

THE EIGHT ESSENTIALS

WEEK 1: THE BIBLE

HOW WE GOT IT

THE CANNON OF SCRIPTURE

EXTRA-BIBLICAL WRITINGS

MODERN TRANSLATIONS

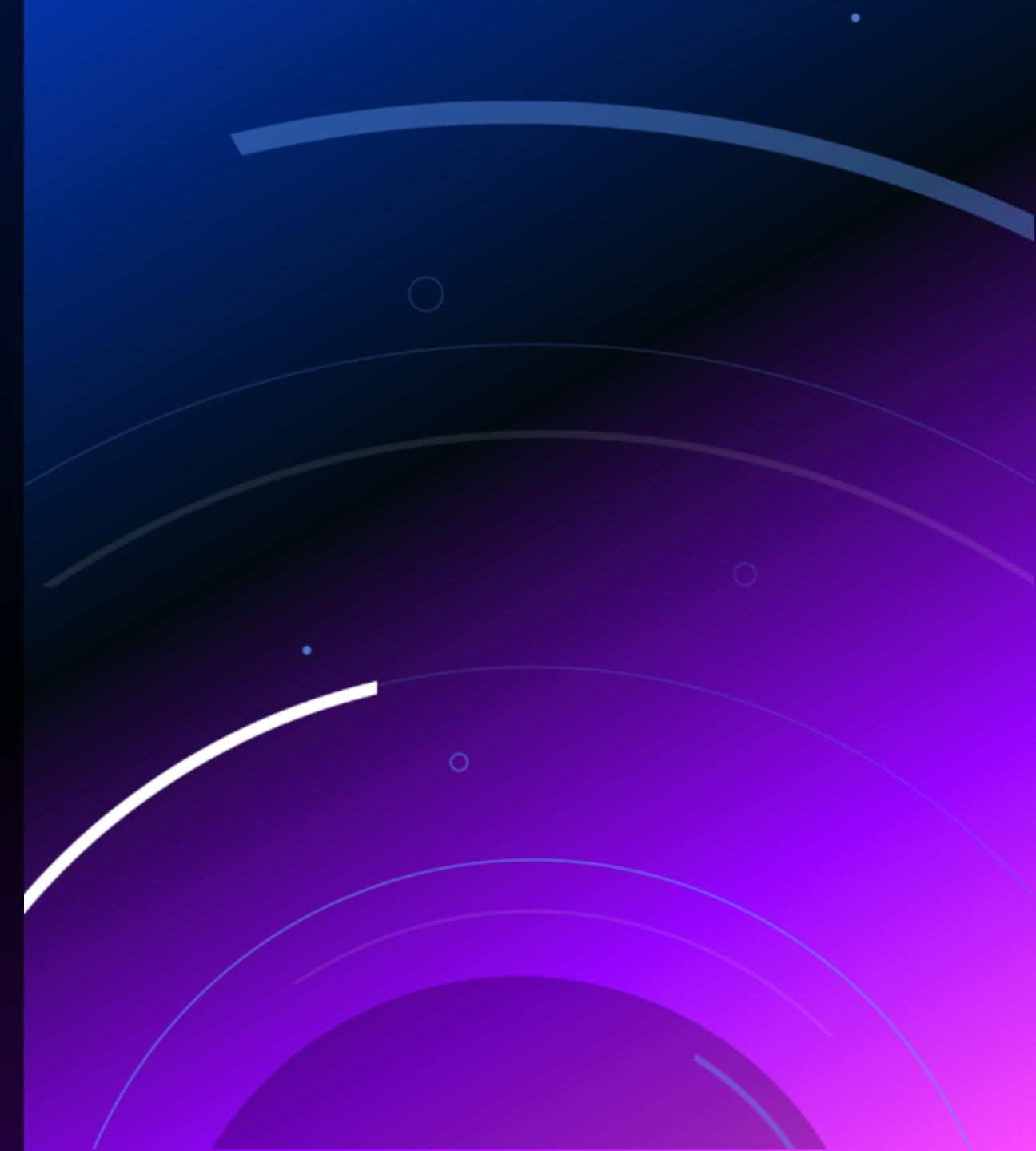
THE BIBLE IS UNIQUE IN ITS ORIGIN AND UNPARALLELED IN ITS IMPACT

No other book has faced such opposition and persecution

No other writing has experienced such widespread circulation

No other source has changed so many lives

No writing can boast of such reliability and trustworthiness



THERE ARE 66 BOOKS OF THE BIBLE

39- OLD TESTAMENT
27- NEW TESTAMENT

THE OT HAS 32-35 DIFFERENT AUTHORS AND SPANS
THE YEARS FROM APPROXIMATELY 1446 BC- 400 BC

THE NT HAS 8-9 DIFFERENT AUTHORS AND WAS
WRITTEN FROM APPROXIMATELY AD 45- 95

3 LANGUAGES- HEBREW/ ARAMAIC/ GREEK

"THE CHURCH DID NOT *CREATE* THE CANNON; IT DID NOT DETERMINE WHICH BOOKS WOULD BE CALLED SCRIPTURE, THE INSPIRED WORD OF GOD. INSTEAD, THE CHURCH *RECOGNIZED*, OR *DISCOVERED*, WHICH BOOKS HAD BEEN INSPIRED FROM THEIR INCEPTION."

- JOSH McDOWELL,
EVIDENCE THAT DEMANDS A VERDICT



5 PRINCIPLES FOR RECOGNITION

- Was the Book written by a prophet of God?
- Was the writer confirmed by acts of God?
- Did the message tell the truth about God?
- Does it come with the power of God?
- Was it accepted by the people of God?

THE OLD TESTAMENT CANNON

GENESIS- MALACHI

-
-
-

CANNON – “THE RULE OF FAITH” -ORIGEN

Much historical evidence clearly supports the theory that the Hebrew cannon of the OT as we have it was well established before the 1st century AD. More than likely this was established as late as 400 BC but certainly no later than 150 BC, due in large part to the scribal work of Ezra after the return of the Jewish people from the Babylonian exile.

Jesus and the other NT authors all recognized the OT as we have it.

-They quoted from it exclusively and often

-Luke 11:51, “From the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah”

-1st and last martyrs of the Hebrew cannon (Genesis- 2 Chronicles)

THE NEW TESTAMENT CANNON

MATTHEW- REVELATION

ITS EARLY RECOGNITION

There is the testimony of the early church fathers

-Ignatius (AD 70- 110)

-Polycarp (AD 115)

-Irenaeus (AD 180)

-Clement (AD 200)

-Origen (c. 249)

-Numerous others

Possibly due to Gnosticism and heretic writings, along with persecution, the early church was moved to officially recognize those writings which were indeed Scripture.

-Athanasius- the earliest formal recognition of the 27 books of the NT as we have it today in AD 367 .

-Jerome and Augustine- recognized shortly after

-The Synod of Hippo (AD 393)

-3rd Council of Carthage (AD 397)

-4th Council of Carthage (AD 419)



WHAT ABOUT EXTRA-BIBLICAL WRITINGS?

Where does the Apocrypha which is included in the Roman Catholic Bibles fit in?

What about the supposed “lost gospels” brought up by the Jesus Seminar and other opponents of Scripture?

THE APOCRYPHA

- Jerome (4th Century AD) (Author of the Latin Vulgate)
 - First to name this group of writings
 - Referred to them as “books for the church” but not to be treated as equal to Scripture
- The Roman Catholic Church
 - Over the years increasingly relied on these writings for their biblical interpretation
 - Council of Trent in 1546 officially declared them to be a part of the cannon of Scripture
- Reformers and fellow Protestants continue to deny them as such

Fallacies of the Apocrypha

1. Contain historical and geographical errors
2. Teach doctrines that are false and foster practices contrary to Scripture
3. Literary style and structure vary from the rest of Scripture
4. Lack prophetic power and poetic and religious feeling

THE “LOST GOSPELS” OF THE NT

The “Gospel of Thomas”/ “Gospel of Peter”

-None of these originated earlier than the second century AD

-After the NT was beginning to be recognized

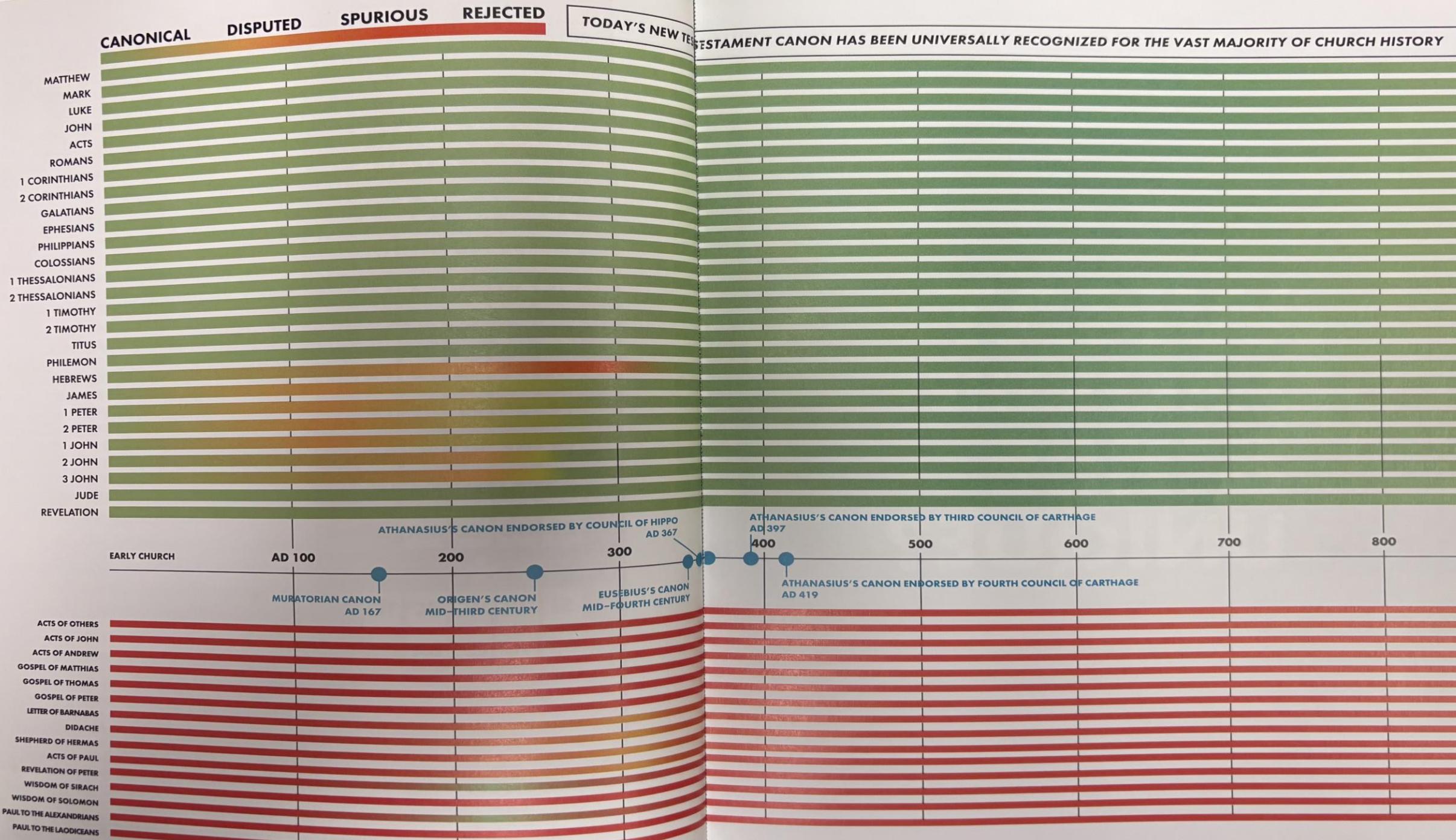
-Probably helped to force the recognition of the NT canon as we have it

- Do not fit in with the other gospel records
- Give no new revelation or teaching
- Assume a knowledge of the writings of the recognized NT books

“THE OLDEST AND BEST SOURCES WE HAVE FOR THE LIFE OF JESUS... ARE THE FOUR GOSPELS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT, MATTHEW, MARK, LUKE, AND JOHN. THIS IS NOT SIMPLY THE VIEW OF CHRISTIAN HISTORIANS WHO HAVE A HIGH OPINION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT AND ITS HISTORICAL WORTH; IT IS THE VIEW OF ALL SERIOUS HISTORIANS OF ANTIQUITY OF EVERY KIND, FROM COMMITTED EVANGELICAL CHRISTIANS TO HARDCORE ATHEISTS... WE MAY WISH THERE WERE OLDER, MORE RELIABLE SOURCES, BUT ULTIMATELY IT IS THE SOURCES FOUND WITHIN THE CANNON THAT PROVIDE US WITH THE MOST, AND BEST, INFORMATION.”

- BART EHRMAN (AGNOSTIC HISTORIAN AND BIBLE SCHOLAR)

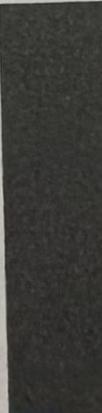




4 feet
Average Classical
Writer



1,792 feet
One World
Trade Center



1 mile
New Testament



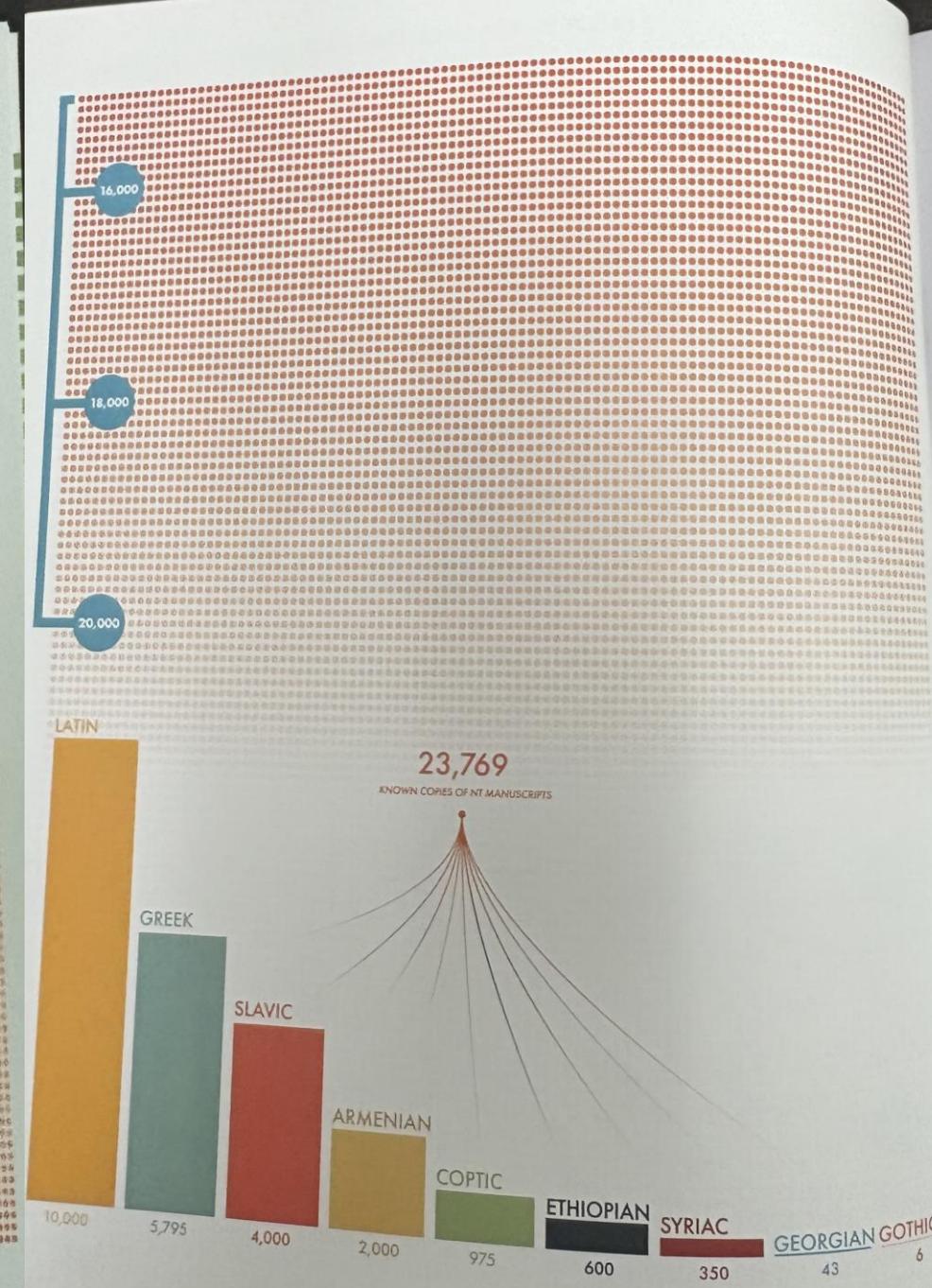
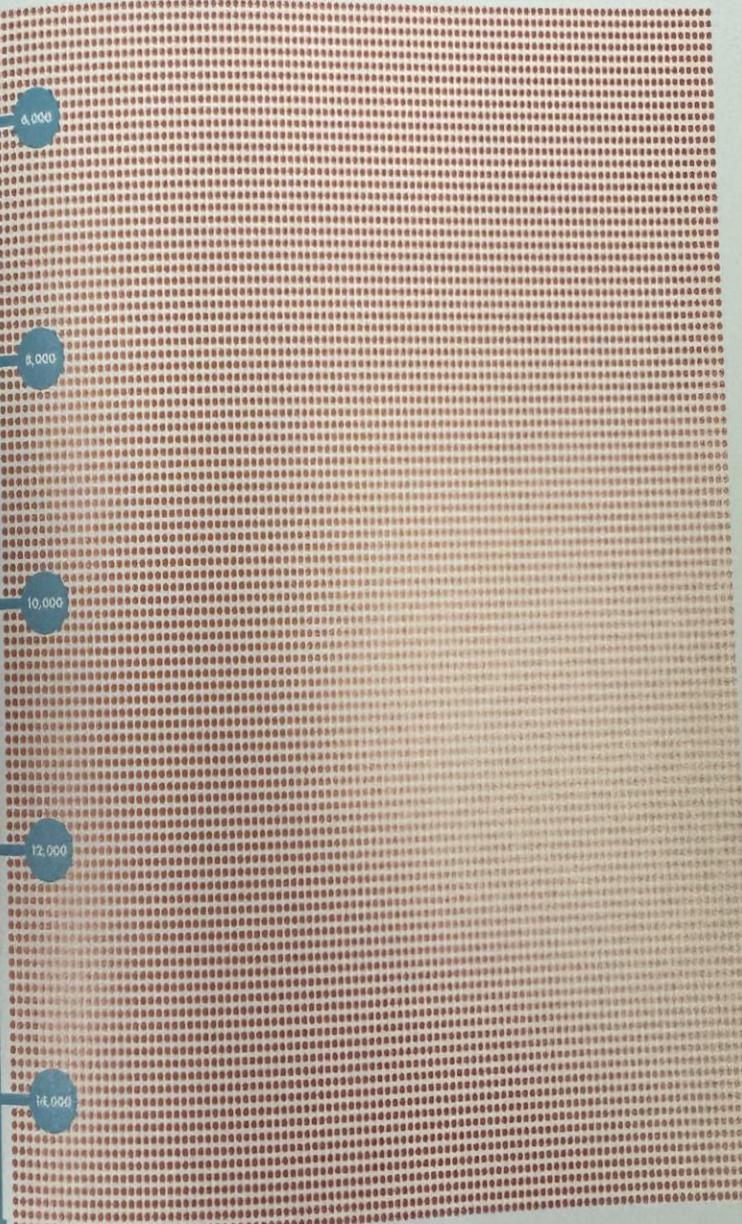
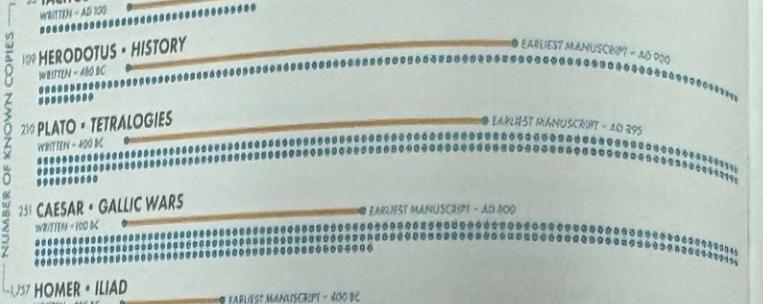
1.5 miles
Old Testament



2.5 miles
Bible

HAS THE BIBLE REALLY BEEN PRESERVED FOR US TODAY?

When we examine the number and quality of manuscripts available, and the gap of time between the original and the earliest existing copies, there is overwhelming evidence that the text of the New Testament we have today is the same as the original.



THE BOTTOM LINE

The Bible, as we have it from Genesis to Revelation, is the most accurate and reliable historical text man has ever known. We can confidently affirm that it is both complete and trustworthy. The only question we need to ask concerning it is “What then should be our response to the Bible?”

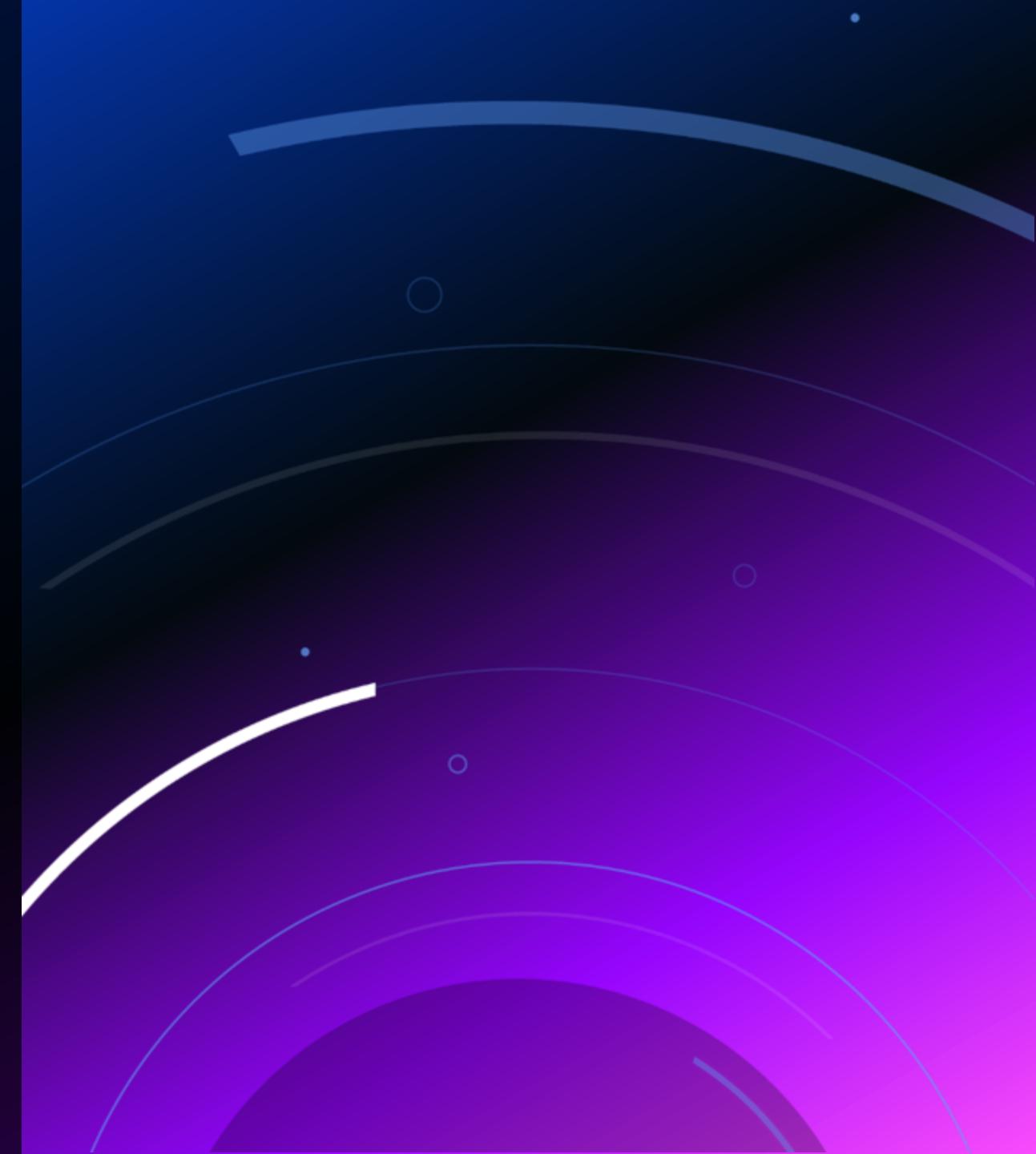
WHAT ABOUT MODERN TRANSLATIONS?

The Bible is inerrant in its original autographs (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek)

Jerome translated the Bible from its original into Latin (Vulgate) around AD 400

The first English translations did not show up until 1380 when John Wycliffe translated the Latin into English

William Tyndale translated the Greek into the first English NT in 1526



A CONTINUING TRADITION

- Translations continued after Tyndale's martyrdom to finish what he had begun (a copy of the Bible for all to read and understand)
- 1611 the first printing of the KJV Authorized Bible
 - There were originally two printing presses in use
 - Over 200 variations between the two
 - Numerous revisions over the years because of the changing English language
 - Today the most widely used KJV is the 1769 edition which differs in thousands of places from the original

A CONTINUING TRADITION

- The intent of the early translators was that the “boy behind the plow” could have as much if not greater knowledge of Scripture as the churchmen of his day
- With this in mind the preface to these Bibles urged the ongoing translations for clarity and accuracy
- 1946 the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered uncovering an extensive amount of older manuscripts than what had been used before in translations
- Today’s translations use these later discoveries and textual criticism along with adapting to the changing English language

HOW TO CHOOSE

- Our English translations today can vary from one to another
- Understand how the text was translated
 - Was it “Word for Word”
 - Was it “Thought for Thought”
 - Was it “Paraphrased and simplified”
- Look for translations by committees not by individuals
- Find one that is accurate to the original languages
- One that you can read and understand
- The best translation is the one that you will read and study