

The Bible:

How Can We Trust It?

How Do I know that What We Have is The Word of God?



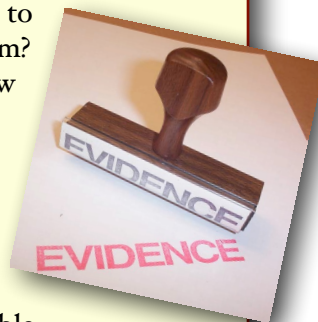
"The Bible is a reliable report supernatural collection of historical events that took place in documents, written by fulfillment of specific eyewitnesses during the prophecies, and they lifetime of other claim to be divine rather eyewitnesses. They than human in origin."

The Objection:

Have you ever heard someone say that the Bible has been changed over and over again as it was copied down through the centuries? Many also say that there are lost books of the Bible that were not included based on some old Church leaders who voted on what would be included.

Other people claim that the Bible is filled with errors and contradictions which mean it cannot be the infallible word of God.

How would you respond to such criticism? Do you know why Christians have every reason to trust the Bible as God's infallible Word?



THE TELEPHONE GAME

The telephone game is a familiar child's game where someone whispers a secret in to another's ear, who then whispers it into the next child's ear, and so on. By the time the secret gets to the last child in the line, it has changed dramatically from the original message. Many today attempt to compare the transmission of the biblical



text to the telephone game. They say it has been copied so much, it was inadvertently changed and we have no idea what it originally said. However, the truth is that the text came to us through multiple streams of transmission, through many different geographical locations.

HOW THE BIBLE WAS TRANSMITTED TO MODERN DAY



P52: Fragment of John: dated 125 A.D.
P75: Show the end of Luke and
 beginning of John: dated 175-225 A.D.

Before 1439, books had to be copied by hand. This naturally leads to scribal errors. If I told 20 people to copy the book of John, I would have 20 different copies with misspellings, errors of sight, and inadvertent mistakes. However, if I lost the original book, I could look at all 20 copies and determine what the original said. All 20 copies would have human mistakes, but they would not have the SAME mistakes. If one copy misspelled a word that the other 19 did not, I could deduce the original spelling.

This is how the text of the New Testament has come to us. We have over 6400 copies of Greek manuscripts. By studying all the copies, the Church is able to determine the original reading of the text. What you have when you

buy a Bible in the store, is the combined study of all the manuscripts of the New Testament.

The New Testament exploded on the Roman Empire quickly throughout a wide geographical range. It spread so rapidly and so uncontrolled that ***there was never a time in all of history that one man, or one group of men had control over the text to make wholesale changes.***

If someone in the 4th century changed the text, we know it because of the multitude of other manuscripts from differing locations.

NOTE: No textual variant in the New Testament Manuscripts affects any significant doctrine of Christianity. 99.9% of the variants are spelling errors or elements of Greek grammar not translatable in English.

Most people think we got the Bible this way:

Paul writes a letter
 Joe copies the letter (and makes mistakes)
 Frank copies Joe's copy (makes more mistakes)
 Jason copies Frank's copy (makes more mistakes)
 and so on for years and years...
 until you buy a copy of the Bible

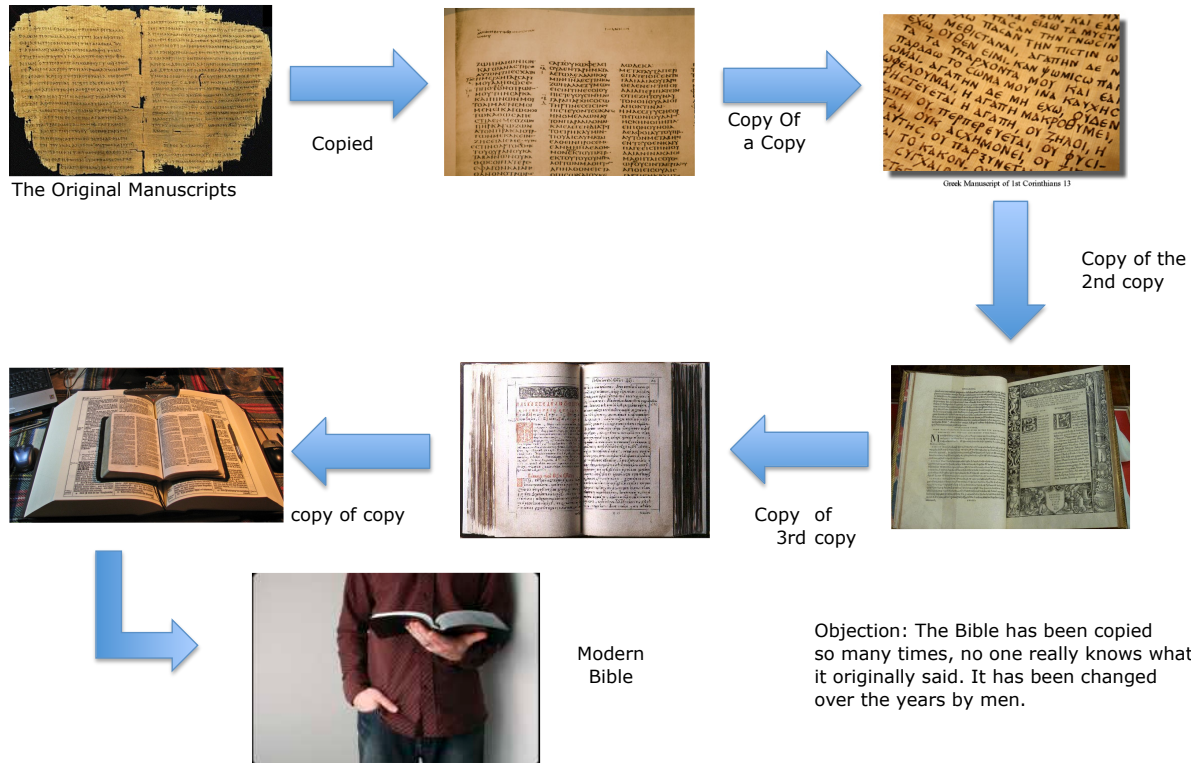
This is how the Bible really came to us:

Paul writes a letter		
Joe and Frank copy Paul's letter (and makes mistakes)		
Four people copy Joe's	Four copy Frank's,	Four copy Paul's
Six different people copy each these four	Six copy these four	Six copy these four
Four copy each of these 24	Four copy each of these 24	Four copy each of these 24
2304 copies are circulated	2304 copies are circulated	2304 copies are circulated

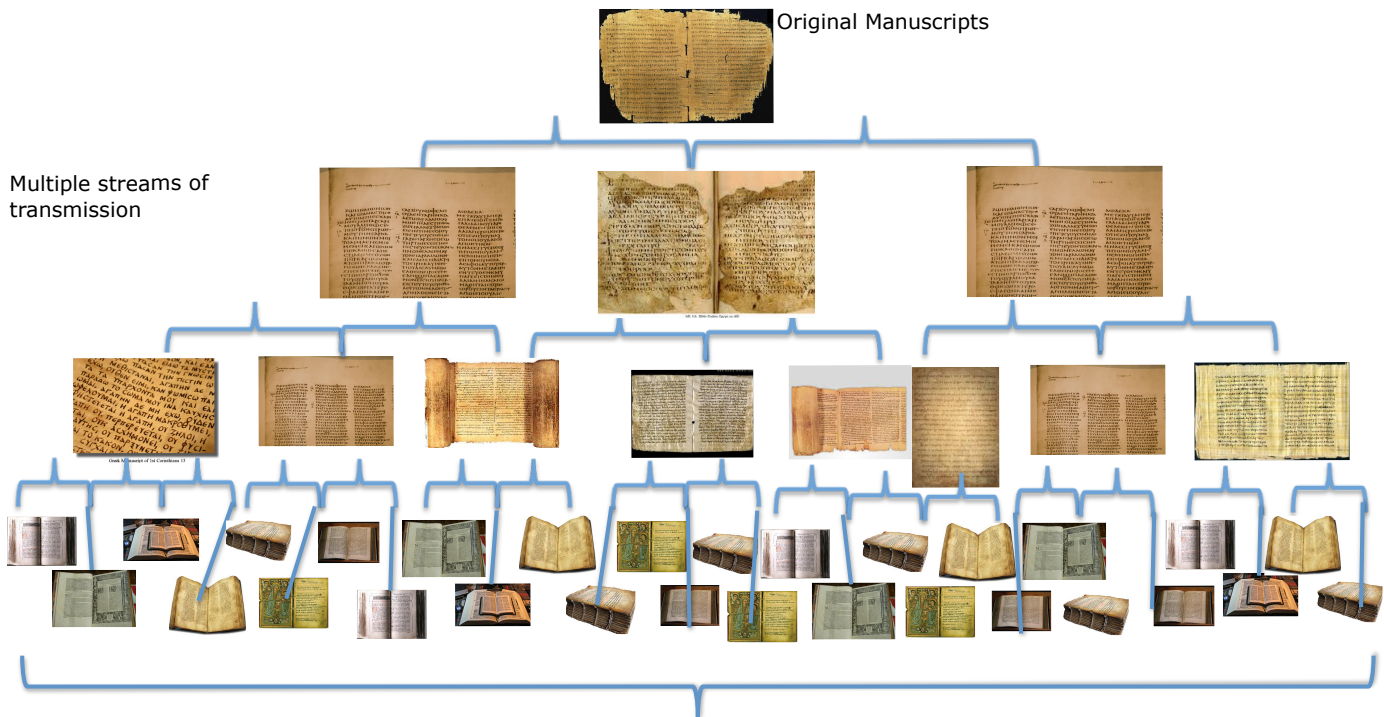
Translators study the thousands of Greek manuscripts to determine original reading
 This printed Greek text is translated into English

This is how people think we got the Bible

The Telephone Game



How We Really Got the Bible



1. Although ever handwritten copy produces errors, the copies don't contain the SAME errors
2. By studying ALL the copies we can get back to the original
3. There never was a time when one person or one group had control over the text to change it wholesale



4. If a manuscript in the 9th century was changed, we know it from all the others that weren't
5. There are over 6000 Greek manuscripts, 20,000 latin, coptic, and sahidic
6. Even if all the manuscripts were destroyed, we could reconstruct the entire New Testament from the church fathers writings.

SEVERAL LINES OF EVIDENCE PROVE THE RELIABILITY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT:

I. Historically Reliable

- a. The text of the New Testament is better attested by manuscript support than any other document of ancient history
- b. The observable transmission of the text of the New Testament provides significant evidence of the text's reliability
- c. If the text of the NT is uncertain, then no work of human history is certain. There is more evidence for the life of Jesus than the life of Julius Caesar.

II. Written By Eyewitnesses

- a. The Apostles were all eyewitnesses to the events they recorded.
- b. Except John, all the disciples died horrific deaths rather than renounce their faith in Christ.
- c. Men will often die for what they believe, but no one will die for something they know is a lie.

III. Written During the Life of Eyewitnesses

- a. 500 people saw the resurrected Jesus (1 Co. 15:6). The documents spread far and wide during the life of eyewitnesses who would have contradicted the events if untrue.

IV. Relate Supernatural Events in Direct Fulfillment of Specific Prophecies

- a. In the gospels alone, Jesus fulfilled over 365 Old Testament Prophecies written hundreds of years before He was born.
- b. Daniel chapter 7 prophecies the rise and fall of the Babylonians, Medo-Persians, the Greek, and Roman Empires with perfect accuracy.

V. They Claim to Be Divine Rather Than Human in Origin



INTERNAL EVIDENCE OF DIVINE AUTHORSHIP



The Old Testament relates facts that no man could have known at the time of writing.

In 681 B.C., God told us, through the prophet Isaiah, that the earth was round, 2000 years

before Columbus discovered it was. (Isa 40:22).

Astronomers before 1564 thought there were only 3000 stars. Galileo said there were about 30,000. But Jeremiah wrote (627-586 B.C.) that the stars were countless. (Jer. 33:22)

The water cycle was not fully understood until about 30 B.C. by a Roman engineer named Marcus Vitruvius. Yet every aspect of the water cycle was fully revealed to mankind in 1600 B.C.! The Bible's description is in perfect harmony

with modern science. Eccl 1:6-7; 11:3; Job 26:8; Amos 9:6. Vitruvius was 1600 years too late!

Matthew Maury (1806-1873) discovered the warm and cold continental currents throughout the oceans. His book on oceanography is still used as a textbook in universities. Yet, God tells us in Psalm 8:8 that there are "paths of the sea."

INTERESTING FACTS:



1. The book of Luke names 32 countries, 54 cities, and 9 islands that are supported by history and archeology.
2. Non-Christian evidence that Jesus lived and was crucified includes: Roman historian, Cornelius Tacitus (A.D. 52), Jewish historian, Flavius Josephus (A.D. 37), Suetonius, Pliny the younger, and Thallus. All these men (non-Christians) mentioned Jesus in a historical context.

Short List of Some Fulfilled Prophecies about Jesus in the Bible

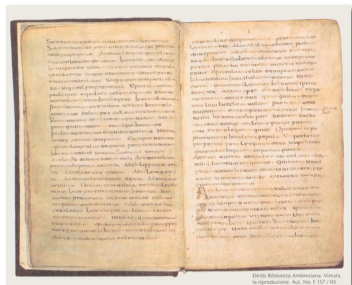
<i>PROPHECY</i>	<i>PREDICTION</i>	<i>FULFILLMENT</i>
Isa. 7:14	Virgin-born...	Luke 1:26-53
Micah 5:2	... in Bethlehem	Matt. 2:1
Hos 11:1	Flight into Egypt...	Mt 2:14
Je 31:15	... to escape the massacre of the infants	Mt 2:16
Gen 49:10	Of the tribe of Judah	Luke 3:33
Isa. 7:14	Called Immanuel	Matt. 1:23
Isa. 9:1-2	Ministry in Galilee	Matt. 4:12-16
Zech. 9:9	Triumphal entry into Jerusalem	Matt. 21:1-11
Ps. 41:9	Betrayed by a friend...	Matt. 26:20-25
Zec 11:12	... for 30 pieces of silver...	Matt. 26:15
Zec 11:13	... & the money used to buy a potter's field	Matt. 27:6,7
Is 53:3	Rejected by Jews	John 1:11
Ps. 35:11	Falsely accused...	Matt. 26:59-68
Isa. 53:7	... yet silent before accusers	Matt. 27:12-14
Isa 50:6	Smitten and spat upon	Mark 14:65
Is 53:4,5	Suffered vicariously	Mt 8:16,17
Isa. 53:12	Crucified with robbers	Matt. 27:38
Ps. 22:16	Hands and feet pierced...	John 20:25
Ps. 34:20	... but bones not broken	John 19:33
Ps. 22:18	Lots cast for clothes	John 19:23-24
Ps. 22:15	Thirsted on the cross...	John 19:28
Ps 69:21	... and given vinegar to drink	John 19:29
Ps 22.1	"My God, why hast thou forsaken me?"	Matt. 27.46
Isa. 53:9	Buried in tomb of rich	Matt. 27:57-61
Ps 16:10	His resurrection	Matt. 28:9
Ps 68:18	His ascension	Lu 24:50,51

THE LOST GOSPELS?

Today, it is very common for opponents of the Bible to claim that the 66 books of the Bible are not all of the inspired Christian writings. Many believe that a council convened to vote on which books would be included as "Scripture." It is very common to hear dissenters say that the Council of Nicea in 325 A.D. is where the Church ratified the New Testament.

There is absolutely no evidence that this is the case. The books of the Bible were not even discussed at the council of Nicea. They met to discuss the Arian Heresy. The books of the New Testament were "discovered" as the Word of God, not "voted in." No Church council put out an authoritative list of books until the Council of Carthage in 397 A.D.

However, there is archeological evidence that the books of the New Testament were recognized as Scripture toward the close of the 2nd century. An "almost" complete list of New Testament books is found in a papyrus fragment dated 180 A.D. Called the "Muratorian Fragment."



Books were understood to be Scripture based on four characteristics of the books themselves.

1. **Apostolicity** - The book was written by, or written under

the supervision of an Apostle then it was accepted as an authoritative word of Scripture and was eventually included in the Church's biblical canon.

2. **Orthodoxy** - The book doctrinally agreed with the Old Testament Scriptures as well as the gospel accounts of Jesus.

3. **Antiquity** - The book must have been written during the time of the Apostles. No book was considered Scripture which was written later. This precluded books like "The Gospel of Thomas" from being included from the very beginning.

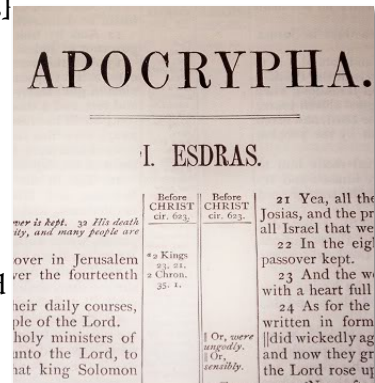
4. **Church Use** - What probably was most determinative in the discovery process was the widespread use of a writing in the churches. A book's divine qualities were recognized throughout the different churches. Those books not read in the church (such as "The Shepherd of Hermas") were excluded.

The books of the New Testament were not "voted in." Their divine nature was discovered based on objective criteria. Therefore, no books were "taken out" of the Bible. The so-called "lost gospels" were never lost, they were denied as Scripture from the very beginning.

There are some books called "The Apocrypha" which the Catholic church decided to include as Scripture in the 1500s, however, these books were NEVER considered to be Scripture by the Jews. When Jerome translated the Greek Old

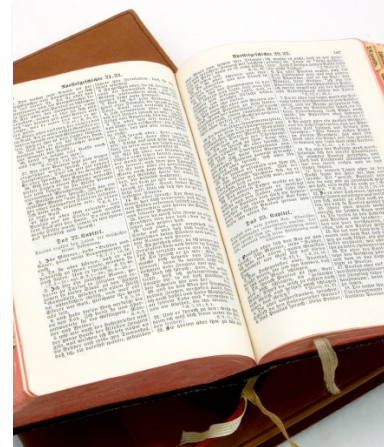
and New Testaments into Latin in the fifth century, he traveled to Palestine and discovered that the Jewish Christians had never accepted the apocryphal books as Scripture.

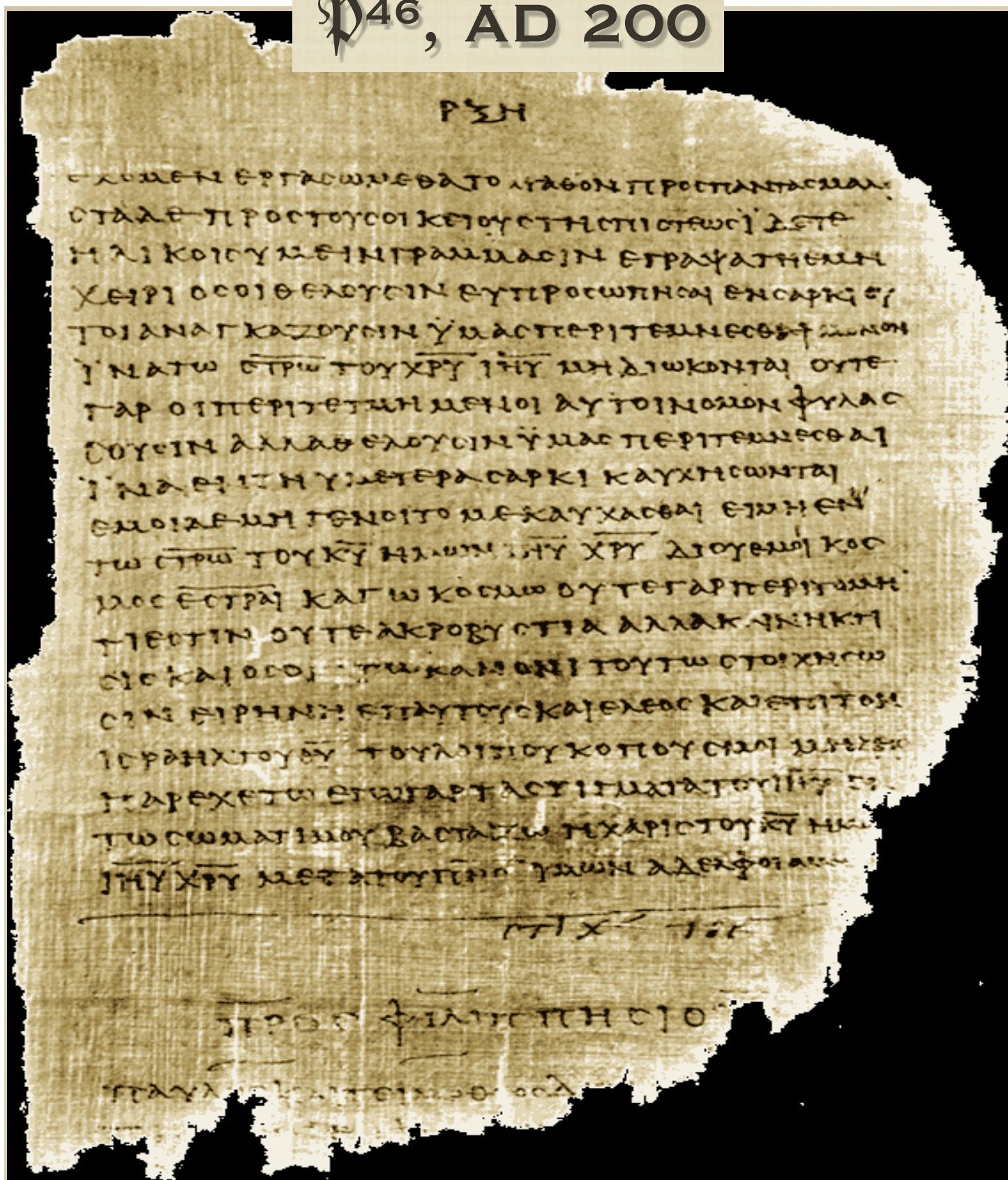
In Romans 3:2, Paul says, "unto them [the Jews] were committed the oracles of God." How could God entrust His word to the Jews if they did not know which writings were divine?



The Bible consists of the exact 66 books which God inspired as His holy Word. Nothing is missing and nothing has been lost. As modern believers, we can rest assured that the books in our Bible are the only inspired Scripture through which God speaks to His church.

The following pages are adapted from a presentation made by Alpha and Omega ministries, Phoenix, AZ.

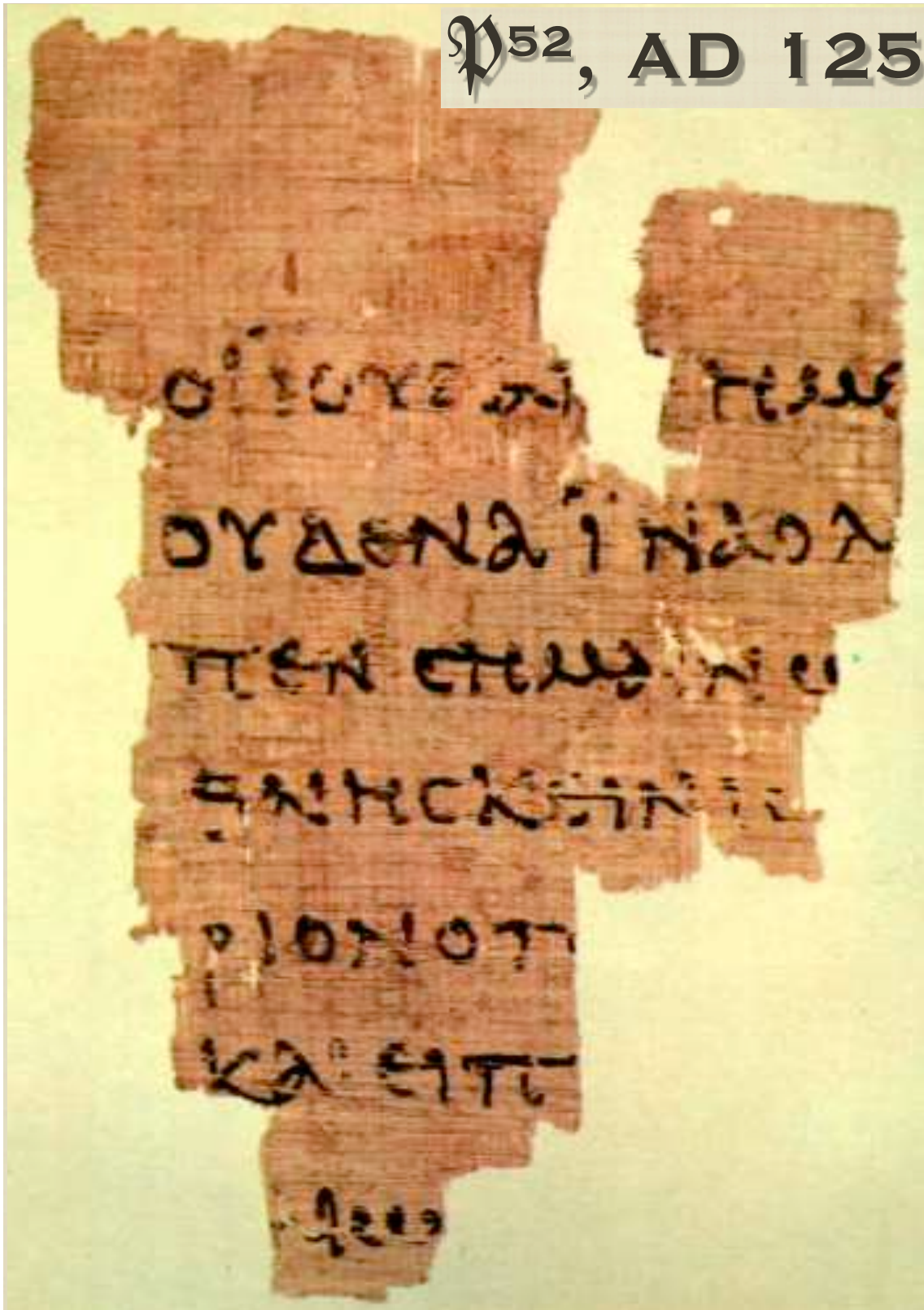




Most scholars date P46 from 175-225. It contains (in order) the last eight chapters of Romans; all of Hebrews; virtually all of 1-2 Corinthians; all of Ephesians, Galatians, Philippians, Colossians; and two chapters of 1 Thessalonians.

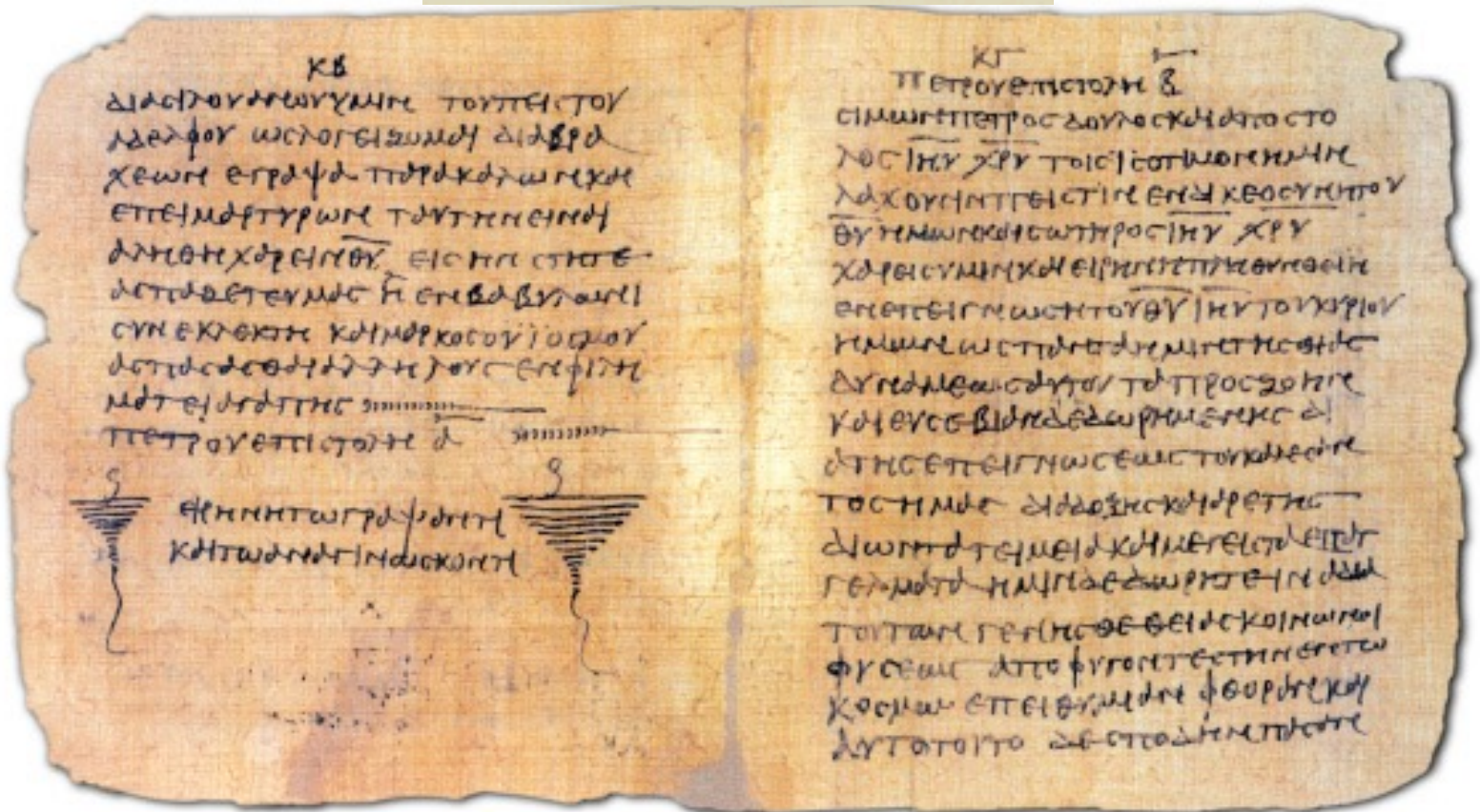
The page shown here displays the end of Ephesians and the beginning of Philippians. This shows the writings of Paul being collected as Scripture from a very early date.

P⁵², AD 125



P⁵² is the oldest surviving fragment of the New Testament. It contains John 18:31-33. Most scholars believe John was written in the around A.D. 90-95. So, this fragment is a very early witness of the testimony of the gospel of John. The portion of Scripture found in this fragment is exactly the same as the same section in the modern Greek text.

P⁷² AD 200



This is P⁷² (Papyrus - 72nd manuscript found). It is dated around 200 A.D (give or take 25 years). This image shows the end of 1 Peter and the beginning of 2nd Peter. This demonstrates the writings of Peter being collected as Scripture from a very early date.

KXIE TENI TO EN TWETAY TO EN AY TO NAY
 ΔΙΕ ΤΗ ΝΑΥ ΤΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΝΕ ΦΕΡΕΤΟ ΕΙΣ ΤΟΝ
 ΟΥΡΑΝΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΑΥΤΟΙΤΕΡΕΣ ΚΥΝΗΓΑΝ ΤΕ ΑΥ
 ΤΟΝ ΥΠΕΡΕΡΕ ΤΑΝ ΕΝ ΠΑΛΑΙΟ ΤΑΧΑΡΑ
 ΜΕΓΑΛΗ ΚΑΙ ΕΝ ΑΙΤΩΝ ΤΟ ΕΝ ΤΩ
 ΤΕΡΩ ΕΥΧΟΜΕΝ ΤΟΝ ΟΝΟΜΑ
 ΕΥΑΓΓΕΛΙΟΝ
 ΚΑΙ
 ΔΟΥΛΟΙ.

[illegible]

WE HAVE MORE THAN 124 GREEK MANUSCRIPT WITNESSES WITHIN THE FIRST 300 YEARS AFTER THE WRITING OF THE NT, FAR MORE THAN ANY OTHER WORK OF ANTIQUITY.

IN FACT, WE HAVE TWELVE MANUSCRIPTS FROM THE SECOND CENTURY, I.E., WITHIN 100 YEARS OF THE WRITING OF THE NT. THESE MANUSCRIPTS CONTAIN PORTIONS OF ALL FOUR GOSPELS, NINE BOOKS OF PAUL, ACTS, HEBREWS, AND REVELATION, COMPRISING A MAJORITY OF THE BOOKS OF THE NT WE POSSESS TODAY. AGAIN, NO WORK OF ANTIQUITY EVEN COMES CLOSE TO THIS EARLY ATTESTATION.

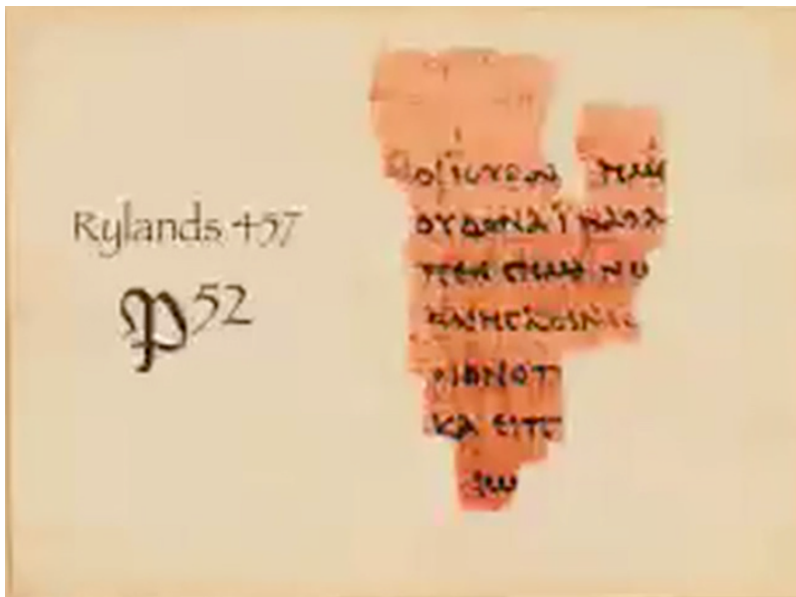
This means that in order to “change” the text of the New Testament, which originally circulated as a group of texts, there would have to be a central authority or a controlling body that could gather all the texts and make wholesale changes.

But the fact of the matter is, no such central agency ever existed, or could have existed. Christianity was a persecuted religion made up mainly of the lower classes in the first three centuries. There was no central authority that could ever have gathered up all the texts and made changes. This was impossible in the earliest days of the text’s transmission.

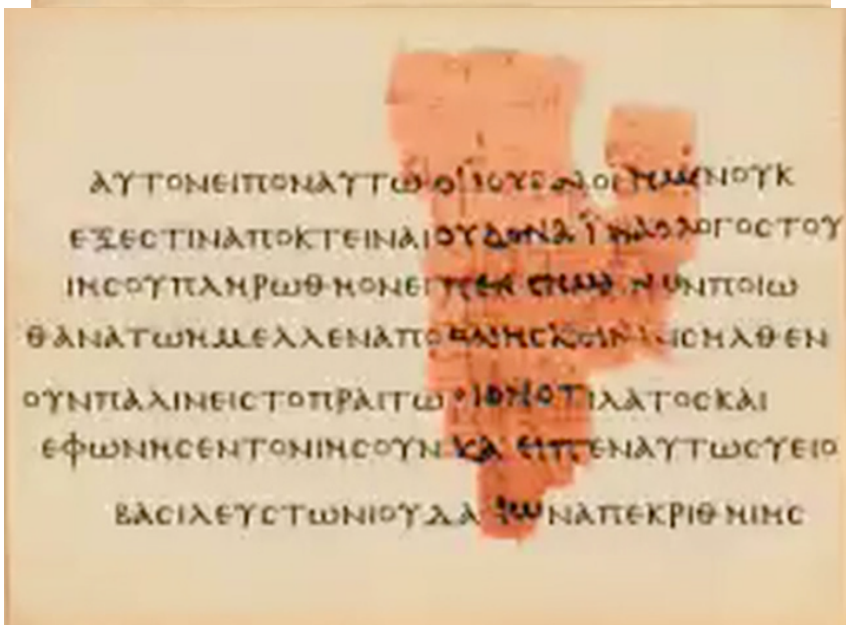
In fact, we can prove beyond all doubt that this kind of corruption did not happen. Since Papyri manuscripts have been found in the last 100 years that date to the second century, if any central authority had altered the texts, these earlier manuscripts which were buried long before that authority existed would show huge differences with more recent manuscripts.

Faithful Transmission

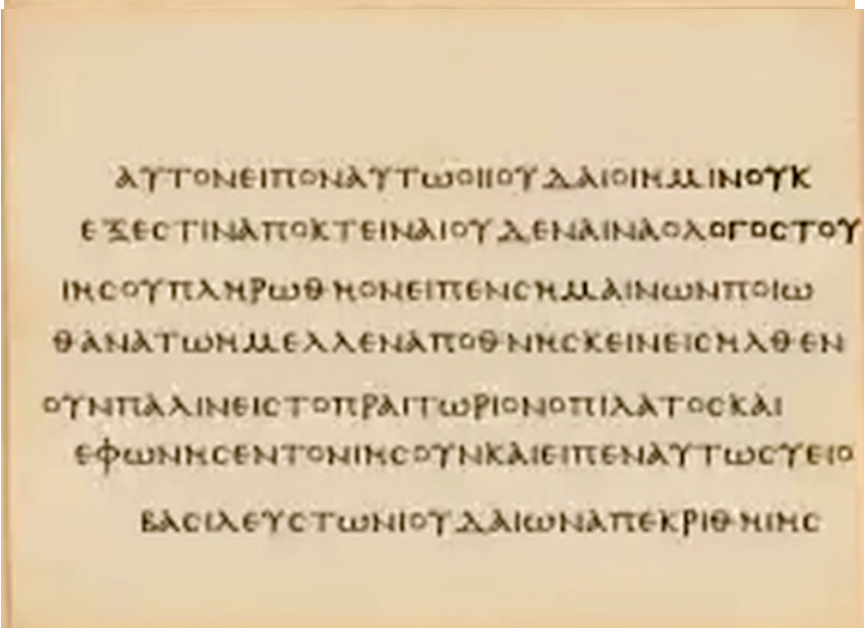
This is P52 - a fragment from around 125 containing John 18:31-33.



This is the same fragment with the actual text overlaid.



If we remove the fragment the text looks like this.



Here is the exact same text from Codex Alexandrinus - 300 years later. It is the exact same text.

ΚΑΙ ΚΑΤΑ ΤΟΝ ΝΟΜΟΝ ΥΜΩΝ ΚΡΙΝΑΤΕ
ΑΥΤΟΝ. ΕΙΠΟΝ ΟΥΝ ΟΙ ΙΟΥΔΑΙΟΙ ΗΜΙΝ ΟΥΚ ΕΞΕΣΤΙΝ
ΑΠΟΚΤΕΙΝΑΙ ΟΥΔΕΝΑ ΤΟΥΤΟΥΤΑΝ ΗΡΩΟΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΙΣ ΗΝ
ΜΑΝΚΩΝΤΙ ΟΙΟΙΣ ΑΝΑΧΤΩ ΗΜΕΙΣ ΛΕ
ΑΠΟΘΝΗΣΚΟΥΝ ΕΙΣΗΛΘΟΝ
ΟΥΝ ΕΙΣ ΤΟ ΠΡΑΙΤΩΡΙΟΝ ΤΙΣ ΑΛΛΗ
ΟΙΣ ΤΙΣ ΑΛΛΟΙΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΦΩΝΗΣΑΝ ΤΟΝ
ΙΗΣΟΥΣ ΕΝ ΤΟΙΣ ΕΥΕΙΟΙΣ ΛΟΓΟΙΣ
ΑΥΤΩΝ ΟΙΟΙΣ ΑΛΛΗ

Codex Alexandrinus

This is the exact same text from Desiderius Erasmus' printed text in 1522.

τὸν ὑμῶν, καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὑμῶν κρίνατε αὐ-
τόν. εἶπον οὖν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἡμῖν οὐκ ἔ-
στιν ἁπαλὸν ἀποκτεῖναι οὐδένα
εἰς τὸ πλῆρωθαι ὅν εἶπε, σημαίνων ποίω
θανάτῳ ἡμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν. * Εἰσῆλθεν οὖν
εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον ὁ Πιλάτος, καὶ ἐφώ-
νησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν, καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ. σὺ εἶ ὁ βα-
σιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων; ὁ Πιλάτος ἀπε-
κρίθη αὐτῷ λέγων· οὐκ εἰμι βασιλεὺς.

This is the modern printed text of the Greek text. It is exactly the same as every text we have seen.

31 εἶπεν οὖν αὐτοῖς ὁ Πιλάτος· λάβετε αὐτόν ὑμεῖς
καὶ κατὰ τὸν νόμον ὑμῶν κρίνατε αὐτόν. εἶπον
αὐτῷ οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι· ἡμῖν οὐκ ἐξεστὶν ἀποκτεῖναι οὐδένα
32 ἵνα ὁ λόγος τοῦ Ἰησοῦ πληρωθῇ ὃν εἶπεν σημαίνων
ποιῶ θανάτῳ ἡμελλεν ἀποθνήσκειν. 33 Εἰσῆλθεν οὖν
πάλιν εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον ὁ Πιλάτος καὶ ἐφώνησεν τὸν
Ἰησοῦν καὶ εἶπεν αὐτῷ· σὺ εἶ ὁ βασιλεὺς τῶν
Ιουδαίων;

κρίνατε αὐτόν. εἶπο **οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι** καὶ οὐκ
ἔξεστιν ἀποκτεῖναι αὐτόν. **οὐδὲν γὰρ ἔστιν**
τοῦτο πληρωθῆναι ὃν εἶπε **ὅτι σὺ**
θανάτῳ ἡμελλεν ἀπελθεῖν. **καὶ**
οὖν πάλιν εἰς τὸ πραιτώριον ἦλθεν αὐτὸς καὶ
ἐφώνησεν τὸν Ἰησοῦν καὶ **εἶπε** αὐτῷ σὺ εἶ ὁ
βασιλεὺς τῶν Ἰουδαίων.

This modern Greek text aligns perfectly with the text on the fragment from A.D. 125. One text, transmitted faithfully for 1900 years.