

How We Got Our Bible #9

Two Lines of Bible Appear

Introduction:

1. God inspired the Bible writers and what they wrote was without error
2. The gospel spread quickly and churches were started and there was a need for copies of Scripture
3. Since there was no printing, all copies of the Bible were made by hand
 - a. Bible copying became a lucrative business
 - b. Later, monks copied Scripture. They had a love and respect for God's Word and they wanted to get the Word of God out
4. Since there was no printing and all copies of the Bible were produced by hand, no copies of the Bible were the same
 - a. Sometimes, words were misspelled
 - b. Occasionally a word or phrase was left out by mistake
5. Fuller cites Hill – “NO sooner had the NT books been given to the church through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit than the spirit of darkness began his endeavors to corrupt their texts and render them useless, but in these efforts also the evil one failed to attain his objective. In regard to the NT text as well as in regard to the NT canon God bestowed upon His Church sufficient grace to enable her to overcome all the wiles of the devil. Just as God guided the church to reject the non-canonical NT books, so God guided the church during this time to reject false readings and to receive into common usage the true NT text.”
6. The devil saw to it that there was very early contamination of the NT
7. As God led believers, there was a purifying process and the corrupt copies were generally removed from common usage.

I. Early Apostasy

A. False Knowledge Exalted Above Scriptures

1Ti 6:20 O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane *and* vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called:

1. The word for science here is “gnosis” = knowledge
 - a) *Paul is not against knowledge*
 - b) *But he is against false knowledge*
2. False teachers were putting their spin on Scripture and this system became Gnosticism
3. The Corinthians and Galatians were bothered by Judaizers who were false teachers
4. Christians were even beginning to stray from the truth of the Bible

B. Spiritualizing the Scriptures Away – 2Tim 2:16

16 But shun profane *and* vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness. **17** And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymenaeus and Philetus; **18** Who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some.

1. The Bible teaches that the resurrection is a future event but some false teachers were saying that it was already past
2. They taught that the resurrection was a spiritual resurrection which takes place at conversion
3. Some spiritualize the bodily resurrection of Jesus
4. Some spiritualize the millennium

C. Substituting of Philosophy for Scripture

Col 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.

1. Greek and Roman philosophy were prevalent
2. These quietly slipped into Christianity

II. Early Apostates

- These men wanted to mix Greek philosophy with Christianity
- They moved away from a grammatico-historical interpretation of Scripture to an allegorical interpretation of Scripture
- They believed that Scripture had more than one meaning
- Since man has three parts – body, soul and spirit, these apostates believed that Scripture had three levels of meaning
 - A literal, historical meaning - body
 - A hidden, moral meaning – soul
 - An underlying spiritual meaning that only more advanced Christians could understand – spirit
- This did much harm to the cause of correct interpretation of Scripture and resulted in absurd and often unscriptural theological ideas

A. Justin Martyr

1. Was born in the same year that the apostle John died (100AD)
2. He was born of pagan parents and later embraced Christianity
3. As he grew in the faith he continued to wear the robes of a pagan philosopher
4. He began the slow departure from the truth only 50 yrs after the death of John

B. Tatian

1. Tatian was the student of Justin Martyr
2. After the death of Justin Martyr, Tatian moved back to Palestine and became a Gnostic
3. He took what Justin Martyr started and went even further
4. He was a writer and used his books to spread his heresy
5. He made a harmony of the gospels called the Diatessaron
 - a) *“The gospels were notoriously corrupted by his hand”*
 - b) *Copies of the Diatessaron were thrown out of true churches*

C. Clement

1. By 200AD, Clement of Alexandria was a student of Tatian
2. He went further than his teacher and even started a school in Alexandria to carry on his teachings
3. He took Christian teachings and clouded them with pagan philosophy
4. Clement did a lot to hurt Christianity, but the worst thing that he did was to direct the studies of Origen

D. Origen

1. He outdid all his predecessors in degrading Christianity
2. He influenced Jerome who edited the Latin Vulgate
3. Origen did all that he could to turn Bible events into allegories for he said, “The Scriptures are of little use to those who understand them as they are written.”
4. Origen believed that the human soul exists before birth and that after death the soul rises or falls to other levels based on the good or evil that one does

III. Two Lines of Bibles Begin

A. A Line of Corrupt Bibles

1. Early apostasy lead to people changing the Bible to make it agree with their ideas
2. Constantine needed Bibles for the Roman Empire and he chose the corrupt Bible to spread around.
 - a) *Constantine wanted to unite Christianity with Rome*
 - b) *Origen had united Christianity with Gnosticism so that Bible was chosen*
3. The corrupt line did not spread as much as you would think
 - a) *Ordinary believers figured out that something was wrong with those corrupt Bibles*
 - b) *No doubt there was the leading of the Holy Spirit*

B. A Line of Trustworthy Bibles

1. During the apostasy there were some people who did not fall for the scholarship of Origen and his students
2. These early Christians found and held pure copies of the Bible
 - a) *Early Greek Christians held to a pure text*
 - b) *Early Syrian Christians held to a pure text*
3. Early British Christians held to pure texts
 - a) *The pope sent Augustine as a missionary to England in 596 AD and he brought with him corrupt Bible texts*
 - b) *The British Christians would not listen to the missionary so the missionary bargained with the Anglo-Saxons to try to exterminate the Christians*
 - c) *These Anglo-Saxons later turned on Augustine and chased him out of England*
4. Waldensians held pure texts
5. Robert Dick Wilson
 - a) *Was reading Greek at age 4 and taught himself Hebrew at age 5.*
 - b) *At the age of 25 he knew 8 modern languages besides Latin, Greek and Hebrew.*
 - c) *He wanted to devote his life to the study of the OT text and figured that he might live to the age of 70.*
 - d) *He had 45 years in which to do his work so he would devote 15 years to learning all the languages necessary to become an expert in the OT. He would spend 15 years using that info to study the OT and he would spend the final 15 years writing his findings.*
 - e) *He learned Syriac, Ethiopic, Chaldee, Aramaic, Phoenician, Coptic, Ugaritic*
 - f) *There was no where in the US that taught Babylonian so he went to Germany to study Babylonian.*
 - g) *At the end of the 15 yrs he has mastered 45 ancient languages and dialects*
 - h) *“The result of those 30 yrs of study which I have given to the text has been this: I can affirm that there is not a page of the OT concerning which we need have any doubt. We can be absolutely certain that substantially we have the text of the OT that Christ and the Apostles had, and which was in existence from the beginning”*

Pass out handout about “Jesus” missing from the new versions
Show chart of “Two Lines of Bibles”