

## Strange Notes In My Bible

<sup>8</sup> Now Cain said to his brother Abel, "Let's go out to the field." And while they were in the field, Cain attacked his brother Abel and killed him.

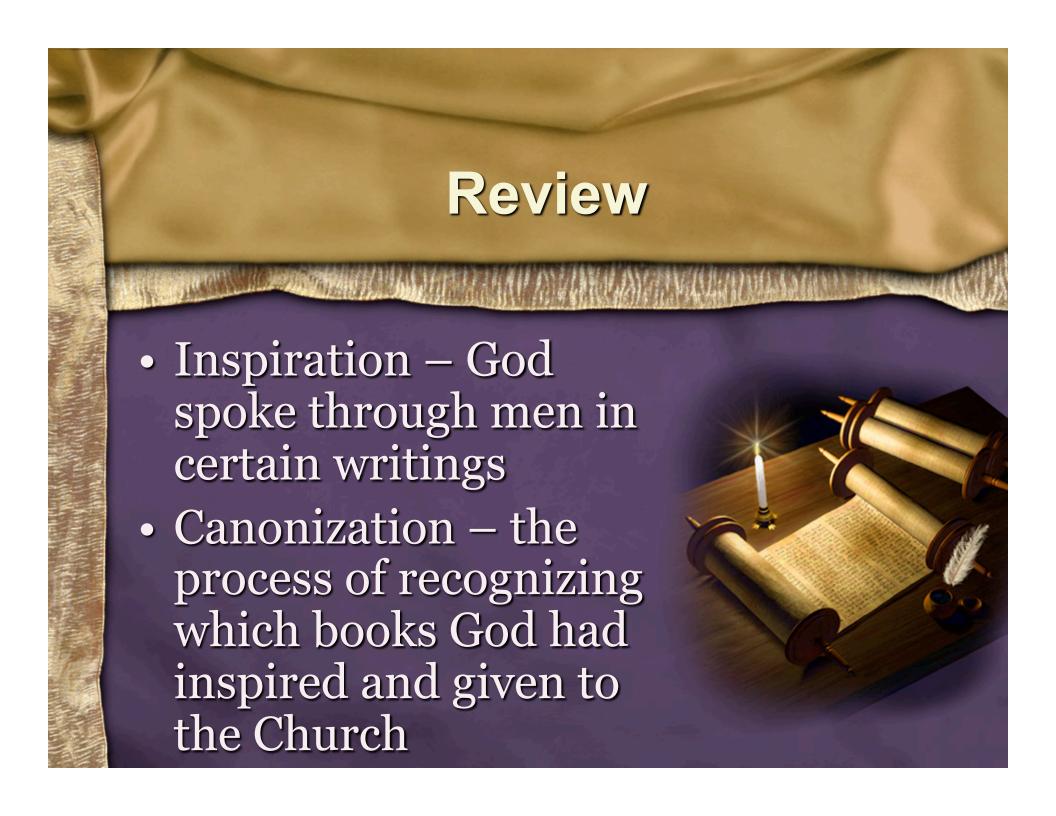
Genesis 4:8

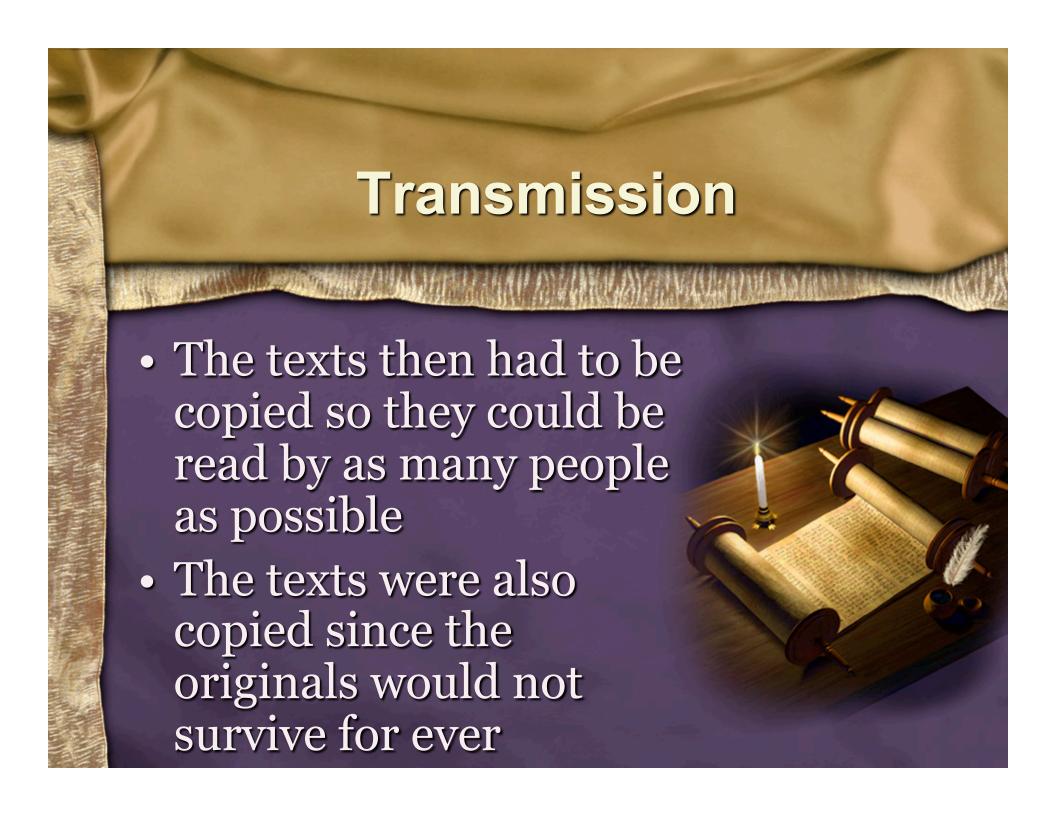
<sup>a</sup> Samaritan Pentateuch, Septuagint, Vulgate and Syriac; Masoretic Text does not have "Let's go out to the field."

# Strange Notes In My Bible

[The earliest manuscripts and many other ancient witnesses do not have John 7:53-8:11.]

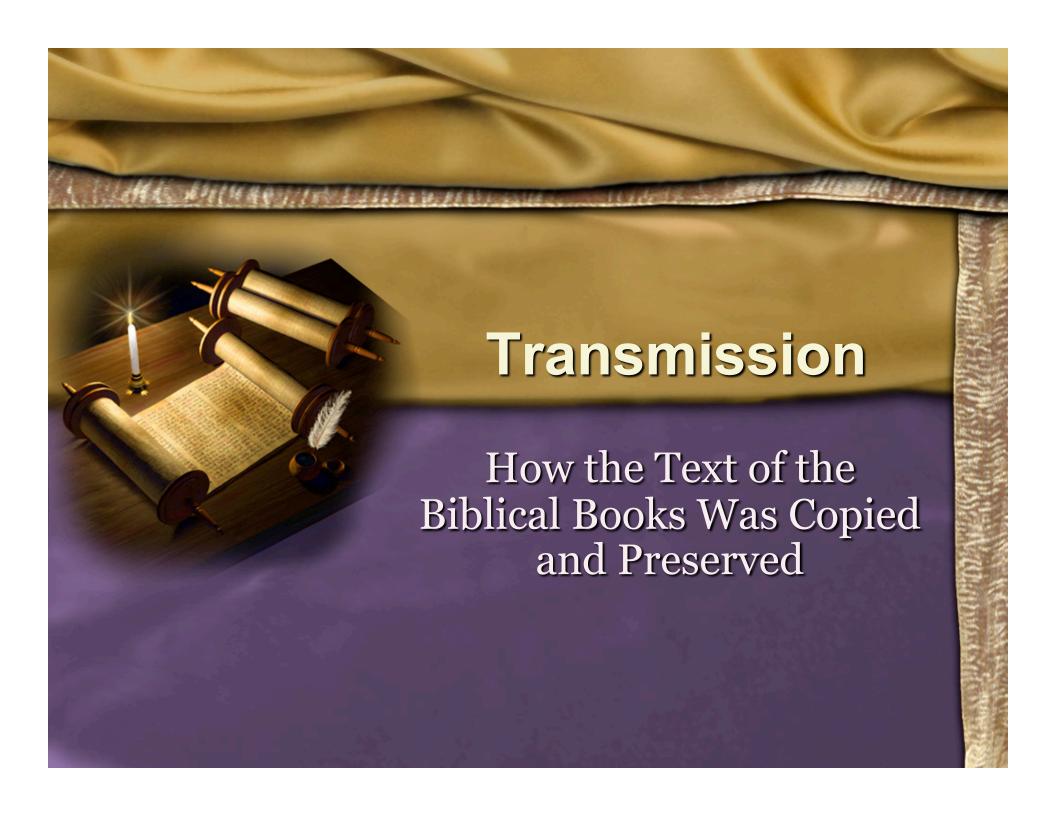
53 Then each went to his own home.

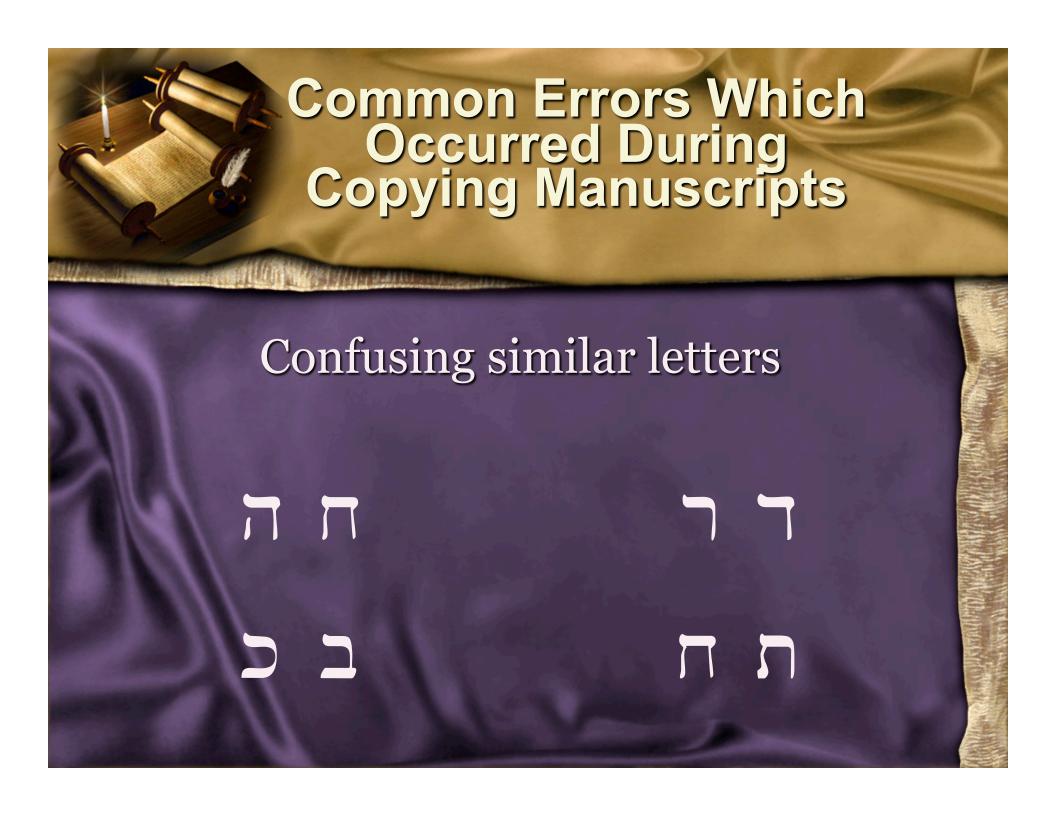


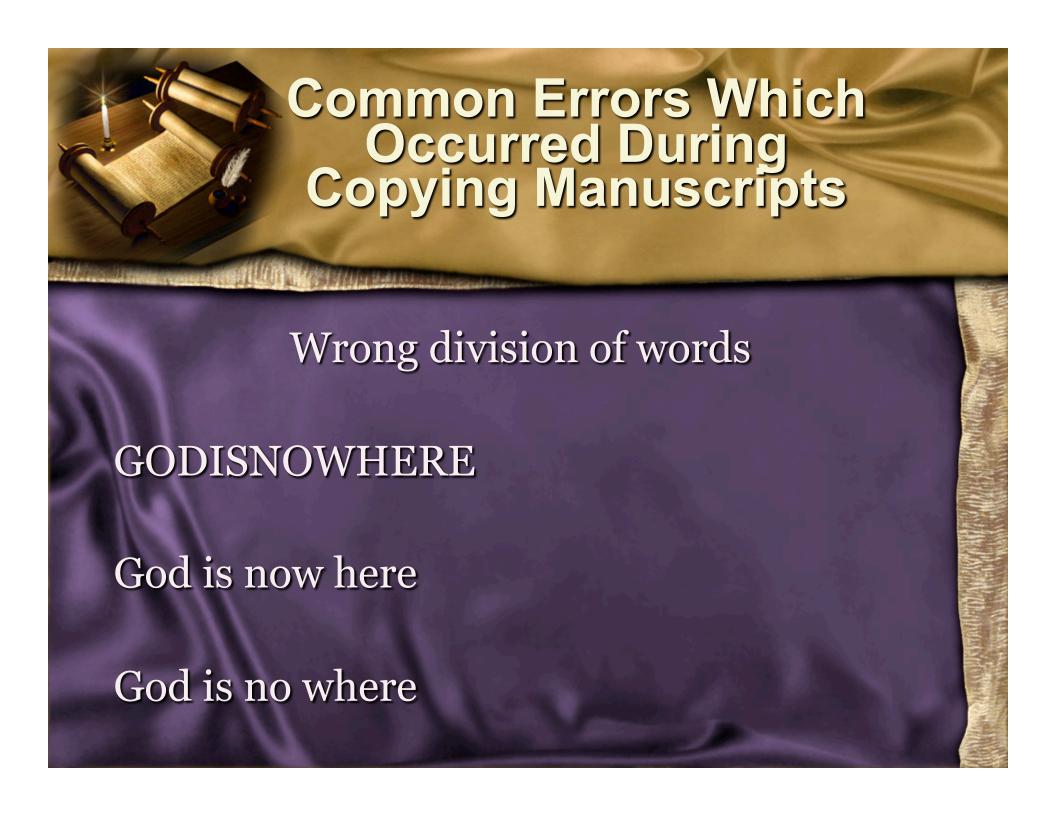


## **Key Questions**

- ✓ How were copies of the Biblical writings made?
- ✓ How many copies of the Biblical writings do we have?
- ✓ How old are the copies we have of the Biblical writings?
- ✓ Are there differences between any of the copies?
- ✓ If there are differences, how do we decide which are the better copies (closer to what was actually written in the original document)?







NHTHONITOXA PHILATAHHODE NAIMIO (AITINH! ELLIEH YLDIEOICEKINE LEIN (DCKOLCIME KYLOAKEEN CDEYN A PAAABANITANIT YL LOIC. GILIGHOOM TOICHAMHOICAMH WIXLOWNHXAL ALM INTERIOR WAY OTTELOFIMILION PATUDNITPORARD TIANTECOCOTHA THE TIPORATACXULA KACHTAICININA YHCIYEYYYY KOACYNYALDIN TATIFORKIKETOH CIMIHOYPANIEM CANTICCICEROH COUPLICE LYKYLE CEKEYCETAIKAI EZEXEXCETAHKAL NOWHNEXTHE OKACHTHEOYKE XEINEIMHINA KACYHKAIOYCH KAIAHOVECHEI~ HADONINAZOH MONIONEXON KAITTEPICCONE XMCINELDE MI-HOIMHNOKYYO. OHOIMHNOKAM THNIAAXHINYALO YI VOICINTHELLO HIPORATION: OVEWI COCHTOCKALOYK TTOIMHNOYOYKE CTINTAIIPORATAI VIYOCOLLIONY KONEPXOMENON KAIAPIHCINTAIP BATAKAIDEYTEL KAIOYYKOCAMIA SELY LYKYICK ! MIZEIOTIMICOCO TOCECTINKNOY MEXCIAYTUHELL

ELCO EIMIOHOLINI OKAKOCKAHCI NOCKOTAEMAK TREMAKABUICH H CD CK I M COTTA DITE KARDLINDCKO TONITATEPAKATH MIYHEPTWHIP RATIONIKATAAAA OYKECTINEKTH XYXHCTXYTHCKX KEINYYEIWENY FINKAITHCOO NHCMOYAKOYON CINKMITENHOE TAIMIAIIOIMNH: EICHOIMHNAIA TOYTOMEOHATH ALYHYOLIELDLI OHMITHNYYXIN MICKITANIN YYRONYTHMOX YICH LEHYLLHI YLLEM OLYYYYEL TIGHMIAYTHNA TIEMAYTOYES OT CIYMEXMBEINN AYTHNKAIEZUTT YNEXCOLIYYINY RIN AYTHN TAY III THNENTONHNEW RONTAPATOYTA TPOCMOYCXICMA HAMINELENELD EN TOICIOYAMON AIATOYCAOLOY TOYCELELYNOYH HOLKOIETATTO AAIMONIONEX KAIMAINEINTI AYTOYAKOYETAL ALLOINEELELON TAYTATAPHMAIAY KECTINALIMONI



Assume wrong vowels

קבָ = to speak

קבְ = word, speech



Missed or doubled letters or words

Skipping a letter, word or line or repeating a letter, word or line, usually due to similar beginning or ending letters in the word or line.



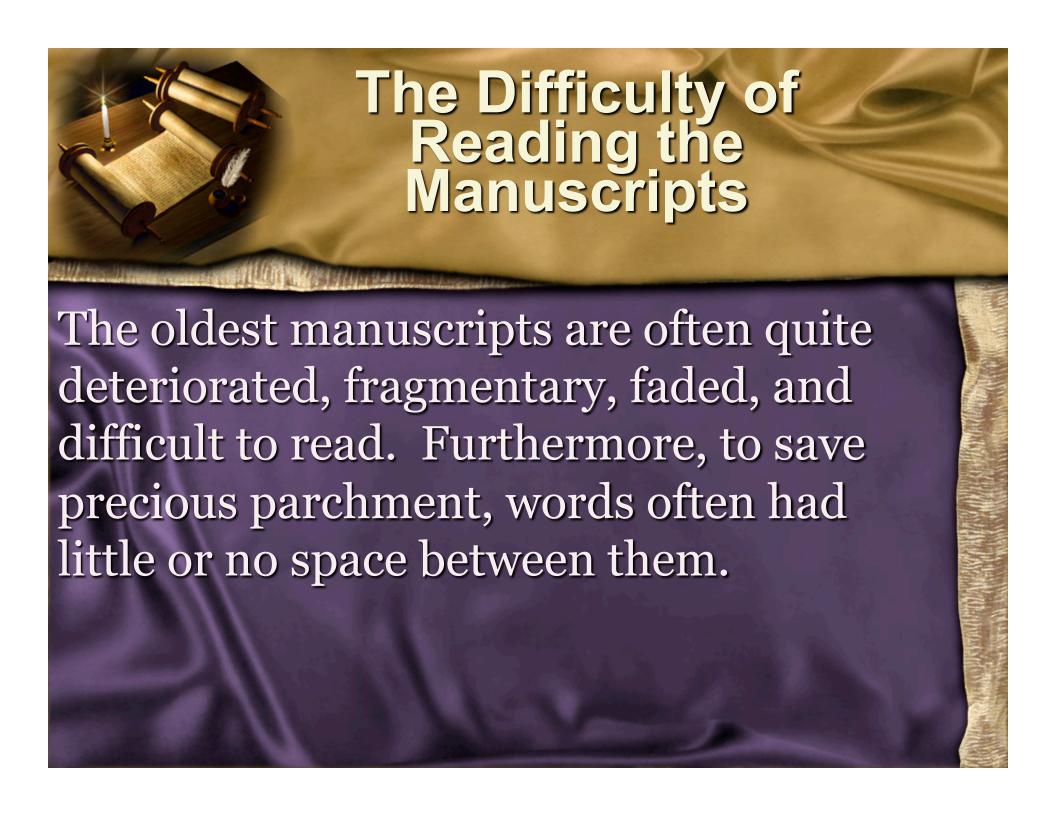
Copying from memory rather than the manuscript

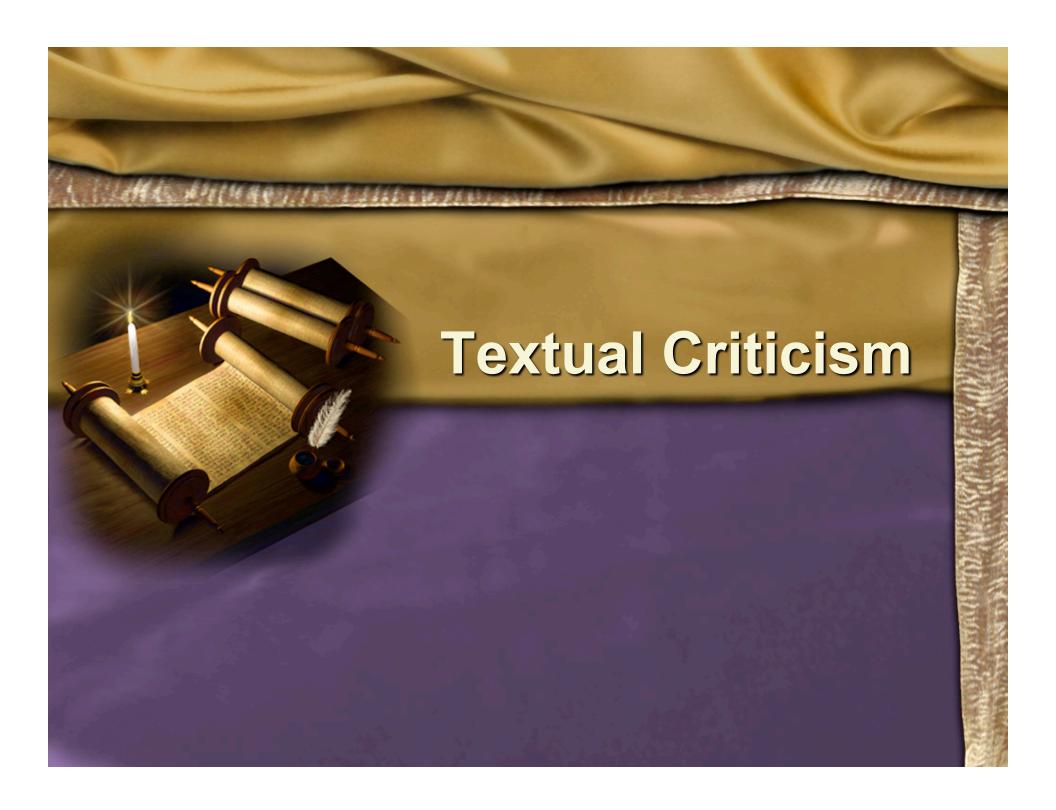
This was especially prevalent if the verse being copied had a parallel in another passage of Scripture.

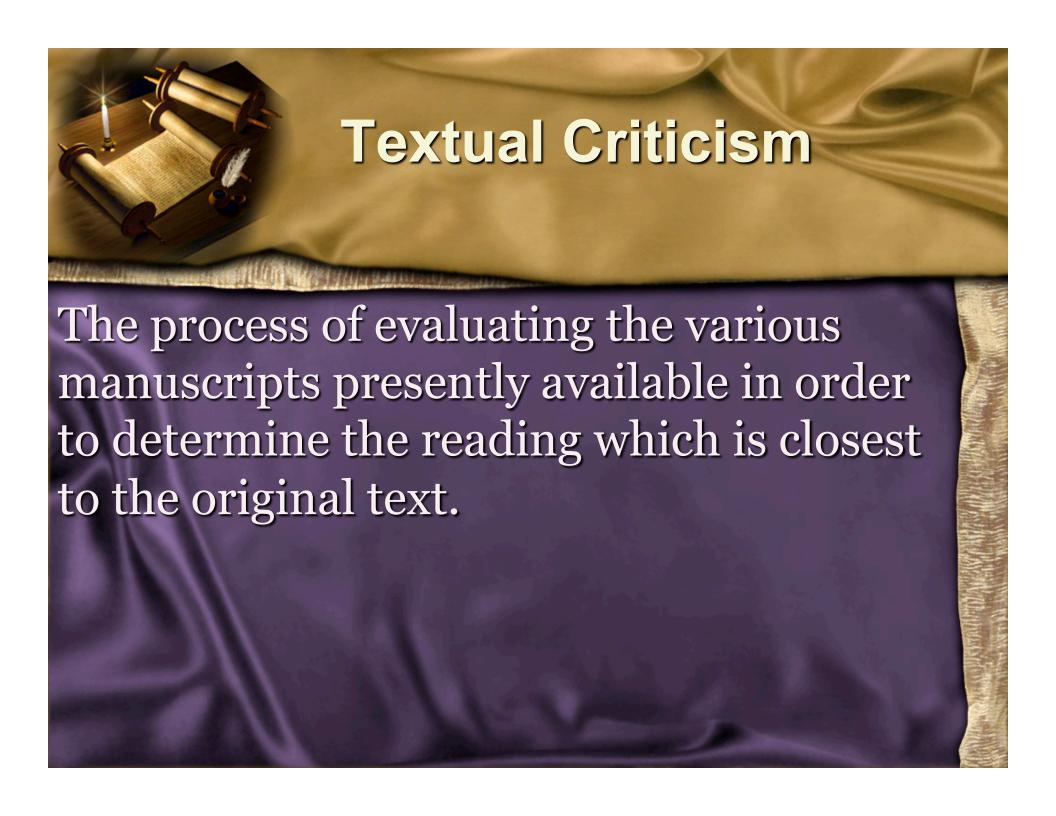


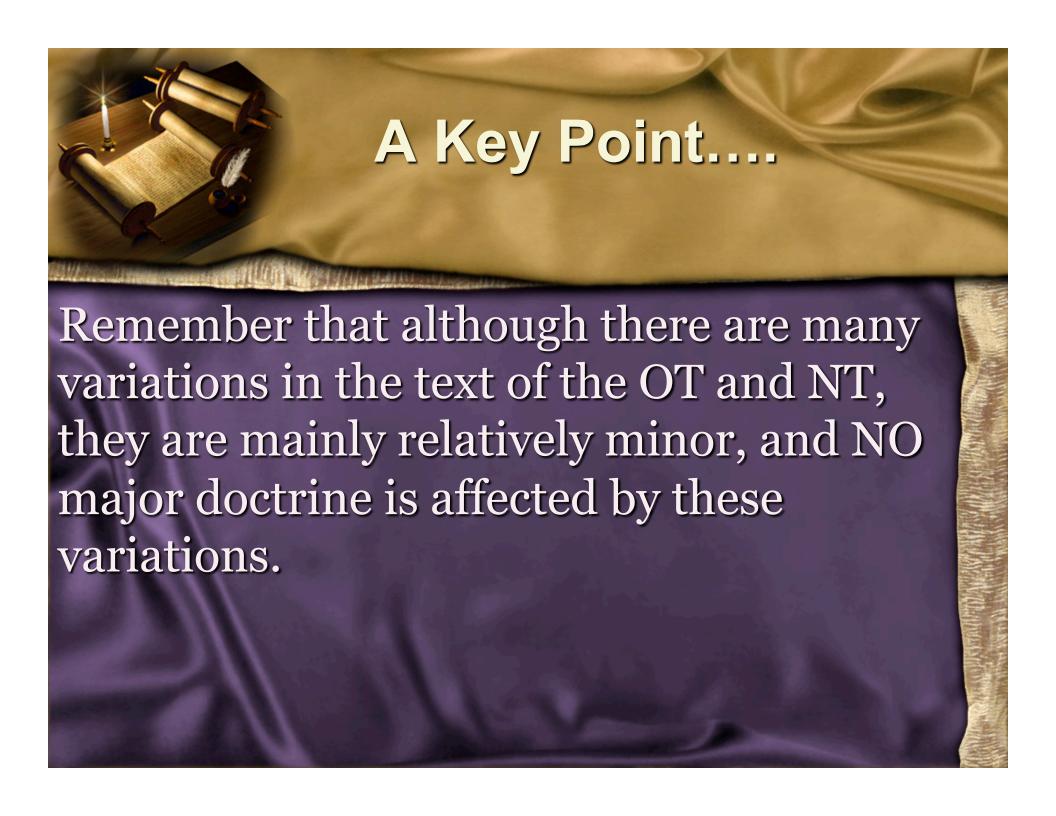
Intentional changes by scribes

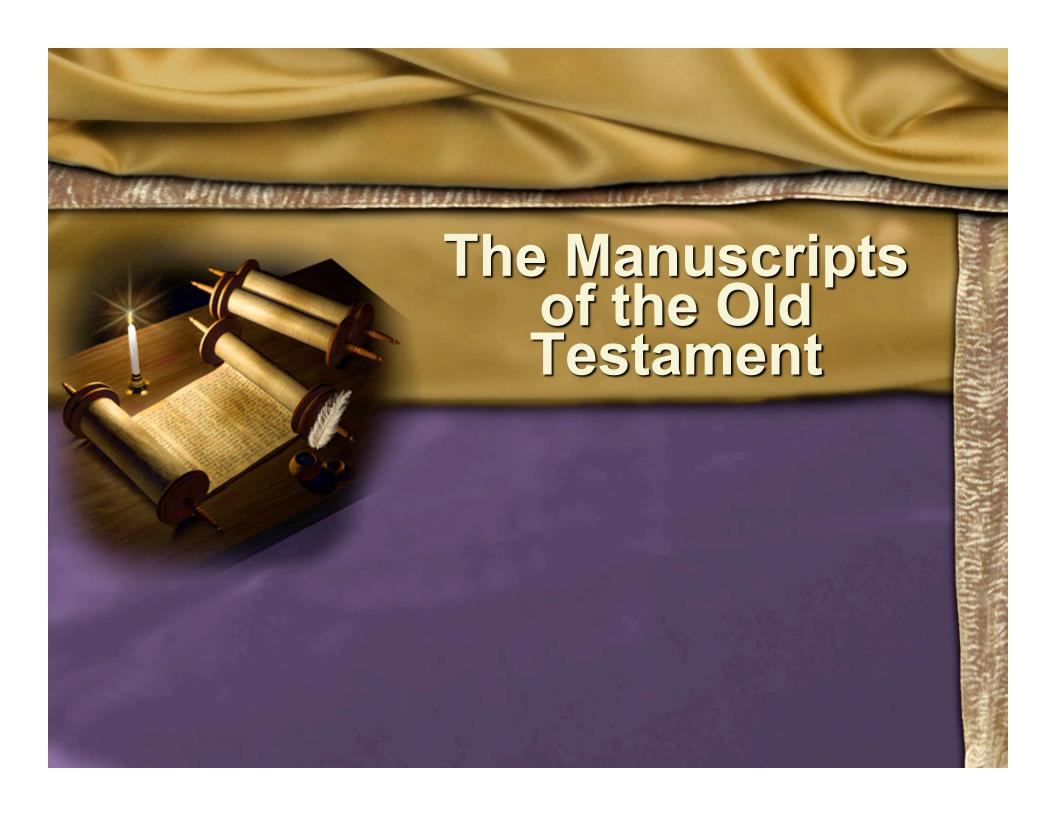
- ✓ To correct grammar or spelling
- ✓ To harmonize with a parallel passage
- ✓ To make the text easier to understand
- ✓ To "correct" perceived theological difficulties













✓ The Masoretes added vowels to the Hebrew text – until this time vowels had been pronounced but never written



### Masoretes Added Vowels to the Written Text

בראשית ברא אלהים את השמים ואת הארץ:

בּרָאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֵת הַשְּׁמֵיִם וְאֵת הָאָרֵץ:

Genesis 1:1



#### The Masoretic Text

- ✓ The Leningrad Codex (circa 1000 AD) is the basis of the BHS the most popular Hebrew text today
- ✓ These texts were meticulously maintained, even to the point of copying what was actually written (the kethiv – what is written) even if it was not what the Masoretes actually thought was correct and read in synagogue (qere – what is read).
- ✓ However, the texts are over 1500 years distant from the original manuscripts.

- ✓ Discovered at Wadi Qumran in the 1940's and 1950's
- ✓ Contained both Biblical and extra-biblical writings, and were made between 250 BC and 70 AD
- ✓ Comprised of hundreds of thousands of fragments from over 800 manuscripts



Some Fragments of Exodus 6-7





✓ Contain fragments of every OT book except for Esther, along with a lot of other religious books, and community rules



✓ The biblical books most often found in the fragments are (in order) Psalms, Deuteronomy, Genesis, and Isaiah

- ✓The Isaiah scroll contains the entire book of Isaiah, and was made around 100 BC
- ✓This gives a look at the Hebrew text 1000 years prior to the Masoretic texts presently in use
- ✓ The text is amazingly similar to the Masoretic text

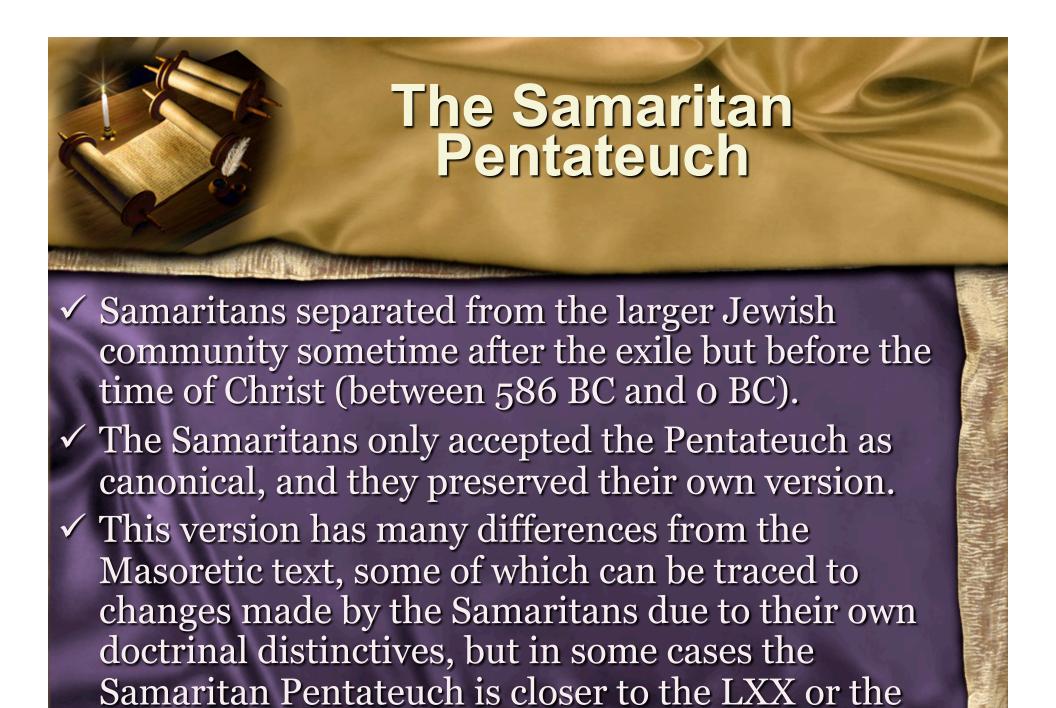




- ✓ A Greek translation of the OT and the Apocrypha that was probably made circa 250-200 BC.
- ✓ Tradition said it was made by 70 translators, hence the name Septuagint (LXX).
- ✓ The type of translation varies from book to book – some are quite literal, while others are much more loose.

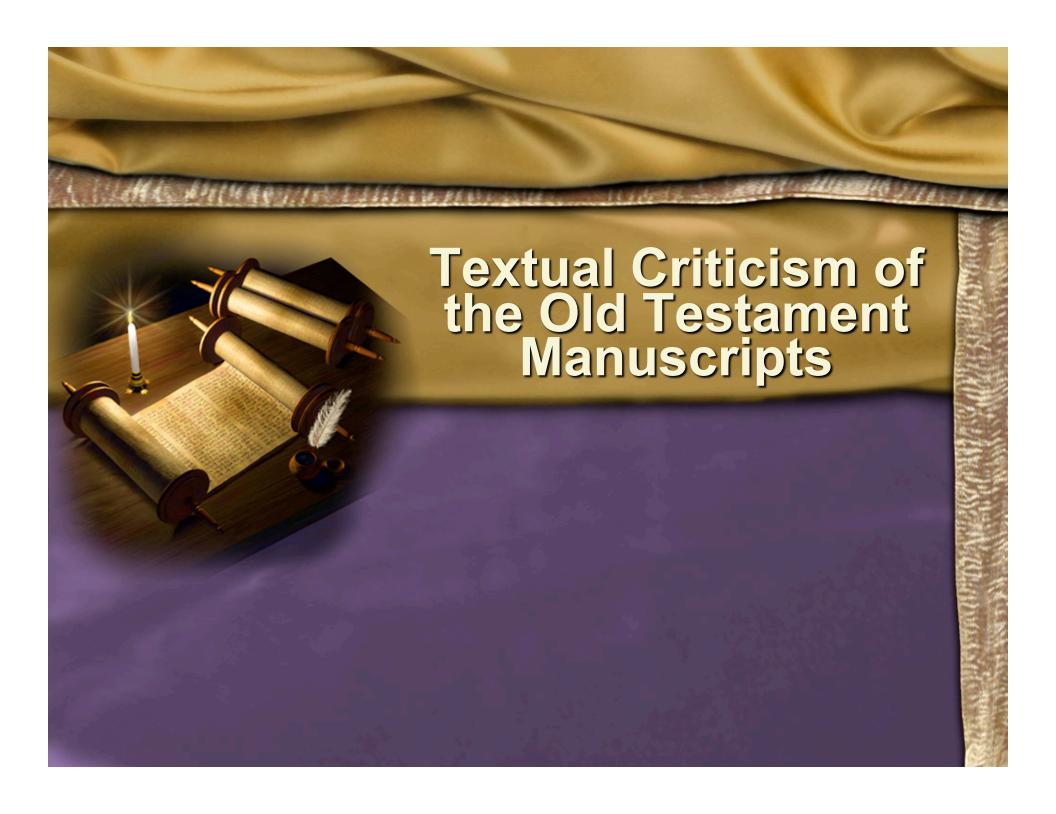


- ✓ Sometimes the Septuagint is missing portions of text, and sometimes it has portions not found in the Masoretic Text.
- ✓ The Septuagint was used by much of the early Church, since they could not read Hebrew but could read Greek.
- ✓ Many of the OT quotations in the NT are clearly from the Septuagint.



Dead Sea Scrolls than the Masoretic Text.



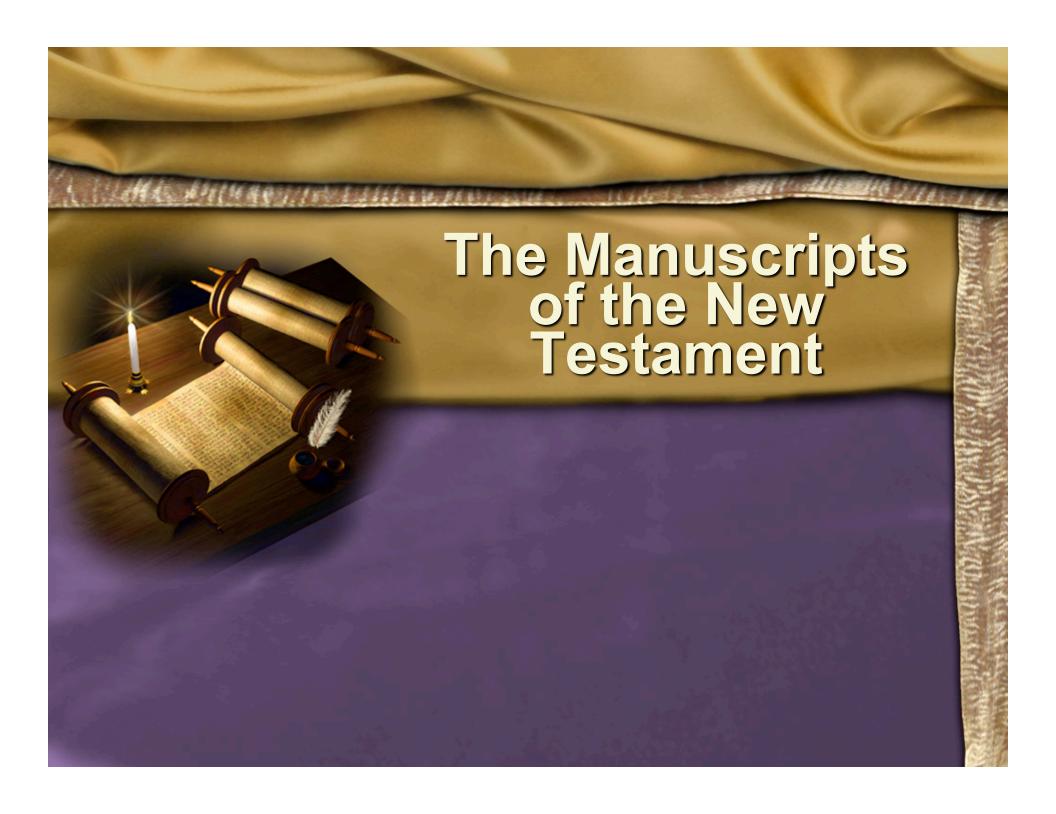


#### Textual Criticism of the OT Manuscripts

✓In general, the Masoretic text is the default text

✓ The other texts are consulted, but only followed against the Masoretic Text in unusual circumstances

Note: The Eastern Orthodox Church only uses the Septuagint; they consider it the true version of the OT text



## Our Rich Deposit of NT Manuscripts

- ✓ We have over 6000 manuscripts, codices, or portions of the NT writings Homer's Iliad only has 650 manuscripts or portions!
- ✓ The typical time lapse between the writing and the oldest known manuscript for most works of Greek literature is around 800 years, yet we have manuscripts of most of the NT within approximately 100 years of the original writing
- ✓ These NT manuscripts and codices can contain anywhere from a few verses, to entire books or collections of books, to even the entire NT

## Some Important Early NT Manuscripts

- ✓P52 John 18:31-34, 37-38 circa 110-125
- ✓ P46 (Chester Beatty Papyrus II) all of Paul epistles except the pastoral epistles circa 150-200
- ✓ Codex Sinaiticus also known as κ or aleph – whole NT – circa 350
- ✓ Codex Vaticanus also known as B Matthew through Hebrews 9:15 – circa 325





# The Byzantine Text Family

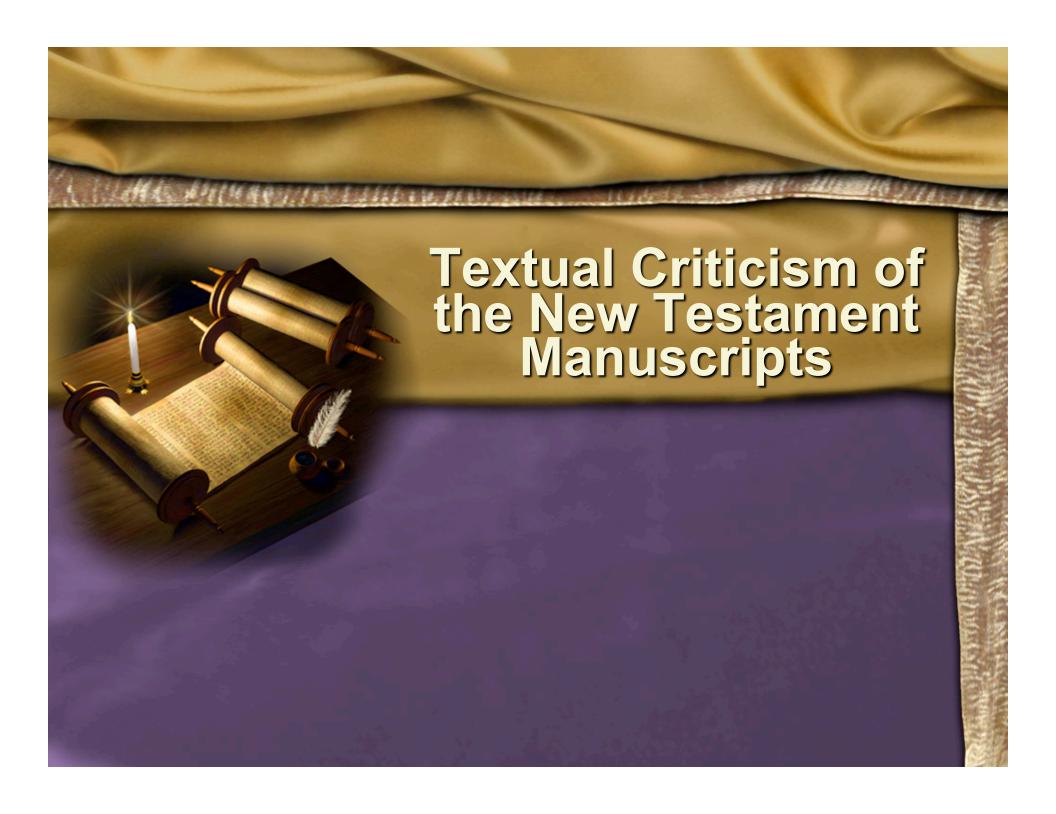
✓ Text maintained by Byzantine (Eastern) church

✓ Basis of Textus Receptus and all early Greek texts of the Renaissance

✓ Greatest number of manuscripts by far



- ✓ Produced by Alexandrian scribes
- ✓ Not widely know of until 19th century
- ✓ Most scholars think these texts are the oldest we have, but fewer of these texts were made and survived (Codex Sinaiticus and Vaticanus are the two main Alexandrian texts)



#### **Textual Criticism of the NT Manuscripts**

- ✓ Most text critics consider the older Alexandrian text family to be the most reliable. It is the basis of most modern Greek texts and English translations
- ✓ Some scholars disagree and prefer the Byzantine/Majority text and use this for their translations (mainly the King James and New King James versions)
- ✓ Virtually all modern translations consult both text families and note any major differences in footnotes

## **Concluding Thoughts**

- ✓ We have an incredible number of manuscripts available today
- ✓ We also have a great number of early translations and quotes that help us know the text that the early church used
- ✓ The manuscripts we have are very early for ancient texts
- ✓ Even where there are differences, they do not affect any major doctrine

#### Our Confidence in God's Word

Finally, it must be said that, although there are certainly differences in many of the New Testament manuscripts, not one fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith rests on a disputed reading.

Philip Comfort
The Origin of the Bible, 189

#### Our Confidence in God's Word

The Christian can take the whole Bible in his hand and say without fear or hesitation that he holds in it the true Word of God, handed down without essential loss from generation to generation throughout the centuries.

Frederick Kenyon (renowned paleographer and textual critic) quoted in *The Origin of the Bile*, 189

