

ORIGIN OF THE BIBLE

| OLD TESTAMENT | |
|-----------------|--|
| 4000 BC | Hebrews (Abraham's descendants) probably literate. |
| 2000 BC | Men trained as scribes and expert copyists. |
| 1500 BC | Time of Moses. He was probably familiar with Egyptian writing. |
| 400 BC | Inspired writings end (book of Nehemiah written c446 BC). |
| | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Preservation of Original Hebrew Texts</u></p> <p>Jews restrained from altering them, probably due to texts like Deut 4.2. Preservation methods used e.g. Dead Sea Scrolls. Dots used over doubtful words.</p> |
| 400 BC | Samaritan Pentateuch (the Hebrew Pentateuch) preserved by the Samaritans. Copies of this reached Europe in 1616. |
| 400 BC – 5 BC | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>The Silent Centuries</u></p> <p>No divinely inspired prophets seem to have spoken, but Apocrypha written (11 - 16 books). Apocrypha accepted by early Jews in Egypt, and 11 books accepted by Catholics in 1546 AD.</p> <p>Apocrypha rejected by some Jews and by Protestant Church as non-canonical. Reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Never quoted by Jesus ◆ Early Jews regarded them as uninspired ◆ Not in ancient Hebrew canon ◆ Inferior quality to scriptures ◆ Jesus accepted current OT, and all but 7 of the OT books are quoted in the NT |
| 400 BC | All original Hebrew manuscripts perished. Only copies exist. |
| 280 BC | Septuagint - important translation of OT into Greek. |
| 200 BC – 100 AD | <p>Dead Sea Scrolls (about 100 scrolls are books of OT in Hebrew). Probably written by a Jewish community - a branch of the Essenes.</p> <p>Found NW of Dead Sea from 1947 onwards.</p> |

| NEW TESTAMENT | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 50 –100 AD | All NT books written. As in OT case, all <i>original</i> manuscripts now perished. Today we only have <i>copies</i> of the OT Hebrew texts and <i>copies</i> of the NT Greek texts (most ancient NT copies found in 1931). |
| 100 - 200 AD | Syriac 'Bible' : OT Hebrew and NT Greek translated into a Syrian language. Also, NT books collected and read in churches. |
| 300 AD onwards | Christian faith declared official religion of Roman Empire. Various Codices produced (Bible in bound and paginated form). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Codex Sinaiticus ◆ Codex Alexanrinus (400 AD) ◆ Codex Vaticanus These translations were written on papyrus (made from reeds) or parchment (made from polished sheep or goat skin). |
| 300 – 400 AD | All 27 books of NT unanimously accepted (without conference) by all churches. |
| 400 AD | Latin Vulgate: entire Bible translated by Jerome from ancient copies. Catholic Church used this for 1000 years. So, from 400 AD - 1400 AD common people could not read the Bible. |
| 500 – 1000 AD | Massorettes: Succeeded the old scribes, handing on the text as they received it, but introduced vowel signs and punctuation into OT Hebrew. Suspected corrections placed in margin. |
| | <u>Growth of English Bible</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ 1380 AD: NT Latin Vulgate to English (Wycliffe) ◆ 1525 - 1530 AD: Tyndale Bible (from Wycliffe and ancient copies) ◆ 1537 AD: Matthews Bible (from Tyndale) ◆ 1539 AD: Great Bible (from Tyndale and Matthews Bibles) ◆ 1560 AD Geneva Bible (from Great Bible) ◆ 1568 AD: Bishops Bible (from Geneva Bible) ◆ 1611 AD: King James Bible (from Bishops and Geneva Bibles, and ancient copies of OT and NT) ◆ 1881 - 1885 AD: English Revised Version: (from King James and the most ancient copies) ◆ 1900- 1901 AD: American Standard Version (from ERV and the most ancient copies) |

BIBLE TRANSLATION ACCURACY

There is a method of grading translations based upon *Dale-Chall, Fry, Raygor and Spache* formulas. This essentially grades accuracy.

| BIBLE VERSION | GRADE LEVEL | DISTINCTIVE FEATURES |
|---|--------------------|--|
| King James (KJV) | 12.0 | Poetic literary style. Considered the most difficult to read. |
| New American Standard Bible (NASB) | 11.0 | A revision of the 1901 American Standard Version (ASV). Generally considered an accurate translation. |
| New Revised Standard (NRSV) | 8.1 | A revision of the Revised Standard Version (RSV). |
| New King James (NKJV) | 8.0 | Captures the accuracy and beauty of the KJV in contemporary, readable language. A 'complete equivalence' (essentially literal) translation. |
| New International (NIV) | 7.8 | Popular modern-language translation. A balance of 'literal equivalence' and 'dynamic equivalence' translation methods. |
| New American Bible | 6.6 | Official translation of the Roman Catholic Church in the USA. |
| New Living Translation | 6.4 | A meaning-for-meaning translation, successor to the Living Bible. |
| The Message | 4.8 | A free paraphrase, seeking to capture the expressiveness of the original languages. |
| International Children's Bible | 3.9 | The first translation prepared especially for children. Simple to read. |