# **The History of Scripture**

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The Origin of Scripture

# Introduction

We are continuing our mini-series on understanding the Bible. Its history, its languages, the aim being to understand what we have a little better. Understanding, I pray, will bring greater confidence, trust, illumination, insight, just help us engage with the Word of God.

Last week we went through the History of God’s Revelation. We talked about General and Special Revelation, and then we surveyed how God spoke throughout Biblical history.

The key outcome I think is that *God wants to be known*. God has created in such a way that His existence is obvious, and He has repeatedly, clearly revealed Himself throughout history, most notably through the person of Jesus Christ - the Word of God.

Why then does not everybody know God?

Because of sin, and the way it blinds us. If a person does not *want* to see God’s existence, they are able to choose ignorance, as do many today. As I did, personally, before coming to Christ.

But for those who *seek* the Lord while He may be found, the Scriptures contain more revelation from God that we could fully explore in a lifetime.

Today is session 2: The History of Scripture.

The goal is to survey the Scriptures themselves. When and how were they written? What has been preserved until now? What languages were used?

## Structure

The outline today is:

1. The Compilation of Scripture

a. How did the books we have today come into being? Were they dictated by God?

2. The Languages of Scripture

a. We will look at, as far as we can, what languages were originally used in the compilation

3. The Preservation of Scripture

a. How did God oversee to safeguard the Bible text from corruption?

b. Survey of the key OT and NT documents that exist

# Introduction to the Bible

Before we get into the compilation, we should take a moment to consider what we have.

The word “Bible” comes from the Greek word Biblos and just means “the book.” In reality it is the “book of books.”

You can think of it as a library, see image.

You’ve got different groupings of those books. The top two shelves are the OT, and the bottom one is the NT.

SLIDE - Bible Overview

The 39 books of the Old Testament and 27 books of the New span a variety of genres. There is:

• Narrative history, such as found in books like Ruth, Esther or in the Gospels

• Poetry, such as the Psalms and also within other books. Remember Hannah’s prayer at the beginning of 1 Samuel.

• Prophesy and wisdom literature are subgenres of poetry

• Reference materials, such as genealogies and lists of names

• Memoranda such as Cyrus’ letter at start of Ezra

• Letters, the Epistles are a key example but there are letters included in the Old Testament as well

• And finally there is the enigmatic “apocalyptic” genre

The Old Testament had about 30 different contributing authors. Moses and David being prominent, the different prophets, Solomon, etc

Moses was probably the most ancient writer, although Job is possibly older. And the most recently written book is Malachi, around 400 BC.

So that makes a period of **at least 1,000 years** during which the Old Testament was written.

In contrast, the New Testament was written within one generation, probably around 45 AD through 95 AD. It had about 10 different authors: each Gospel, Paul, James, etc.

So you have approximately 40 authors, writing in different countries and cultures, over a period of at least a millennium, writing different genres in different languages.

And yet, the completed package is a consistent, unified book. Free of contradiction, free of error, unified in overall message about the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Who Himself declared that the scriptures “testify about me” in John 5:39.

There is *no other project on earth* that was in development for 1,400 years! Only God, Who is unconstrained by things like mortality and time, could accomplish such a thing.

In session 4 I plan to get into some mind-blowing details from the Bible that prove its divine origin.

# The Compilation of Scripture

That’s what we have. Let’s talk about how it was written.

Last week I laid the foundation about God’s Revelation, and we looked at several verses that showed Moses writing down.

A little addendum to that: I read the end of Joshua this week, Joshua 24:25-26. [SLIDE] Here it says Joshua made a covenant and “wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God.” So he was consciously extending the Book of the Law that Moses had received.

I thought that was interesting!

Today though I want to talk more generally. You will hear that the Biblical authors were “inspired.” What does this mean? How did God’s Revelation get recorded?

The concept of inspiration comes from 2 Tim 3:16

**2 Timothy 3:16 NASB 2020**

All Scripture is inspired by God and beneficial for teaching, for rebuke, for correction, for training in righteousness;

The Greek word used there is best translated as God-breathed, breathed out by God. But how do we understand that?

When you read the Bible, it’s evident that the character, tone and voice of the author is preserved. The books written by the Apostle John have a distinctive character to them, very different to Paul’s, for example. Hebrew I find harder to discern, but again the vocabulary and expressive style of the authors is different. Even within the Psalm you can start to get a sense that one’s Davidic, that one sounds more like Asaph, etc.

So while in many places we read “And the LORD spoke” - we have the very words of God, we cannot assert that God “dictated” to the authors **all** of the content.

That would not account for these stylistic differences we observe.

And yet, in Romans 3:2 Paul clearly states that the Bible (specifically the OT) is “the actual words of God.”

Now look at what Peter says about it:

**2 Peter 1:20–21 NASB 2020**

*But* know this first *of all,* that no prophecy of Scripture becomes *a matter* of *someone’s* own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

If you read from v16, you’ll see Peter state that the Scriptures are more reliable than experience - even his supernatural experience of seeing the Transfigured Jesus Christ!

In these two verses, he speaks of how the words of God came to being, saying that it’s not human will, but rather men moved by the Spirit spoke from God.

So God-breathed - inspired by God - means that the Holy Spirit *moved* the men. The word means “to guide, to direct, to lead.” You might also check 1 Peter 1:11 where he says that the “Spirit of Christ” was “in” the prophets as they wrote.

In Jeremiah 20:9, the prophet Jeremiah speaks of trying to *stop speaking about God* because it just brings him derision. But then his heart becomes “like a burning fire” and he HAS to declare it.

I’m not saying all Scripture was written like that. On the contrary, when you read Luke’s introduction to the Book of Acts, he writes as an academic regarding the “first account [he] composed.” In his case, I think he carefully and prayerfully wrote according to the wisdom God gave him, and the Holy Spirit oversaw (guide/direct/lead) the work.

And I think that is the summary. The Inspiration of Scripture means that God moved the authors in the supernatural way that only He can. He used the skills and gifts He’d given them, used their writing style, and the miraculous outcome is the Book before us. And I will show you a few miracles in the text in session 4.

### The Sources

From internal evidence, we can infer that many books of the Bible had their own sources and went through compiling or editorial processing. They weren’t all simply written down and that’s it.

The Book of Joshua and the Book of 2 Samuel both refer to the “Book of Jashar,” or possibly “the Book of the Upright.” 2 Samuel 1, which we’ll study in a few weeks’ time, has a recorded song of mourning from David, which the author of 2 Samuel had sourced from the Book of Jashar and recorded in his work.

The Books of Kings and Chronicles keep referring to other works. For example: 1 Kings 11:41

**1 Kings 11:41 NASB 2020**

Now the rest of the acts of Solomon and whatever he did, and his wisdom, are they not written in the Book of the Acts of Solomon?

The implication is that the author of Kings has taken excerpts from that book in his writing of his book.

Later in Kings, 1 Kings 14:19, there’s a reference to the “Book of the Chronicles of the Kings of Israel.”

These two books are lost to history.

Nehemiah refers to a reference book of the exiles who came up from Babylon after the Captivity:

**Nehemiah 7:5 NASB 2020**

Then my God put it into my heart to assemble the nobles, the officials, and the *other* people to be enrolled by genealogies. Then I found the book of the genealogy of those who came up first, in which I found the following record:

And then the bulk of that chapter is a table of names and numbers.

You will also come across little editorial remarks. For example, you’ll often see the phrase “to this day” in a narrative story. Such and such a thing happened, and it’s true to this day. An example: Genesis 47:26, where we read Joseph made a statute in Egypt “valid to this day.”

This shows the final work was not contemporary with the events. We accept Genesis was written by Moses, writing some 400 years after Joseph, and this is probably his editorial comment.

We see the same phrase throughout the Old Testament. A thing happened, and now the place is called such-and-such *to this day.*

So, we see that in some cases, the biblical authors drew upon other records when they compiled their works.

### The Original Compilations

If you look at the structure of Genesis, you will find come across this phrase: “these are the generations of Noah” and “These are the generations of Shem” etc.

In fact, Gen 5:1 says “This is the **book** of the generations of Adam.”

It’s quite conceivable that the original works of Moses would have been separate papyri or tablets of stone or clay. Due to the space constraints, the entire book of Genesis would have needed to be in multiple volumes, and these division markers could have served as headers for those items.

However...

#### Rebuttal of the Documentary Hypothesis

Now there is an erroneous theory about the books of Moses called the Documentary Hypothesis. It suggests that the Torah is a late compilation from four (or possibly more!) sources rather than the work of Moses. Commonly called J, E, D and P.

It’s a theory based on literary analysis, such as the apparent divisions I mentioned, and also the language used. It looks at Genesis 1, for example, where God is called *Elohim* in Hebrew. Then it looks at Genesis 2:3*ff* where God is now called *Yahweh Elohim,* and concludes “ah, must have been two different sources!”

It’s based on the faulty assumption that sophisticated writing did not yet exist in the days of Moses. Now Moses was brought up for 40 years in the palace of Pharaoh in Egypt. Stephen says in Acts 7:22 he “was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was proficient in words (logos) and action.” So the idea he was not able to write, or that writing did not exist, is without basis. In fact, I’ll prove it to you shortly!

Here’s a slide to illustrate the basics of the theory: there was only oral tradition until the time of the kings, etc.

I’m okay with the idea that there were sources.

But we *have to maintain* that Moses was the one who compiled the Torah. Why? Because all through the Gospels, it repeatedly declares Moses was the author. Example:

**John 5:46 NASB 2020**

For if you believed Moses, you would believe Me; for he wrote about Me.

Moses’ name appears **79 times** in the New Testament. Plenty of other quotes and references from Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and Deuteronomy.

Moses said. Moses wrote.

The risen Jesus Himself said:

**Luke 24:44 NASB 2020**

Now He said to them, “These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all the things that are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”

He appeals to *Moses by name*.

So as long as we accept the word of Jesus Christ as trustworthy, we can immediately reject the Documentary Hypothesis.

SLIDE

It’s WRONG.

This is an example that shows how tightly integrated Jesus Christ and the Bible are. We can either accept both, or we have to reject both.

#### Deutero-Isaiah

There is a similar nonsense that claims Isaiah was written by two (or more!) authors, not the one Isaiah. One wrote chapters 1-39, then another wrote 40-66.

I won’t waste your time talking about it, because the theory can also be rejected based on the New Testament.

**John 12:38–41 NASB 2020**

*This happened* so that the word of Isaiah the prophet which he spoke would be fulfilled: “Lord, who has believed our report? And to whom has the arm of the Lord been revealed?” For this reason they could not believe, for Isaiah said again, “He has blinded their eyes and He Hardened their heart, so that they will not see with their eyes and understand with their heart, and be converted, and *so* I will *not* heal them.” These things Isaiah said because he saw His glory, and he spoke about Him.

One of these quotes is from chapter 53 of Isaiah, the other from chapter 6. And both are ascribed to Isaiah.

In the end, both the Documentary Hypothesis and the Deutero-Isaiah theory are rooted in the minds of men who have chosen to reject the straightforward truth of the Bible. They are not based on scholarship; they are based upon pride, rebellion and unbelief.

Much like evolution is a concept that is rooted in a rejection of the straightforward truth of the Bible!

### New Testament

Let’s turn to consider the New Testament. Again, in some cases, sources were used.

I’ve mentioned Luke already; Let’s look at the introduction to his Gospel:

**Luke 1:1–4 NASB 2020**

Since many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, it seemed fitting to me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write *it out* for you in an orderly sequence, most excellent Theophilus; so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.

Luke’s a true scholar. He was not one of the 12 Apostles, in fact his name shows up just 3 times in Paul’s writings, where we learn he was a doctor who was close to Paul, and with him to the end. As he wasn’t an eyewitness, he used sources. He interviewed people who *had* seen Jesus.

Matthew includes a private message between Pilate and his wife in Matthew 27, showing he also used sources, possibly even spoke to one or both of them.

John includes a conversation between Jesus and Pilate privately in the Praetorium in John 19.

And Mark’s entire Gospel is generally accepted to be primarily sourced from the Apostle Peter’s account of Jesus’ life.

However, the key difference with the Old Testament is that everything was completed within one generation. Many of the books of the New Testament appeal to eyewitnesses. This is especially true of the Resurrection. Paul says in 1 Cor 15:6

**1 Corinthians 15:6 NASB 2020**

After that He appeared to more than five hundred brothers *and sisters* at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep;

So again, sources were used in some cases for the New Testament, but everything was completed and accepted while the generation who saw Jesus Christ were yet alive.

## Summary of the Compilation of Scripture

To summarise the compilation of Scripture then. The Books of the Bible are the inspired word of God. The authors of the books of the Bible did so as the Holy Spirit inspired and enabled them to do so, but in general they did not receive dictation.

Many of the authors drew from other sources for their works, but that in no way undermines the inspiration of the books. We can reject as unbiblical theories for the compilation of the Old Testament that are rebutted by the New Testament.

# The Languages of Scripture

Let’s get into the languages used in Scripture. God has handed down to us a library of books, primarily written in Hebrew and Koine Greek (or common Greek).

Most of the Old Testament is written in Hebrew.

The New Testament is written in Koine Greek.

## History

A brief survey of language, to begin with.

SLIDE

I found this book by Jeff A. Benner called “The Ancient Hebrew Language and Alphabet” very helpful in preparing.

His website is ancient-hebrew.org.

Another useful website is hebrew4christians.com, which is where I learned the letters and basics of pronunciation, years ago.

First, language has existed from the beginning, certainly spoken and written form was not far behind. Creation was literally accomplished through the speech of God. Adam gave names to the animals through speech.

Arguably, the first written language would be the mark God put on Cain in Genesis 4.

It has been common to argue that written language came later, but archaeology has now shown that written language has been around since pre-history.

SLIDE

According to Halley’s Bible Handbook, there is a tradition among Arabs and Jews that Enoch, the seventh from Adam, the one who “walked with God,” invented writing, and that he buried some clay tablets prior to the Flood to preserve them. One of the kings of Ninevah, Assurbanipal, apparently claimed to enjoy reading “inscriptions of the time before the Flood.”

These two images are allegedly of pre-Flood writing, taken from Halley’s Bible Handbook.

Is that true? I… do not know. I found out this morning that the latest edition of Halley’s Bible Handbook have deleted all of that, so who knows.

This is more definitive: two images of early post-Flood writing.

SLIDE

The Weld-Blundell Prism, currently in the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, lists the records of Sumerian kings, including 10 who had reigns lasting hundreds of years, before the Flood. It was probably written just prior to Abraham’s time.

The Code of Hummurabi, likely contemporaneous with Abraham and certainly well before Moses, is a legal document with over 4,000 lines of text carved onto a basalt stele. Currently in the Louvre in Paris.

My point is only that writing has been around for millennia. By the time of Abraham, there were great libraries in existence.

Written language *DEFINITELY* predates Moses!

Genesis 11 shows how different languages came to be. Originally there was just one:

**Genesis 11:1 NASB 2020**

Now all the earth used the same language and the same words.

The chapter goes on with the famous story of the Tower of Babel, where God came down to “confuse their language so that they will not understand one another’s speech” and thus prevent humanity’s pride and scatter them.

Based on the fact that the names we have prior to Babel make sense in Hebrew… Adam means “man”, Noah means “comfort” for example, we can infer that the original language was indeed Hebrew.

It’s amazing to think that the very first words spoken - by God Himself - was Hebrew!

One interesting perspective from Benner is that the three major ancient languages of Hebrew, Egyptian and Sumerian - all pictographic but sounding very different - were spoken by the descendants of Shem, Ham and Japheth respectively.

## Hebrew

So Hebrew is a very ancient language, and it has gone through changes. Originally, it was a pictographic language. That means the letters themselves carried meaning.

This chart - www.ancient-hebrew.org/alphabet/files/alphabetchart.png - illustrates early and modern Hebrew letters, the original letter meanings, and they then the development into modern Hebrew and Greek.

I know you can’t read it, but you can check it out at home later if you want.

So the original Hebrew of the Old Testament looked very different to the Hebrew we have today.

Today, the letter shapes are from Aramean script, or Aramaic.

The Aramaic and Hebrew Languages are closely related, with differences in grammar and pronunciation but with many shared semantic roots. In the time of Christ, it was the dominant language among the Jews in Roman Judea. Several times we see Jesus quoted in Aramaic. You can see this from verses like Mark 5:41, 7:34. Whenever you come across “Abba, Father” - Abba is Aramaic for "father.”

Written Hebrew shifted from the ancient pictographic letters to Aramean script around the time of the Babylonian captivity, around 6th Century before Christ.

That’s the time of Daniel, of course. Half of the Book of Daniel is written in Aramaic. You’ll see a footnote in your Bible on Daniel 2:4 pointing it out.

The book of Ezra, a book describing the history of the return from Exile, features some Aramaic sections, mainly official memoranda.

So around this time, the Jews adopted the Aramaic script for writing Hebrew - maybe Daniel himself had something to do with this shift!

Another key point in the development of ancient Hebrew was the writing of vowels.

You may know that Hebrew lacks vowels. Or rather, all the letters are consonants, and the vowels are inferred.

NW Y MY THNK THT THS WLD MK TH TXT DFFCLT T NDRSTND, BT N RLTY, Y FND VN MST NGLSH CN B RD ND NDRSTD WTHT VWLS!

Around the early Middle Ages, a community of Jewish scribes and scholars called The Masoretes created a system to standardise pronunciation and write the vowels using system of dots and dashes called “*nikud”* plural *nikkudot*.

Fluent Hebrew speakers don’t actually need vowels written to be able to read it.

Now next week I plan to talk a bit more about Hebrew, specifically how different it is to English thought and the challenges they present to Bible translators and interpreters.

## New Testament Koine Greek

SLIDE

All the New Testament manuscripts we have are in Koine Greek. Koine means common, and it’s distinct from the classical Greek of the philosophers of the day. It’s like the common, global English of today.

That said, Jesus and the Disciples spoke Aramaic.

So why do we have Greek manuscripts?

Early Church fathers, including Papias (60 - 130AD) was a chronicler of early Christianity, and he wrote that Matthew wrote down the sayings of Jesus in Hebrew. It’s debated if that meant the entire book was originally Hebrew/Aramaic, or whether just some of the quotes of Jesus were.

Similarly, Clement of Alexandria (200AD ish) wrote that “Paul wrote Hebrews in Hebrew, and Luke translated it into Greek,” but this is debatable.

So why Greek? Because it was the common tongue of the region. Aramaic was prominent in Judea, but globally across the Roman Empire, the main languages were Latin and Koine Greek.

I took this map from Wikipedia. The red areas to the west were predominantly Latin, the blue to the east predominantly Greek. The blue area, of course, is exactly the area that Paul in the Book of Acts evangelised.

God ordained that the New Testament scriptures should be in Greek, and we can confidently assert that Greek is the original language. I’ll show you a fun proof of this is session 5.

(read here for a preview: https://www.khouse.org/personal\_update/articles/2020/genealogy-christ)

We shouldn’t think we’ve lost something from earlier versions.

# The Preservation of Scripture

So the texts we have are very ancient. The New Testament is getting on for 2,000 years old, and the oldest parts of the Old Testament are more like 3,500 years old.

How do they still exist then? How have they been preserved? And how can we have any confidence we have the real deal?

In the New Testament we continually read about the Scribes. Because leather and papyri wear out, it was necessary to keep replacing the documents. Once scrolls showed signs of wear, they would be copied and then reverently buried. The Hebrew word *genizah* means a hiding place where worn-out scrolls would be buried.

The Cairo Genizah is a prominent example of this, found in 1890 or so and containing some 300,000 textual fragments. A portion of nearly every book of the Bible was found, copies from around 9th - 13th Century AD. Copies from Middle Ages.

The copying had to be done by hand. How could it be done accurately?

It was a professional job, done by Scribes. They were skilled and highly disciplined: scribes would count the letters of the Torah to ensure it was correct. They would never write from memory; they would always read the next letter, pronounce it verbally, then write it.

Additionally, they would validate accuracy by counting letters, words and lines on each page and comparing to the original.

So, did they do a good job?

Before we answer, a quick summary of what we still have today:

## Key OT Texts

For the Old Testament, there are three key historical document groups.

#### The Masoretic Text

First, the Masoretic Text. This is the authoritative Hebrew version of the Old Testament today. It was copied and maintained by the Masoretes, as previously mentioned.

SLIDE

The oldest complete copy of the MT is called the **Leningrad Codex** which is dated to 1008AD. It’s one of the primary sources of our English Bibles today.

Another significant copy of the MT is the **Aleppo Codex**, which is older at 930 AD, but is incomplete, being damaged and partially lost in 1947.

#### The Septuagint

The Septuagint is a translation of the Old Testament into Koine Greek, started around the 3rd Century BC with the Torah, and then most of the rest was done by the 2nd Century BC. It was commissioned so that the Scriptures were available in the common tongue.

There are two things that make the Septuagint highly significant.

First, it is older than Jesus Christ. That means, the Septuagint is a proof of the legitimacy of Old Testament prophesies of Jesus Christ. All the Torah, all the Prophets, the Psalms, these are all known to pre-date Jesus Christ.

So, when you read Isaiah 53 and Psalm 22, which are astonishing depictions of the Cross of Christ, we can be certain they are genuine prophetic text. No doubt!

Second, the quotations of the Old Testament we find in the New are from the Septuagint. The NT has many quotations, and practically all of them use the Old Greek version of the LXX.

For this reason, the Septuagint is very much worth our study today.

#### The Dead Sea Scrolls

The last group is the famous Dead Sea Scrolls, discovered in caves near the Dead Sea around 1950. These are a set of very ancient documents that date between 3rd and 1st Century BC. The leading theory is they were hidden before the first Jewish-Roman war that began in 66 BC.

Here were found the **oldest surviving manuscripts of entire books** of the Old Testament.

And broadly speaking, the DSS confirm the accuracy of the Masoretic Text, which is 1000 years older! There are minor variations, but *none* of these variations have any impact on doctrine. It’s minor spelling variations, maybe words in a slightly different order. That’s it!

And I must mention the Great Isaiah Scroll. Non-Christian Jews argued for a long time that Isaiah 53 is a Christian addition to the Book of Isaiah. Although found in the Septuagint, they argued it had been modified or altered.

Why? Because it is an incredible prediction of the suffering of Christ and the Christian Gospel.

**Isaiah 53:5–6 NASB 2020**

But He was pierced for our offenses,   
  
He was crushed for our wrongdoings;   
  
The punishment for our well-being *was laid* upon Him,   
  
And by His wounds we are healed.   
  
All of us, like sheep, have gone astray,   
  
Each of us has turned to his own way;   
  
But the Lord has caused the wrongdoing of us all   
  
To fall on Him.

Very clearly and obviously, this is Jesus Christ, written about in advance. Pierced for *our* offences. We all turned to our own way, and the punishment was laid on HIM! The Lord caused the wrongdoing of us all to fall on Him!

Of *course* anyone not wanting to believe the gospel would prefer this text were a later addition.

I just imagine them unrolling that Great Isaiah Scroll, looking for chapter 53 … and there it is.

NO significant differences to the Masoretic Text, just a minor spelling variation or two.

So the Dead Sea Scrolls, especially the Great Isaiah Scroll, show the accuracy of the Masoretic Text.

So. Did the scribes do a good job of preserving the Old Testament through the millennia?

Absolutely, yes.

Completely perfectly? No, and next week we will talk about textual criticism, which is the science of attempting to identify the original, as far as we can do.

## The New Testament

Let’s now consider the New Testament. These were all written within a few decades of each other, and the originals would be newer than the DSS!

Unfortunately, the originals are assumed to be lost, but who knows, maybe in another cave somewhere!

So, what do we have today?

Well, the answer is over 5,800 Greek NT manuscripts or fragments!

[Slide]

Here is the oldest fragment, called the St John Fragment. It’s a tiny piece of John 18, and it dates to the early 2nd Century. Being written on both sides, it was originally part of a codex - a bound book like we have today.

We have around 115 papyrus fragments of this kind of age, and some are much more extensive than this little one.

In addition to this, there are thousands of manuscripts, including the Codex Sinaiticus.

[Slide]

This is the oldest complete New Testament, plus most of the Septuagint OT, and dates from around 350 AD.

If you’re a nerd like me, you can read it for yourself at this website!

As with the Old Testament, preservation was done by hand copying, and although all due diligence was applied, naturally copyist errors have occurred.

And so again, there is a need for diligent review of what we have to try to identify what the original most likely said. That’s next week’s topic!

# Conclusion

We’ve talked about the nature of the Bible. This incredible library God has produced for us through holy men throughout history.

We’ve talked about Inspiration and how God breathed the Word through people. He did not dictate it, and yet it is the Word of God.

We’ve talked about the languages used in Scripture.

Next week we will look at how we take all these extant texts and fragments and compile it into one. And we will talk about the challenges of translating these ancient languages into modern western languages like English.

The Bible is AWESOME. It is absolutely staggering.

The Bible Teacher Chuck Missler had a fondness for saying:

“66 books, 40 authors, yet it is an **integrated message system**.”

It truly is a miraculous book, demonstrably telling the future in advance.

It is a unique work that God has brought into being and preserved for us throughout the ages.

I know today was quite technical. I don’t want anyone to think they need to master all of this to understand the Bible.

You don’t.

The Bible is spiritually discerned, we have a Teacher in the Holy Spirit to guide us. It’s helpful to understand what we have, but we can trust our Bibles as week seek the Lord to reveal these things.

**Hebrews 4:12 NASB 2020**

For the word of God is living and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, even penetrating as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

I pray indeed that the Lord would “Open our eyes, that we may behold wonderful things from your Law.”