

3. Bible Translation

The authority of scripture

The authority of scripture is not affected by minor copyist errors.

There is one consistent central message of scripture that stands as a framework for understanding scripture.

A person who has a personal relationship with Jesus will understand the real meaning of scripture better than scholars who understand the original languages.

The inspiration of translations

Scholarship alone cannot produce a good translation.

Translations must always remain within the guidelines of the one central message of scripture. The Bible must be translated in the light of the salvation message.

Individual scriptures can never be interpreted in isolation from other scriptures.

A literal translation may not convey the true meaning.

Example: Philippians 2:7

Literally - Emptied Himself

Translated – Made Himself of no reputation.

Bible Translation

Jerome c.345-420)

The Latin Vulgate



Commissioned by Pope Damasus to make a new Latin translation of the Bible from the original texts. It included the Apocrypha.

Jerome began the work sometime after 382 when he became papal secretary in Rome. He completed the work in Bethlehem c.405.

His translation became known as the Latin Vulgate

It was the only translation authorised by the Roman Catholic Church for over 1000 years.

Waldensians



Peter Waldo of Lyons c.1182-1217

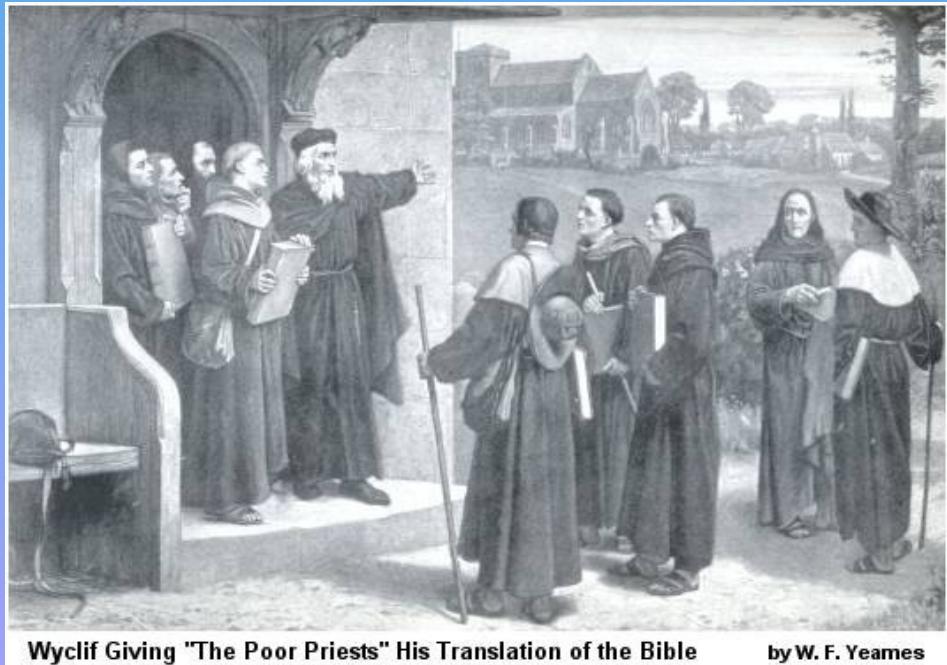
Followers first called the 'Poor men of Lyons' later called Waldensians.

Sought to preach in the common language to ordinary people.
Forbidden to do so by the Third Lateran Council in Rome.

Translated portions of the scripture and preached to the poor around the region of the Alps.

John Wycliffe (c.1329-1384)

The Morning Star of the Reformation



Wycliffe translated the Bible from the Latin Vulgate into English.

The Wycliffe Bible had to be handwritten. Printing had not yet invented in the West.

Printing was invented in Europe about 1438 by Johannes Gutenberg.

William Caxton began printing in England in 1476.

Wycliffe Bible

P. 96v

Fathers

L'Estampe

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Printing and Bible Translation

1. Manuscripts (until mid 15th century)

Hand written translations taken from the Latin Vulgate

2. Printed Bibles (from mid 15th century)

Translations taken from the Greek and Hebrew texts

Hebrew Bible published 1488

Erasmus first published Greek New Testament 1516

In Germany the Scriptures were printed in 1466
reprinted 17 times before Luther's translation in 1521.

By the early 16th century the Bible had been translated into the vernacular in
France,

Spain,

Italy,

Bohemia and

Holland

There was no portion of the English Bible printed before Tyndale's Bible (1525).

There was no complete English Bible printed before 1535,

The Bible was not printed in England until 1538.

Erasmus (1466/9-1536) Greek New Testament



1516 published *Novum instrumentum* (Basel: Froben). Greek text with notes and a new Latin translation differing from the Vulgate of Jerome.

Revised edition of the Greek New Testament were published in 1519, 1522, 1527, and 1535.



Complutensian Polyglot (1514)

The Greek New Testament had been printed before Erasmus as part of the New Testament volume of the Complutensian Polyglot in Spain in 1514.

But it was not published until 1522 when the complete work in 4 volumes was completed.

This work also needed the approval of the Pope. Erasmus wrote satire against the Pope and had no need for his approval.

Luther's New Testament (1522)



Martin Luther translated the New Testament from Erasmus' Greek New Testament (1519) to German while hiding in Wartburg Castle.

(May 1521 – March 1522)

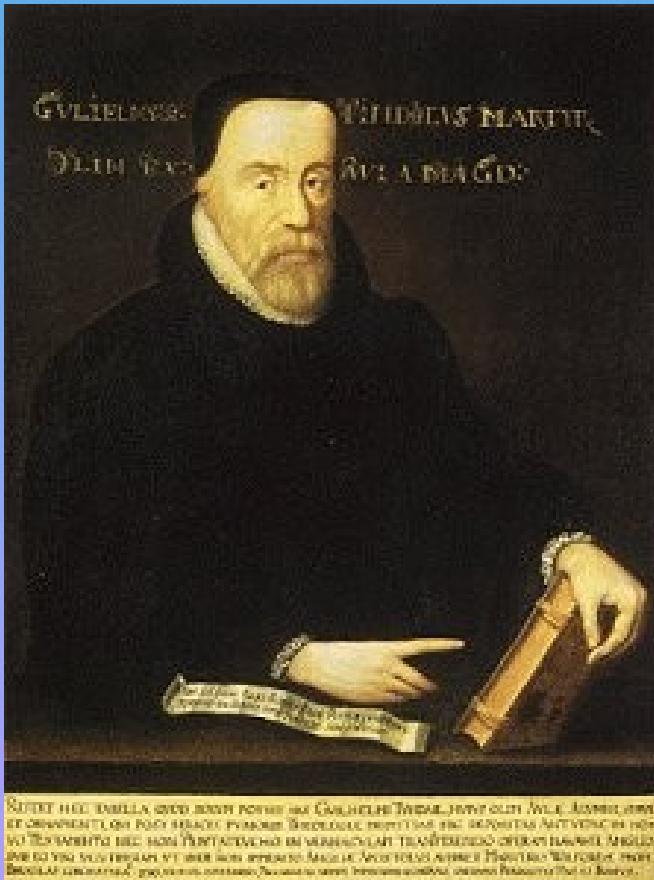
Luther's one main criteria for scripture: the message - scripture always preaches Christ.

Luther translated the 27 books.

The last 4 books being Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation

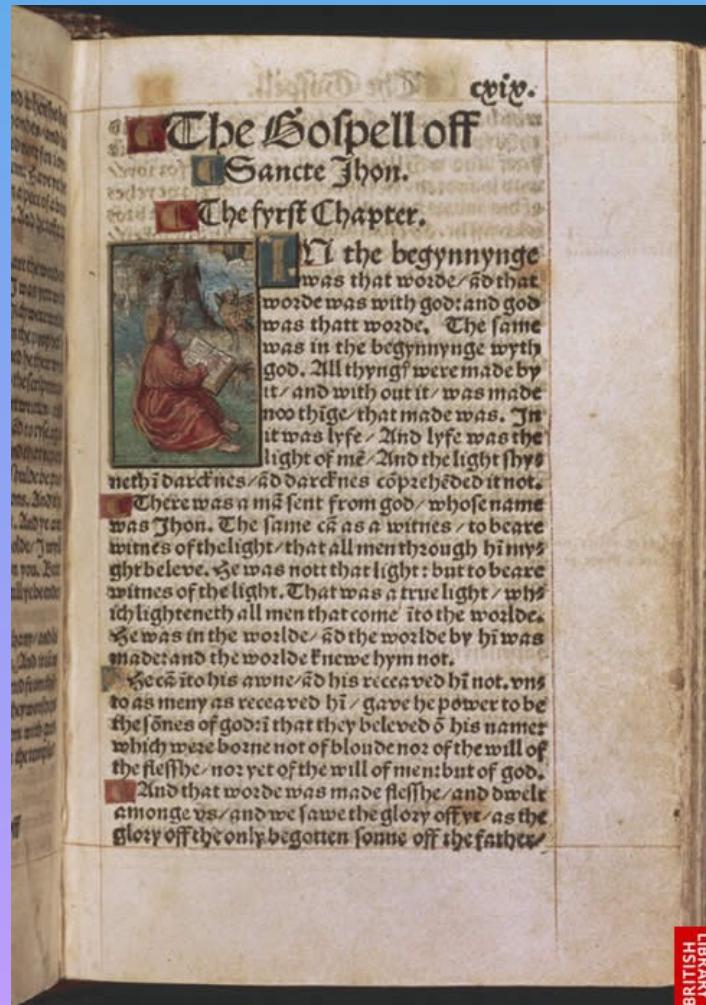
Luther called James an 'epistle of straw', but he accepted it as part of the New Testament canon.

William Tyndale (c.1494-1536)



Tyndale also placed Hebrews, James, Jude and Revelation last.

Published English New Testament (1525) Revised (1534)



King James Version 1611

Hampton Court Conference held January 1604 – King, moderate Puritans and Anglican Bishops.

Puritan demands rejected but decision made to produce new edition of the Bible.

The King James Version was published in 1611.

Primary sources

Greek (Textus Receptus) – Beza's edition (1598) and the Stephen's text (1550)

Hebrew – Masoretic Text

King James Version

Primary Sources

Greek text

Theodore Beza (1519-1605) published a revised edition of the Erasmus' Greek text (Textus Receptus)

Beza's 1598 edition of the TR was the primary source for the KJV's Greek text.

Hebrew Text

The Old Testament is based upon the Masoretic Text.

The KJV New Testament retained over 80% of Tyndale's translation (1534).

Reliability of the Old Testament Hebrew Manuscripts

The Masoretic text (7th – 10th centuries)

The Dead Sea Scrolls (1st century BC)

The Masoretic text was the oldest Hebrew text available until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The authenticity of the Massoretic text for translating the Old Testament was confirmed by the finding of the Dead Sea Scrolls in 1947.

A leaf from Masoretic Text



The Masoretic text was written and distributed by Jewish scribes known as Masoretes between the 7th – 10th centuries.

The word Masoretic refers to the marginal notes that characterise this text.

The Aleppo Codex associated with Rabbi Aaron Ben Asher.

Codex - Written by Masoretic scholars 10th century in Tiberius.

Contains vowels and grammar points.

תְּהִיא אַחֲרֵי קְדוּמָתְמִשְׁתָּחָעָבָד לִי
וְהַרְחֵב אַמְרֵי יְהוָה לְאַלְהֹתָשׁוּעָה
בְּנֵוֹתָם יְשִׁרְתָּתְמִשְׁתָּחָלָמְרִי

Caves where the first Dead Sea Scrolls were found near Qumran (1947).

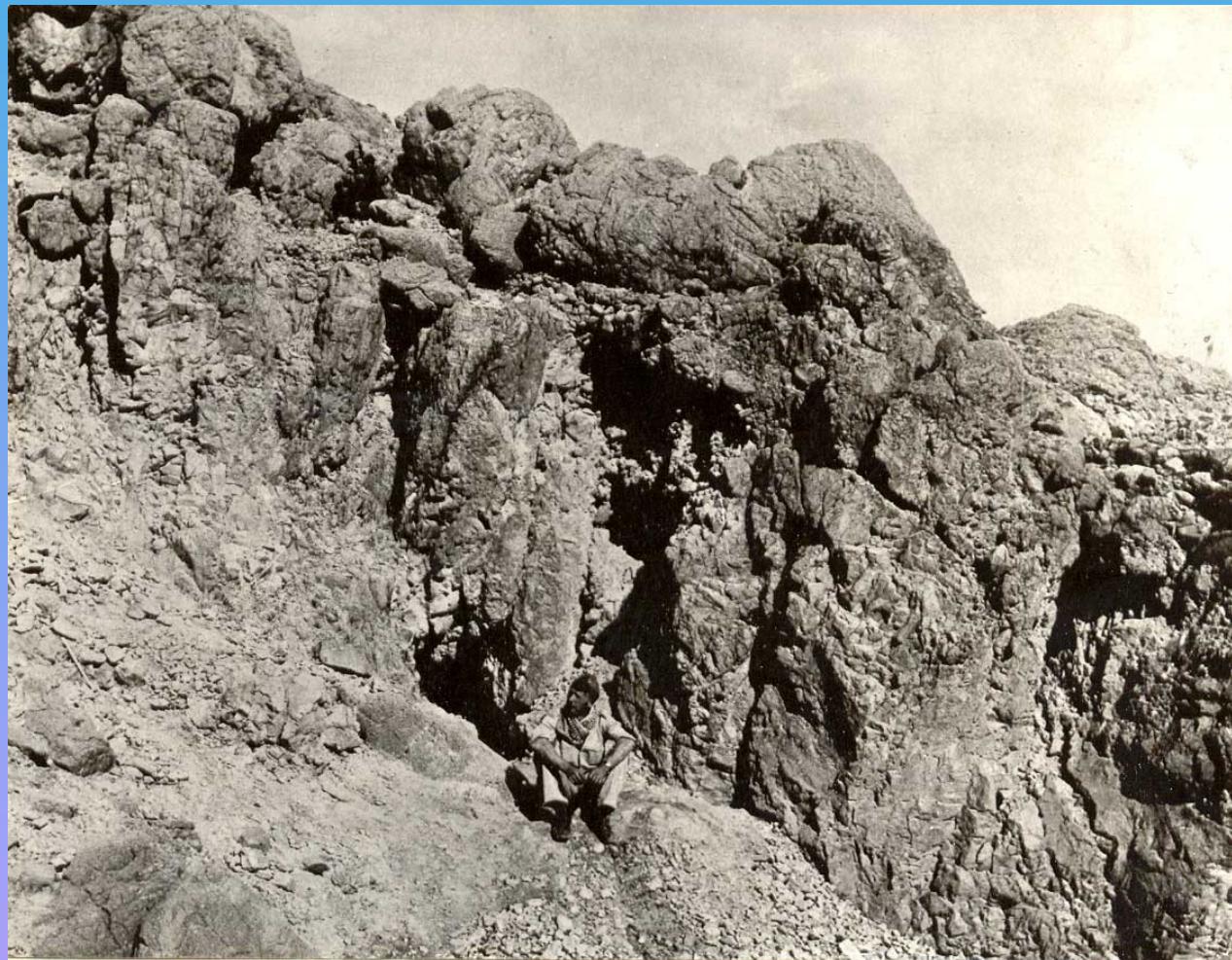


The Dead Sea Scrolls

Entrance to Cave 1

The first scrolls were found here in 1947 by a Bedouin boy.

Included complete scroll of Isaiah dated c.100 BC

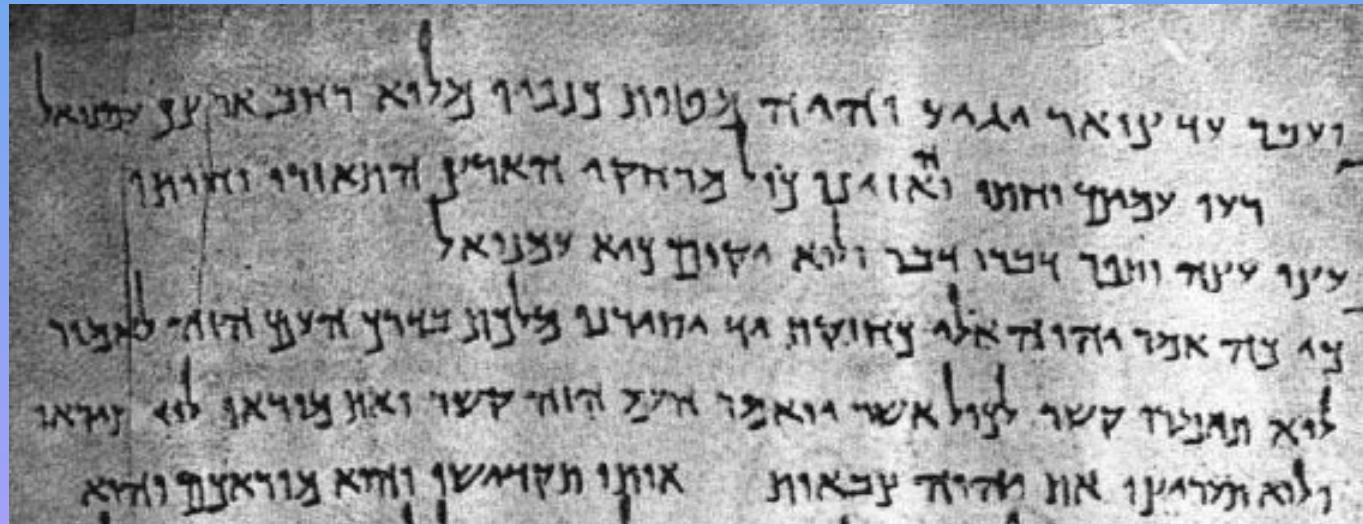


Isaiah Scroll – Dated c.100 BC

Cave 1 contained the only complete scroll – Book of Isaiah (Chapters 1-66)

Oldest existing complete manuscript of the Hebrew scriptures.

Also contained another scroll of Isaiah (75% complete)



Comparing the Masoretic text with the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The Great Scroll of Isaiah found in Cave 1 dates 1000 years earlier than the Masoretic text but the textual differences are of minor importance.

Summary

Jerome translated the New Testament into Latin.

Scripture kept away from the people.

Some portions of scripture were translated by Waldenses.

John Wycliffe was the first to translate the New Testament into the language of the people.

Printing made it possible to spread scripture quickly.

Erasmus' Greek New Testament allowed Luther and Tyndale to translate directly from the Greek.

The KJV (1611) kept over 80% of Tyndale's translation.