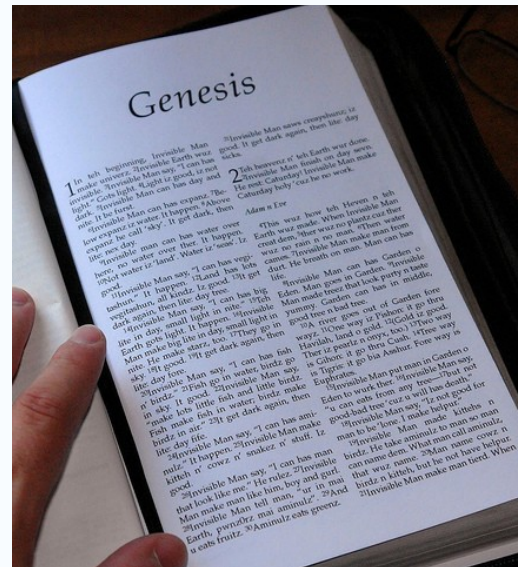
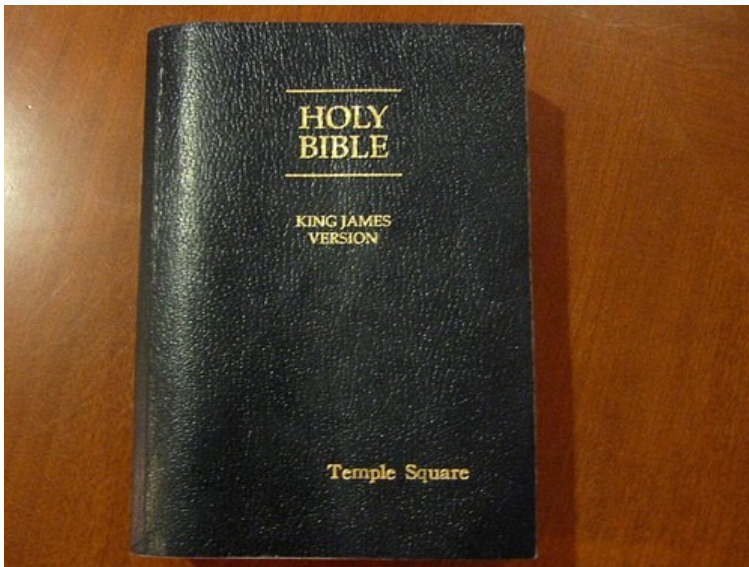


THE HISTORY OF THE BIBLE

– AN OBJECTIVE ANALYSIS

By Oleg Dei

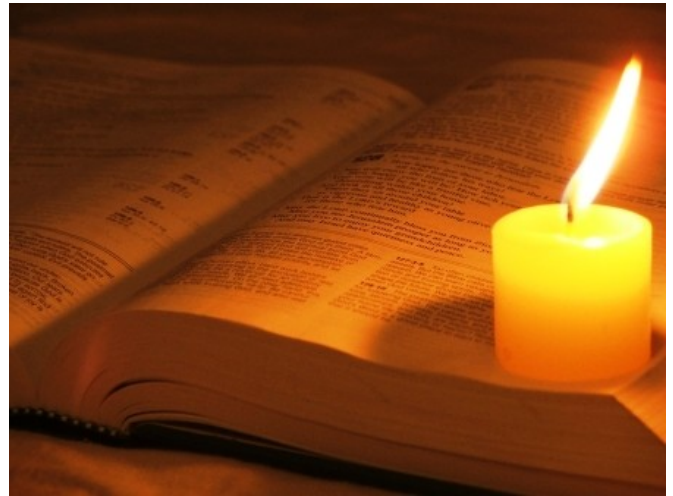
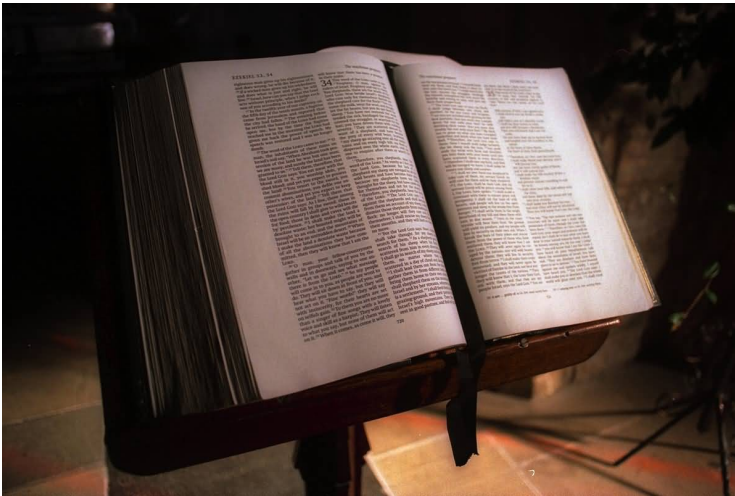


The Bible in the views of many people represents the **Holy word of God**. This is especially true of the Christian Evangelicals in this country. In the next series of articles we will take a close look and examine the Bible. Is it really the work of men inspired by God, who wrote the scripture or is it the work of primitive men who tried their best to explain the origins of the universe?

Put your seat belts on, as we examine the Bible to learn the truth – is it really the word of God?

The **Bible** is the collection of religious writings of Judaism and of Christianity. It is important to know that **the exact composition of the Bible is dependent on the religious traditions of specific denominations and it varies from version to version**. Modern Rabbinic Judaism generally recognizes a single set of canonical books that comprise the *Tanakh*, the Jewish version of the Bible. The Christian Bible includes the books of the Tanakh, but in a different order, as well as a collection of Christian books collectively called the New Testament. The Hebrew Bible comprises three parts: the Torah or the "Teaching", also known as the Pentateuch or the "Five Books of Moses", the Prophets, and the Writings. It was primarily written in Hebrew with some portions written in Aramaic. The Christian Bible includes the twenty-seven books of the New Testament, which were originally written in Greek, preceded by the protocanonical books of the Old Testament and sometimes a number of deuterocanonical books. The Eastern Orthodox Churches use all of the books that were incorporated into the Septuagint, the earliest Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible. Roman Catholics include some of these books in their canon; and many Protestant Bibles follow the Jewish canon, excluding the additional books. Some editions of the

Christian Bible have a separate Biblical apocrypha section for books not considered canonical. According to the United Bible Society, as of December 31, 2007, the Bible is available in 2,454 languages, with various portions of the Bible in 848 languages, one of the two Testaments in 1,168 languages, and the full Bible in 438 languages. The Nevi'im, or "Prophets," tell the story of the rise of the Hebrew monarchy, its division into two kingdoms, and the prophets who, in God's name, warned the kings and the Children of Israel about the punishment of God. It ends with the conquest of the Kingdom of Israel by the Assyrians and the conquest of the Kingdom of Judah by the Babylonians, and the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem. The Nevi'im comprise the following eight books: [Joshua](#), [Judges](#), [Samuel](#), [Kings](#), [Isaiah](#), [Jeremiah](#), and [Ezekiel](#).



Ketuvim

The Ketuvim, or "Writings" or "Scriptures," may have been written during or after the Babylonian Exile but no one can be sure. According to Rabbinic tradition, many of the psalms in the book of [Psalms](#) are attributed to [David](#). [King Solomon](#) is believed to have written [Song of Songs](#) in his youth, [Proverbs](#) at the prime of his life, and [Ecclesiastes](#) at old age. The prophet [Jeremiah](#) is thought to have written [Lamentations](#). The [Book of Ruth](#) is the only biblical book that centers entirely on a non-Jew. The book of Ruth tells the story of a [Moabite](#) who married a Jew and, upon his death, [followed in the ways of the Jews](#). According to the Bible, she was the great-grandmother of [King David](#). Five of the books, called "The Five Scrolls" or the Megillot, are read on Jewish holidays, [Song of Songs](#) on [Passover](#), the [Book of Ruth](#) on [Shavuot](#), [Lamentations](#) on the [Ninth of Av](#), [Ecclesiastes](#) on [Sukkot](#), and the [Book of Esther](#) on [Purim](#). The Ketuvim comprise the following eleven books: [Psalms](#), [Proverbs](#), [Job](#), [Song of Songs](#), [Ruth](#), [Lamentations](#), [Ecclesiastes](#), [Esther](#), [Daniel](#), [Ezra](#), [Nehemiah](#), [Chronicles](#). The Tanakh was mainly written in [Biblical Hebrew](#), with some portions notably in [Daniel](#) and [Ezra](#) in [Biblical Aramaic](#). Sometime in the 2nd or 3rd century BC, the [Torah](#) was translated into Greek and over the next century, other books were translated or composed as well.

This translation became known as the **Septuagint** and was widely used by Greek-speaking Jews, and later by Christians. It differs somewhat from the later standardized Hebrew **Masoretic Text**. From the 800s to the 1400s, **Jewish scholars known as Masoretes compared the text of all known biblical manuscripts in an effort to create a unified, standardized text**. A series of highly similar texts eventually emerged, and any of these texts are known as Masoretic Texts. In antiquity, variant Hebrew readings existed, some of which have survived in the **Samaritan Pentateuch**, the **Dead Sea scrolls**, and other ancient fragments, as well as being attested in ancient versions in other languages. **Versions of the Septuagint contain several passages and whole books beyond what was included in the Masoretic texts of the Tanakh**. In some cases these additions were originally composed in Greek, while in other cases they are translations of Hebrew books or variants not present in the Masoretic texts. Recent discoveries have shown that more of the Septuagint additions have a Hebrew origin more than was once thought. While there are no complete surviving manuscripts of the Hebrew texts on which the Septuagint was based, many scholars believe that they represent a different textual tradition or "Vorlage" from the one that became the basis for the Masoretic texts.

The Torah of Judaism



Orthodox Judaism, as epitomized in the **Pharisee** sect, rejects any notion that the Written Torah and Oral Torah are distinct entities. The Written Torah (the Five Books of Moses), Prophets and Writings, form the corpus of what is God's word in written form. This body, is completely incomprehensible without an Oral Tradition. For example, a Torah scroll contains no vowels, and no punctuation. Were it not for an Oral Tradition, the meaning of words would be unknown, as well as the sentence structure, where to begin and end verses or section. These are all reliant on

oral tradition. This is extended into what Orthodox Judaism classifies in the legal parts of the Oral Tradition, as the rules of Biblical Exegesis, which defines how to interpret the text, which is also transmitted orally. The [Sadducees](#) were a minority group, that had some sway during the [Hellenistic period](#), were the inheritors of their leader Zadok who believed that there was only a minimal oral tradition of interpreting the words of the Torah, and this did not extend into biblical interpretation. They argued against the Rabbis in mostly legal matters, threatening the very existence of Judaism. The Sadducees became corrupted and took over positions in the Priestly service, some becoming the [High Priest](#). [Masorti](#) and [Conservative Judaism](#) state that the Oral Tradition is to some degree Divinely inspired, but disregard its legal elements in varying degrees.

Christian Bible



The Christian Bible consists of the Hebrew scriptures, which have been called the [Old Testament](#), and some later writings known as the [New Testament](#). Some groups within Christianity include additional books as part of their sacred writings – most prominent among which are the [biblical apocrypha](#) or [deuterocanonical books](#). In Judaism, the term *Christian Bible* is commonly used to identify only the New Testament which have been added by Christians to the [Masoretic Text](#), and excludes any reference to an *Old Testament*.

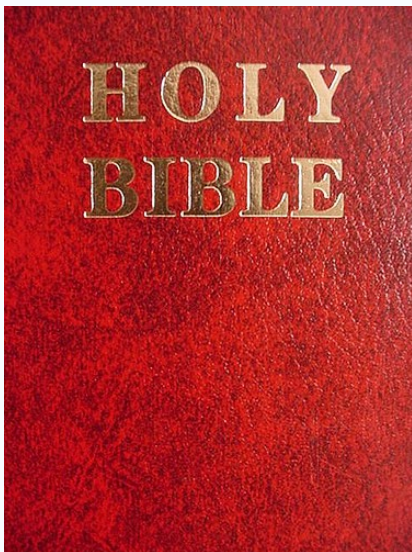
Old Testament

The Old Testament is the collection of books written prior to the life of Jesus but accepted by

Christians as scripture. Broadly speaking, it is the same as the Hebrew Bible, however it divides and orders them differently, and varies from Judaism in interpretation and emphasis, see for example [Isaiah 7:14](#). Several Christian denominations also incorporate additional books into their canons of the Old Testament. A few groups consider particular translations to be divinely inspired, notably the Greek Septuagint, the Aramaic Peshitta, and the English King James Version.

Apocryphal or deuterocanonical books

The [Septuagint](#) Greek translation, from Alexandria in Egypt under the [Ptolemies](#) was generally abandoned in favour of the [Masoretic](#) text as the basis for translations of the Old Testament into [western](#) languages from St. Jerome's Bible the [Vulgate](#) to the present day. In [Eastern Christianity](#), translations based on the Septuagint still prevail. Some modern Western translations make use of the Septuagint to clarify passages in the Masoretic text, where the Septuagint may preserve a variant reading of the Hebrew text. They also sometimes adopt variants that appear in other texts like those discovered among the [Dead Sea Scrolls](#).



A number of books which are part of the Greek Septuagint but are not found in the Hebrew Rabbinic Bible are often referred to as deuterocanonical books by Roman Catholics referring to a later secondary deuterocanon. Most Protestants term these books as apocrypha. Evangelicals and those of the Modern Protestant traditions do not accept the deuterocanonical books as canonical, although Protestant Bibles included them in Apocrypha sections until around the

1820s. However, the Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Oriental Orthodox Churches include these books as part of their Old Testament.

New Testament

The Bible as used by the majority of Christians includes the Rabbinic Hebrew Scripture and the New Testament, which relates the life and teachings of Jesus, the letters of the Apostle Paul and other disciples to the early church and the Book of Revelation. The New Testament is a collection of 27 books, of 4 different genres of Christian literature: Gospels, one account of the Acts of the Apostles, Epistles and an Apocalypse. Jesus is its central figure. The New Testament was written primarily in Koine Greek in the early Christian period, though a minority argue for Aramaic primacy. Nearly all Christians recognize the New Testament as canonical scripture. These books can be grouped into: Gospel According to Matthew, Gospel According to Mark, Gospel According to Luke, Gospel According to John, Acts of the Apostles, Epistle to the Romans, First Epistle to the Corinthians, Second Epistle to the Corinthians, Epistle to the Galatians, Epistle to the Ephesians, Epistle to the Philippians, Epistle to the Colossians, First Epistle to the Thessalonians, Second Epistle to the Thessalonians, First Epistle to Timothy, Second Epistle to Timothy, Epistle to Titus, Epistle to Philemon, Epistle to the Hebrews, General Epistles, Epistle of James, First Epistle of Peter, Second Epistle of Peter, First Epistle of John, Second Epistle of John, Third Epistle of John, Epistle of Jude, and lastly Revelation.

The order of these books varies according to Church tradition. The New Testament books are ordered differently in the Catholic and Protestant tradition, the Lutheran tradition, the Slavonic tradition, the Syriac tradition and the Ethiopian tradition.

Original language

The books of the New Testament were likely written in Koine Greek, the language of the earliest extant manuscripts, even though some authors often included translations from Hebrew and Aramaic texts. Certainly the Pauline Epistles were written in Greek for Greek-speaking audiences. When ancient scribes copied earlier books, they wrote notes on the margins of the page *marginal glosses* to correct their text—especially if a scribe accidentally omitted a word or line—and to comment about the text. When later scribes were copying the copy, they were sometimes uncertain if a note was intended to be included as part of the text.

Different regions evolved different versions, each with its own assemblage of omissions and additions.

The *autographs*, the Greek manuscripts written by the original authors, have not survived.

Scholars surmise the original Greek text from the versions that do survive. The three main textual traditions of the Greek New Testament are sometimes called the **Alexandrian text-type** generally minimalist, the **Byzantine text-type** generally maximalist, and the **Western text-type** occasionally wild. Together they comprise most of the ancient manuscripts.



There are also several ancient translations, most important of which are in the **Syriac** dialect of Aramaic including the **Peshitta** and the **Diatessaron** gospel harmony, in the Ethiopian language of **Ge'ez**, and in **Latin** both the **Vetus Latina** and the **Vulgate**.

In 331, the Emperor Constantine commissioned Eusebius to deliver fifty Bibles for the Church of Constantinople. Athanasius recorded Alexandrian scribes around 340 preparing Bibles for Constans. Little else is known, though there is plenty of speculation. For example, it is speculated that this may have provided motivation for canon lists, and that **Codex Vaticanus**, **Codex Sinaiticus** and **Codex Alexandrinus** are examples of these Bibles. Together with the **Peshitta**, these are the earliest extant Christian Bibles. The earliest surviving complete manuscript of the entire Bible is the **Codex Amiatinus**, a Latin Vulgate edition produced in eighth century England at the double monastery of Wearmouth-Jarrow.

The earliest printed edition of the Greek New Testament appeared in 1516 from the **Froben** press, by **Desiderius Erasmus**, who reconstructed its Greek text from several recent manuscripts of the Byzantine text-type. **He occasionally added a Greek translation of the Latin Vulgate for parts that did not exist in the Greek manuscripts. He produced four later editions of this text.** Erasmus was Roman Catholic, but his preference for the **Byzantine Greek** manuscripts rather than the Latin Vulgate led some church authorities to view him with suspicion.



The first printed edition with *critical apparatus* noting variant readings among the manuscripts was produced by the printer **Robert Estienne** of Paris in 1550. The Greek text of this edition and of those of Erasmus became known as the *Textus Receptus* which is Latin for "received text", a name given to it in the **Elzevier** edition of 1633, which termed it as the text *nunc ab omnibus receptum* "now received by all". **The churches of the Protestant Reformation translated the Greek of the Textus Receptus to produce vernacular Bibles, such as the German Luther Bible and the English King James Bible. The discovery of older manuscripts, which belong to the Alexandrian text-type, including the 4th century Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus, led scholars to revise their view about the original Greek text. Attempts to reconstruct the original text are called critical editions. Later critical editions incorporate ongoing scholarly research, including discoveries of Greek papyrus fragments from near Alexandria, Egypt, that date in some cases within a few decades of the original New Testament writings. Today, most critical editions of the Greek New Testament, such as UBS4 and NA27, consider the Alexandrian text-type corrected by papyri, to be the Greek text that is closest to the original.**

Critical editions that rely primarily on the Alexandrian text-type inform nearly all modern translations and revisions of older translations. However for reasons of tradition, especially the doctrine of the inerrancy of the King James Bible, some modern scholars prefer to use the Textus Receptus for the Greek text, or use the *Majority Text* which is similar to it but is a critical edition that relies on earlier manuscripts of the Byzantine text-type. Among these scholars, some argue that the Byzantine tradition contains scribal additions, but these later interpolations preserve the orthodox interpretations of the biblical text—as part of the ongoing Christian experience—and in this sense are authoritative.

Christian theology

While individual books within the Christian Bible present narratives set in certain historical periods, most Christian denominations teach that the Bible itself has an overarching message. There are among Christians wide differences of opinion as to how particular incidents as described in the Bible are to be interpreted and as to what meaning should be attached to various prophecies. However, Christians in general are in agreement as to the Bible's basic message. A general outline, as described by C. S. Lewis and state as follows:

At some point in the past, humanity chose to depart from God's will and began to sin.

1. Because no one is free from sin, people cannot deal with God directly, so God revealed himself in ways people could understand.
2. God called Abraham and his progeny to be the means for saving all of humanity.
3. To this end, He gave the Law to Moses.
4. The resulting nation of Israel went through cycles of sin and repentance, yet the prophets show an increasing understanding of the Law as a moral, not just a ceremonial force.
5. Jesus brought a perfect understanding of the Mosaic Law, that of love and salvation.
6. By His death and resurrection, all who believe are saved and reconciled to God.

Many Christians and Jews regard the Bible as inspired by God yet written by a variety of imperfect men over thousands of years. Many others, who identify themselves as Bible-believing Christians, regard both the New and Old Testament as the undiluted Word of God, spoken by God and written down in its perfect form by humans. Still others hold the Biblical infallibility perspective, that the Bible is free from error in spiritual but not scientific matters. If the Bible is wrong on scientific matters, then what guarantees do we have that the Bible is correct on spiritual matters? In future articles we will prove that the Bible is wrong on spiritual matters as well.

Hebrew Bible

The New Testament refers to the threefold division of the Hebrew Scriptures: the law, the

prophets, and the writings. [Luke 24:44](#) refers to the "law of Moses" [Pentateuch](#), the "prophets" which include certain historical books in addition to the books now called "prophets," and the psalms the "writings" designated by its most prominent collection. The Hebrew Bible probably was canonized in these three stages: the law canonized before the Exile, the prophets by the time of the Syrian persecution of the Jews, and the writings shortly after AD 70 the fall of Jerusalem. About that time, early Christian writings began being accepted by Christians as "scripture." These events, taken together, may have caused the Jews to close their "canon." [They listed their own recognized Scriptures and also excluded both Christian and Jewish writings considered by them to be "apocryphal."](#) In this canon the thirty-nine books found in the Old Testament of today's Christian Bibles were grouped together as twenty-two books, equaling the number of letters in the Hebrew alphabet. This canon of Jewish scripture is attested to by Philo, Josephus, the New Testament [Luke 11:51](#), [Luke 24:44](#), and the Talmud.

The New Testament writers assumed the inspiration of the Old Testament, probably earliest stated in [2 Timothy 3:16](#) which may be rendered "All Scripture is inspired of God" or "Every God-inspired Scripture is profitable for teaching." Both translations consider inspiration as a fact.

Old and New Testaments



The Old Testament canon entered into Christian use in the Greek Septuagint translations and original books, and their differing lists of texts. In addition to the Septuagint, Christianity subsequently added various writings that would become the New Testament. During the Protestant Reformation, certain reformers proposed different canonical lists than what was currently in use. Though not without debate, the list of New Testament books would come to remain the same; however, the Old Testament texts present in the Septuagint, but not included in the Jewish canon, fell out of favor. In time they would come to be removed from most Protestant canons. Hence, in a Catholic context these texts are referred to as deuterocanonical books, whereas in a Protestant context they are referred to as Apocrypha, the label applied to all texts excluded from the biblical canon which were in the Septuagint. It should also be noted, that Catholics and Protestants both describe certain other books, such as the *Acts of Peter*, as apocryphal. Thus, the Protestant Old Testament of today has a 39-book canon—the number varies from that of the books in the Tanakh because of a different method of division—while the Roman Catholic Church recognizes 46 books as part of the canonical Old Testament. The term "Hebrew Scriptures" is only synonymous with the Protestant Old Testament, not the Catholic, which contains the Hebrew Scriptures and additional texts. Both Catholics and Protestants have the same 27-book New Testament Canon.

Bible versions and translations



A Bible handwritten in Latin, on display in Malmesbury Abbey, Wiltshire, England. This Bible was transcribed in Belgium in 1407 for reading aloud in a monastery.

In scholarly writing, ancient translations are frequently referred to as "versions," with the term "translation" being reserved for medieval or modern translations. The original texts of the Tanakh were in Hebrew, although some portions were in Aramaic. In addition to the authoritative Masoretic Text, Jews still refer to the Septuagint, the translation of the Hebrew Bible into Greek, and the Targum Onkelos, an Aramaic version of the Bible. There are several different ancient

versions of the Tanakh in Hebrew, mostly differing by spelling, and the traditional Jewish version is based on the version known as Aleppo Codex. **Even in this version by itself, there are words which are traditionally read differently than written, sometimes one word is written and another is read, because the oral tradition is considered more fundamental than the written one, and presumably mistakes had been made in copying the text over the generations.**

The primary biblical text for early Christians was the Septuagint. In addition they translated the Hebrew Bible into several other languages. Translations were made into Syriac, Coptic, Ge'ez and Latin, among other languages. The Latin translations were historically the most important for the Church in the West, while the Greek-speaking East continued to use the Septuagint translations of the Old Testament and had no need to translate the New Testament.

The earliest Latin translation was the Old Latin text, or *Vetus Latina*, which, from internal evidence, seems to have been made by several authors over a period of time. It was based on the Septuagint, and thus included books not in the Hebrew Bible.

Pope Damasus I assembled the first list of books of the Bible at the Council of Rome in 382 AD. He commissioned Saint Jerome to produce a reliable and consistent text by translating the original Greek and Hebrew texts into Latin. This translation became known as the Latin Vulgate Bible and in 1546 at the Council of Trent was declared by the Church to be the only authentic and official Bible in the Latin rite.

Bible translations for many languages have been made through the various influences of Catholicism, Orthodox, Protestant, etc especially since the Protestant Reformation. The Bible has seen a notably large number of English language translations.

The work of Bible translation continues, including by Christian organisations such as Wycliffe Bible Translators, New Tribes Missions and the Bible Societies. Of the world's 6,900 languages, 2,400 have some or all of the Bible, 1,600 spoken by more than a billion people have translation underway, and some 2,500 spoken by 270 million people are judged as needing translation to begin.

Characteristics of early Bible texts

The use of numbered chapters and verses was not introduced until the Middle Ages and later. The system used in English was developed by Stephanus Robert Estienne of Paris. Early manuscripts of the letters of Paul and other New Testament writings show no punctuation whatsoever. The punctuation was added later by other editors, according to their own understanding of the text.

Differences in Bible translations



This Gutenberg Bible is displayed by the United States Library of Congress.

As Hebrew and Greek, the original languages of the Bible, have idioms and concepts not easily translated, there is an on going critical tension about whether it is better to give a word for word translation or to give a translation that gives a parallel idiom in the target language. For instance, in the English language Catholic translation, the New American Bible, as well as the Protestant translations of the Christian Bible, translations like the King James Version, the New Revised Standard Version and the New American Standard Bible are seen as fairly literal translations or "word for word", whereas translations like the New International Version and New Living Translation attempt to give relevant parallel idioms. The Living Bible and The Message are two paraphrases of the Bible that try to convey the original meaning in contemporary language. The further away one gets from word to word translation, the text becomes easier to read while relying more on the theological, linguistic or cultural understanding of the translator, which one would not normally expect a lay reader to require.

Inclusive language

Traditionally, English masculine pronouns have been used interchangeably to refer to the male gender and to all people. For instance, "All *men* are mortal" is not intended to imply that males are mortal but females are immortal. English language readers and hearers have had to interpret masculine pronouns and such words as "man" and "mankind" based on context. Further, both Hebrew and Greek, like some of the Latin-origin languages, use the male gender of nouns and pronouns to refer to groups that contain both sexes. This creates some difficulty in determining whether a noun or pronoun should be translated using terms that refer to men only, or generically to men and women inclusively. Context sometimes, but not always, helps determine whether to decode them in a gender-insensitive or gender-specific way.

Contemporary language has changed in many cases to reflect criticism of the use of the masculine gender, which has been characterized as discriminatory

Until recently, virtually all English translations of the Bible have used masculine nouns and pronouns both specifically to refer to males and generically when the reference is not necessarily gender-specific. Recent examples of translations which incorporate gender-inclusive language include the [New Revised Standard Version](#), the [Revised English Bible](#), and [Today's New International Version](#).

Chapters and verses

The [Hebrew Masoretic text](#) contains verse endings as an important feature. According to the [Talmudic](#) tradition, the verse endings are of ancient origin. Another related feature of the Masoretic text is the division of the *sedarim*. This division is not thematic, but is almost entirely based upon the *quantity* of text.

The Byzantines also introduced a chapter division of sorts, called *Kephalaia*. It is not identical to the present chapters.

The current division of the Bible into chapters and the verse numbers within the chapters has no basis in any ancient textual tradition. Rather, they are medieval Christian inventions. They were later adopted by many Jews as well, as technical references within the Hebrew text. Such technical references became crucial to medieval rabbis in the historical context of forced debates with Christian clergy who used the chapter and verse numbers, especially in late medieval Spain. Chapter divisions were first used by Jews in a 1330 manuscript and for a printed edition in 1516. However, for the past generation, most Jewish editions of the complete [Hebrew Bible](#) have made a systematic effort to relegate chapter and verse numbers to the margins of the text.

The division of the Bible into chapters and verses has often elicited severe criticism from traditionalists and modern scholars alike. Critics charge that the text is often divided into chapters in an incoherent way, or at inappropriate rhetorical points, and that it encourages citing passages out of context, in effect turning the Bible into a kind of textual quarry for clerical citations.

Biblical criticism

[Biblical criticism](#) refers to the investigation of the Bible as a text, and addresses questions such as authorship, dates of composition, and authorial intention.

Higher criticism

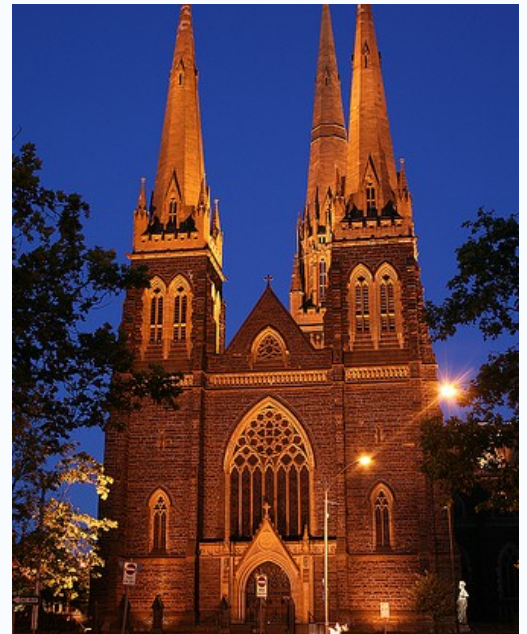
The traditional view of the Mosaic authorship of the Torah came under sporadic criticism from medieval scholars including Isaac ibn Yashush, [Abraham ibn Ezra](#), Bonfils of Damascus and Bishop [Tostatus](#) of Avila, who pointed to passages such as the description of the death of Moses in Deuteronomy as evidence that some portions, at least, could not have been written by Moses. **In the 17th century Thomas Hobbes collected the current evidence and became the first scholar to conclude outright that Moses could not have written the bulk of the Torah.** Shortly afterwards



the philosopher [Baruch Spinoza](#) published a unified critical analysis, demonstrating that the problematic passages were not isolated cases that could be explained away one by one, but pervasive throughout the five books, concluding that it was **"clearer than the sun at noon that the Pentateuch was not written by Moses...."** Despite determined opposition from the Church, both Catholic and Protestant, the views of Hobbes and Spinoza gained increasing acceptance amongst scholars.

Documentary hypothesis

Scholars intrigued by the hypothesis that Moses had not written the Pentateuch considered other authors. Independent but nearly simultaneous proposals by H. B. Witter, [Jean Astruc](#), and [Johann Gottfried Eichhorn](#) separated the Pentateuch into two original documentary components, both dating from after the time of Moses. [Subsequent scholars, notably Eduard Reuss, Karl Heinrich Graf and Wilhelm Vatke, turned their attention to the order in which the documents had](#)



[been composed which they deduced from internal clues and placed them in the context of a theory of the development of ancient Israelite religion, suggesting that much of the Laws and the narrative of the Pentateuch were unknown to the Israelites in the time of Moses.](#) These were synthesized by [Julius Wellhausen](#) 1844-1918, who suggested a historical framework for the composition of the documents and their redaction or combination into the final document known as the Pentateuch. [The documentary hypothesis is important in the field of biblical studies not only because it claims that the Torah was written by different people at different times—generally long after the events it describes—but it also proposed what was at the time a radically new way of reading the Bible. Many proponents of the documentary hypothesis view the Bible more as a body of literature than a work of history, believing that the historical value of the text lies not in its account of the events that it describes, but in what critics can infer about the times in which the authors lived.](#)

Modern developments

The critical analysis of authorship now encompasses every book of the Bible. Every book in turn has been hypothesized to bear traces of multiple authorship, even the book of Obadiah, which is only a single page. In some cases the traditional view on authorship has been overturned.



Although biblical archaeology has confirmed the existence of many people, places, and events mentioned in the Bible, many critical scholars have argued that the Bible be read not as an accurate historical document, but rather as a work of literature and theology that often draws on **historical events**. For these scholars, the Bible reveals much about the lives and times of its authors and compilers. The relevance of these ideas to contemporary religious life is left to clerics and adherents of contemporary religions to decide.

Theological responses - Judaism

The claim that the Torah—"the Five Books of Moses"—were not written by Moses, but by many authors long after Moses was said to have lived, directly challenged Jewish orthodoxy. For most, this claim implies that the Torah itself—especially its account of God's revelation at Mt. Sinai—is

not historically reliable. Most Conservative and virtually all Reform Jewish scholars have accepted it. Consequently, there has been considerable debate among Jewish scholars as to the nature of revelation and the divine nature of the Torah.

Archaeological and historical research

According to recent theories, linguistic as well as archaeological, the global structure of the texts in the Hebrew Bible were compiled during the reign of King Josiah in the 7th century BC. Even though the components are derived from more ancient writings, the final form of the books is believed to have been set somewhere between the 1st century BC and the 4th century AD.

With regard to the Exodus and the 40-year sojourn in the desert, archaeological digs in possible Biblical locations have been unsuccessful so far. There is also no archaeological evidence of a conquest of the land and cities of Canaan of the kind recounted in the Book of Joshua.

Nomadist theory

The ancestors of the **Hebrews** and the **Jews** are believed to be either nomads who have become sedentary, or people from the plains of **Canaan**, who fled to the highlands to escape the control of the cities.

CONCLUSION:

BEFORE THE BIBLE WAS THE BIBLE it was a lot of little books written by many writers with many different viewpoints.

If you open up the Bible and read it straight through, you will notice two things that should not be true if it had been written as a coherent whole and with a single purpose. First, the Bible is quite repetitious; second, the Bible frequently seems to contradict itself. Readers have often ignored these contradictions, and apologists have long tried to reconcile them. All books are written for or against some point of view, and the books of the Bible are no different. Bible book authors were often motivated to write because they wanted to challenge or correct those who had written before them. Paul said of Peter, 'I opposed him to his face, because he was clearly in the wrong Gal. 2:11.' Helms notes that Jeremiah condemned the entire religious establishment of his time — the very same people that other Bible authors held in highest esteem: "prophets and priests are

frauds, every one of them” Jer. 8:10. Luke felt the need to write another gospel even though “many writers have undertaken to draw up an account of the events” Luke 1:1. Luke obviously felt that Mark’s gospel was filled with errors and edited it freely. Not even Mark’s account of the words of the dying Christ was left unaltered. The evidence clearly shows that the Bible was strictly the work of men that tried to control and dominate the thinking of other men and society as a whole. This is clearly proven by the following historical evidence:

- The fact that the Bible was written, edited, translated and retranslated by men.
- The fact that the original Hebrew and Greek writings are lost.
- The fact that there are nearly a thousand contradictions in the Bible.
- The fact that certain Gospels have purposely been excluded and removed by the church, such as the Gospel of Phillip, Thomas and Mary Magdalene.
- The fact that there are so many vulgarities in the Bible.
- The fact that the Bible depicts God as an evil murdering entity and not a kind loving spirit.
- The fact that the Bible disproves that Christ was the son of God as he never returned in the lifetime of his apostles as he promised, to set up his thousand year kingdom here on Earth.
- The fact that the author of Chronicles I & II white-washed earlier historical accounts of Saul, David, and Solomon covering up earlier writings.
- The fact that the Book of Ruth was written to challenge the growing racism of religious reformers of its time.
- The fact that every apocalyptic book in the Bible struggled to reinterpret and change some earlier failed Bible prophecy that never came true.
- The fact that the war of “Wisdom” between religious teachings, pagan proverbs, and practical advice shows that each teaching differed or contradicted earlier writings.
- The fact that the centuries-long battle in the Bible between prophets and the Law of Moses, and even between prophets and prophecy itself differed.
- how first and second century Christians interpreted the Hebrew Bible in a new way, to change it into a book that had “really” been written about Jesus.
- The fact that Jesus of Nazareth’s philosophy conflicted with that of Jesus the son of Sirach.
- The fact that there was a battle between James and Paul — and their followers — for control of first century Christianity shows there was strong disagreement of what was the truth.
- The fact that even the best Biblical scholars can’t agree among themselves on any one important issues.
- The fact that most Biblical scholars now questions who the original writers really where.

- The fact that there are so many different versions of the Bible, each stating a different version of what happened.
- The fact that there is so much evil in the Bible clearly proves that this was not the work of a kind loving God.

Throughout the history of their formation, the Jewish and Christian scriptures developed as the by-products of ongoing theological debates. Far from expressing the unity of thought and doctrinal accord that would reflect divine inspiration, the scriptures represent a series of furious and unrelenting disputes between authors supporting often bitterly divided dogmas.

In summary: Reading and understanding the history of the Bible and how it was written, edited, translated, formatted and compiled by early men, leads us to only one possible conclusion as supported by evidence. The Bible was only the work of men, that clearly sought to dominate and control others. The Church clearly removed many Gospels from the Bible and withheld certain information. The original writings in Original Hebrew are lost, so it is impossible to speculate what these contained. Biblical scholars can't agree on anything. More and more evidence clearly shows that the Gospels had many more authors than originally thought. The endless contradictions and vulgarities disprove any divine influence and clearly prove that the Bible was the work of ordinary men. The fact that there are so many different versions of the Bible clearly shows the writers had different opinions on every event or subject. Not only the different versions of the Bible contradict each other but the writings in each individual Bible contradict themselves. The catastrophic failure of the prophecy of Christ returning in the lifetime of the apostles and starting his kingdom on Earth, as stated in the Bible over and over again clearly proves he was not the son of any God and proves that Christianity is nothing but a hoax built on a pillar of disproven lies.

In the next series of articles we will examine who authored the Bible. Next we will look at the violence, vulgarities and various contradictions in the Bible. These Earth shattering articles will expose the Bible for what it really is! The work of ordinary primitive men who sought to control others thru religion!

SOURCE: WIKIPEDIA, SKEPTIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER, THE BIBLE.