

History of the Bible

Ancient scribes and texts

- Before the invention of the printing press, scriptures were written and copied by hand by highly trained _____.
- The Hebrew Bible was originally written mainly in _____, with a few sections in _____.
- In the 3rd century BC, the Hebrew scriptures were translated into Koine **Greek** in Alexandria, Egypt. This version is known as the _____.
- In the first century AD, the books of the New Testament were written in _____.
- Discovered between 1947 and 1956, the _____ contained copies of nearly every book of the Hebrew Bible and proved the remarkable accuracy of the biblical text over thousands of years.

Early translations and the Latin Vulgate

(All based on the T.R. – Textus Receptus)

- In _____ AD, Saint _____ was commissioned by Pope Damasus the 1st to create a new Latin translation of the Bible, this was completed in _____ AD.
- Jerome's translation was known as the _____, which became the official Bible of the Catholic Church and was used for over a thousand years.

The Reformation and the printing press

- In the 1370's, John Wycliffe started to produce the first full English translation of the Bible, based on the Latin Vulgate. The New Testament was completed in _____.
- The invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg in the 1450s made it possible to produce books on a mass scale and accelerated the spread of scripture. The printing press was finished in 1454 and the first major book Gutenberg printed with movable type in the West was the **Gutenberg Bible**, a Latin Vulgate edition in _____.

The Earliest English Translations (14th - 16th Centuries)

- **Wycliffe Bible (New Testament - _____):**

John Wycliffe and his followers produced the first complete English Bible, but it was hand-written and based on the Latin Vulgate, not the original Hebrew and Greek texts.

- **Tyndale New Testament (_____):**

William Tyndale's translation was the first to be mass-produced using the new printing press and was based on the original Greek.

- **Coverdale Bible (_____):**

Myles Coverdale's Bible was the first complete printed English Bible.

- **Matthew's Bible (_____):**

A compilation and revision of Tyndale's and Coverdale's work, printed by John Rogers.

- **Great Bible (_____):**

Also known as the "Cranmer's Bible," it was authorized by King Henry VIII and was the first widely distributed English Bible in English churches.

- **Geneva Bible (_____):**

Published by English refugees in Geneva, it was the first English Bible to include chapter and verse numbers and extensive marginal notes.

- **Bishops' Bible (_____):** Created by the Church of England to replace the Geneva Bible.

- **Douay-Rheims Bible (_____):** A Catholic translation based on the Latin Vulgate.

Early Modern English (17th - 19th Centuries)

- **King James Version (KJV) (_____):** Commissioned by King James I, this influential and widely read translation became the standard for centuries, praised for its literary quality.

- **Revised Version (_____):** An English revision (Based on Alexandrian Text)

- **American Standard Version (_____):** A significant American revision of the KJV, known for its accuracy. (Based on Alexandrian Text)

Modern English Translations (20th Century - Present)

- **New American Standard Bible (NASB)** (_____): A "word-for-word" translation aiming for modern accuracy from the original Hebrew and Greek texts. (Based on Alexandrian Text)
- **New International Version (NIV)** (_____): A popular "phrase-for-phrase" or dynamic equivalence translation. (Based on Alexandrian Text)
- **New King James Version (NKJV)** (_____): An updated version of the KJV that retains its original style. (Based on the T.R. – Textus Receptus)
- **English Standard Version (ESV)** (_____ - **Newest update** _____): A widely accepted translation balancing literary excellence with accuracy. (Based on Alexandrian Text)

The Shift to the Alexandrian Text

- **Discovery of Older Manuscripts:**

In the 19th century, manuscripts like Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus were discovered. These ancient texts, dating from the 2nd to 4th centuries AD, were significantly older than the Byzantine manuscripts used for the King James Version.

- **Textual Criticism:**

Textual critics studied these older manuscripts, which showed a consistent Alexandrian text type. They noted that Alexandrian readings were often more challenging and less polished, suggesting they were closer to the original wording rather than later emendations made by scribes.

- **The Modern Critical Text:**

The findings of these older Alexandrian manuscripts led to the creation of critical Greek New Testament texts. Instead of relying solely on one manuscript family, these critical texts (like the Nestle-Aland/UBS editions) synthesize all available manuscript evidence to provide the most likely original reading.