

Foundations of Biblical History
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Lesson 7
Suspicious Characters

In previous lessons we explored the beginning of two very different streams of Bible manuscripts.

One stream began at Antioch, Syria, where the Apostles Paul and Barnabus preached, and the Word of God was published.

The other stream began in Alexandria, Egypt, where teachers of false doctrines added their own teachings to the Bible Manuscripts they published.

The Philosophy of Antioch was that the Bible is **Preserved** and Perfect and cannot be **improved**.

The Philosophy of Alexandria was that God did not preserve a **perfect** Bible. Therefore, scholars are left to **improve** upon the Bible.

Down through history the Roman Catholic Church has promoted the **Alexandrian** manuscripts.

Until the late 1800s Protestant Churches have mostly promoted the **Antiochian** Manuscripts.

In 1522 Erasmus compiled and published a collections of Antioch manuscripts in what became known as the "Textus Receptus" or "Received Text."

From the Textus Receptus, Martin Luther translated a German Bible. The Tyndale Bible, Coverdale Bible, Matthews Bible, Great Bible, Geneva Bible, Bishops Bible and later the King James Bible were all published in English.

The Roman Catholic Church tried to maintain **control** of people by keeping the Bible out of the common language.

Church services were held in Latin. Only the priest and church leaders were allowed to read the Bible.

The Catholic Church persecuted and sometimes killed people for reading their Bibles.

William Tyndale and others were killed by the Catholic church because they translated the Bible into English.

As the Bible became more available to the general public the Catholic church leaders realized they could not stop the spread of the Bible. The only other solution was to change the Bible.

In 1540 the Roman Catholic church formed the "Jesuit Order." This was an army of secret Roman Catholic agents whose purpose was to **destroy** the Textus Receptus and infiltrate Protestant churches, universities, and governments of the world.

In 1870, The Convention of the Church of England commissioned a revision of the Authorized [King James] Version. Their original intent was to correct a few supposed errors they thought were in the King James Bible. The revision committee was instructed to change as little as possible to form a minor revision of the King James Bible.

On the revision committee were two Church of England scholars who were under the influence of the Roman Catholic Jesuits. These two scholars were Brooke Foss Westcott and Fenton John Anthony Hort.

For twenty years they had been working on a new Greek translation of the Bible in hopes of replacing the Textus Receptus and destroying the King James Bible.

Westcott and Hort used mainly two Greek manuscripts as their source documents for this new translation.

One was the Vaticanus. This manuscript had been locked away in the Vatican for hundreds of years under the watchful eye of the Roman Catholic Church.

The other document was the Sinaiticus. This document was of highly questionable origin. A man named Constantine von Tischendorf claimed to have found it in a trash basket in the monastery at Mt. Sinai.

Tischendorf claimed he found the "oldest and best" manuscript available. It did not contain the whole Bible. It has a lot of editing and corrections in it.

It was disputed by a man named Simonides who said the Sinaiticus document was written by his own hand. If Simonides wrote it, then it cannot be one of the oldest manuscripts. If Tischendorf found it in the trash, it was there because it was known to be in error.

Tischendorf, Westcott, and Hort taught that God's word had been "**lost**" for hundreds of years and that now they had "**found**" it.

Since we know God promised to preserve His Word to every generation, we know that God would not have allowed His Word to be lost and hidden away

in a monastery or in the Vatican for hundreds of year, only to be brought to light by a couple of men who did not even believe the Bible.

Both the Sinaiticus and the Vaticanus closely match the Alexandrian manuscripts.

Westcott and Hort combined these two documents to form their new Greek edition of the Bible.

The following information comes from *Gipp's Understandable History of the Bible, 1987, Sam Gipp*. In his book he quotes directly from *The Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott*, by Westcott's son Arthur, and *The Life and Letters of Fenton John Anthony Hort*, written by his son.

Let's look at what Westcott and Hort believed about the Bible.

Hort did not believe God preserved His Word. He believed the New Testament had become corrupted.

Bible Authority:

He said, "In the New Testament, as in almost all prose writings which have been much copied, corruptions by [added words] are many times more numerous than corruptions by omission."

He believed the Bible was **no different** than any other writing.

Hort wrote in 1858, "There are, I fear, still more serious differences between [myself and Evangelicals] on the subject of authority, and especially the authority of the Bible."

Evolution:

Hort admired Charles Darwin's book explaining the theory of evolution.

The devil and Hell:

Hort did not believe in the existence of the devil. Concerning Hell, he said, "We have no sure knowledge respecting the duration of future punishment..."

Atonement:

Hort rejected the belief in Christ's atonement for sin through His shedding of Blood.

Hort said, "Certainly nothing can be more unscriptural than the modern limiting of Christ's bearing our sins and sufferings to His death."

Baptism:

Hort believed babies received salvation at baptism even before they were old enough to repent of sin.

Problems with Westcott

Westcott did not believe the first 3 chapters of Genesis were to be taken literally. In his words, "No one now, I suppose, holds that the first three chapters of Genesis...give a literal history."

Westcott did not believe Heaven is a real place.

Westcott rejected the idea of the Bible being infallible (perfect, without mistakes). He said, "I reject the word infallibility of Holy Scripture overwhelmingly."

Westcott followed the Roman Catholic tradition of honoring idols of Mary.

Westcott did not believe in the miracles of the Bible.

The secret trade off

Under the influence of the Roman Catholic Jesuits, these two men compiled a new Greek manuscript based on faulty Alexandrian documents. They kept their new manuscript a secret until they were placed on the Bible revision committee in 1870. Secretly and gradually they exchanged Textus Receptus manuscripts with their own manuscripts, so the end result was a new Alexandrian Greek text.

These two men successfully replaced the true Word of God, found in the Greek Textus Receptus, with their own new manuscript. This new manuscript became the foundation of most modern English Bibles that are available today.

"The new Greek Testament upon which Westcott and Hort had been working for twenty years was, portion by portion, secretly committed into the hand of the Revision Committee. Their Greek text was strongly radical and revolutionary. The Revisors followed the guidance of the two Cambridge editors, Westcott and Hort, who were constantly at their elbow, and whose radical Greek New Testament, deviating the furthest possible from the Received Text, is to all intents and purposes the Greek New Testament followed by the Revision Committee. This Greek

text, in the main, follows the Vatican and Sinaiticus Manuscripts."—(Fuller, David, *Which Bible?*, Grand Rapids International Publications, Grand Rapids, 1971, 2nd edition, p. 204)

“Westcott and Hort were so successful at their secret task of subtly guiding the decisions of the Revision Committee that many Committee members did not suspect that they had been used...to help destroy the authority of the Authorized [King James] Version and give the world yet another Roman Catholic Bible.”—Gipp, Samuel, *Gipp's Understandable History of the Bible*, Daystar Publishing, Miamitown, OH, 3rd edition, 2004, p. 267

VIDEO

Conclusion

God inspired His word perfectly to the human writers. He promised to preserve His Word for eternity. Satan has been fighting against the authority of God's Word from the beginning of time. We must choose. Do we trust God's inerrant preserved Word? Or do we trust the Bibles that have been polluted to by scholars whose goal was to exalt the authority of the Roman Catholic church?