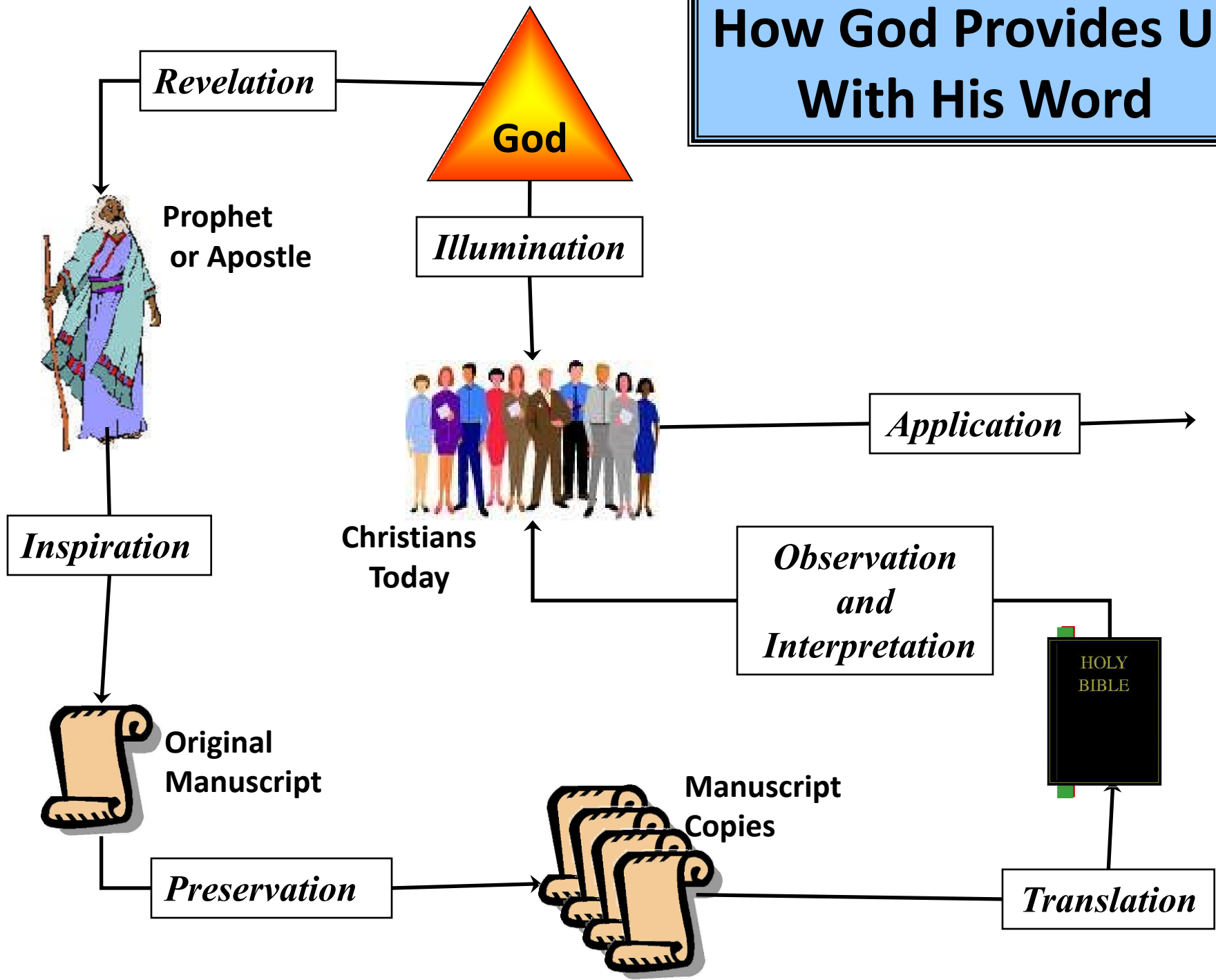
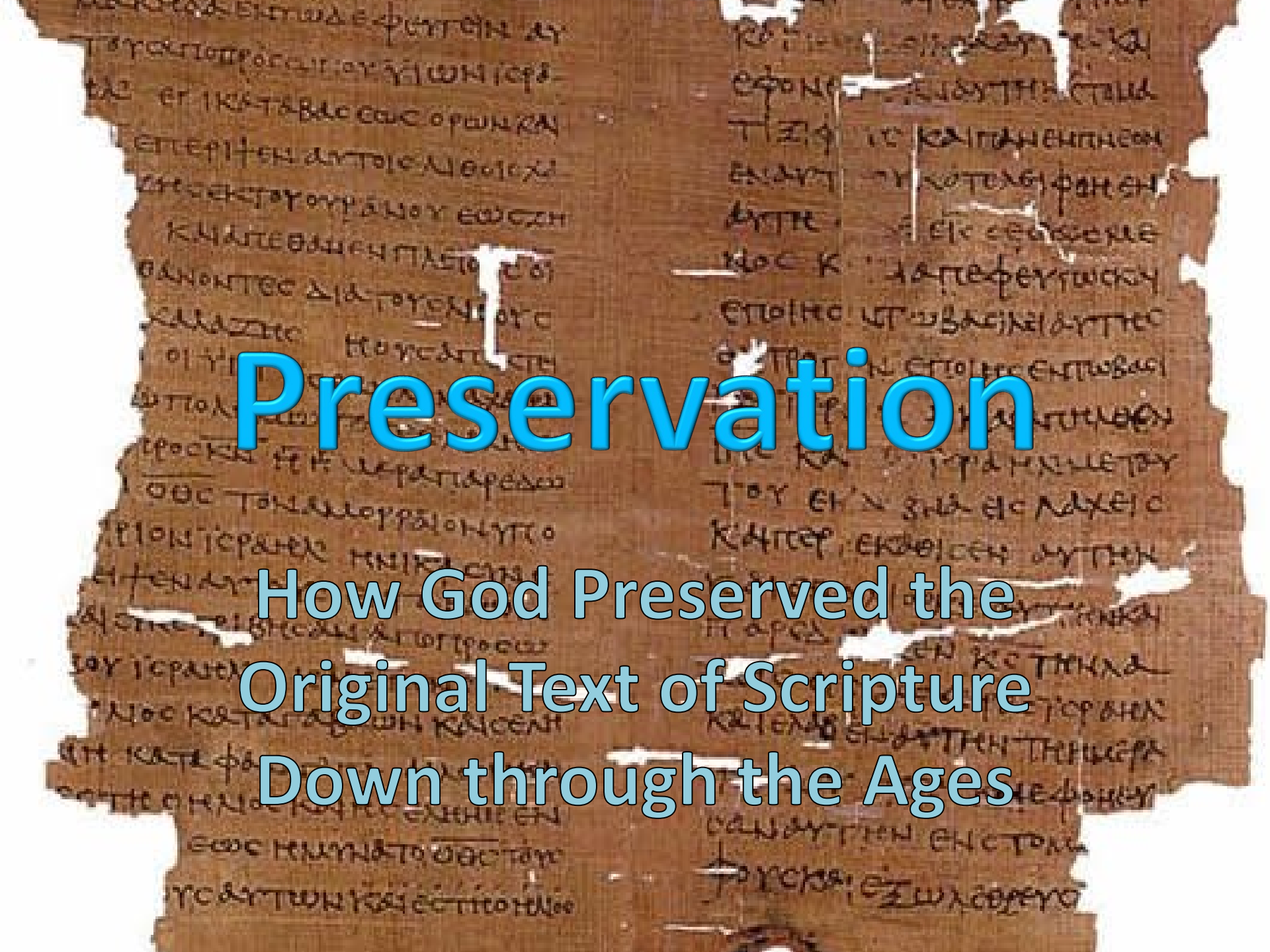


How God Provides Us With His Word





Preservation

How God Preserved the
Original Text of Scripture
Down through the Ages

Preservation of Ancient Literature

- **Today** - We are spoiled today by our ability to copy information – because of recent technology we are able to flawlessly copy large amounts of information with just a few mouse clicks.
- **Photocopiers** - Even before computers were so readily available to the general public, “copy machines” (introduced by Xerox in the 1960s) made it easy to create a perfect copy of printed materials.
- **The Printing Press** - The ability to make perfect copies of written information dates back to the invention of the printing press (1440 – the Gutenberg Press)

Preservation of Ancient Literature

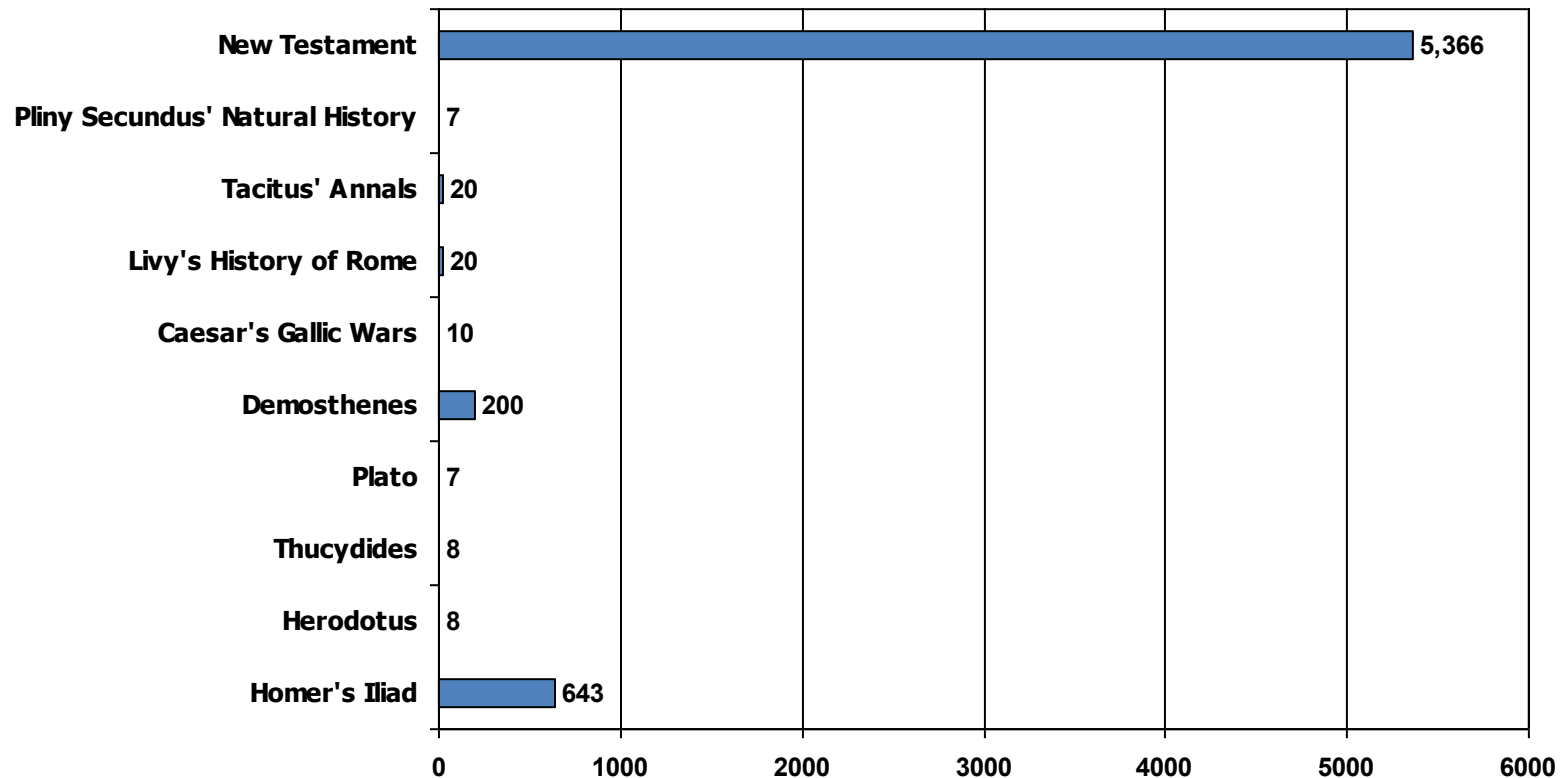
- Before the Printing Press - All copies of written information prior to 1440 involved *handwritten* copies on *perishable materials* which resulted in the loss of written information over time due to:
 - Copying Mistakes
 - The eventual destruction of the original manuscript (and perhaps subsequent copies)
- Like most manuscripts written before 1440, the *original manuscripts* of the Bible composed by the OT prophets and the NT apostles are *no longer available*. All that we have today are handwritten copies of copies of the original.

Preservation of Ancient Literature

- BUT :

- Copying of the NT began early – first century Christians were eager to have the Word of God and there is evidence that they began to share the scriptures among themselves even while the apostles were still alive (cf. Col 4:16; 2 Tim 4:13, 2 Pet 3:16)
- Numerous good copies have survived – we have *more copies* and *earlier copies* of the scriptures than we do of any other ancient literature!

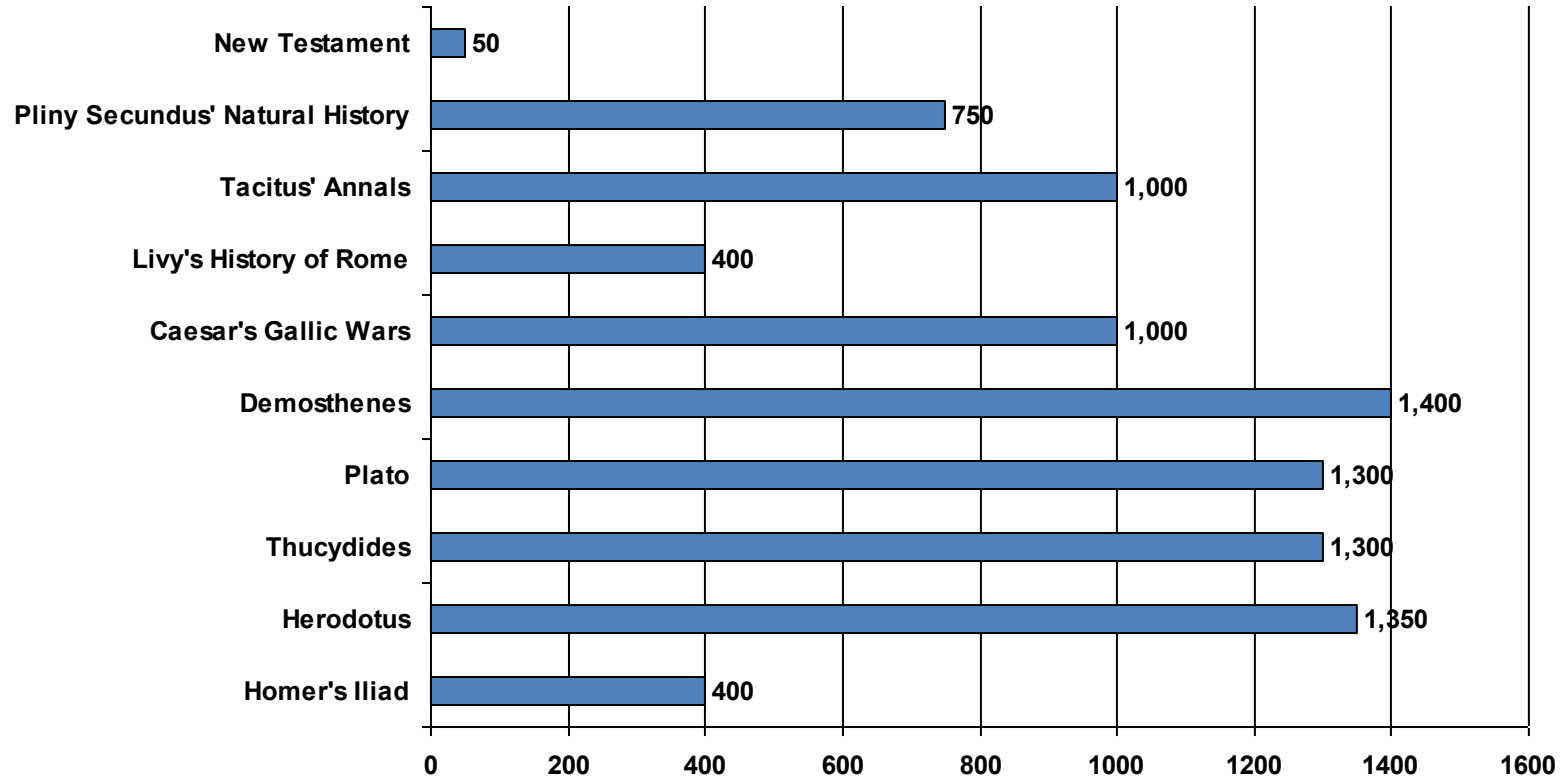
Number of Copies of the NT Compared to Other Ancient Literature*



“There is no body of ancient literature in the world which enjoys such a wealth of good textual attestation as the New Testament” (F.F. Bruce)

*Josh McDowell, *The New Evidence that Demands a Verdict*, 1999, pp. 37-38

Time Gap Between Original and Earliest Existing Copies*



“In no other case is the interval of time between the composition of the book and the date of the earliest extant manuscripts so short as in that of the New Testament”

(Fredric G. Kenyon, director and principle librarian of the British Museum, 1901)

Preservation of Ancient Literature

- We have at least *a dozen manuscripts within the first 100 years* after the writing of the NT; they represent a majority of the books of the NT and about 4/10th of the text.

Manuscripts Dated Within 100 Years of the Writing of the NT

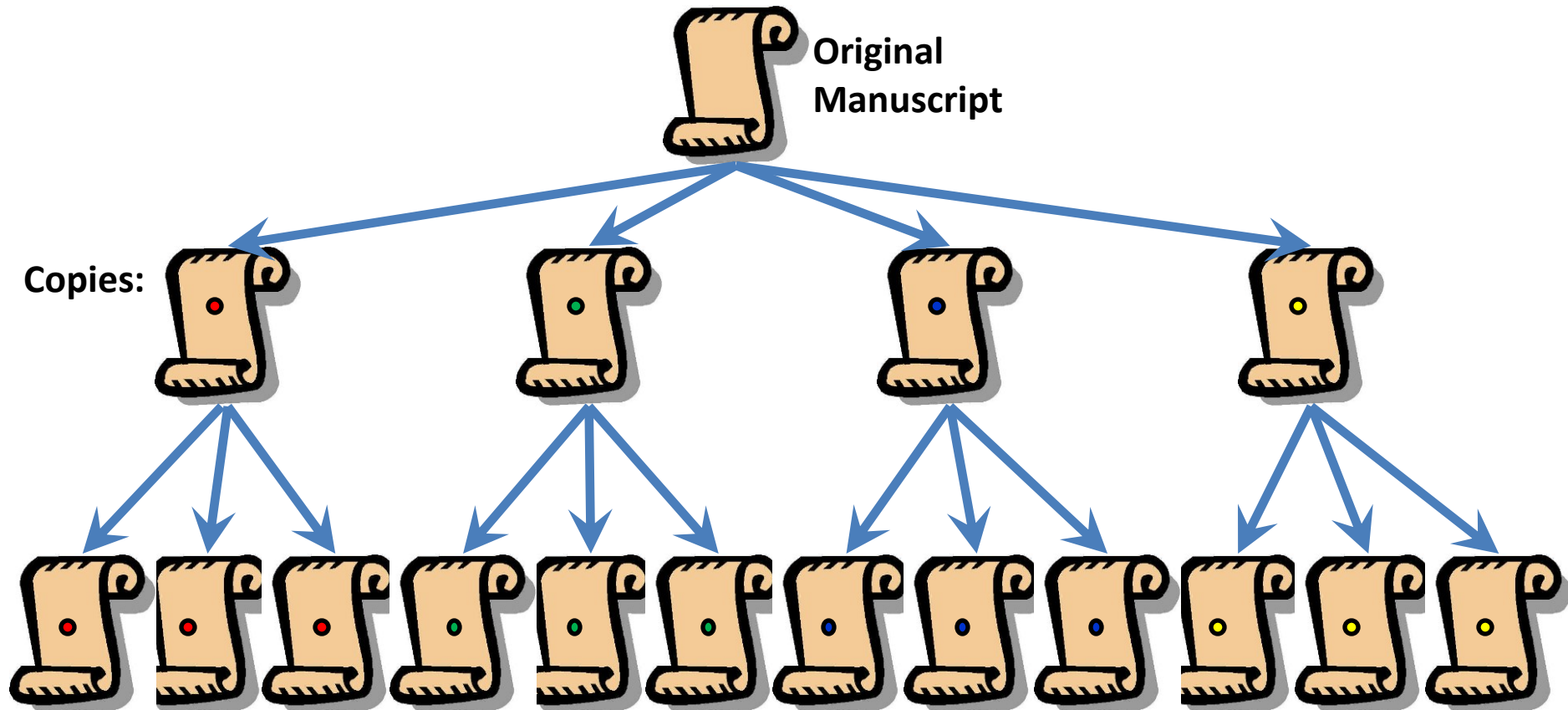
Manuscript	Contents
P4/P64/P67 (all one manuscript)	Gospels
P32	Pauline Epistles
P46	Pauline Epistles
P52	Gospels
P66	Gospels
P75	Gospels
P77	Gospels
P87	Pauline Epistles
P90	Gospels
P98	Revelation
P104	Gospels
P108	Gospels
P109	Gospels

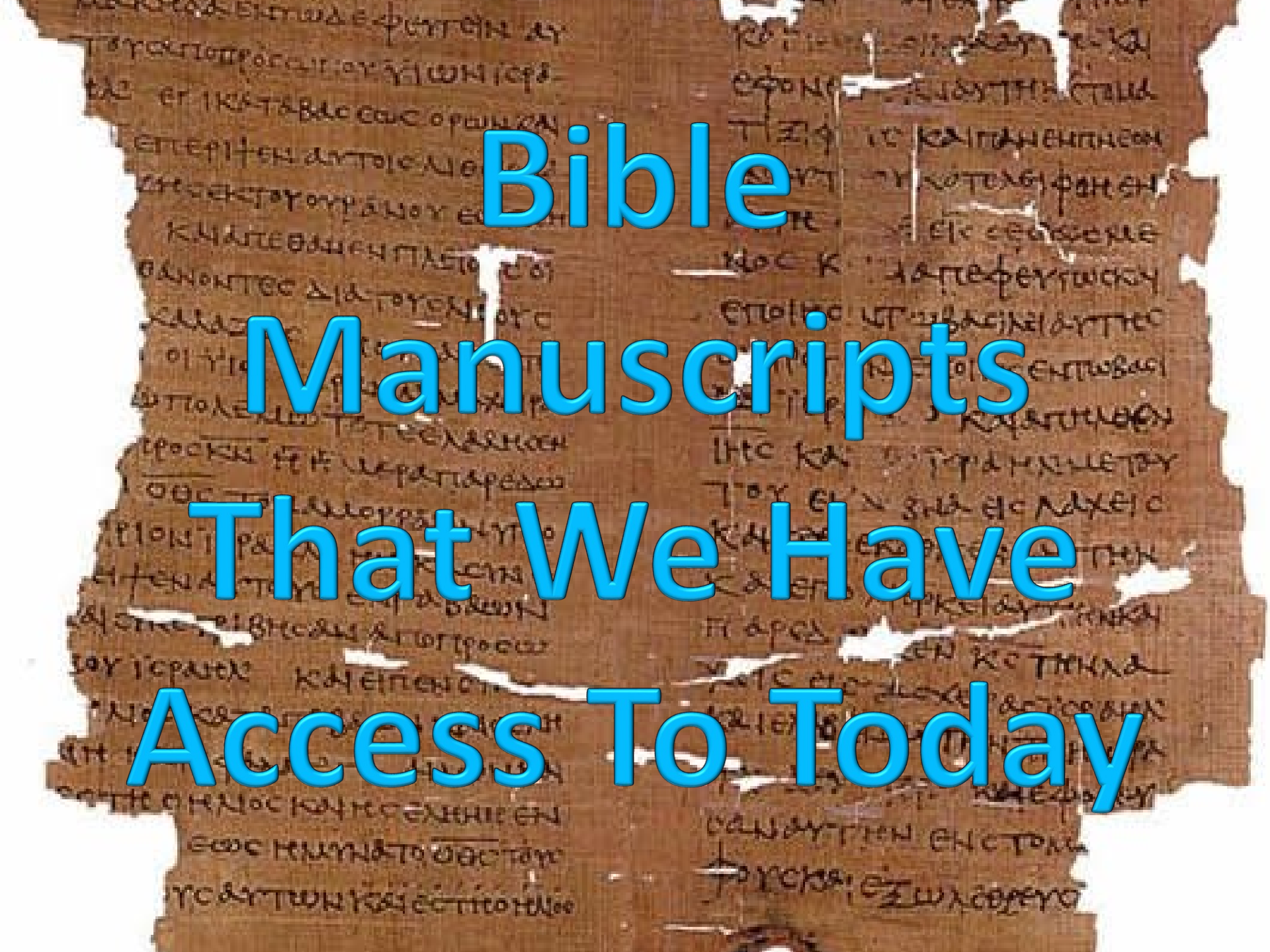
<http://www.aomin.org/aoblog/index.php?itemid=3092>

Preservation of Ancient Literature

- We have *more than 120 manuscripts within the first 300 years* after the writing of the NT.
- Another *key fact* that allows us to have great confidence that the New Testament manuscripts that we possess today accurately reflect the original inspired writings is that these documents have come to us through *multiple lines of transmission*.

Multiple Lines of Transmission





Bible Manuscripts That We Have Access To Today

Old Testament Manuscripts

Name	When Discovered	Estimated Age	Description
Principal Masoretic		6 th – 10 th Century	Written by Jewish scribes in the 6 th to 10 th century who labored to preserve and transmit the text of the OT.
Samaritan Pentateuch	1616	11 th Century	A somewhat controversial set of manuscripts which differ in numerous places from the other Hebrew manuscripts. The Samaritans who accept the Pentateuch alone as canonical preserved these manuscripts.
Cairo Genizah Fragments	1897	6 th – 9 th Century	Found in a storeroom of an old synagogue (built in 882 AD) in Old Cairo, Egypt. Consists of thousands of parchment fragments dated slightly before the Masoretic texts.
Nash Papyrus	1902	2 nd Century BC	Prior to the Dead Sea Scrolls was the oldest known manuscripts. Contains the ten commandments and the “Shema” (Deut. 6:4ff)
Dead Sea Scrolls	1947	3 rd Century BC to 1 st Century AD	The oldest manuscripts known to date – found in caves near the Dead sea. Contains thousands of manuscript fragments – at least one from every OT book except Esther.

New Testament Manuscript Types

Name	Number of Manuscripts	Age	Description
Papyri	80	2 nd – 8 th Century	Written in all capital letters on material made from the papyrus plant
Uncials (vellum)	260	4 th – 10 th Century	Written in all capital letters on specially treated leather known as vellum. Vellum manuscripts tended to last longer than those made of papyri.
Minuscule	2,700	9 th – 15 th Century	A form of handwriting more formal than regular cursive. Takes up less space and is faster to write than Uncial.
Lectionaries	2,100		Church reading books containing select portions of the Scriptures to be read on select days according to the Church calendar.
Versions (translations)			The NT was translated into other languages as early as the 2nd century. The most significant versions are the Latin, Syriac, and Coptic.
Patristic Quotations			The early church fathers cited the Bible so often that the text of the entire Greek NT could probably be recovered just from the quotations found in their writings!

Papyrus Plant

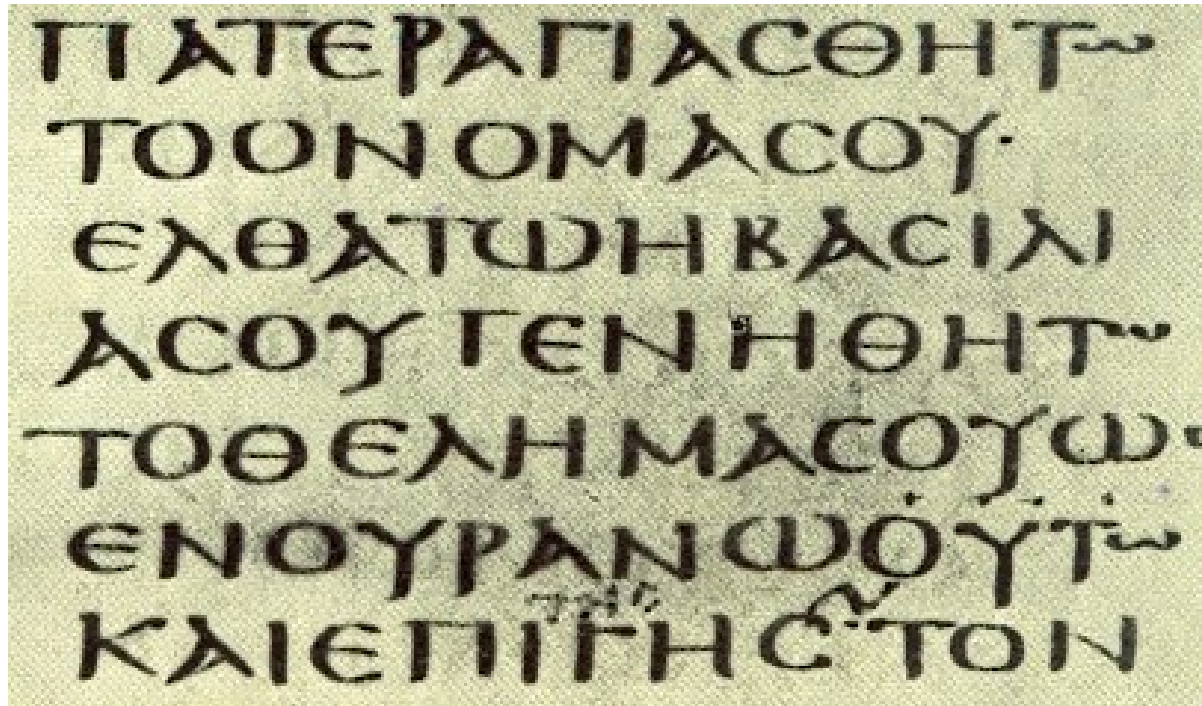


Papyrus Manuscript



One of 86 leaves from P⁴⁶ - a manuscript dated at 200 AD which contains most of the Pauline epistles.

Uncial (Vellum) Manuscript



Luke 11:2 - Πάτερ, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου· ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου·
Father let be hallowed the name of you let come the kingdom of you

**ⲗ Aleph is a 4th century uncial manuscript of
the Greek Bible, written between 330–350 AD**

Uncial Lettering

ITSURESEEMSLIKEITWOULDH
AVEBEENHARDTOREADADOC
UMENTWHERE THEYUSEDALL
CAPITALLETTERSANDNOSPAC
ESORPUNCTUATIONMARKSB
UTASYOUCANSEEITCANBEDO
NE

Minuscule Manuscript

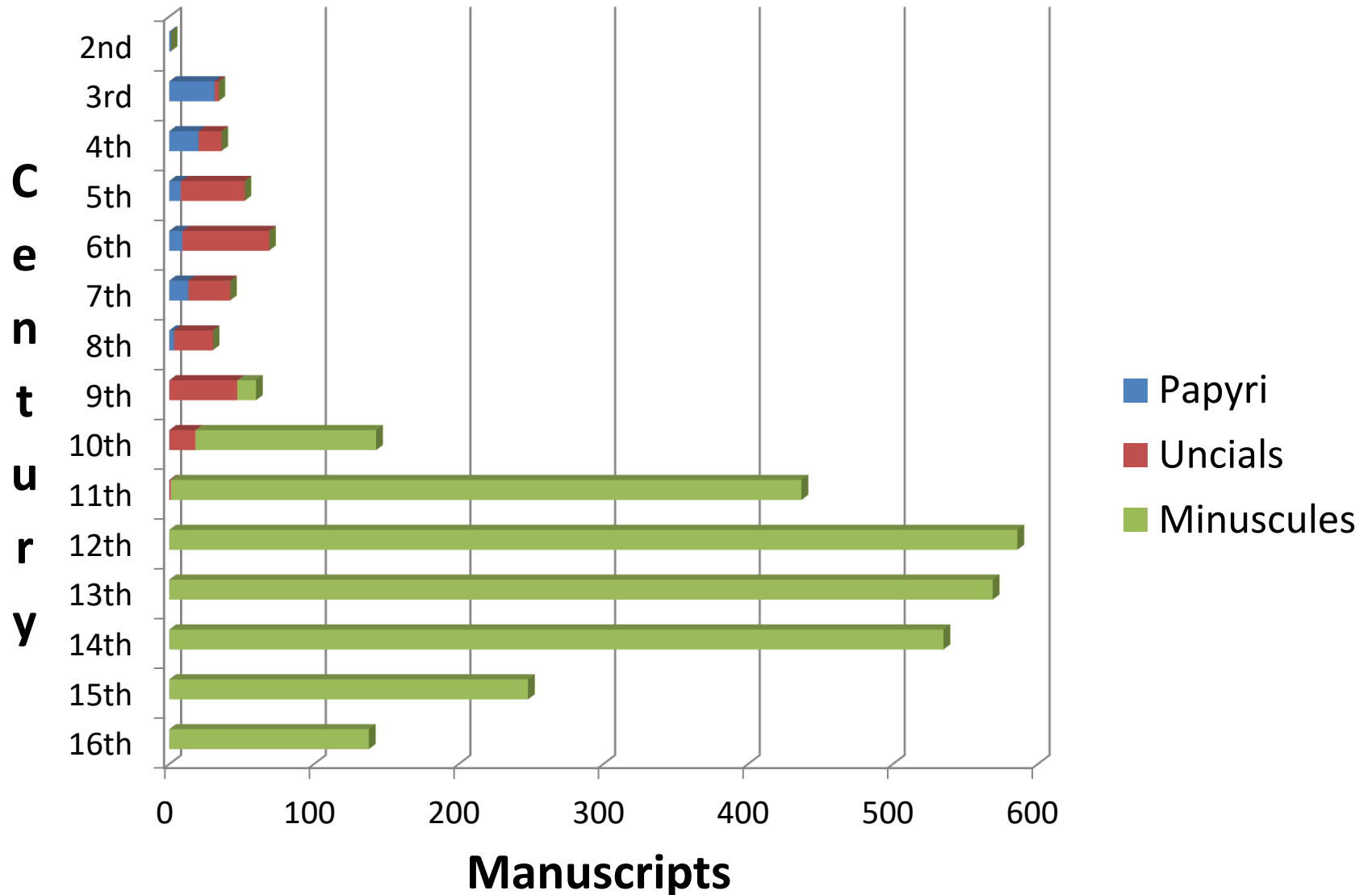


Manuscript 57 – 12th century - Includes the Gospels, Acts, CE, Paul [also Pss, Cant.]

A closer view



NT Manuscripts Broken Down by Century



Labeling New Testament Manuscripts

- The manuscript copies of the New Testament that still exist today are kept in various places around the world.
- These manuscripts have all been given names or labels so that we can identify them and distinguish them from one another.

Labels Used for Various NT Manuscript Types

Text Type	Labels Used
Papyri	Papyrus MSS are designated by the letter P followed by a number (e.g. P ¹² , P ⁴⁰ , P ⁴¹ , etc.)
Uncials (vellum)	Uncial MSS were (and often still are) designated by English capital letters, Greek capital letters that differ from English letters, and the Hebrew letter א (aleph) (e.g. א, A, B, C, D, W, Ψ, etc.). In 1890, uncial manuscripts began to be designated by a number preceded by a zero (e.g. 01, 02, 03, etc.)
Minuscule	Minuscule MSS are designated by Arabic Numbers (e.g. 1, 33, 565, etc.)

Labels Used for Various NT Manuscript Types

Text Type	Labels Used
Lectionaries	Lectionaries are designated by an italic <i>l</i> or by the abbreviation “Lect.” and an Arabic number (e.g. <i>l</i> 25, Lect. 299)
Versions (translations)	Versions are identified by their name abbreviated in lower case. The most significant versions used in NT textual criticism are the Latin Vulgate, Syriac, and Coptic (abbreviated: vg, syr, cop)
Patristic Quotations	Patristic Quotations are simply identified by the church father’s name (e.g. Clement, Chrysostom, Ambrose, etc.)

Some Examples of NT Papyri Manuscripts

Name	Content	Current Location	Date
p ²⁵	Gospels	Berlin	Late 4 th century
p ³⁸	Acts	Ann Arbor, Michigan	About 300
p ⁴⁵	Gospels and Acts	Dublin; Vienna	3 rd century
p ⁴⁶	Pauline Letters	Dublin; Ann Arbor, Michigan	About A.D. 200
p ⁵²	Gospels	Manchester	About A.D. 125
p ⁵³	Gospels and Acts	Ann Arbor, Michigan	3 rd century
p ⁷⁴	Acts and General Letters	Cologne	7 th century

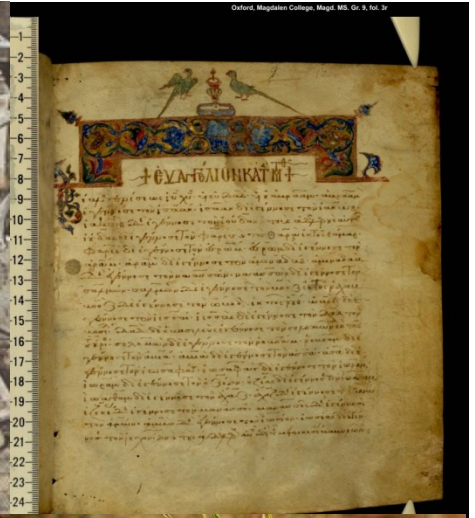
Some Important NT Uncial Manuscripts

Name	Content	Current Location	Date	Brief Description
Ⲁ (01)	Entire NT	London	4 th century	Codex Sinaiticus, found by Tischendorf at Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai.
A (02)	Entire NT	London	5 th century	Codex Alexandrinus, so named since it was supposed to have come from Alexandria.
B (03)	Entire NT minus Revelation	Vatican City	4 th century	Codex Vaticanus, universally esteemed to be the oldest and best manuscript of the Greek New Testament;
C (04)	Entire NT	Paris	5 th century	Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus
D (05)	Gospels and Acts	Cambridge	5 th century	Codex Bezae, is the early known manuscript which Theodore Beza obtained in 1562 from the monastery of Irenaeus at Lyons.

Review Questions

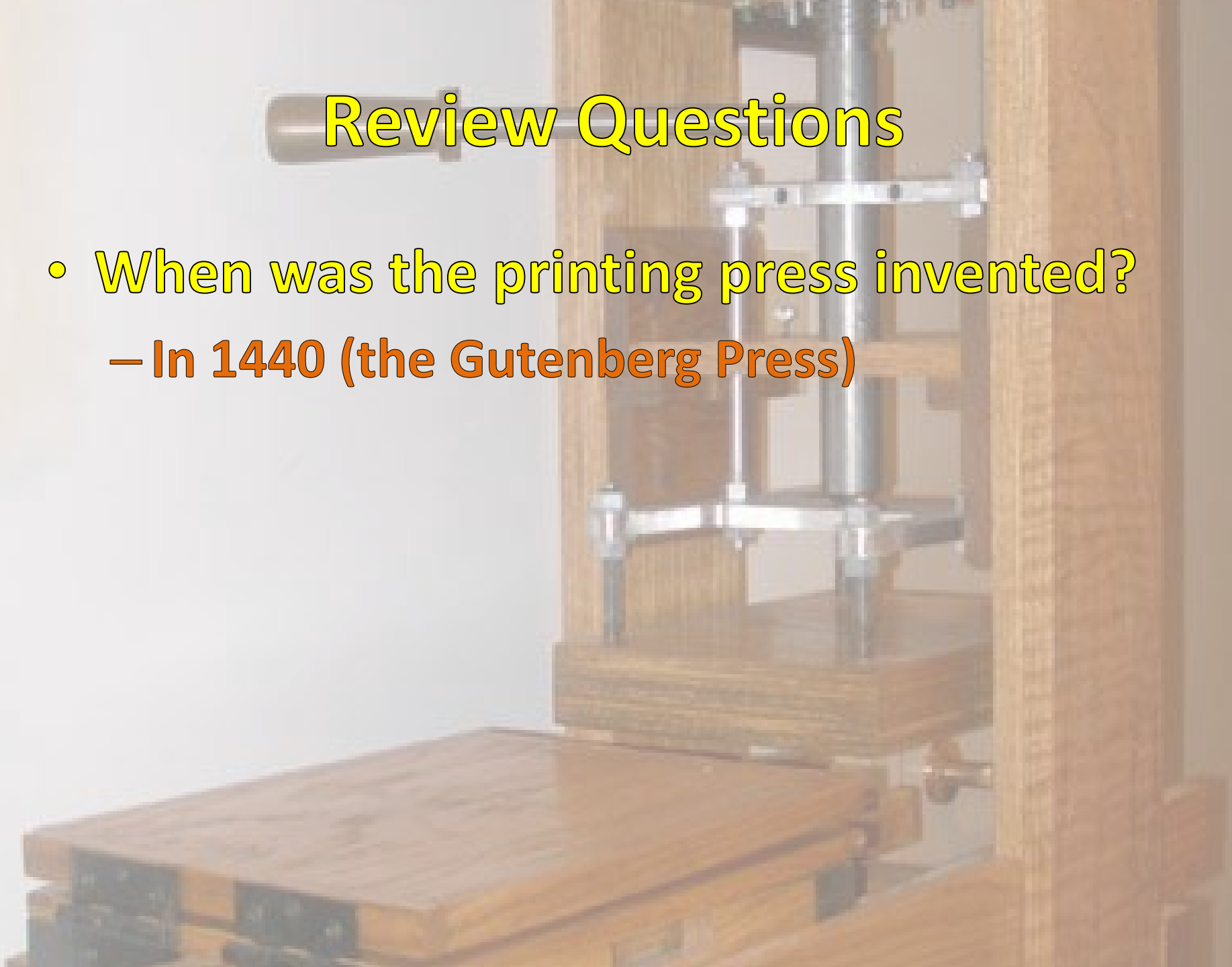


ΠΑΤΕΡΑΓΙΑΣΘΗΤ
ΤΟΥΝΟΜΑΣΟΥ
ΕΛΘΑΤΩΗΒΑΣΙΛ
ΑΣΟΥΓΕΝΗΘΗΤ
ΤΟΘΕΛΗΜΑΣΟΥ
ΕΝΟΥΡΑΝΩΟΥΤ
ΚΑΙΕΠΙΓΗΣΤΟΙ



Review Questions

- When was the printing press invented?
 - In 1440 (the Gutenberg Press)



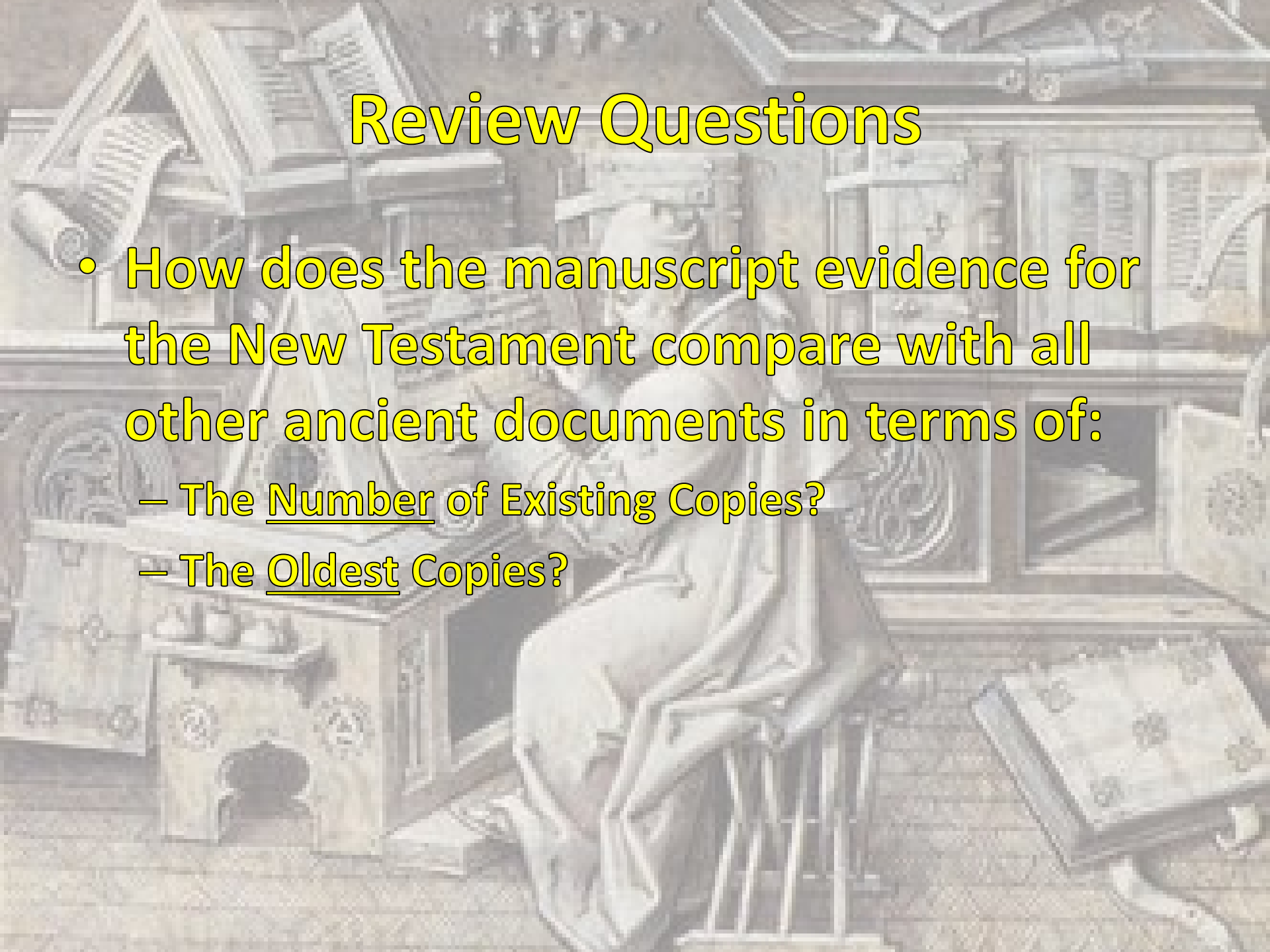
Review Questions

- Prior to 1440 what method was used to reproduce ancient documents?
 - Hand copying



Review Questions

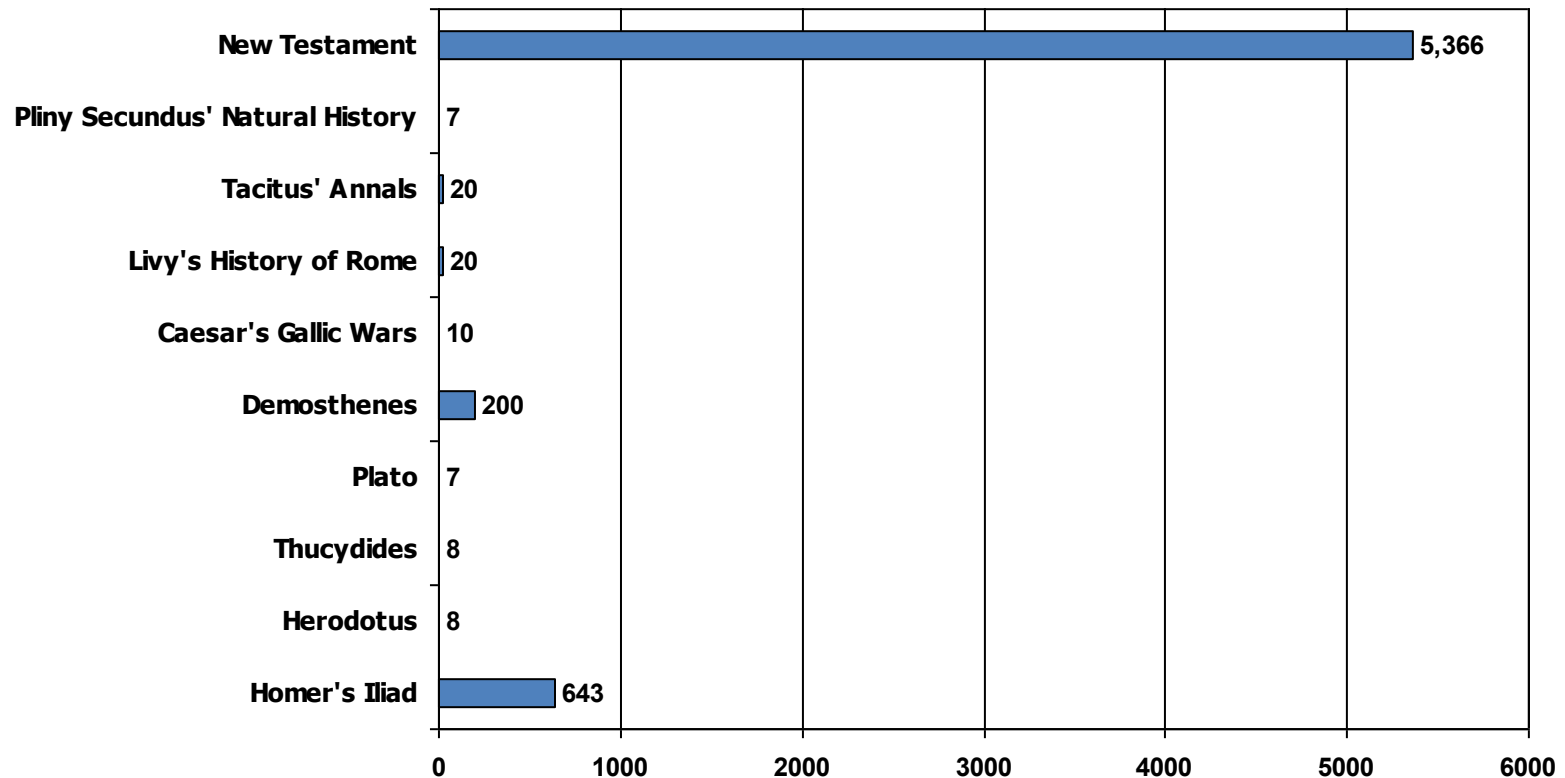
- When looking at the body of manuscript evidence for an ancient document, what are two characteristics that we hope to find in that body of evidence so as to improve our ability to accurately reconstruct what the original document said?
 - A Large Number of Copies – especially if those copies represent multiple lines of transmission
 - Older Copies - that is, copies that are close in age to the original



Review Questions

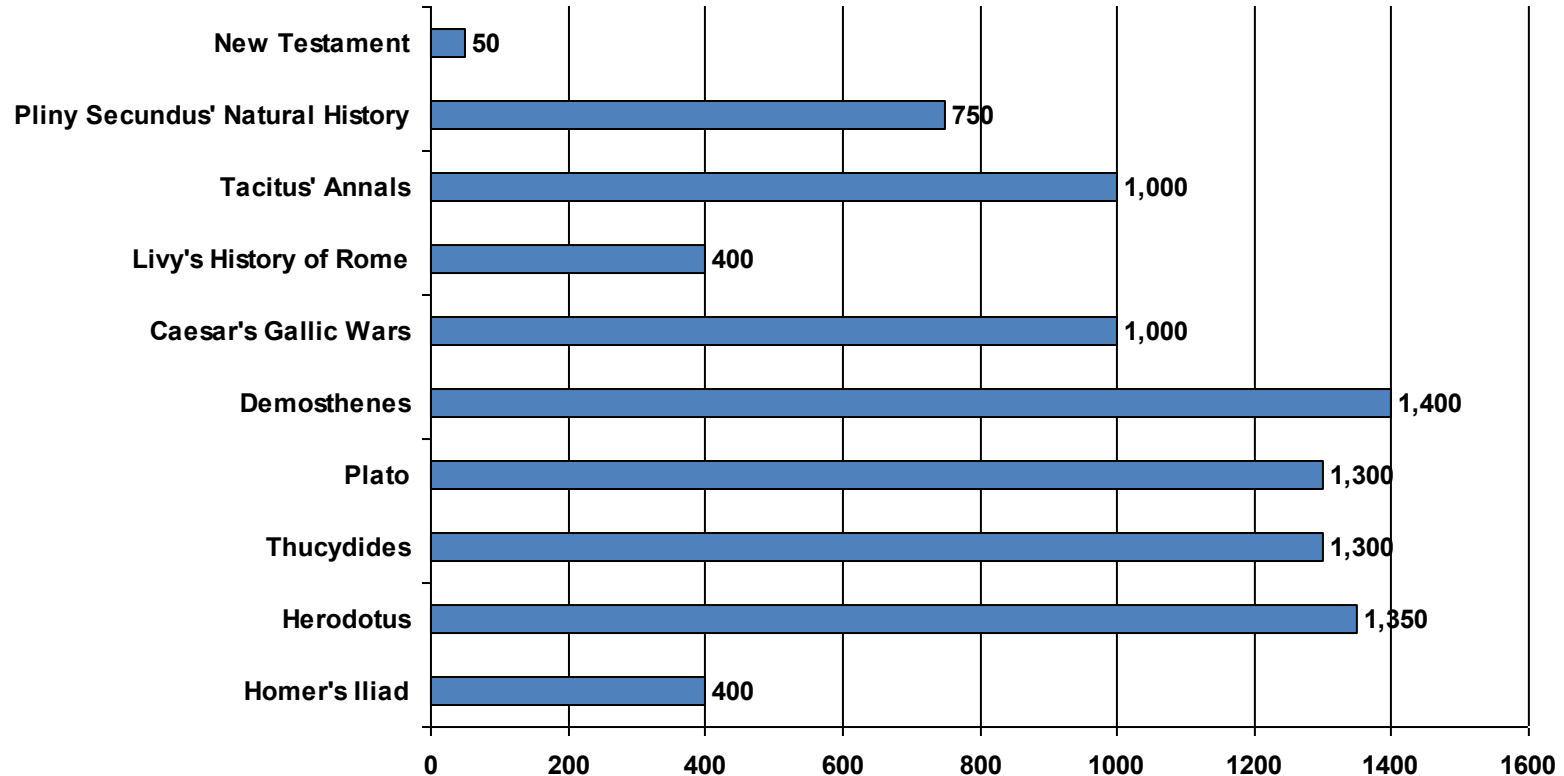
- How does the manuscript evidence for the New Testament compare with all other ancient documents in terms of:
 - The Number of Existing Copies?
 - The Oldest Copies?

Number of Copies of the NT Compared to Other Ancient Literature*



“There is no body of ancient literature in the world which enjoys such a wealth of good textual attestation as the New Testament” (F.F. Bruce)

Time Gap Between Original and Earliest Existing Copies*

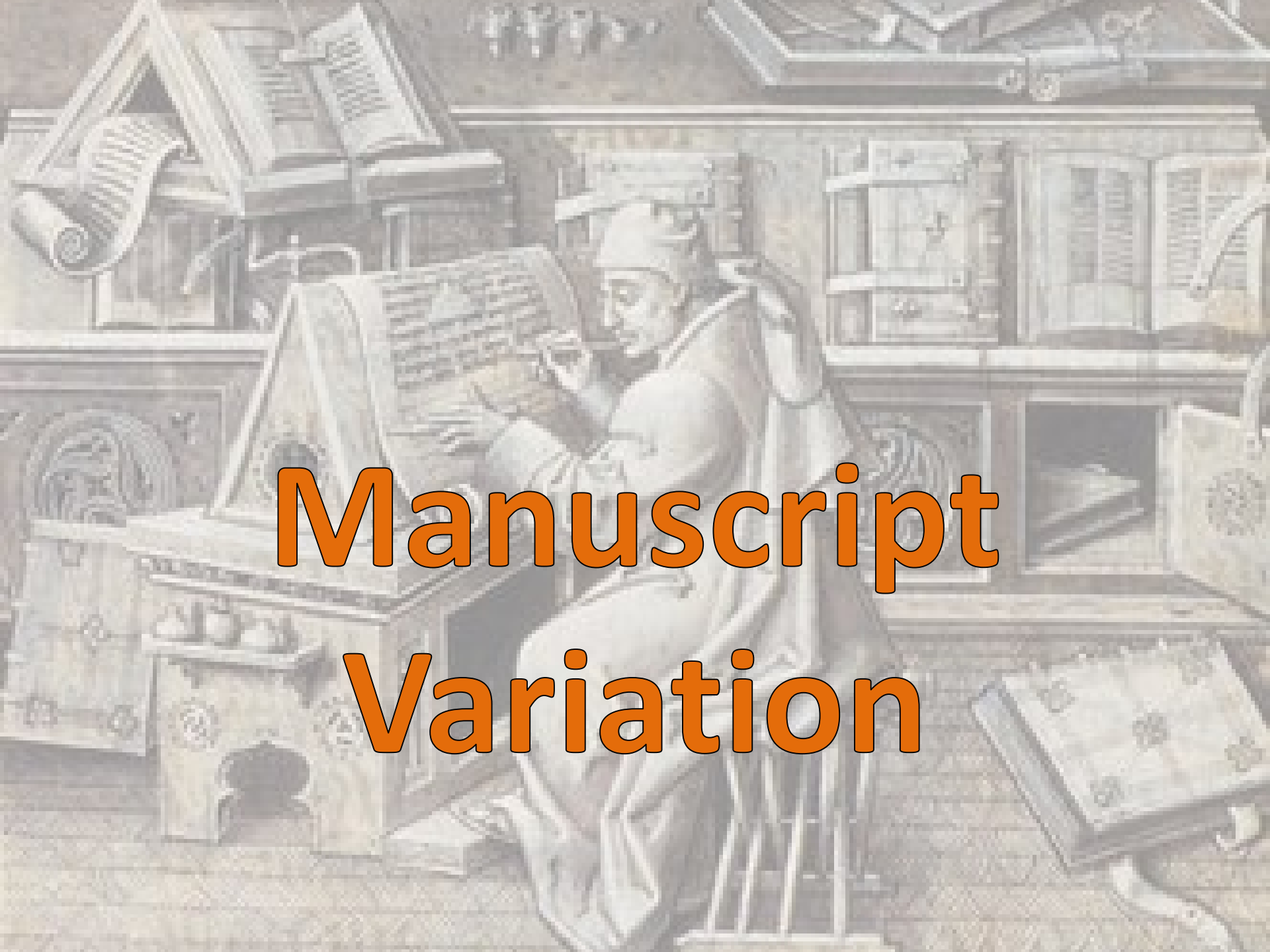


“In no other case is the interval of time between the composition of the book and the date of the earliest extant manuscripts so short as in that of the New Testament”

(Fredric G. Kenyon, director and principle librarian of the British Museum, 1901)

The Oldest NT Manuscripts

- We have at least *a dozen manuscripts within the first 100 years* after the writing of the NT; they represent a majority of the books of the NT and about 4/10th of the text.
- We have *more than 120 manuscripts within the first 300 years* after the writing of the NT.



Manuscript Variation

Manuscript Variation

Example of manuscript variation: Mark 7:16

Main Text: (NIV Study Bible)

understand this. ¹⁵Nothing outside a man can make him 'unclean' by going into him. Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him 'unclean.' ^x''

Footnote:

^t6,7 Isaiah 29:13 ^u9 Some manuscripts *set up*
^v10 Exodus 20:12; Deut. 5:16 ^w10 Exodus 21:17;
Lev. 20:9 ^x15 Some early manuscripts *'unclean.'* ¹⁶If
anyone has ears to hear, let him hear. ^y24 Many
early manuscripts *Tyre and Sidon* ^z25 Greek *unclean*

Manuscript Variation

A second example: Mark 7:24

Main Text: (NIV Study Bible)

²⁴Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre.^{y w} He entered a house and

Footnote:

^{t6,7} Isaiah 29:13 ^{u9} Some manuscripts *set up*
^{v10} Exodus 20:12; Deut. 5:16 ^{w10} Exodus 21:17;
Lev. 20:9 ^{x15} Some early manuscripts '*unclean.*' ¹⁶*If*
anyone has ears to hear, let him hear. ^{y24} Many
early manuscripts *Tyre and Sidon* ^{z25} Greek *unclean*

Manuscript Variation

- Bart Ehrman, a well know Christian apostate, likes to try to shock his audience by stating that there are more manuscript **variations** in the New Testaments than there are **words** in the New Testament.
- This statement is **true**, but it is also very **misleading**.
- The impression left by the statement is that every word of the New Testament is **hopelessly in doubt**.
- In reality, the **exact opposite** is true!

Why are there variations between manuscripts?

- Manuscript variations are an inescapable, natural result of hand copying.
- The more manuscripts you have, the more variants you will have.
- If you only have a small number of manuscripts, you will have fewer variants; you likewise have less certainty of the original readings. These go hand in hand.
- Therefore the fact that we have many variants within the NT is a good thing – it indicates that we have rich manuscript evidence!

Why are there variations between manuscripts?

- Contrast the NT manuscript evidence with the Muslim Quran:
 - There is **very little manuscript variance** in the Muslim Quran.
 - This is because Muslim leaders (such as Uthman, the third Caliph) are known to have **destroyed all evidence** of manuscript variations so as to have only one reading!

Why are there variations between manuscripts?

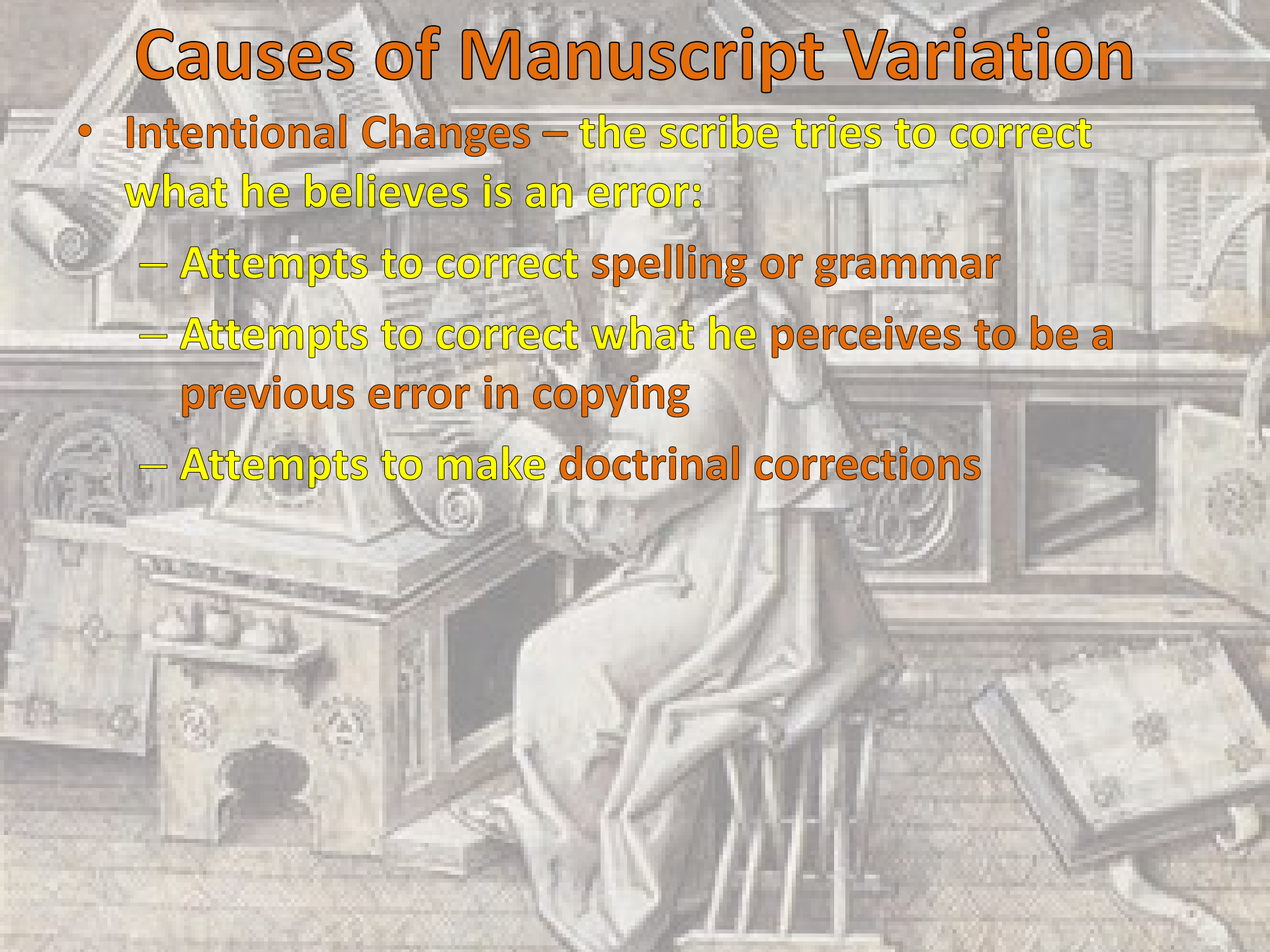
- In contrast to the Quran, there was **never** a time when any **one** man or group of men, **had control** over the text of the New Testament. There was never a Christian Uthman.
- Therefore it is **bogus** to claim that we are missing parts of the New Testament because early scribes changed the Bible to match their own theology.
- The early Christian church was a **persecuted minority** and did not have the power to enforce the kind of uniform textual transmission that occurred in the history of Islam.

Causes of Manuscript Variation

- **Unintentional Errors** – the scribe made a mistake in copying:
 - **Errors of the Eye** - Due to the eye are repetitions, transpositions, omissions, mistaking one letter for another, and so forth.
 - **Errors of the Ear** - Errors due to the ear would arise when one scribe was dictating to another. Examples:
 - **Rom 5:1** echomen vs. echomen (“we have” vs. “let us have” – i.e., an omicron vs. an omega for the “o”)
 - **Rev 1:5** lousanti vs. lusanti (“washed us” vs. “freed us”)
 - **1 Jn 1:4** hemeis vs. humeis (“our joy” vs. “your joy”)
 - **Errors of Memory** - Failure of memory in copying would explain the occurrence of synonymous words in parallel passages.

Causes of Manuscript Variation

- **Intentional Changes** – the scribe tries to correct what he believes is an error:
 - Attempts to correct **spelling or grammar**
 - Attempts to correct what he **perceives to be a previous error in copying**
 - Attempts to make **doctrinal corrections**



Manuscript Variation

- **A Word of Comfort – The vast majority of NT variants that are either:**
 - **Non-meaningful** – the variation in meaning between the two readings is *so little* that whichever option you go with it will not significantly effect the overall meaning of the text.
 - **Non-viable** – they have *so little manuscript support* that no one would think of them as rivals.

Manuscript Variation

Some Examples of Non-Meaningful Variation:

- Errors that can't even be translated into English:
 - Spelling Errors
 - The “movable nu” in Greek - an “n” at the end of a word when the next word starts with a vowel
 - The use of the Greek article in ways that don't translate into English
 - Changes in the word order of the Greek that does not affect the translation into English

Manuscript Variation

Some Examples of Non-Meaningful Variation:
Eight ways to say “Jesus loves Paul” in Greek:

1. Ἰησοῦς ἀγαπᾷ Παῦλον
2. Ἰησοῦς ἀγαπᾷ τὸν Παῦλον
3. ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀγαπᾷ Παῦλον
4. ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀγαπᾷ τὸν Παῦλον
5. Παῦλον Ἰησοῦς ἀγαπᾷ
6. τὸν Παῦλον Ἰησοῦς ἀγαπᾷ
7. Παῦλον ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀγαπᾷ
8. τὸν Παῦλον ὁ Ἰησοῦς ἀγαπᾷ

Manuscript Variation

Some Examples of Non-Meaningful Variation:

Eight more ways to say “Jesus loves Paul” in Greek:

9. ἀγαπᾷ Ἰησοῦς Παῦλον
10. ἀγαπᾷ Ἰησοῦς τὸν Παῦλον
11. ἀγαπᾷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς Παῦλον
12. ἀγαπᾷ ὁ Ἰησοῦς τὸν Παῦλον
13. ἀγαπᾷ Παῦλον Ἰησοῦς
14. ἀγαπᾷ τὸν Παῦλον Ἰησοῦς
15. ἀγαπᾷ Παῦλον ὁ Ἰησοῦς
16. ἀγαπᾷ τὸν Παῦλον ὁ Ἰησοῦς

Manuscript Variation

Some Examples of Non-Meaningful Variation:

Reference	Nestle-Aland/UBS	Byzantine Text
Matthew 4:18	He	Jesus
Matthew 12:25	He	Jesus
Mark 2:15	He	Jesus
Mark 10:52	He	Jesus
Luke 24:36	He	Jesus
Acts 19:10	The Lord	The Lord Jesus
1 Corinthians 16:22	The Lord	The Lord Jesus Christ
Acts 19:4	Jesus	Christ Jesus
1 Corinthians 9:1	Jesus	Jesus Christ
2 Corinthians 4:10	Jesus	Lord Jesus
Hebrews 3:1	Jesus	Christ Jesus

Here's the Good News About Manuscript Variation:

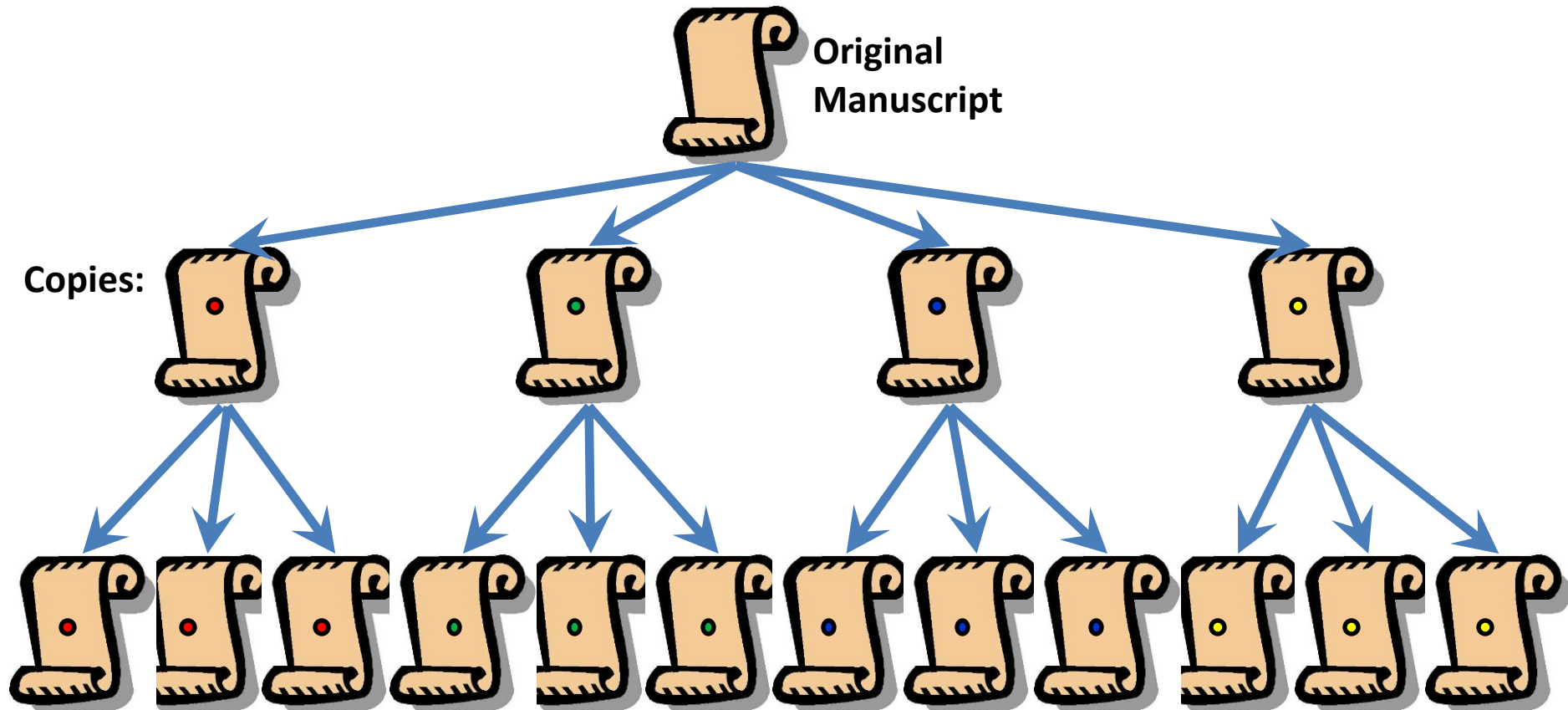
- Only *1% of the NT text contains meaningful, viable variants which must be studied carefully in order to determine the original reading.
- **Note:** None of these variants affect the outcome of any major teaching of the New Testament.

More Good News: The “Tenacity of the Text”

- Scholars* who study manuscript variations have noticed that once a particular reading occurs in the text, it tends to **stay there** in all subsequent copies.
- Why would this be good? Because that means **the original readings are still there** as well.
- **This is the key!** When we have a variant with three possibilities: A, B, and C, we do not have to worry about D: “None of the above”

*Kurt and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*, pp. 56, 286ff – cited by James White in the *King James Only Controversy*, p.51, fn 26

The “Tenacity of the Text”



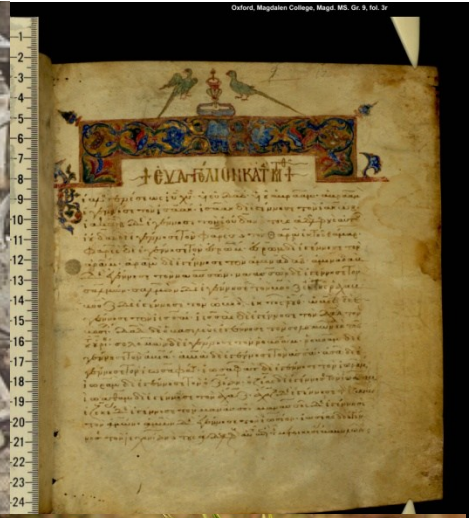
Worst Case Scenarios: The “Big Three”

- When attacking the integrity of the New Testament, there are **three** textual variations that skeptics like Bart Ehrman like to **emphasize** (because they hope it will **shock** their audience):
 - Mark 16:9-20 – The last chapter of Mark
 - John 7:53-8:11 – Jesus forgives the adulteress
 - 1 John 5:7-8 – The Trinity verse
- The reason these are cited is because they are the worst case scenarios – most other variations are minor in comparison.

Review Questions



ΠΑΤΕΡΑΓΙΑΣΘΗΤ
ΤΟΥΝΟΜΑΣΟΥ
ΕΛΘΑΤΩΗΒΑΣΙΛ
ΑΣΟΥΓΕΝΗΘΗΤ
ΤΟΘΕΛΗΜΑΣΟΥ
ΕΝΟΥΡΑΝΩΟΥΤ
ΚΑΙΕΠΙΓΗΣΤΟΙ



Review Question

- Bart Ehrman likes to say there are more manuscript **variations** in the New Testaments than there are **words** in the New Testament.
- Is this a **true** statement?
 - Yes – there are 140,000 words in the NT and there are an estimated 300,000 – 400,000 manuscript variations.
- Is this a **misleading** statement – if so why?
 - Yes, it gives the impression that the NT text is hopelessly in doubt – but the exact opposite is true!

Review Question

- Why are there **so many** variations in the NT manuscripts and why is that actually **good thing**?
 - Copying errors are unavoidable when copying by hand – which is all that was possible during the time the NT was written
 - The reason we have so many variations is because we have so much manuscript evidence which gives us a much better chance of determining the original reading.

Review Question

- What percentage of NT manuscript variations have no meaningful effect on our ability to get back to the original text?
 - 99%
 - Either they do not significantly affect how the text reads:
 - Spelling errors which don't change the meaning
 - Differences in the Greek that don't even translate into English – such as the Greek article, or Greek word order
 - Differences that don't matter such as: “Lord Jesus” versus “Jesus Christ”
 - Or they are differences found in so few manuscripts that scholars have no doubt that they are not original

Review Question

- Of the 1% of manuscript variations that **do** effect the reading of the text how many affect the outcome of any **major teaching** of the New Testament?
 - None – as even Bart Ehrman admits in his recent book *Misquoting Jesus* (p.252 – cited by Dan Wallace in the Ehrman Wallace debate, October 2011)

Review Question

- What are the three most dramatic textual variations that skeptics like Bart Ehrman like to **emphasize** (because they hope it will **shock** their audience)?
 - Mark 16:9-20 – The last chapter of Mark
 - John 7:53-8:11 – Jesus forgives the adulteress
 - 1 John 5:7-8 – The Trinity verse

A photograph of Bart Ehrman, a man with glasses and a mustache, wearing a dark suit jacket over a white shirt. He is standing behind a dark wooden podium, gesturing with his right hand extended outwards. A microphone is positioned in front of him. The background is dark and out of focus.

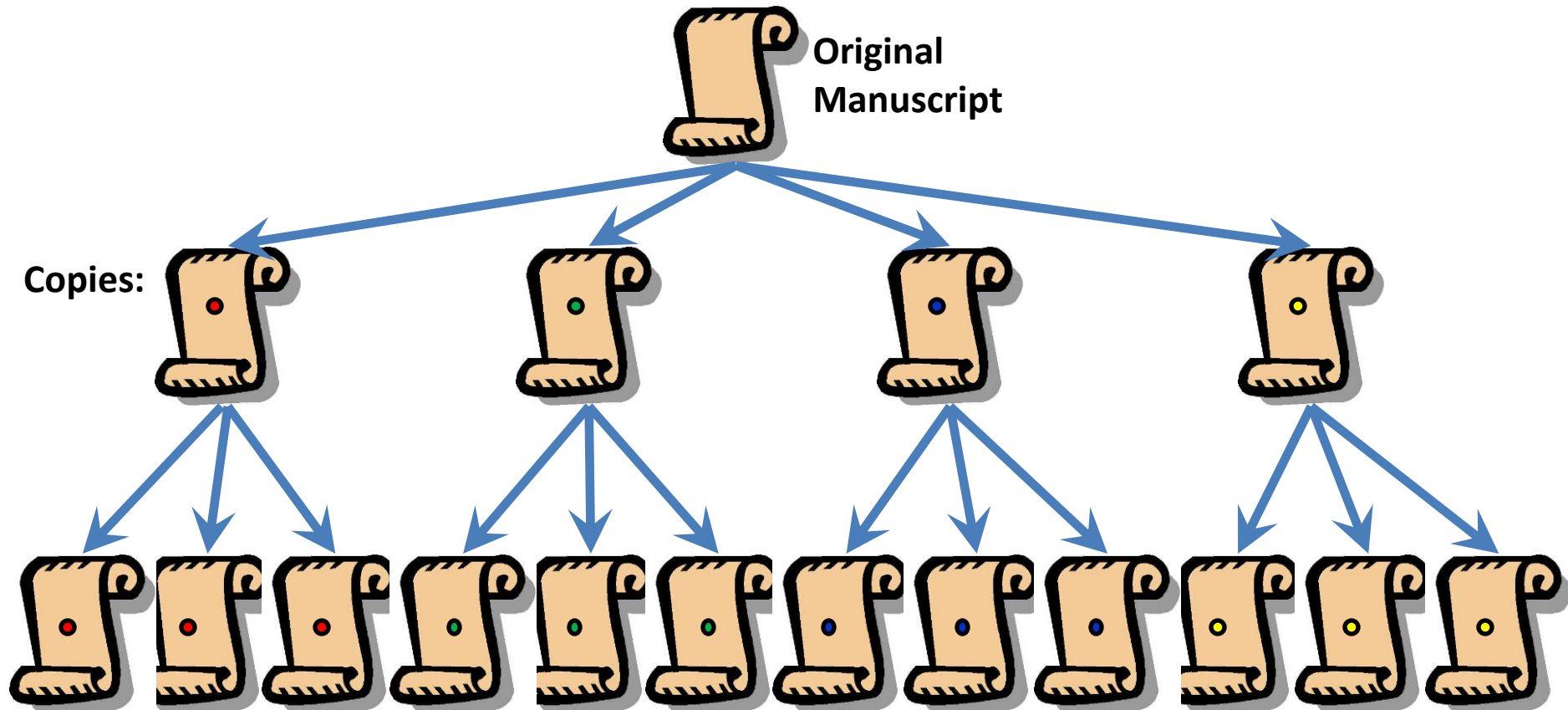
Arguments From Bart Ehrman

12:53

Copies of the Copies of the Copies

“Now I don’t know if you’ve ever tried to write out a copy of one of the books of the NT, like the gospel of Mark. But I could guarantee you if you do that you’re going to make a mistake. You might make **lots** of mistakes. And you are **much** more highly educated and literate than the **vast majority** of early Christians. Mistakes happen when people copy text. And the problem is when someone copies a text and makes a mistake, the next person who copies the copy replicates the mistakes of his predecessor. And he makes mistakes of his own. And then somebody comes along and copies that copy. And when they copy that copy, they replicate the mistakes of both of their predecessors and they make their own mistakes. And then somebody copies that copy. And it goes on like that for year after year after year. The only time mistakes get corrected is when a scribe is copying a text and he’ll realize, “Oh, this copy has a mistake”. And they try to correct the mistake. But they don’t know what the original says - they’re just trying to make it right. It’s possible that when somebody tries to correct a mistake, they correct it incorrectly. In which case you’ve got the original copy, you’ve got the mistake and you’ve got the mistaken correction of the mistake. Three forms of the text and then somebody copies that form of the text. And it goes on like that – month after month, year after year, decade after decade. And so you get copies of the copies of the copies.”

Multiple Lines of Transmission



28:13

Problems With the Early Manuscripts

“There probably were even more accidental changes in the years **before** we have surviving manuscripts. My reason for thinking that is this: by the time you get to the middle ages, who was copying manuscripts? The people copying manuscripts in the Middle Ages are the highly educated literate people who are monks in monasteries who are trained to copy manuscripts. Those are the people who copied manuscripts in the middle ages. Well you didn’t have monks in the fourth century, so when you first start getting complete manuscripts, who was copying them then if you don’t have monks in monasteries yet? ... The fourth century manuscripts we have are pretty good, so they’re written by highly literate people who appear to be trained to copy manuscripts in the fourth century. But things start changing when you start getting earlier. The manuscripts in the third century aren’t nearly as good as manuscripts from the fourth century. The scribes don’t appear to be trained. When you get to the second century, we don’t have much – just fragments here and there – they’re not nearly as good as fourth century manuscripts. Who was copying the manuscripts to begin with? The reality is that most people in the ancient world were illiterate. This seems strange to us today because almost everybody we know is basically literate. Illiteracy is still a big problem in this country, but 99% of the population in the United States can at least read the sports page.

“In the ancient world maybe 10% of the population could read the sports page... Most people couldn’t read. Most people couldn’t write. Who copied the manuscripts? In the early Christian churches whoever the guy was in the church who at least could read something was probably the person who copied the manuscript. Was he trained as a scribe? No! Well then, how good was he?

Probably not very good. He **probably** made accidental mistakes. That got replicated and replicated and replicated until the surviving manuscripts. **Probably** – I mean **I don’t know!** Nobody knows! Dan doesn’t know. Now he’s going to tell you he knows, but I’m telling you he doesn’t know.”

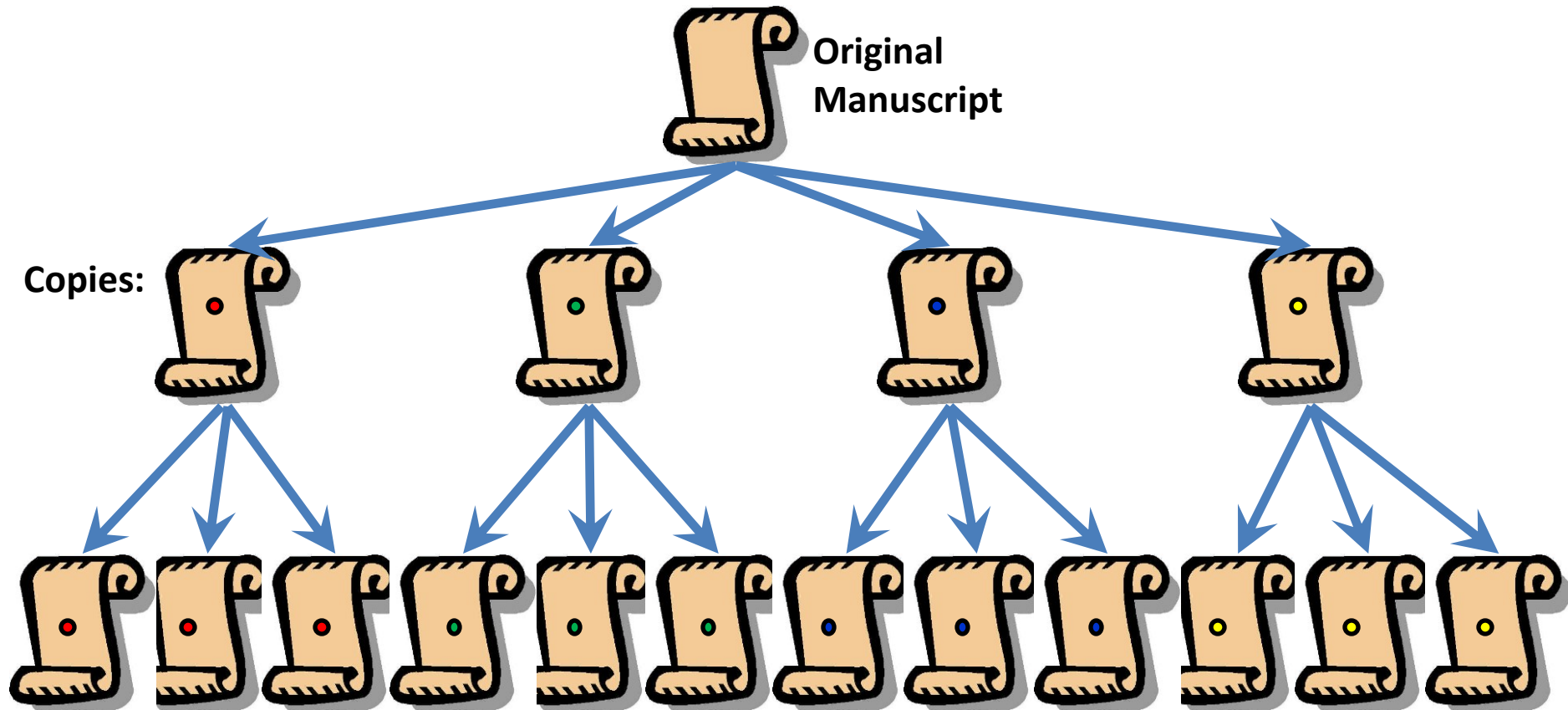
Response From Dan Wallace (in the debate)

Bart claims that the first two centuries of copying were wild. This is not the whole story. The standard introduction to NT textual criticism puts things in perspective:

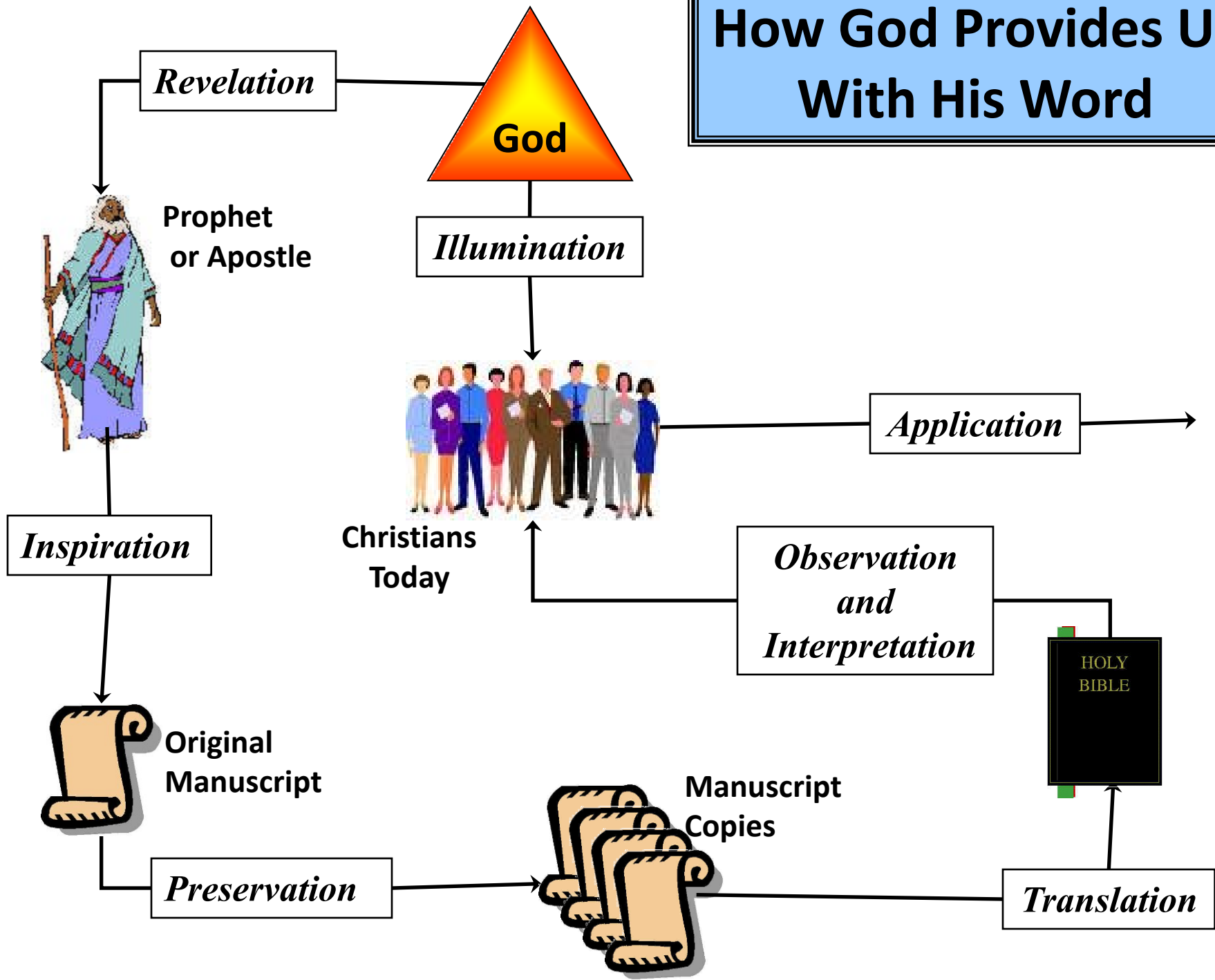
“It would be a mistake to think that the uncontrolled copying practices that led to the formation of the Western textual tradition were followed everywhere that texts were reproduced in the Roman Empire. In particular, there is solid evidence that in at least one major see of early Christendom, the city of Alexandria, there was conscientious control exercised in the copying of the books of the NT. Textual witnesses connected to Alexandria attest to a high quality of textual transmission from the earliest times. It was there that a very ancient line of text was copied and preserved...” (Fourth Edition of the Text of the NT by Bruce Metzger and Bart Ehrman)

P75 and Codex Vaticanus (also known as B) are two examples of this kind of quality of text. These two texts descend from a much earlier ancestor of the two in the second century and yet the two are very similar in their wording.

Multiple Lines of Transmission



How God Provides Us With His Word



Review Questions



Review Questions

- As Bart Ehrman attempts to cast **doubt** on the reliability of our New Testament manuscripts, what **unproven assumption** does he always seem to make about how the New Testament documents were copied?
 - He seems to assume that there was only one line of transmission, that is, one copy was made of the original (and mistakes were made), and then one copy was made of that copy (and more mistakes were made) etc.

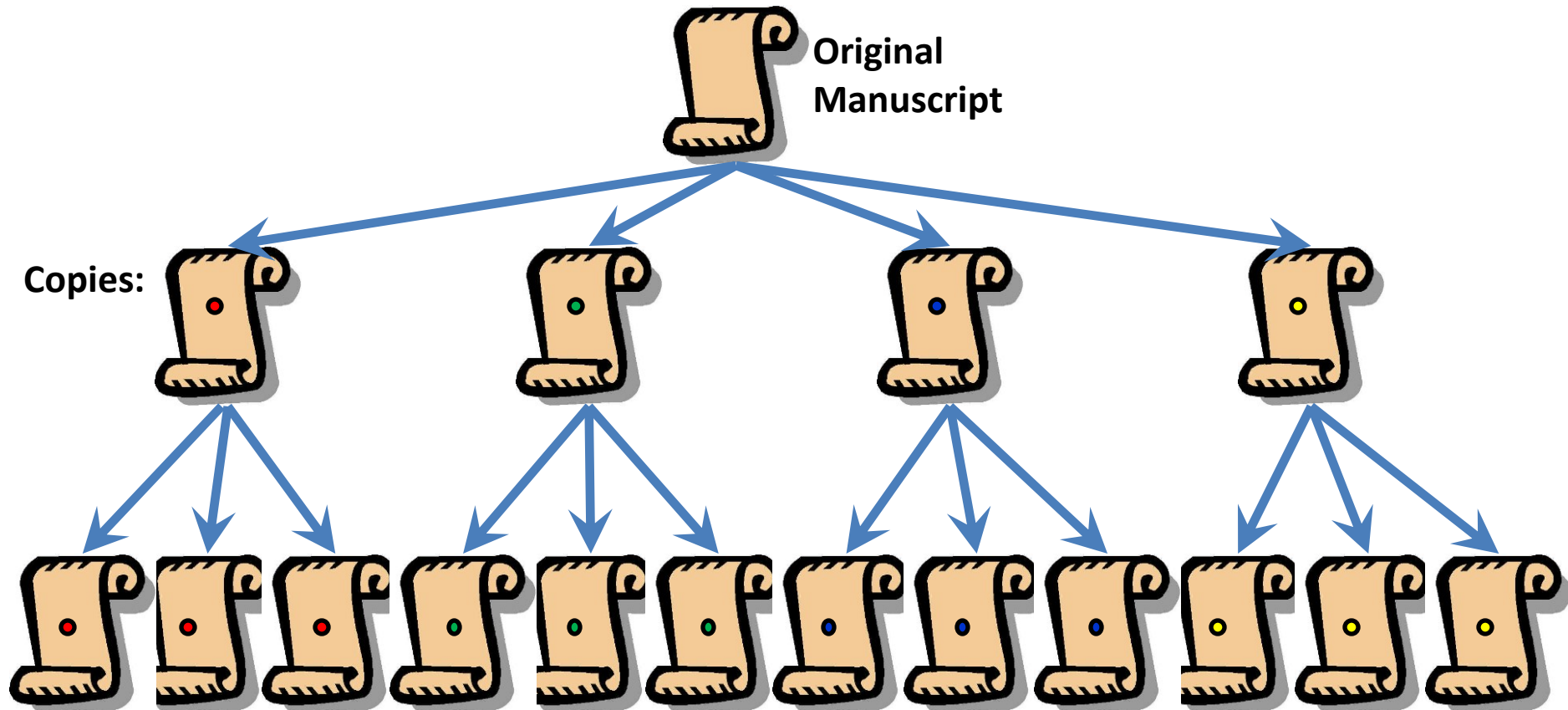
Review Questions

- Given the environment in which the NT was copied – that early Christians all wanted copies of the NT – what is a **more likely** way that the NT manuscripts were copied?
 - There were probably multiple lines of transmission – that is, numerous copies would have been made of each of the originals and then numerous copies of those copies would have been made, etc.

Review Questions

- How does having multiple lines of transmission give us **confidence** that we can still get back to the **original wording** of the New Testament even though we no longer have the original copies?
 - Because, although every copy has some mistakes, the other copies of that same original are very unlikely to contain the exact same mistakes.
 - Therefore we are assured that the original wording can still be found among our existing copies.

Multiple Lines of Transmission



1:52:32

Q & A

Question: (directed to Bart Ehrman) Between what we have, the strong evidence we have that's been presented, and the original autographs, what would it be in between that that would convince you that it's trustworthy – other than the autographs?

Answer: Well if we had early copies – suppose next week there is an archaeological find in Rome and we have reason to think that these ten manuscripts that are discovered were all copied within a **week** of the original copy of Mark and they disagree in .001% of the textual variation, then I would say, “**That's** good evidence!” and that's precisely what we **don't** have.

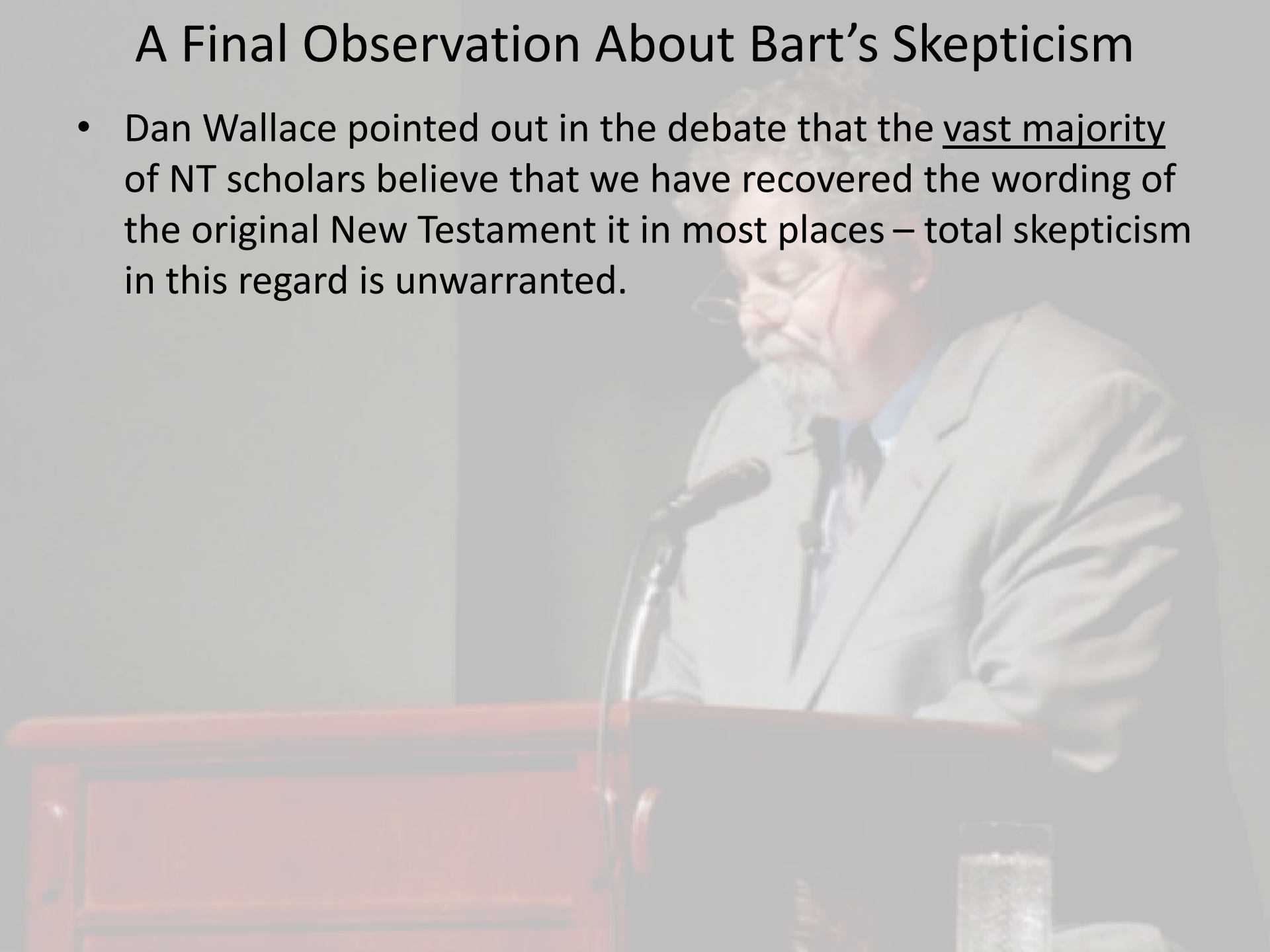
1:53:24

Question: There is one argument that Dr. Wallace presented that was not addressed – not specifically. He mentioned that the NT has more manuscripts than any average classical piece of work that we have today. Following the question that the young man in front of me asked, what type of evidence would convince you and you answered that, so with that type of standard of requirement for evidence how then in your opinion should we regard classical pieces of work today of which we don't have original autographs or not even half near the number of manuscripts for them like the Odyssey and things like that that we were required to read in High School.

Answer: Right, yeah, so you wasted your time, I'm sorry! (laughter) I tried to address that, I'm sorry if it didn't come through clearly; I certainly wanted to address it and tried to address it. Is that it's absolutely true. We have **far** more manuscripts of the NT than we have of Homer, or Plato, or Euripides... that's **absolutely true**. But that does not mean though that we have the original NT. What it means is that we have more manuscripts of the NT than these other works and it's harder to reconstruct these other works even than it is of the NT. And this isn't a disputed point, I mean classicists agree that in many places we have problems. One difference is, that most of these classical authors' scribes did not make intentional changes because of their particular belief, so there are more intentional changes in the NT manuscripts because people wanted to make sure it said what they wanted it to say and so they changed it in places. That simply didn't happen all that much in Homer. But scholars have known about problems in Homer for over 2000 years. There were scholars devoted to the problem of trying to reconstruct the text of Homer realizing that in fact ultimately it was an impossible task. So yes, it's an **impossible task** with the classics but that doesn't mean that therefore it's possible with the NT.

A Final Observation About Bart's Skepticism

- Dan Wallace pointed out in the debate that the vast majority of NT scholars believe that we have recovered the wording of the original New Testament in most places – total skepticism in this regard is unwarranted.



A Final Observation About Bart's Skepticism

- Dan then pointed out the titles of Bart's latest books demonstrate that even Bart believes that he can know what the original text of the New Testament says:
 - ***Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament***
 - ***Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why***
 - ***Jesus, Interrupted: Revealing the Hidden Contradictions in the Bible (And Why We Don't Know About Them)***
 - ***The Text of the NT: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration***
 - ***Forged: Writing in the Name of God – Why the Bible's Authors Are Not Who We Think They Are***
 - In this book Bart argues that Paul did not write the Pastoral Epistles because he does not use the same vocabulary as he uses in his "authentic" letters.
 - In order for him to make that claim, he has to know what the words are in Paul's other letters as well as what the words are in the pastoral letters!

A photograph of Bruce Metzger, an elderly man with white hair and glasses, wearing a white shirt and a patterned tie. He is seated at a desk, holding a large, open, aged manuscript with both hands. The manuscript has yellowed, stained pages. The background is dark and out of focus, showing what appears to be a library or study with bookshelves.

Textual Criticism

Bruce Metzger

Textual Criticism

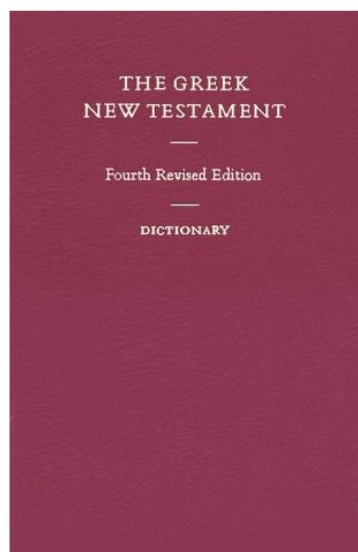
- Over the years, scholars have developed a set of methods for carefully analyzing the New Testament manuscript evidence in order to determine the **most likely original reading** of the text.
- Often a committee of scholars will end up producing a “critical Greek text” of the NT which they believe best approximates the original reading.

Textual Criticism

- A recent critical Greek text done by a **committee of scholars** is The Greek New Testament by the United Bible Societies. It gives:
 - All **meaningful, viable** variants in the NT manuscripts
 - Which variant was **preferred by the committee** in each case, as well as the major alternate readings
 - A **rating** describing the **confidence** the committee had in selecting a particular reading*:
 - A = the text is certain
 - B = the text is **almost** certain
 - C = the committee had difficulty deciding on the text
 - D = the committee had **great** difficulty deciding on the text

*These ratings are described in the UBS Greek NT, p.3

Format of the critical text of The Greek New Testament by the United Bible Society



The Greek Text

Footnotes

αὐτοῖς τῇ χειρὶ σιγᾶν διηγήσατο [αὐτοῖς] πῶς ὁ κύριος αὐτὸν ἐξήγαγεν ἐκ τῆς φυλακῆς εἰπέν τε, Ἄπαγγεῖλατε Ἰακώβῳ καὶ τοῖς ἀδελφοῖς ταῦτα. καὶ ἐξελθὼν ἐπορεύθη εἰς ἕτερον τόπον.^h

18 Γενομένης δὲ ἡμέρας ἦν τάραχος οὐκ ὀλίγος ἐν τοῖς στρατιώταις τί ἄρα ὁ Πέτρος ἐγένετο. 19 Ἡρώδης δὲ ἐπιζητήσας αὐτὸν καὶ μὴ εὐρῶν, ἀνακρίνας τοὺς φύλακας ἐκέλευσεν ἀπαχθῆναι,ⁱ καὶ κατελθὼν ἀπὸ τῆς Ἰουδαίας εἰς Καισάρειαν διέτριβεν.^k

The Death of Herod

20 Ἦν δὲ θυμομαχῶν Τυρίοις καὶ Σιδωνίοις· ὁμοθυμαδὸν δὲ παρήσαν πρὸς αὐτὸν καὶ πείσαντες Βλάστον, τὸν ἐπὶ τοῦ κοιτῶνος τοῦ βασιλέως, ἡτοῦντο εἰρήνην διὰ τὸ τρέφεσθαι αὐτῶν τὴν χώραν ἀπὸ τῆς βασιλικῆς.^l 21 τακτῇ δὲ ἡμέρᾳ ὁ Ἡρώδης ἐνδυσάμενος ἐσθῆτα βασιλικὴν [καὶ] καθίσας ἐπὶ τοῦ βήματος ἐδημηγόρει πρὸς αὐτούς, 22 ὁ δὲ δῆμος ἐπεφώνει, Θεοῦ φωνὴ καὶ οὐκ ἀνθρώπου.^m 23 παραχρῆμα δὲ ἐπάταξεν αὐτὸν ἄγγελος κυρίου ἀνθ' ὧν οὐκ ἔδωκεν τὴν δόξαν τῷ θεῷ, καὶ γενόμενος σκωληκόβρωτος² ἐξέψυξεν.ⁿ

24 Ὁ δὲ λόγος τοῦ θεοῦ ἡὔξανεν καὶ ἐπληθύνετο.^o 25 Βαρναβᾶς δὲ καὶ Σαῦλος ὑπέστρεψαν εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ.³

² 23 {A} γενόμενος σκωληκόβρωτος P⁷⁴ S A B E Ψ 33^{vid} 36 81 181 307 453 610 614 945 1175 1409 1678 1739 1891 2344 Byz [L P] / 884 / 1178 it^{ar, c, dem, e, gig, p, ph, ro, w} vg sy^{r(p), h} cop^{sa, bo} arm eth geo slav Basil Chrysostom; Ambrosiaster Lucifer || καταβάς ἀπὸ τοῦ βήματος γενόμενος σκωληκόβρωτος ἔτι ζῶν καὶ οὕτως D it^d (cop^{meg})

³ 25 {C} εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ S B 81 1409 Byz [L P] Lect^m sy^{r(h), m} slav Chrysostom^{mss} || ἀπὸ Ἱερουσαλὴμ D Ψ 36 181 307 453 610 614 1678 Lect^m it^{ar, c, d, dem, gig, ph, ro} vg cop^{bo, meg} Chrysostom^{ms} || ἐξ Ἱερουσαλὴμ P⁷⁴ A 33 2344 cop^{sa, mss} eth Chrysostom || ἐξ Ἱερουσαλὴμ εἰς Ἀντιόχειαν (E 1175 ἀπό for ἐξ) 945 1739 1891 (I 1178 ἀπό for ἐξ) I^{AD} it^{e, p, w} sy^{r(p)} cop^{sa}

Format of the Footnote

² 23 [A] γενόμενος σκωληκόβρωτος $\Phi^{74} \aleph A B E \Psi 33^{vid} 36 81 181 307 453 610$
614 945 1175 1409 1678 1739 1891 2344 *Byz* [L P] / 884 / 1178 *it*^{ar, c, dem, e, gig, p, ph, ro, w} *vg*
syr^(p, h) *cop*^{sa, bo} *arm eth geo slav Basil Chrysostom; Ambrosiaster Lucifer* // καταβάς
ἀπὸ τοῦ βήματος γενόμενος σκωληκόβρωτος ἔτι ζῶν καὶ οὕτως *D it*^d (*cop*^{meg})



Footnote number and **verse** number (from the text above the footnote)

Format of the Footnote

² 23 [A] γεγόμενος σκοληκόβρωτος Ψ⁷⁴ N A B E Ψ 33^{vid} 36 81 181 307 453 610
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syr^{(p), h} cop^{sa, bo} arm eth geo slav Basil Chrysostom; Ambrosiaster Lucifer // καταβάς
ἀπὸ τοῦ βήματος γεγόμενος σκοληκόβρωτος ἔτι ζῶν καὶ οὕτως D it^d (cop^{meg})



The Greek text of the reading selected by the UBS committee as the **most likely reading** – preceded by a **rating** (A, B, C or D) that tells how much **confidence** the committee had in the selected reading

Format of the Footnote

² 23 {A} γενόμενος σκοληκόβρωτος Φ⁷⁴ N A B E Ψ 33^{vid} 36 81 181 307 453 610
614 945 1175 1409 1678 1739 1891 2344 Byz [L P] / 884 / 1178 j^{ar}, c, dem, e, g, g, p, ph, ro, w vg
syr^(p), h cop^{sa, bo} arm eth geo slav Basil Chrysostom; Ambrosiaster Lucifer // καταβάς
ἀπὸ τοῦ βήματος γενόμενος σκοληκόβρωτος ἔτι ζῶν καὶ οὕτως D it^d (cop^{meg})



A list of the manuscripts that have the reading that was selected by the UBS committee

Format of the Footnote

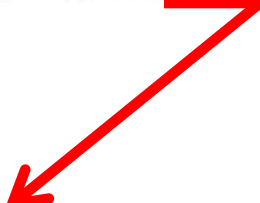
² 23 {A} γενόμενος σκωληκόβρωτος Ψ⁷⁴ N A B E Ψ 33^{vid} 36 81 181 307 453 610
614 945 1175 1409 1678 1739 1891 2344 Byz [L P] / 884 / 1178 it^{ar, c, dem, e, gig, p, ph, ro, w} vg
syr^{(p), h} cop^{sa, bo} arm eth geo slav Basil Chrysostom; Ambrosiaster Lucifer // καταβάς
ἀπὸ τοῦ βήματος γενόμενος σκωληκόβρωτος ἔτι ζῶν καὶ οὕτως D it^d (cop^{meg})



Greek text showing an **alternate reading** of the text
that was **rejected** by the UBS committee

Format of the Footnote

² 23 [A] γενόμενος σκωληκόβρωτος Φ^{74} $\aleph$ A B E Ψ 33^{vid} 36 81 181 307 453 610
614 945 1175 1409 1678 1739 1891 2344 Byz [L P] / 884 / 1178 it^{ar, c, dem, e, gig, p, ph, ro, w} vg
syr^{(p), h} cop^{sa, bo} arm eth geo slav Basil Chrysostom; Ambrosiaster Lucifer // καταβάς
ἀπὸ τοῦ βήματος γενόμενος σκωληκόβρωτος ἔτι ζῶν καὶ οὕτως D it^d (cop^{meg})



List of NT manuscripts that contain the **alternate** reading that was rejected by the committee

A Helpful Commentary

- United Bible Societies also provides a useful **companion book** to be used with their critical text of the Greek New Testament: A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament by Bruce Metzger.
- This book lists each of the major textual variants noted in their critical text along with an explanation of:
 - **How** the committee decided **which reading** to choose for that variant
 - **How** they decided on their **rating** (A, B, C or D) for that reading.



Textual Criticism

- **Two kinds of evidence** are considered when deciding which reading of a text is correct:
 - **External Evidence** – which takes into consideration the quality of the manuscript evidence for a reading, including its age and reliability
 - **Internal Evidence** – which takes into consideration things like:
 - The kind of change made and what is most likely to have caused it
 - Which reading best fits the context, the author's style, etc.

Examples of Internal Evidence

- The reading that best fits with the **immediate context** of the passage is considered most likely to be the original reading (Rom 5:1 “since we have been justified by faith, **we have** peace with God” versus “... **let us have** peace with God”)
- A reading that best **accords with the author’s style** is probably original. This applies only to longer passages. (John 7:53-8:11; Mark 16:9-10)
- A reading that **disagrees with a parallel passage** is **more likely original** than a reading that harmonizes the parallels (Luke 11:2 “Our Father who is in heaven” cf. Mat 6:9)
- A reading that at first seems **more difficult** to understand, but on further examination proves to make good sense is considered more likely to be the original reading. (Jn 1:18 “only begotten God” versus “only-begotten Son”)

External Evidence

- An **earlier** text is more likely to have the original reading than a later text.
- A reading that is found in a **wider variety of manuscripts** is more likely to be the original reading.
- A manuscript that has proven to be **more reliable** is given greater weight when deciding which reading should be considered original.

A photograph of an elderly man with white hair and glasses, wearing a white shirt and a patterned tie. He is sitting at a desk, looking directly at the camera. In front of him is a large, open book or manuscript that appears to be quite old, with some yellowing and wear. The background is dark and out of focus, suggesting an office or library setting.

Working Through an Actual Example!

Bruce Metzger

NIV Study Bible – Luke 11:2

Main Text:

Jesus' Teaching on Prayer

11:2-4pp — Mt 6:9-13

11:9-13pp — Mt 7:7-11

11 One day Jesus was praying^d in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord,^e teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.”

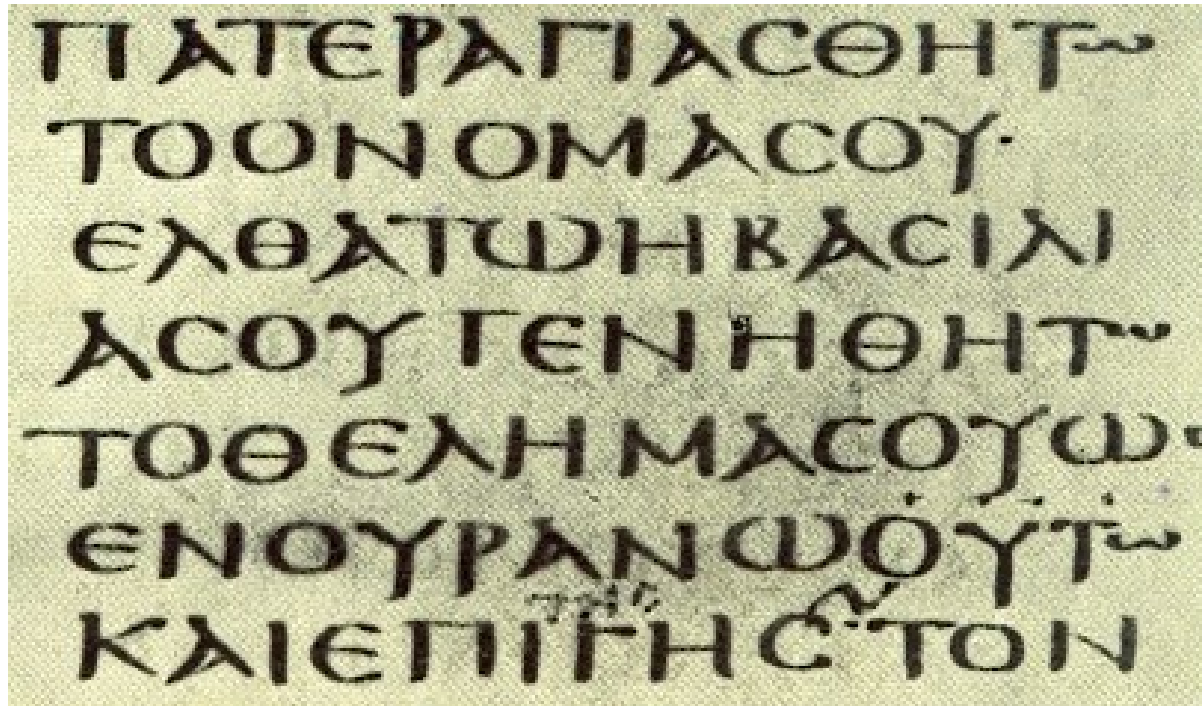
²He said to them, “When you pray, say:

“ ‘Father,^t
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom^f come.^u

Footnote:

^{t2} Some manuscripts *Our Father in heaven*

Codex Sinaiticus (Symbol: Ⲛ)*

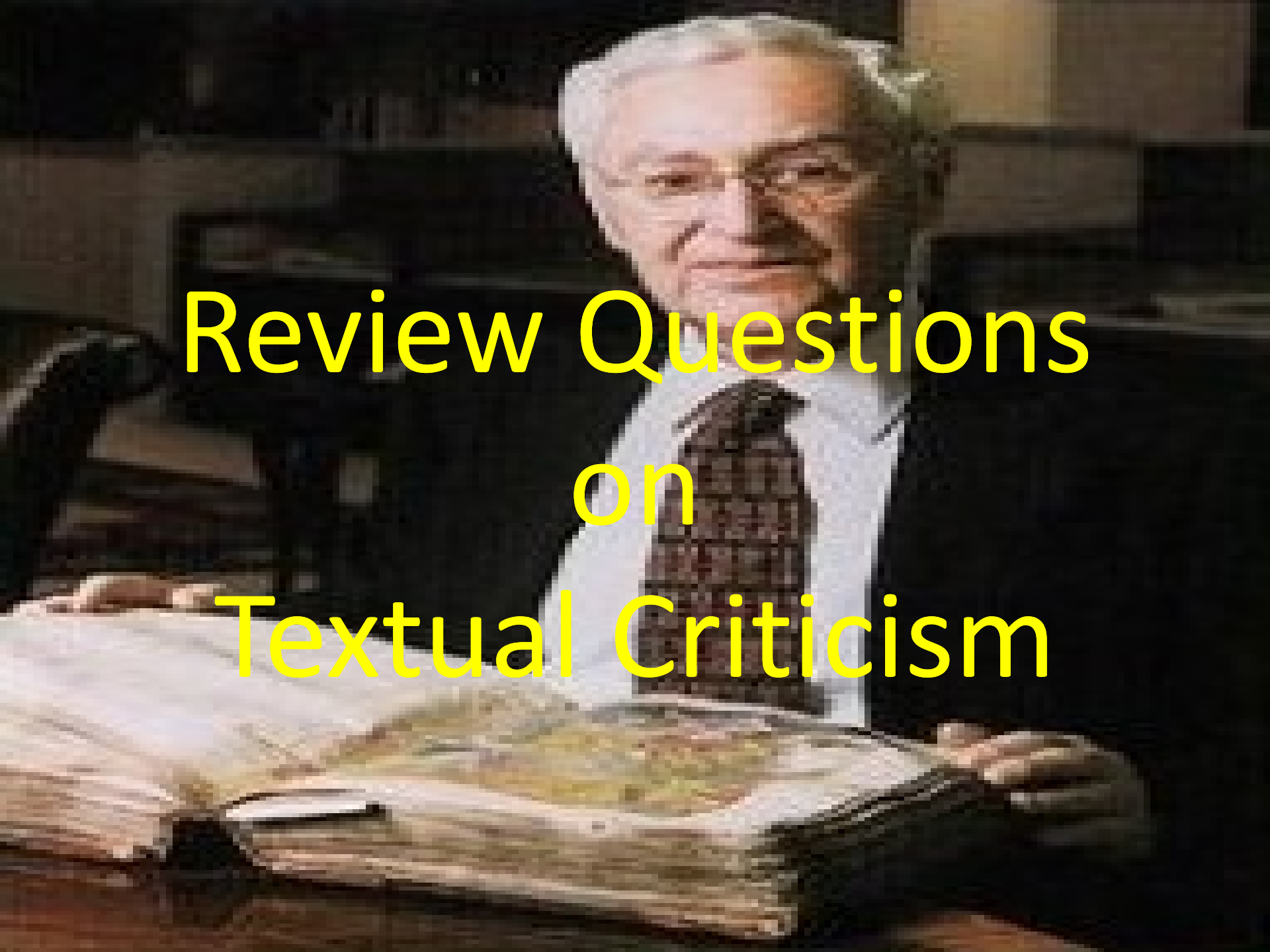


Luke 11:2 - Πάτερ, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου· ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου·
Father let be hallowed the name of you let come the kingdom of you

***Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲛ) is a 4th century uncial manuscript of the Greek Bible, written between 330–350 AD**

Uncial Lettering

ITSURESEEMSLIKEITWOULDH
AVEBEENHARDTOREADADOC
UMENTWHERE THEYUSEDALL
CAPITALLETTERSANDNOSPAC
ESORPUNCTUATIONMARKSB
UTASYOUCANSEEITCANBEDO
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Review Questions on Textual Criticism

Review Questions

- What is Textual Criticism?
 - A set of methods developed by scholars for carefully analyzing the New Testament manuscript evidence in order to determine the most likely original reading of the text.

Review Questions

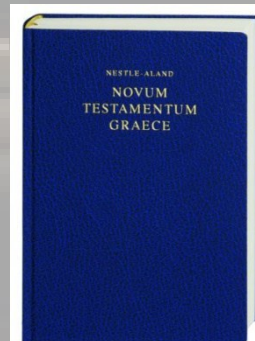
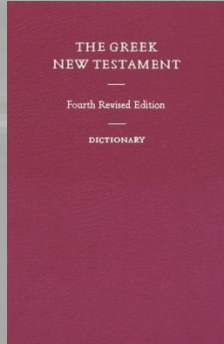
- What are the two kinds of manuscript evidence that textual critical scholars consider when trying to decide which reading of the New Testament text is the original?
 - External Evidence – which takes into consideration the quality of the manuscript evidence for a reading, including its age and reliability
 - Internal Evidence – which takes into consideration things like:
 - The kind of change made and what is most likely to have caused it
 - Which reading best fits the context, the author's style, etc.

Review Questions

- Describe what a “critical Greek text” of the New Testament is.
 - It is a Greek text of the New Testament produced (usually) by a committee of scholars which they believe best approximates the original reading of the New Testament text.

Review Questions

- What modern “critical Greek text” did I recommend to you last week in class?
 - *United Bible Society's Greek New Testament (UBS4)*.
 - There is one other modern critical Greek text that I recommend, but failed to mention last week in class: *Novum Testamentum Graece Nestle-Aland 27th edition (NA 27)*



Review Questions

- In addition to the critical Greek text, what other information is provided in the *United Bible Society's Greek New Testament* (UBS4)?
 - Alternate readings found in the manuscript evidence that were not selected
 - Lists of manuscripts that support the various readings
 - A one letter code (A, B, C, or D) that represents the confidence level that the committee had in the selected reading

NIV Study Bible – Luke 11:2

Main Text:

Jesus' Teaching on Prayer

11:2-4pp — Mt 6:9-13

11:9-13pp — Mt 7:7-11

11 One day Jesus was praying^d in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord,^e teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.”

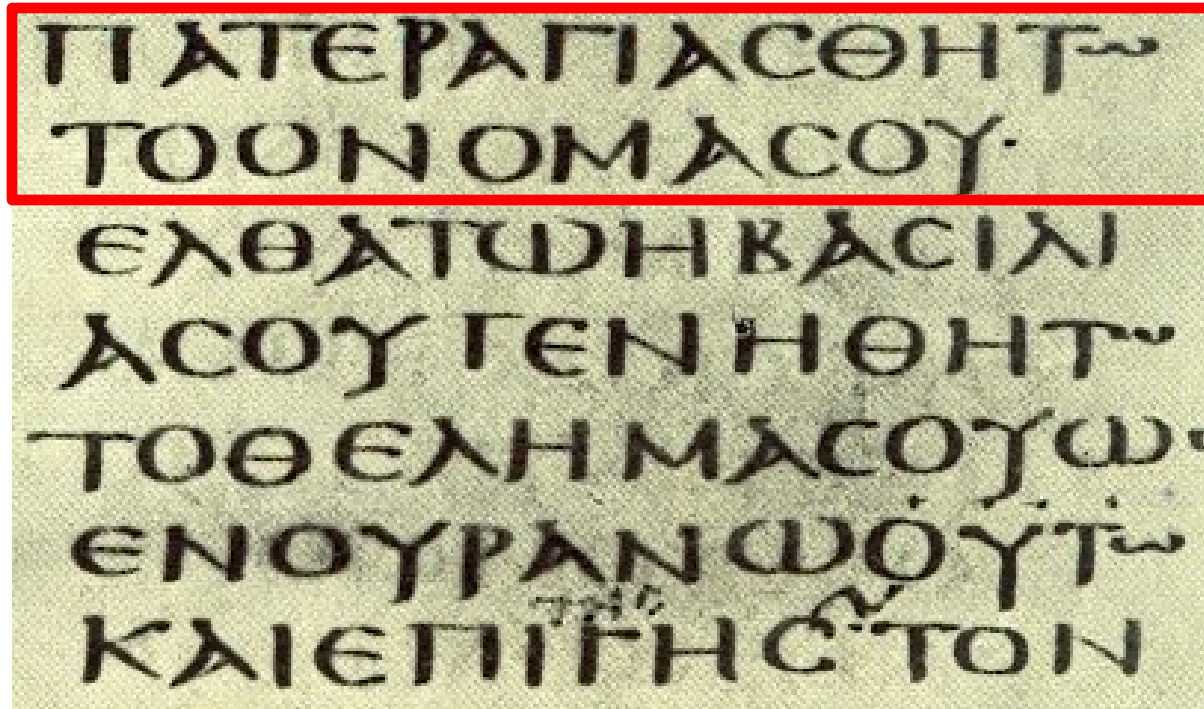
²He said to them, “When you pray, say:

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Footnote:

^{t2} Some manuscripts *Our Father in heaven*

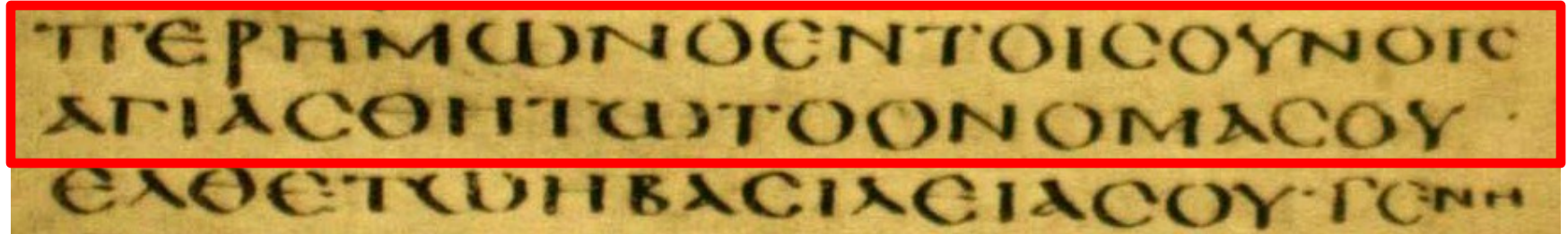
Codex Sinaiticus (Symbol: Ⲛ)*



Luke 11:2 Πάτερ, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου· ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου·
Father let be hallowed the name of you let come the kingdom of you

*Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲛ) is a 4th century uncial manuscript of the Greek Bible, written between 330–350 AD

Codex Alexandrinus (Symbol: A)*



Luke 11:2 - Πάτερ, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου· ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου·
Father let be hallowed the name of you let come the kingdom of you

*Codex Alexandrinus (A) is a 5th century uncial manuscript of the Greek Bible

A Comparison of Two Greek Manuscripts of Luke 11:2b

Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲭ):

ΠΑΤΕΡ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΘΗΤΩ
ΤΟΥ ΝΟΜΑΟΥ.

Codex Alexandrinus (A):

ΠΕΡΗΜΩΝΟΕΝΤΟΙΣ ΟΥΝ ΟΙΣ
ΑΓΙΑΣ ΘΗΤΩ ΤΟΥ ΝΟΜΑΟΥ.

A Comparison of Two Greek Manuscripts of Luke 11:2b

Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲱ):

ΠΑΤΕΡ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΘΗΣ
ΤΟΥ ΝΟΜΟΥ.

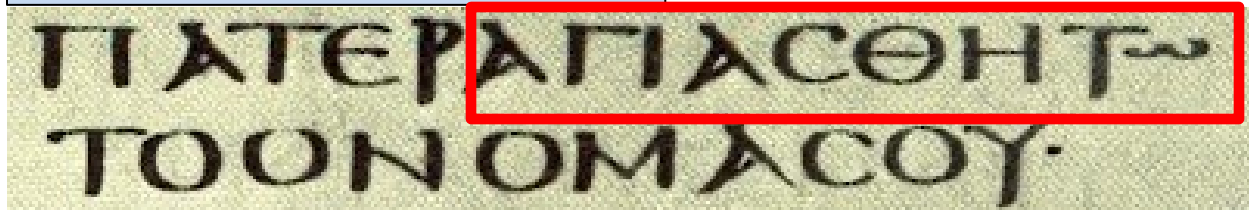
Codex Alexandrinus (A):

ΠΕΡΗΜΩΝ Ο ΕΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΟΥΝΟΙΣ
ΑΓΙΑΣ ΘΗΣ ΤΟΥ ΝΟΜΟΥ.

PATER = Father

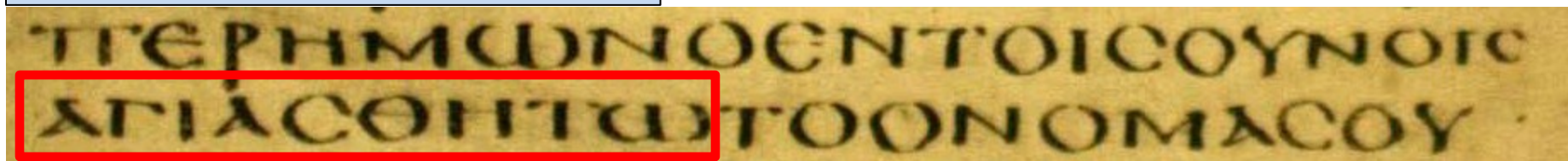
A Comparison of Two Greek Manuscripts of Luke 11:2b

Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲱ):



ΠΑΤΕΡ ΑΓΙΑΣΘΗΤΩ
ΤΟΝ ΟΜΛΟΟΥ.

Codex Alexandrinus (A):



ΠΑΤΕΡ ΗΜΩΝ ΟΕΝΤΟΙΣ ΟΥΝ ΟΙΣ
ΑΓΙΑΣΘΗΤΩ ΤΟΝ ΟΜΛΟΟΥ.

(H)AGIASTHETO = Let it be set apart as holy

A Comparison of Two Greek Manuscripts of Luke 11:2b

Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲱ):

ΠΑΤΕΡ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΘΗΤΩ
ΤΟΥ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΣΟΥ·

Codex Alexandrinus (A):

ΠΑΤΕΡ ΗΜΩΝ Ο ΕΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΟΥΝΟΙΣ
ΑΓΙΑΣ ΘΗΤΩ ΤΟΥ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΣΟΥ·

ΤΟ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΣΟΥ = the name of you (your name)

A Comparison of Two Greek Manuscripts of Luke 11:2b

Codex Sinaiticus (Ⲭ):

ΠΑΤΕΡ ΑΓΙΑΣ ΘΗΤΩ
ΤΟΥ ΝΟΜΑΟΥ.



Codex Alexandrinus (A):

ΠΕΡ ΗΜΩΝ Ο ΕΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΟΥΡΑΝΟΙΣ
ΑΓΙΑΣ ΘΗΤΩ ΤΟΥ ΝΟΜΑΟΥ.

(H)EMON (H)O EN TOIS OURANOIS
= [Father] of us, the one in the heavens

NIV Study Bible – Luke 11:2

Main Text:

Jesus' Teaching on Prayer

11:2-4pp — Mt 6:9-13

11:9-13pp — Mt 7:7-11

11 One day Jesus was praying^d in a certain place. When he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord,^e teach us to pray, just as John taught his disciples.”

²He said to them, “When you pray, say:

“ ‘Father,^t
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom^f come.^u

Footnote:

^{t2} Some manuscripts *Our Father in heaven*

Greek NT (UBS4) – Luke 11:1-2

Main Text:

Teaching about Prayer

(Mt 6.9-15; 7.7-11)

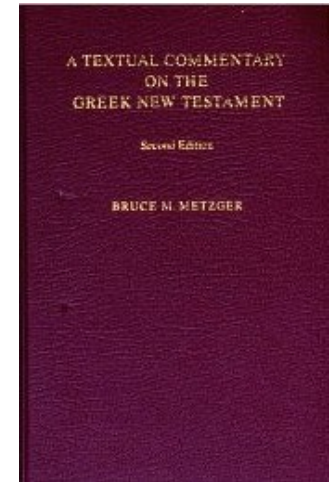
11 Καὶ ἐγένετο ἐν τῷ εἶναι αὐτὸν ἐν τόπῳ τινὶ προσευ-
χόμενον, ὡς ἐπαύσατο, εἶπέν τις τῶν μαθητῶν αὐτοῦ
πρὸς αὐτόν, Κύριε, δίδαξον ἡμᾶς προσεύχεσθαι, καθὼς
καὶ Ἰωάννης ἐδίδαξεν τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ. **2** εἶπεν δὲ
αὐτοῖς, Ὅταν προσεύχησθε λέγετε,
Πάτερ¹, ἁγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου·
ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου^{2·3}

Footnote:

¹ 2 {A} πάτερ ℘⁷⁵ & B (L πάτερ ἡμῶν) 1 700 1342 it^{aur} vg syr^s (arm πάτερ ἡμῶν) Marcion^{acc. to Tertullian} Origen (Cyril^{lem}vid); Tertullian^{vid} // πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς (see Mt 6.9) A C D W Δ Θ Ψ f¹³ 28 157 180 205 565^{supp} 579 597 892 1006 1010 1071 1241 1243 1292 1424 1505 Byz [E F G H P] Lect it^{b, d, e, f, l, q, r}vid (it^{a, c, ff}2, i πάτερ ἅγιε) vg^{mss} syr^{c, p, h} cop^{sa, bo} eth geo slav

A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament

by Bruce Metzger



11.2 *πάτερ* {A}

In view of the liturgical usage of the Matthean form of the Lord's Prayer, it is remarkable that such a variety of early witnesses managed to resist what must have been an exceedingly strong temptation to assimilate the Lukan text to the much more familiar Matthean form. It is not surprising, therefore, that the great majority of witnesses read *Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς*, as in Mt 6.9.