

Foundations of Biblical History
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Lesson 6
Alexandria, City of Doubt

(Genesis 3:1) Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? (KJV)

Since the beginning of time, Satan has tried to convince people to doubt the Word of God. His temptation to Eve was to doubt what God said, "Yea, hath God said?" Then Satan offered his improvement on what God said. He interpreted God's Words for Eve and convinced her that his "improved" word was better than God's Word.

In our last lesson we explored Antioch, the city of faith. Antioch was a city in Syria where the Apostles Paul and Barnabas ministered. From Antioch the Word of God was published and spread all around Asia Minor.

In the early days of church history, another city rose to prominence in education, theology, and the spread of the Bible.

This city was Alexandria, Egypt. These two cities, Antioch and Alexandria practiced and promoted two very different philosophies.

The **Antioch** people believed that God's Word is perfect, and no one can improve it. The **Alexandrians** thought the Word of God was full of allegories, fables, and hidden meanings and needed scholars to edit and improve on it.

From these two cities, two streams of Bible manuscripts have flowed down through the centuries of time. These two streams of manuscripts are still flowing today.

Those who publish Bibles built on the Alexandrian texts continue to attempt to "improve" on God's Word. Those who only use Bibles built on the Antioch text still believe that God's Word is **perfect**.

Alexandria, Egypt

(Matthew 7:17-18) Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit.

"The worst corruptions to which the New Testament has ever been subjected originated within a hundred years after it was composed." –Frederick Scrivener, 1861, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament for the use of Biblical Students*, pg 386

The School of Alexandria, Egypt

Clement of Alexandria

One of the fathers of the false doctrine of **Purgatory**. (The belief that there is a temporary place of punishment after death. According to this false teaching, people can pay the church large sums of money to rescue their dead relatives from purgatory and prevent them from going on in to hell fire.)

Believed that man can become God.

Mixed pagan philosophy with Christianity.

Origen of Alexandria

Denied Divine Inspiration of Scripture.

Denied **Resurrection** of Jesus Christ.

Believed man is divine.

Arius of Alexandria

Taught that Jesus Christ was **created**, not eternal.

Taught that Jesus Christ is inferior to God the Father.

Teachings were very similar to the modern day Jehovah's Witness cult.

	NIV	NASV	NKJV	RSV	NRSV	NCV	LIV
Christ	o 25	o 34	o 1	o 32	o 87	a 121	a 44
Lord	o 352	o 438	o 66	o 36	o 91	o 299	o 2368
Jesus	a 292	o 64	o 2	o 53	a 16	a 1098	a 293
God	o 468	o 87	o 51	o 111	o 138	a 803	a 452
Godhead	o 3 *	o 3 *	o 1	o 3 *	o 3 *	o 3 *	o 3 *
Lucifer	o 1 *	o 1 *		o 1 *	o 1 *	o 1 *	
devil(s)	o 80	o 82	o 81	o 82	o 80	o 74	o 87
hell	o 40	o 41	o 22	o 41	o 41	o 39	a 13
heaven	o 160	o 127	o 50	o 83	o 88	o 186	o 26
damned (able, ation	o 15 *	o 15 *	o 15 *	o 15 *	o 15 *	o 15 *	o 7
blood	o 41	o 39	o 23	o 26	o 46	o 157	o 174
salvation	o 42	o 4	o 2	o 33	o 37	o 94	o 25
Word of God	o 8	o 2	o 1	o 3	o 8	o 31	o 27
Word of the Lord	o 25	o 2	a 4	o 2	o 3	o 217	o 236
Lord Jesus Christ	o 24	o 21		o 21	o 22	o 20	o 15

o = Omits

a = Adds

* = Totally Removed

Sample Changes in Bibles from Alexandrian line of manuscripts

1 Tim. 3:16

KJV : "God was manifest in the flesh..."

NIV: "...He appeared in a body..."

2 Tim. 2:15

KJV: "Study to shew thyself approved unto God"

NIV: "**Do your best** to present yourself to God as one approved..."

Heb. 1:3

KJV: "when he had by himself **purged** our sins"

NIV: "he had provided purification for sins"

2Co 2:15

KJV: "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that **are saved**, and in them that perish"

NIV: "...among those who are being saved and those who are perishing..."

Mark 1:2

KJV: "As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee."

NIV: "It is written in Isaiah the prophet"

This prophecy was not from Isaiah! This is a quote from Malachi 3:1

(Malachi 3:1) Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts. (KJV)

(Acts 8:36-38)

KJV: And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

NIV: As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?" And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him.

The Lord's Prayer

(Matthew 6:9-13)

KJV: After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: **For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.**

NIV: This, then, is how you should pray: "'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'"

(Luke 11:2-4)

KJV: And he said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; **but deliver us from evil.**

NIV: "He said to them, "When you pray, say:""Father, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation."

Conclusion:

The changes that Satan brought to the Bible through the Alexandrian manuscripts were designed to bring doubt rather than faith in the Word of God. The real issue is on authority. Is God's Word the final authority ruling over and judging the world? Or is man the final authority, ruling over, judging and "improving" God's Word?

1 THE TWO CITIES

Dr. Jack Moorman, who spent many years in researching the question of Bible versions, has stated that the transmission of the Greek text of the New Testament is essentially a "tale of two cities", viz., Antioch and Alexandria. Dr. Moorman writes: "Just as surely as the King James text was woven into the spiritual life of Antioch in Syria, so was the modern versions text in Alexandria. Today a person must decide whether he is more comfortable with a Bible whose roots go back to one or the other of these two cities...certainly Antioch has by far the most glorious heritage."

ANTIOCH: Here was the springboard for the Gentile church. It became the center for Gentile Christians just as Jerusalem was for the Jews. "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch" (Acts 11:26). Antioch was the center for the outreach of the apostle Paul and his missionary journeys. Many of the disciples also visited Antioch. Antioch was the 'heartbeat' of Christianity.

ALEXANDRIA: The place where most of the modern texts and translations originated, had no such glory. It is true, however, that Alexandria became a center of intellectualism. Such men as Clement and Origen were active in this area. It was also noted as a place where every deviant sect was represented. Religious corruption and false doctrines were prevalent including Gnosticism, Arianism, pagan philosophy, etc. Alexandria was the place where the intellectuals of Christianity were attracted.

2 THE TWO ESSENTIALS

Since God has inspired his Word has He also preserved His Word? Has He preserved it for every generation? The Westminster Confession (1646) states: "The Scriptures were immediately inspired of God and under His singular care and providence kept pure in all ages." The Bible has the final say in the matter: "The words of the Lord are pure words...Thou shalt keep them, O Lord, Thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever. (Psalm 12: 6,7). If we accept the Inspiration of Scripture we must also accept that every word has been and will be Preserved through the ages in the church. Both together are essential doctrines.

TRADITIONAL TEXT LINE

5210 MSS. †

ANTIOCH

APOSTLES

ORIGINAL N.T. MSS.
30-90 A.D.

SYRIAN MSS. (PESHITTA).
100-200 A.D.

OLD LATIN & SYRIAC OF
ORIGINALS. 100-200 A.D.

PAPYRI MSS.
(85%=TRAD. TEXT) †
150-400 A.D.

UNCIAL & CURSIVE MSS.
(99%=TRAD. TEXT) †
150-1500 A.D.

LATIN BIBLES
(WALDENSIANS ETC.)
1100 A.D.-1300 A.D.

ERASMUS GREEK N.T.
1522 A.D.

MARTIN LUTHER BIBLE
1522 A.D.-1534 A.D.
(GERMAN)

TYNDALES N.T. 1525 A.D.
COVERDALE BIBLE 1535 A.D.
MATTHEWS BIBLE 1537 A.D.
GREAT BIBLE 1539 A.D.
(ENGLISH)

STEPHENS GREEK N.T.
1550 A.D.

GENEVA BIBLE 1560 A.D.
BISHOPS BIBLE 1568 A.D.
(ENGLISH)

BEZAS GREEK N.T.
1598 A.D.

**KING JAMES BIBLE
1611 A.D.**

THE PURE WORD OF GOD

PROVIDENTIAL PRESERVATION OF THE TEXT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

CORRUPTION OF THE SCRIPTURES
(Gnosticism, Arianism, pagan philosophy)

ALEXANDRIAN TEXT LINE

45 MSS. †

ALEXANDRIA

PAPYRUS
MSS. (P66, P75, ETC.)
200 A.D.

CLEMENT
150-215 A.D.

ORIGEN
184-254 A.D.

EUSEBIUS
260-340 A.D.

VATICANUS
MSS. 331 A.D.

SINAITICUS
MSS. 331 A.D.

JEROME
382 A.D.

ALEXANDRINUS
MS. 450 A.D.

RHEIMS-DOUAY
BIBLE. 1582 A.D.
(ENGLISH)

**GREEK NEW
TESTAMENTS**
GREISBACH 1805 A.D.
LACHMANN 1850 A.D.
TREGELLES 1870 A.D.
TISCHENDORF 1870 A.D.
ALFORD 1872 A.D.

WESTCOTT-HORT
GREEK N.T. 1881 A.D.

**REVISED VERSION
1881 A.D.**

A.S.V., R.S.V., J.B., L.B., T.E.V., N.E.B., N.I.V.,
N.A.S.V., G.N.B., N.R.S.V., N.A.B., C.E.V.,
N.B.V., N.K.J.V., (footnotes.) JEH. WITNESS
BIBLE etc.

CORRUPTED MODERN VERSIONS

3 THE TWO HERETICS*

CLEMENT: He accepted Greek philosophy and the Apocrypha as divinely authoritative. He was head of the catechetical school at Alexandria, and believed that salvation could be obtained through various means including baptism, faith and works, faith alone etc.

ORIGEN: He also became head of the catechetical school. A man of superior intellect he however denied the Bible's historicity, eternal punishment, the Holy Spirit's eternality, salvation by grace etc. He was given to the allegorizing of scripture.

* Data from: "Final Authority" by William P. Grady.

4 THE TWO FALSE WITNESSES **

Discarded and hidden for 1500 years, these two corrupted manuscripts form the basis of all MODERN VERSIONS. They disagree with each other in over 3000 places in the Gospels alone. It is the **VATICAN MSS** (which include the Apocrypha) that the translators mostly relied upon. Both had their roots in Alexandria and show the influence of Origen.

** Data from H.C. Hoskier's "Codex B and its Allies".

A total of 43 other manuscripts indicate some support for this text compared to 5210 which support the Traditional Text. †

John W. Burgon, states: "These are two of the least trustworthy documents in existence..." ("Revision Revised.")

5 THE TWO APOSTATE REVISIONISTS

Westcott and Hort Both were apostates. Westcott did not accept: Genesis 1-3; Bodily resurrection of Christ; Miracles and literal coming of Christ. Was partial to Romish ways. Hort did not accept the infallibility of Scripture. He also favored Darwin's theory of evolution. Both men did not believe in eternal punishment or the vicarious atonement. (Data from, "Life & Letters", 1896., 1903.)

NESTLE GREEK
N.T. 1898 A.D.
(+26 revisions)

6 CHANGES COMPARED WITH THE TRAD. TEXT.*

GREEK WORDS:
Added=306, Omitted=2987
VERSES:
Omitted = 20

* Data from E.W. Fowler's "Evaluating Versions of the N.T."

Note: Most of these changes originate in the W-H text and most have been carried into the modern versions.