this category:

1. The Bible has literary value just as Shakespeare's works do.

2. The Bible contains valuable principles that reasonable people may wish to incorporate into their individual lives, even as they would of the writings of some other religious or philosophical leader.

3. The Bible is in part the Word of God, but contains numerous mistakes and contradictions because it was written by fallible men.

Mk 13:31: *"Heaven and earth
will pass away, but My words will
not pass away."*

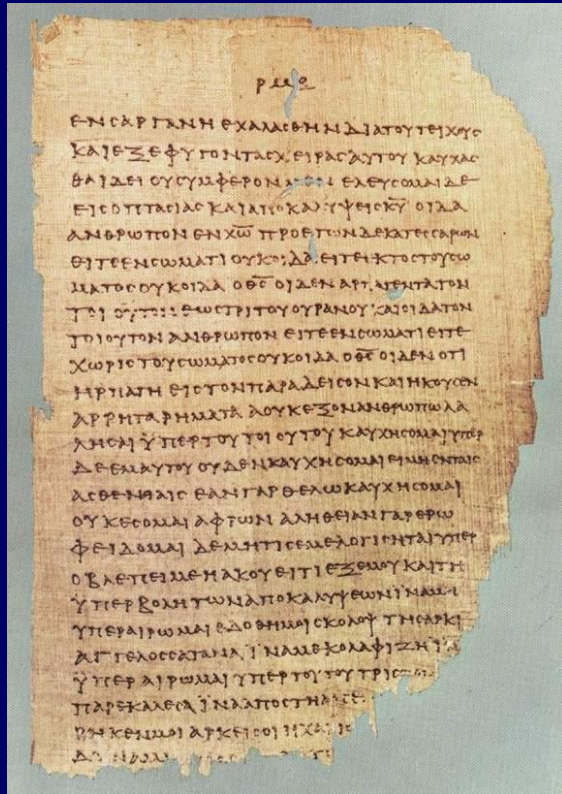
- a) Jesus claims that the world
will pass away, but His words
will not.
- b) Then, He claims His divine
words would be providentially
preserved!

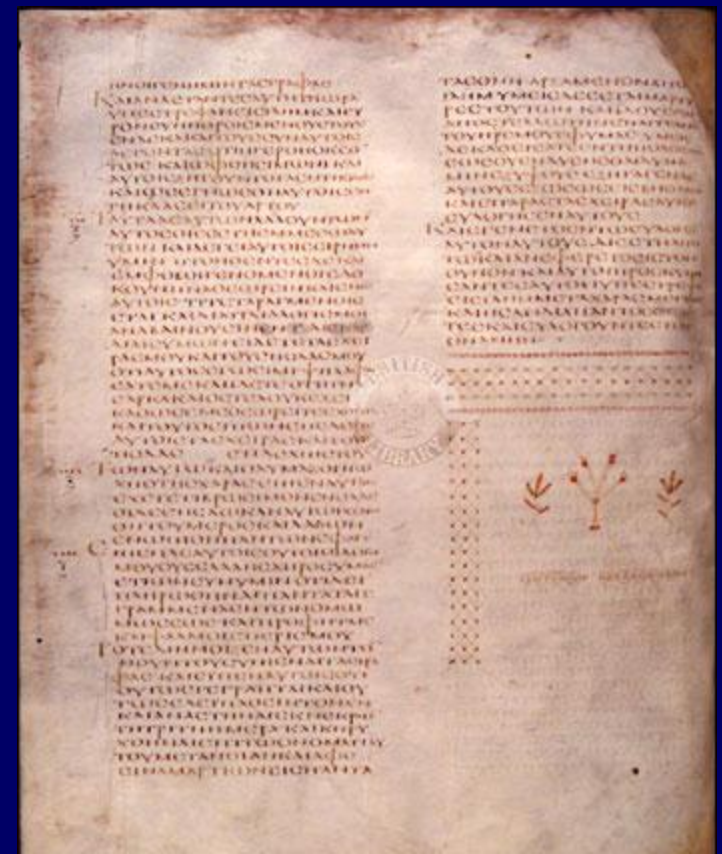
HISTORY OF THE BIBLE

Written over a period of about 1500 years by more than 40 authors who came from diverse backgrounds and location, spoke different languages, possessed differing degrees of education. Yet, they spoke with unity and harmony.

The significance of the biblical manuscripts:

1. The original manuscripts of the Bible were written on leather, papyrus and vellum. The papyrus plant formerly grew in abundance along the Nile river. This dates as far back as 3000 B.C. Originally kept in rolls, but replaced by the *codex*. A codex manuscript is what we call a book.





Vellum (end of Lk 24 pictured) usually refers to a fine quality animal skin which is significantly more durable than regular leather or papyrus (plant and P⁴⁵ Lk 11.50-12.12 and 13.6-24).

SCISSUM EST ET CENTURI CLAMANS
 HONORIFICABAT Dñm Dicens UERE
 IUSTUS ERAT NICOMAS ET OMNES
 QUI SIMUL VENERANT AD SPECTACULUM POPULI
 UIDENTES QUAE FACTAE SUNT
 PERCUTIENTES PECTORA ET FRONTES
 REVERTEBANTUR STABANT AUTEM OMNES
 NOTIUS ALONCE ET MULIERES
 QUAE SECUTAE SUNT EUM
 AC ALILAEA UIDENTES HAEC
 ET ECCE UIX NOMINE IOSEPH
 DECURIO CUM ESSET BONUS ET IUSTUS
 NICOMAS ERAT CONSENTIENS CONSIDIO
 ET ACTIONE CORUM ABARIMATHIA
 CIVITATE IUDAEORUM QUI EXPECTABAT
 REGNUM DEI ET ACCEDENS AD PILATUM
 PETIUIT CORPUS IHS ET DEPONENS
 INVOLUIT CORPUS IHS IN SINDONE
 ET POSUIT EUM IN MONUMENTO
 SCULPTO UBI ADHUC
 NEMO POSUITUS ET POSITO EO IN POSUIT
 IN MONUMENTO LAPIDEM QUEM UIX VICINI
 MOUEBANT ERATAUTEM DIES ANTES ABHATUM
 SECUTAE SUNT AUTEM DUA
 MULIERES QUAE ERANT SIMUL VENIENTES
 AC ALILAEA ET UIDE RUNT
 MONIMENTUM EIUS REVERSAE AUTEM
 PARAE RUNT AROMATA ET UNCIENTIA
 ET QUIDEM SABBATUM REQUIEUE RUNT IUNA AUTEM
 SABBATI MANE DILUCULO
 VENIEBANT AD MONIMENTUM ADFERENTES
 QUAE PARAE SUNT ET QUIDAM CUM ILLIS
 LOCITABANT AUTEM IN TRASE

Lk 23.47-4.1 from
 Codex Bezae, from
 6th century AD

New Testament
 manuscripts are of two
 major types, differing
 by virtue of the form of
 the actual letters. The
 earliest and certainly
 most important are
 written in capital letters
 and are known as
uncials.

The handwriting found in a larger group is smaller and in a running hand-style, so these manuscripts are known as *cursives*. The cursives did not make their appearance until the ninth century and thus are of less value because of their later date.

The original manuscripts written in three different languages: Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek.

Aramaic is very similar to Hebrew. It became the common language of Palestine after the time of the exile. (c. 500 B.C.) (e.g., Mark 15.34: "*Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani.*" - cf., Matt. 27.46)

The books that comprise our New Testament were written in *Koine* Greek, or common Greek. It became a dead language within 300 years of the death of Christ, and thus remained unchanging in the meaning of its words.

The historical reliability of the Bible should be tested by the same criteria that is used on all historical documents. Exegetes use three basic tests:

1. Bibliographical Test.
2. Internal Test
3. External Test.

1. Bibliographical Test.

This test examines the copies or manuscripts in existence.

Authenticity is evaluated to determine if the copies accurately reflect the originals autographs.

Of all the books of antiquity, the Bible is overwhelmingly the most verifiable! There are more manuscripts of the books of the Bible than any other ancient writings. There are 500 *original copies* of biblical books with over 1500 ancient copies of these. There are more than 5,300 portions of Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, totaling more than 24,000 manuscript copies of portions of the New Testament.



A page of a
copy of the
Iliad from the
5th-early 6th
century AD

Homer's *Iliad* has only 643 copies and
any one of Aristotle's has at most 49
existing manuscripts.

2. *Internal Test.*

This test examines the contents of the manuscripts. Is there consistency within the text? Are there any contradictions that render the manuscript unreliable? Are the events historically accurate? Also included is a careful examination of geographical and chronological factors: the names of civilizations, kings, and other historical data.

There are critics who claim the bible is filled with contradictions.

A true contradiction exists only where there is no way to reconcile the statements.

If a plausible explanation exists,
there is no contradiction. The
alleged contradictions are usually
copyist errors and easily
explained. [e.g., 2 Sam. 21.19; (1
Sam. 17.48-52) cf., 1 Chron.
20.5]

3. *External Test.*

It asks the basic question,
"Are there any other historical documents that will either confirm or deny the internal material of the manuscript in question?"

Without question, external evidence supports the biblical documents. Ancient historians Josephus [ca. 37- 100 AD] and Tacitus [ca. 56-120 AD] confirm the biblical record.

Vatican Manuscript [*Codex Vaticanus*]: a fourth century uncial manuscript, perhaps the oldest (except for some of the *papyri*), located in the Vatican Library in Rome. The Old Testament is almost complete, except for the first 46 chapters in Genesis, Psalms 105-137, and 2 Samuel 2.5-7, 10-13. The New Testament is missing Matthew 3; Paul's epistles 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus and Philemon; Hebrews 9.14 to 13.25; and, the entire book of Revelation. Mark 16.9-20 is missing as well.

Sinaitic Manuscript [*Codex Sinaiticus*]:
discovered by Constantine Tischendorf at St.
Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai in 1859,
written AD 325-360. It contains part of the
Old Testament and the entire New Testament.
43 leaves (1/3 of the whole, containing parts
of 1 Chronicles, 2 Esdras, Tobit and Jeremiah,
with the entire book of Esther) were given to
King Frederick Augustus of Saxony, and
published as the *Codex Frederico-Augustanus*.
Now in the University of Leipzig Library.

ΚΑΙ ΔΟΘΗΤΩΣ ΜΗΡ
 ΜΑ ΚΑΙ ΗΛΘΙ ΠΗ
 ΗΙ ΜΕΛΙΑ ΚΑΙ ΤΥΝΗ
 Η ΑΝΑΡΕΣΗ ΤΩ ΒΑΣΙ
 ΛΕΙ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΕΑΝ
 ΤΙΑΣΤΗΝ ΚΑΙ ΗΡΕΣΕ
 ΤΩ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΙ ΤΟ ΠΡΑ
 ΓΜΑ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΟΙΗΣΕ
 ΟΥΤΩΣ·
 ΚΑΙ ΑΝΘΡΩΠΟΣ ΗΝ
 ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΣ ΕΝ ΟΥ
 ΣΟΙΣ ΤΗ ΠΟΛΕΙ ΚΑΙ
 ΟΝΟΜΑ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΜΑΡ
 ΔΟΧΑΙΟΣ Ο ΤΟΥΤΙ ΜΙ
 ΡΟΥ ΤΟΥΣ ΕΜΕΕΙΟΥ·
 ΙΟΥ ΚΕΙΣΑΙΟΥ ΕΚ
 ΦΥΛΗΣ ΚΕΝΙΑ ΜΕΤ
 ΟΣ ΗΝ ΑΙ ΧΜΑΛΩ·
 ΤΟΣ ΕΞΙΨΗ ΑΜΗΝ
 Η ΧΜΑΛΩ ΤΕΥΣΕΝ
 ΝΑΡΟΥ ΧΟΔΟΝ Ο
 ΣΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΥΣ ΚΑ
 ΒΥΛΩΝΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΗΝ
 ΤΟΥΤΩ ΠΑΙΣ ΟΡΕ
 ΠΤΗΘΥΓΑΤΗΡ ΑΜΙ
 ΝΑΔΑΒΑΔΕΛΦΟΥ·
 ΠΑΤΡΟΣ ΑΥΤΟΥ ΚΑΙ
 ΤΟΝ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΑΥΤΗΣ
 ΕΣΘΗΡ· ΕΝ ΔΕ ΤΩ
 ΜΕΤΑΛΛΑΞΑΙ ΑΥ
 ΤΗΣ ΤΟΥΣ ΟΝΕΙΣ·
 ΕΠΕΔΕΥΣΕΝ ΑΥΤΗΝ
 ΕΑΥΤΩ ΕΙΣ ΤΥΝΑΙ
 ΚΑΚΑΙ ΗΝ ΤΟ ΚΟΡΑ
 ΣΙΟΝ ΚΑΛΗ ΤΩ ΕΙΔΕ
 ΚΑΙ ΟΤΕ ΗΚΟΥΣΘΗ
 ΤΟ ΤΟΥ ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ
 ΠΡΟΣ ΤΑΓΜΑ ΣΥΝΗ
 ΧΟΗΣΑΝ ΤΗΝ ΠΟ
 ΛΙΝ· ΥΠΟΧΕΙΡΑΓΑ

The remainder is
 in the National British
 Library and omits
 Matthew 16.2-3; Mark
 16.9-20; John 5.5; John
 8.1-11; Acts 8.37;
 Romans 16.24; 1 John
 5.7 and about a dozen
 other entire verses.

Purchased in 1933
 from the Soviet Union
 for £100,000.

Codex Sinaiticus,
www.codexsinaiticus.org/en/



The end of the gospel of John, showing the decorative tailpiece at the end of each book

Alexandrian Manuscript
[Codex Alexandrinus]:
Contains both testaments.
Ten leaves are missing from the Old Testament, twenty-five from Matthew, two from John, and three from 2 Cor. Written about 450 AD, located in the British Museum. Copyist's errors are frequent in this manuscript.

There are many other important manuscripts and thousands of *cursives, lectionaries, versions* and *papyri* of the ancient manuscripts.

Cursives are copies of the ancient manuscripts written in a running hand. About 2,800 cursives have now been catalogued, dating from the ninth to sixteenth centuries, which limits their value.

Lectionaries come from the term *lection*, a selected passage of Scripture to be read in public worship. Some 2,200 lectionaries exist.

Versions are translations of the ancient manuscripts. A number of translations were made shortly after the New Testament books were first written.

1) Syriac Versions: chief language spoken in the regions of Syria and Mesopotamia. Two principle versions: Old Syriac and the Peshitta

2) Latin Versions: Latin replaced Greek as the "universal" language. Important because they were used to make the first translations of the English Bible. Two principle versions: the Old Latin and the Latin Vulgate.



Papyri comprise some of the earliest known texts of certain Scriptures.

Rylands Papyrus 457(P52) this scrap, about 3.5 x 2.5 inches, the oldest surviving manuscript of any part of the New Testament (**A.D. 117-138**) containing John 18.31-33, opposite side 37- 38.

P104 and **P64** (parts of Matt. 21 and 26) are
dated to c. **125-150 AD**;

P77+P103 (parts of Matt. 13, 14, 23) c. **150-
190**;

P4 (Luke 1-6) c. **150 AD**;

P75 (Luke 3-24 + John 1-15) c. **175 AD**;

P66 (John 1-21) to c. **150 AD**;
P45 (Matt. 20-26; Mark. 4-12;
Luke 6-14; John 4-11; Acts 4-19)
c. **200 AD**. *Chester Beatty Papyri*
I-III: containing 30 leaves from
what was once a codex of about
220 leaves, parts of all four
gospels and the book of Acts.

We have met every scholarly test to show that the Bible as we now have it is based on manuscripts dating within 25 years of the death of the apostle John at the age of 100.

Polycarp (AD 69-155) was a student of John who died on Patmos, AD 100. Irenaeus (AD 130-202) heard Polycarp teach and wrote in AD 180 of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John as the Four Gospels.

This was only 80 years from the time of John's death. A time equivalent in my family from my Grandfather to the present. I have my Grandfather's study Bible. That is how close we are to the original manuscripts and the men who wrote them.

Mk 13:31: *"Heaven and earth
will pass away, but My words
will not pass away."*

1 Peter 1:22 Since you have in obedience to the truth purified your souls for a sincere love of the brethren, fervently love one another from the heart, 23 for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, that is, through the living and abiding word of God. 24 For, "All flesh is like grass, And all its glory like the flower of grass. The grass withers, And the flower falls off, 25 But the word of the Lord abides forever. " And this is the word which was preached to you.

Why not obey Jesus now?

Mark 16:16 Whoever believes
and is baptized will be saved, but
whoever does not believe will be
condemned.