

Topic

● I INTRODUCTION

● A "The Bible"

- 1 The word derives from "biblia"
 - a It is the Latin word for "The Book"
 - b Actually, the Bible is not one book but 72 booklets – 72 in the Catholic Bible
- 2 The Latin word, in turn, came from the Greek word for "books"

● B Christians divide the Bible into two parts: Two Testaments

- 1 The word "testament" originally came from the two "**covenants**," ***God made with His People***
 - a God established the first with Israel at Mt. Sinai (a/K/a Mt. Horeb)
 - (1) Exodus 34:10
 - (a) Then the LORD said: "I am making a covenant with you. Before all your people I will do wonders never before done in any nation in all the world. The people you live among will see how awesome is the work that I, the LORD, will do for you."
 - (2) God made a pact with a people, with 12 separate tribes
 - (3) He established a unity with this confederation
 - (4) He became their God and they became His People
 - b Jesus established the second with the Church, the New Israel, at the Last Supper
 - (1) Mark 14:22
 - (a) While they were eating, Jesus took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take it; this is my body." 23 Then he took the cup, gave thanks and offered it to them, and they all drank from it. 24 "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many," he said to them.
 - (2) This unity was based on a shared life, His Spirit, (His "blood,") which He handed over to the Church from the cross
 - 2 "**Testament**" is an unusual synonym for the word "covenant"
 - a In old English "**Testament**" referred to "a covenant between human beings and God"
 - b So the two parts of the Bible describe the old and new forms of unity between God and a particular People
 - (1) The 12 tribes, Israel
 - (2) The Church
 - 3 There is an easy way to understand the division between the two parts of the Bible:
 - a "The Old Testament" refers to all the books written before the birth of Jesus
 - b "The New Testament" refers to all the books written after the rebirth (Resurrection) of Jesus
- #### ● C People wonder about the differences between Bibles, Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish
- 1 The separate booklets were not organized into any complete pattern for centuries --
 - a Almost every booklet was written originally on the available writing material: papyrus parchment
 - (1) These individual parchments did not lend themselves for compiling into books
 - (2) As individual scrolls, they were rolled inward or outward from both ends as they were read
 - (3) The maximum practical length of a scroll helped necessitate the division of a few booklets intended to be read as one
 - (a) 1 Kings and 2 Kings
 - (b) 1 Chronicle and 2 Chronicle
 - (4) Jews, living in areas where papyrus reeds were available, continued to use them for "the writings" long after the birth of Jesus
 - (a) They simply lumped the booklets into broad divisions
 - (b) "Law" and "Prophets," and "Writings"
 - b The first Christians, who also lived in Palestine, continued using papyrus
 - c Later converts to Christianity were Greeks who lived in areas where papyrus was not available
 - (1) They began using paper, not papyrus, to record their sacred booklets
 - (2) And they began compiling these paper sheets into booklets and into one larger book – paper allows for this compiling, invites it
 - 2 Between Jews and Christians
 - a Jews, of course, included only the books of the "Old Testament"

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- b They ordered these books in the "Old Testament" in a way very different from the way all Christians, Catholic and Protestant, follow today
 - (1) Jews follow an order in which God is increasingly more hidden
 - (a) The "historical books" – God acts directly: the plagues, the flood
 - [1] The term as used among Jews refers only to the first five books of the Bible, the "Torah"
 - [2] These booklets are Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy,
 - (b) The "prophetic books" – God speaks through others
 - [1] "Early Prophets":
 - [a] The booklets included here surprise us –
 - [b] They are the remaining "historical books: "Joshua," "Judges," "1 & 2 Samuel," "1 & 2 Kings"
 - [2] "Later Prophets"
 - [a] These are divided into "Major," and "Minor"
 - [b] The division is based on the length of the booklets, not the importance of the individual works
 - (c) The "wisdom books" – God is silent
 - (2) Christians start with Biblical history and end with Biblical prophecy, placing the Proverbial booklets (called "The Wisdom Books,") in the middle
 - (a) "Historical books" range from Genesis through Ezra and Nehemiah
 - (b) "Wisdom books," include a large variety of sapiential sayings and writings
 - (c) "Prophetic books" cover all the writers considered to be from the prophets
 - (3) There is a reason for the Christian ordering
 - (a) Christians believe the prophets looked forward to Jesus
 - (b) They placed the prophetic books immediately before the start of the New Testament
 - (c) They did this so they could end with Malachi who concluded with references to the return of Elijah
 - [1] Malachi 4:5
 - [a] Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet Before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. 6 And he will turn The hearts of the fathers to the children, And the hearts of the children to their fathers, Lest I come and strike the earth with a curse. - to Elijah taken to Heaven
 - [2] Elijah had earlier been reported to have been taken alive to Heaven
 - [a] 2-Kings 2:11*
 - [1] As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.
 - [b] He was not taken up to spend eternity with God (as we would interpret the action)
 - {1} Such a concept of Heaven had not yet been reached in Biblical thought at the time this story was written
 - {2} He could only have been taken from the earth to be preserved from death in order that he could return later to accomplish a vital mission
 - {3} Christians, of course, felt this mission must have been to prepare the way for the Christ, for Jesus, for the "Kingdom of God"
- 3 Between Catholics and Protestants
 - a The New Testament booklets are the same in both Bibles
 - b The differences in the number of booklets in the Old Testament will be explained later because background information is required
- D **It is important for us to remember that the Biblical books were not written in the order in which they appear in any popular Bible, Catholic, Protestant, or Jewish**
 - 1 The opening booklets of the OT cover the early history of God's dealing with us
 - a Genesis to Deuteronomy were actually written very, very late in relationship with the other Old Testament booklets
 - b These works probably were written in the final form in which we have them after almost all the prophetic books had already been compiled
 - c This explains why the prophetic books make so few references to events, key events, reported in the early historical booklets
 - 2 The opening booklets of the NT, the Gospels, also were written after many of the other booklets in the NT
 - a The Gospels were written after all the letters of Paul
 - b Paul died around the year 63 CE and the first Gospel, Mark, probably was written around 69 CE or later
 - 3 **Luke was inspired to write two booklets**

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- a These two were intended to be read as **one work**
 - (1) The first, ***Luke's Gospel, shows the Spirit of God preaching, healing, teaching in Jesus***
 - (2) The second, ***the Acts of the Apostles, shows the exact same Spirit of God preaching, healing, teaching in the Church, often in direct echoes of the way the Spirit worked in Jesus***
- b The unity of Luke, when his booklets are put together as intended, offers a challenging message: **you are as important to your town today as Jesus was to Galilee and Judea 2000 years ago!**
- c Years after Luke wrote, some Christian scribe separated Luke's joint works to insert the Gospel of John
 - (1) Now they are read as completely separate booklets
 - (2) The teaching Luke intended is lost to most people
- II TEXT
 - A **"Raise up"** also is used to imply **"resurrected;"** **"serve"** also suggests "function as deacon[ness]"
 - 1 **Mark 1:30**
 - (a) **But Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a fever, and they told Him about her at once. 31 So He came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and immediately the fever left her. And she served them.**
 - B **Almost none of this Bible I am holding was inspired by God!**
 - 1 [Stage Direction: Remember to hold up any English Bible translation]
 - 2 The Old Testament was composed from 900 BC (BCE) to 100 BC
 - 3 The New Testament was composed from 50 AD to 150 AD
 - 4 Thus, the period of writing spanned over 1000 years
 - a **Our most recent Biblical book was written in its original form 1850 years ago!**
 - b And the oldest book was written at least 2700 years ago
 - 5 For all but 500 of these years, printing had not yet been invented
 - a **Everything written had to be copied by hand**
 - b Since the copying was arduous and monotonous scribes made errors
 - c Once made, these errors were then repeated in all the copies made from the text that contained the error
 - C **God only guarantees the original text produced by the inspired author(s)**
 - 1 He definitely did not guarantee all the copies made from copies made from copies made from.....etc
 - 2 For centuries increasing errors were possible; more than possible: they happened!
 - 3 **We do not have any original text**
 - 4 The search for the original texts was problematic until recently – very recently!
 - a **Our first complete Bible in the original languages dates only to 900 AD!**
 - b **Even more surprising, our first complete translation of the entire Bible dates only to 400 AD!!!**
 - c At different dates, many copies of booklets, parts of booklets in the original languages, and collected parts of Bible were discovered
 - d **Most English translations are based on a copy of the Hebrew text originally written by a scribe(s) only in 1008 AD!**
 - e We must never forget that most English copies are based upon a minimum of 1200-1600 years of hand copying
 - 5 There are many differences in the versions of texts that have been passed down to us
 - a Most of these differences are minor
 - b A few of them are significant, especially in Luke
 - (1) A significant addition or deletion occurs
 - (2) Some call it the "Great Interpolation"
 - D **The difficulties in copying are far greater than we would imagine**
 - 1 Greek, (the language of the entire New Testament,) presented hazards for translators and for copyists
 - a **It used no punctuation**
 - b **It had no spacing between words, phrases, sentences**
 - c **And it used no small letters**
 - d Here is an English parallel to Greek writing:
 - (1) THELORDISMYSHEPHERDISHALLNOTWANTHEMAKESMETOLIEDOWNINGREENPASTURESHELEAD
SMEBESIDETHESTILLWATERSHERESTORESmysoulHELEADSMEINTHEPATHSOFRIGHTEOUSNES
SFORHISNAMESSAKEYEATHOUGHIIWALKTHROUGHTHEVALLEYOFTHESHADOWOFDEATHIWILLFE
ARNOEVILFORYOUAREWITHMEYOURRODANDYOURSTAFFTHEYCOMFORTMEYOUUPREAREATAB
LEBEFOREMEINTHEPRESENCEOFMYENEMIESYOUANOINTMYHEADWITHOILMYCUPRUNSOVERSU

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- 2 Hebrew, the language of most of the Old Testament was even harder to copy and translate
 - a All of the above difficulties also existed for Hebrew copying
 - b **There was one additional problem, a major one**
 - (1) **Hebrew had no letters for its vowels**
 - (2) On occasion the meanings of words had to be inferred since several words could use the same consonants
 - (3) Example of another English parallel
 - (a) THLRDSMSPHRDShLLNTWNTHMKSMTLDWNGRNPSTRSHLDSMBSDTHSTLLWTRSHRSTRSMS
LHLDSMNTHPTHSFRGHTSNSSFRHSNMSSKYTHGHWLKTHRGHTHVLLYFTHSHDWFDTHIWLLFR
NVLFYRWTHMYRRDNDYRSTFFTHCMFRTMYPRPRTBLBFRMNTHPRSNCFMNMSYNNTMHDWT
HLMCPRNSVRSRLGDNSSNDMRCShLLFLLWMLLTHDYSFMLFNDIWLLDWLLNTHHSFTHLRDFVR
 - c **To make matters worse, by the time of Jesus, Hebrew was no longer spoken by people**
 - (1) It was a "dead" language like Latin is today
 - (a) It was used in reading the Bible
 - (b) But the sermons on the readings and the everyday language of Jews in the Holy Land were in Aramaic
 - (2) During the years since people had stopped speaking the Hebrew language, it was much easier for a copying scribe to make errors
 - (3) For example, what was God's personal name? "Yahweh" as most modern language/scripture scholars believe, or "Jehovah" as the scholars during the Dark Ages believed?
 - (a) **YHWH is the name as written**
 - [1] But it was written in a different alphabet
 - [2] So different letters were used to spell it out in different nations
 - [a] **In English: YHWH**
 - [b] **In German: JHVH**
 - (b) **A German monk in Middle Ages put in what he thought were the missing vowels**
 - [1] He guessed and he guessed wrong
 - [2] He came up with "Jehovah"
 - (c) **Today Hebrew is again a spoken language in Israel**
 - [1] Therefore, we know the correct word was "Yahweh"
 - [2] It is the holiest name of God, the one revealed to Moses at the burning bush
 - [a] Exodus 3:13
 - {1} Moses said to God, "Suppose I go to the Israelites and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' Then what shall I tell them?"
 - {2} 14 God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.'"
 - {3} 15 God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob—has sent me to you.' This is my name for ever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.
 - [b] Of all the gods, when Pharaoh asks, which one of them shall I say are you?
 - {1} God answered "I AM;" this is God's intimate name, as mine is "Larry"
 - {2} The Hebrews believed that speaking any person's name gave the speaker power
 - {a} Demons try to control Jesus in this fashion in the Gospel stories
 - {b} Mark 1:23
 - ((1)) Just then a man in their synagogue who was possessed by an evil spirit cried out,
 - ((2)) 24 "What do you want with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!"
 - ((3)) 25 "Be quiet!" said Jesus sternly, "Come out of him!" 26 The evil spirit shook the man violently and came out of him with a shriek.
 - [c] Therefore, the Israelites substituted a different name for God when reading aloud: when the text says "Yahweh is my shepherd," they read "Adonai (lord, master) is my shepherd"
 - [d] Next the Jews began to avoid saying "God," a generic term, as much as possible
 - {1} **This explains Matthew's use of "Kingship of Heaven"**
 - {a} Mark 4:30

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- ((1)) **30 Again he said, "What shall we say the kingdom of God is like, or what parable shall we use to describe it? 31 It is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest seed you plant in the ground.**
- ((2)) 32 Yet when planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all garden plants, with such big branches that the birds of the air can perch in its shade."
- {b} **Matthew 13:31**
 - ((1)) **He told them another parable: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field.**
 - ((2)) 32 Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches."
- {2} **And most passive constructions in the Gospels are an indirect way to describe God acting**
- {a} **Matthew 6:9**
 - ((1)) "This, then, is how you should pray:
 - ((a)) "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.
 - ((b)) 10 your kingdom come. your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
 - ((c)) 11 Give us today our daily bread.
 - ((d)) 12 Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
 - ((e)) 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'
- {b} **"Holy ["/hallowed."] be your name"**
 - ((1)) The petition does not mean that we should respect God's name -- though we certainly should
 - ((2)) Rather it asks that God should establish the holiness of His name since only He can do this
 - ((a)) The Bible correctly sees God alone in control of all events
 - ((b)) It does, of course, teach our freedom and our responsibility
 - ((c)) But these do not affect God governing the world
- 3 **Scripture Scholars have developed guidelines to resolve differences between the versions**
 - a **For the New Testament**
 - (1) **They refer to quotations of texts by the earliest Christian writers**
 - (a) These writers are called "Fathers of the Church"
 - (b) These Fathers made extensive Biblical references and quotations in their writings
 - (c) These references can be compared with varieties of the same verses that we have received in our Bibles
 - (2) And they give considerable weight to the earliest versions of translations of the texts into the Near Eastern and Latin languages
 - b **For the Old Testament**
 - (1) **They use the same guidelines referred to above**
 - (2) **And they use one more: The Septuagint**
 - (a) This translation is exceptionally important, far more important than any of the other
 - [1] **Its existence explains the differences between Catholic and Protestant Bibles**
 - [2] Remember: these Bibles differ only in the number of booklets in the OT
 - (b) **The translation was made about 200 years before Jesus**
 - [1] By this time, there were more Jews living outside the Holy Land than there were within Palestine
 - [2] These emigrants spoke the universal language of business: Greek, not Hebrew or Aramaic or Latin
 - [3] **The Old Testament part of the Bible was translated into Greek for them**
 - [a] There were popular myths that gave the translation great respect
 - {1} One was that God inspired 70 scholars to translate it in 70 days
 - {2} Another was that 70 scholars translated it separately and all their translations agreed
 - [b] The myths explain why it was called the "Septuagint" -- from the Greek word for "70"
 - (3) **There are important differences between the translation called the Septuagint and the Hebrew original**
 - (a) **Sometimes the translator changed the meaning of the text**
 - [1] An important example deals with Isaiah **"Young girl shall conceive"**

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- [a] **Isaiah 7:13** [New Revised Standard Translation]
 - {1} 13 Then Isaiah said: "Hear then, O house of David! Is it too little for you to weary mortals, that you weary my God also?"
 - {2} 14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.
- [b] The Hebrew word stresses her youth
- [c] Usually, therefore, but not necessarily, she was a virgin
- [2] The text was translated in the Septuagint with the word for "virgin"
 - [a] Matthew quotes the Septuagint version of this text in his Gospel and uses the quote to prove the virginal conception of Jesus
 - [b] Jesus, Himself, is shown as often using the Septuagint version of a text, not the Hebrew one
- (b) And the Septuagint adds several books and sections to 2 other books (Daniel)
 - [1] The new texts were Tobit, Judith, 1 & 2 Maccabees, Wisdom, Sirach [Ecclesiasticus,) Baruch and additions to Daniel and Esther
 - [2] The Qumran scrolls have shown us that a few of these booklets had Hebrew originals
 - [3] **But some of the booklets were composed originally in Greek**
- E Eventually, each of the major religions had to decide on the books which it would include in the Bible
 - 1 **The Jews did it long before Christians finalized their Bibles**
 - a **They did it shortly after the second Temple was destroyed in 70 AD -- sometime around the year 100 CE**
 - b They decided to include in their sacred writings only those books with Hebrew originals
 - (1) The destruction of the Temple caused the Jewish leaders to become defensive
 - (2) Before this, their faith had allowed a great variety of differing groups, differing sects
 - (3) Now, without the Temple to keep them united, they defined the requirements of being Jewish -- strict adherence to the Law
 - (4) And they settled on the booklets of which they were most sure -- those composed and retained in Hebrew
 - c They rejected the Septuagint originals
 - 2 Christians didn't begin to finalize their Bibles until Martin Luther broke from the Catholic Church in 1519 AD!
 - a Luther revolted against beliefs in "Church Tradition" for which he could find no basis in the Bible
 - (1) He felt many practices had seeped into Christianity that had no Biblical justification -- that didn't belong
 - (2) To correct this, he wanted the Bible alone as the sole and entire basis for faith
 - (3) Because of his reliance on "Sola Scriptura," ("the Bible Alone,") he needed to decide which books belonged to the Bible
 - (4) He decided to accept only the Old Testament books included in the Jewish Bible, only those booklets that had Hebrew originals
 - (5) All other Christian sects, except Catholics, in adopting their Bibles have followed his example
 - b The Catholic Church didn't make an official decision regarding the booklets to be included in the Bible until the Council of Trent after 1548 AD
 - (1) The Council was called to react to Luther's objections to the Catholic experience of Christianity
 - (2) Luther had rejected "Tradition"
 - (3) So the Council stressed it in area after area
 - (4) And it adopted the Septuagint version of the Old Testament as the official Catholic version of this part of the Bible
 - (a) After all, the Septuagint was the version of Old Testament texts most frequently quoted in the New Testament (where these texts differed from the Hebrew)
 - (b) The New Testament used it in quotes made by Jesus as His statements are cited in the Gospels
 - 3 **There really is no major doctrine taught in the controversial booklets**
 - a So they shouldn't affect the understanding of the basics of our faith as held by Catholics and Protestants
 - b One of them [2 Maccabees] does contain one strange passage that might be interpreted as backing Purgatory --
 - (1) **2 Maccabees 12:43**
 - (a) He then took up a collection among all his soldiers, amounting to two thousand silver drachmas, which he sent to Jerusalem to provide for an expiatory sacrifice. In doing this he acted in a very excellent and noble way, inasmuch as he had the resurrection of the dead in view.
 - (b) 44 for if he were not expecting the fallen to rise again, it would have been useless and foolish to pray for them in death.

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- (c) 45 But if he did this with a view to the splendid reward that awaits those who had gone to rest in godliness, it was a holy and pious thought. 46 Thus he made atonement for the dead that they might be freed from this sin.
- (2) It suggests prayers should be made for the dead
- (3) Some argue, "Why would the dead need prayers unless they were not yet in their eternal bliss?"
- (4) However, no respected modern Scripture scholar would suggest the author of this booklet believed in anything like Purgatory
- 4 The faith of each Christian sect ultimately decides which booklets belong in its Bible
- F Here are just a few examples of textual problems that are in some versions and omitted from others
- 1 Scholars must conclude on a case by case basis whether to include or exclude the longer text
- a Example 1: An addition: Matthew's ending of the "Our Father"
 - (1) Solution: the Catholic Church's version is probably the one included in the original of Matthew
 - (a) All accurate Protestant translations since 1958 reflect the probability of this solution
 - (b) The Modern American Standard certainly does: Matthew 6:12*
 - [1] *'And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. 13* And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.'* [Italics are used in the translation for the words underlined]
 - (2) There are solid reasons for concluding that the shorter version, (the "Catholic version" of the Our Father,) was the correct one
 - (a) No scribe would dare drop one of the 7 or 8 petitions from the only prayer Jesus taught us
 - (b) But scribes, in copying, did add things to the text of Bible
 - [1] "For thine..." is a traditional prayer ending used at the time of Jesus
 - [2] It is easy to conclude a scribe, reading the prayer of Jesus, was carried away in prayer and added an ending in the margin, an expression of praise
 - [3] A copyist using the text with the prayer that had the praise exclamation in the margin, thinking the line was an omission, added it to the text
 - [4] And all the subsequent copies made from this second version included the longer ending
- b Example 2: A deletion: Luke's "Father forgive them"
 - (1) Solution: there are good reasons for concluding that the longer version was the correct one
 - (a) We can easily understand why, considering the cultural background of the time, a scribe would drop the phrase
 - (b) He would drop it because of the bitter rivalry, strife, and hatred Christians developed, sadly, towards Jews within 100 years of the first Easter Sunday -- a hatred that persisted all through the period the Bible was copied manually
 - [1] Some copyist couldn't believe that Jesus wanted the Jews forgiven so they dropped the phrase
 - [2] And other copyists, afterwards, would copy the remaining Passion with no qualms
 - (c) Because of this atmosphere of bitterness, it is much, much more difficult to believe any copyist would create a prayer of forgiveness for Jews and put this prayer on the lips of the dying Jesus
 - ((2)) Luke 23:32*
 - (a) *Two others also, who were criminals, were led away to be put to death with him. 33* When they came to the place that is called The Skull, they crucified Jesus there with the criminals, one on his right and one on his left.*
 - (b) *34* Then Jesus said, "Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing."*
- 2 In some few instances, it is impossible to make sense of the text
 - a Sections of Hosea reflect this confusion
 - b Brackets are used in translations to indicate such questionable texts and translations
- 3 Finally, there is a problem unique to Luke
 - a One version of his second work (the Western), Acts, is considerably longer (over 10% longer!) than the other major version, the Alexandrian
 - b Each editor, translator, commentator must decide which version to accept as authentic
- III TRANSLATION
 - A God does not guarantee any of the English translations we use
 - 1 He only guarantees the text of the original language,
 - 2 First, a translator must select the proper version of each booklet, deciding between all the thousands of minor differences
 - 3 Then he/she/they must translate accurately from the original into English

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- a Before the 1900's Church beliefs colored word selections for both Catholics and Protestants
- b Now almost all translations strive to be as accurate as possible
- B Problems still exist with the most accurate translations
 - 1 In both Hebrew and Greek, there are words that have several different meanings
 - a The translator can only use one of these several possible meanings
 - b Often several of the meanings are intended to be simultaneously implied by the inspired author
 - (1) "Heal" also came to mean "save" in its religious sense
 - (a) Luke 6:7*
 - (a) So the scribes and Pharisees watched Him closely, whether He would heal on the Sabbath, that they might find an accusation against Him.
 - (2) "Lord" can be used for both "Sir" or "Master" and "Yahweh"
 - (a) Matthew 8:6*
 - [1] "Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed and in terrible suffering." 7* Jesus said to him, "I will go and heal him."
 - (b) The centurion called Jesus "Sir"
 - (c) But the Church knew He was actually "Lord," "Yahweh"
 - (3) Mark uses "the way" to unite his entire "Journey" section
 - (a) Mark 8:27
 - [1] Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?"
 - [2] 28 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets."
 - [3] 29 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ."
 - [4] 30 Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him. 31 He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again
 - [5] 34Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.
 - [6] 35 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.
 - [7] 36 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul? 37 Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?
 - (b) Here is the background of the story
 - [1] Jesus has revealed Himself in Galilee
 - [a] He showed through this ministry that He was here to make us whole, all we could be
 - [b] He gave Himself to us in response to our needs in order to make us whole
 - {1} Our blindness
 - {2} Our deafness
 - {3} Our paralysis
 - {4} Our deadness
 - [2] Now He begins a journey of revelation inviting us to follow Him
 - [a] He does not ask us to precede or to walk alongside with Him
 - [b] But He does invite us to allow His love to guide us each step that we take
 - [c] As He travels, He tries to teach the Church how He will save us
 - {1} He saves us not through power but through loving service
 - {2} Sadly, Mark shows that the disciples, (the Church,) continue not to understand
 - (c) Again and again, Mark uses the term "the way"
 - [1] Mark ends the Journey section with Bartimaeus first sitting "along the way" then following Jesus "on the way" as Jesus enters Jerusalem
 - [a] Mark 10:46
 - {1} Then they came to Jericho. As Jesus and his disciples, together with a large crowd, were leaving the city, a blind man, Bartimaeus (that is, the Son of Timaeus), was sitting by the roadside begging. [Literally: sitting "along the way"]
 - {2} 47 When he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to shout, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!"

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- (c) 48 Many rebuked him and told him to be quiet, but he shouted all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 49 Jesus stopped and said, "Call him." So they called to the blind man, "Cheer up! On your feet! He's calling you."
- {4} 50 Throwing his cloak aside, he jumped to his feet and came to Jesus. 51 "What do you want me to do for you?" Jesus asked him. The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see."
- {5} 52 "Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road. [Literally: "on the way"]
- [6] **[Note]**
 - [1] In verse 46, "by the roadside" was "along the way"
 - [2] In verse 52, "along the road" was "on the way"
- [2] Mark's usage has additional significance since **"The Way"** was the first title the Church gave itself
 - [a] They used it even before they or others called them "Christians"
 - [b] They were those who followed Jesus on **"The Way"** to the cross of service
- [3] Today, however, the same translator will often use a variety of words – **"road," "way,"**
- (d) Many other single word references are also translated by several words
 - [1] **Mark 7:27**
 - [a] He said to her, "I let the children be fed first, for it is not fair to take the children's food and throw it to the dogs." 28 But she answered him, "Sir, even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."
 - [2] **"Food" also means "bread;" "crumbs" also means "scraps"**
 - [a] Both words are often translated in both ways by some translators
 - [b] It is important that **"bread"** and **"crumbs"** be used for this story
 - [c] These words tie this story to the theme of the whole section
 - {1} Jesus feeds 5000 with **bread; 12 baskets of crumbs are left over**
 - {2} A pagan woman and Jesus hassle over performing a miracle for the woman's daughter
 - {a} Jesus says people don't give dogs the **bread**
 - {b} The woman replies that even dogs get the **crumbs**
 - {c} Jesus works the miracle
 - {3} Jesus next feeds 4000 with **bread; 7 baskets of crumbs are left over**
 - {4} The disciples and Jesus, still later, are in a boat with only one loaf of **bread**
 - [d] The words unite a section intended to teach one of the basic themes of Mark: Jesus gives **bread** (His Body) to feed all peoples and to unite them by this feeding
- 2 Both Hebrew and Greek have grammar peculiarities that cannot be reflected in English translations
 - a At times these grammar peculiarities are more significant than double meanings
 - b It is impossible in English to catch all of the overtones of Greek and Hebrew grammar
 - c Greek verbs can have two versions
 - (1) One stresses a repeated action -- Jesus was "weeping and weeping and weeping"
 - (2) The other stresses an action done once -- "Jesus wept"
 - (3) We can't fully catch these differences in English
 - (a) Our verbal distinctions are not nearly as sharp as those in Greek
 - (b) The difference can completely change the meaning of a text
 - [1] What is the "unforgivable sin?"
 - [a] **Mark 3:28**
 - {1} I tell you the truth, all the sins and blasphemies of men will be forgiven them. 29 But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven: he is guilty of an eternal sin."
 - {2} 30 He said this because they were saying, "He has an evil spirit."
 - [b] He who is **continuing in a state of blaspheming the Spirit**
 - [c] Not he who **only once blasphemes**
 - [2] **All verbs in Matthew's "Our Father" are one time only verbs**
 - [a] **Matthew 6:9**
 - {1} "Our Father in heaven, **hallowed be** your name,
 - {2} 10 your kingdom **come**, your will **be done** on earth as it is in heaven.
 - {3} 11 **Give** us today our daily bread.

Topic

- {4} 12 Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.
 - {5} 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'
- [b] Remember: Matthew uses a passive of respect for God
 - {1} God: "You make holy Your name;" not "may we respect your name"
 - {a} Not daily
 - {b} But once and for all
 - {2} God: "You establish Your will as completely on earth as You have in heaven:"
 - {a} Not daily
 - {b} But once and for all
- [c] In Matthew, the Our Father is not a prayer for daily help
 - {1} It's okay to use the prayer this way, of course, since Luke, inspired by the risen Jesus, changes the verb forms to the daily usage format in his shorter version of the Lord's Prayer
 - {a} Luke 11:2
 - ((1)) "When you pray, say: "Father hallowed be your name, your kingdom come.
 - ((2)) 3 Give us each day our daily bread.
 - {3} 4 Forgive us our sins, for we also forgive everyone who sins against us. And lead us not into temptation.'
 - {2} Matthew's Jesus offers us a prayer that God would end time as we know it!
 - {a} Not for the end of the world
 - {b} But for the end of an age of history as we know its
- d One Greek past tense has a form unlike anything in English
 - (1) An action is mentioned as having happened in the past
 - (2) **But the entire stress is on the continuing effect of that action in the present**
 - (3) Ephesians 1:3
 - (a) Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.
 - [1] The blessing occurred at some real moment in the past
 - [2] But the stress of the verb is on our continuing to experience this blessing, this gift now, in the present
 - (b) The verb form does not focus our attention on the past as it seems to in English
 - (c) Rather it focuses our attention on the present experience of that action of the past
- IV LITERARY FORMS
 - A A quick reading of the Bible reveals a variety of forms [of ways of writing]
 - 1 Historical books
 - 2 Collections of **proverbs**
 - 3 Law books with laws dealing with
 - a Morality
 - b Worship
 - c Food
 - 4 Stories about Jesus (Gospels)
 - 5 Love songs (Song of Songs)
 - 6 Prophets' sermonettes
 - 7 Poems (Psalms)
 - 8 Letters (Epistles)
 - B The "Literary forms," (ways of writing,) which were used then differ significantly from the literary forms in use today
 - 1 **These forms have varied greatly with the passage of time**
 - a We cannot apply our standards of 'history' and our way of understanding "history" to the way history was written and historical works were understood 2000 years ago
 - b We try to capture an accurate reporting of facts; — we want quotes to be factual
 - c The ancients attempted to capture an accurate reporting of the spirit of the event — they would create speeches to interpret the of factual events

Topic

- 2 We read different forms, styles of writing, very differently -- we automatically shift our mental gears
 - a A history book
 - b An historical novel
 - c A news article
 - d An editorial
 - e A columnist's opinion
- 3 Each form has a collection of different guides that help determine the way it is written
 - a News articles show a decrease in importance for each succeeding paragraph
 - (1) Who, what, when, where, why is to be covered in the first sentence,
 - (2) Each succeeding paragraph is less important in the reporter's and editor's view because the reporter never knows how much column space will be allocated for his story
 - b Editorials are written logically
 - c Society wedding stories follow a pattern that varies by paper and region, but a highly stylized pattern
 - d Obituaries are very different from weddings or sports stories, and, again, are highly stylized
- 4 We watch different television programs very differently -- again automatically switching our mental gears to adjust to the rules for each of them
 - a News programs
 - b Comedies
 - c Soap operas
 - d "60 Minutes"
 - e Sport's programs
 - f Commercials
- C Most Biblical interpretation problems come from confusing the literary forms of the booklets
 - 1 Confusion must result when the entire Bible is read in exactly the same way from cover to cover
 - a The Bible is read as if every sentence were equally true and factual
 - b This is similar to watching everything on TV as actually having happened as truly as news programs, -- including the cartoons!
 - c The individual booklets are interpreted and read the same despite the obvious differences in the forms used
 - d This is the "Fundamentalist" approach to the Bible
 - 2 But a knowledge of the literary forms tell us what is actually intended to be shared by the author in each separate booklet
 - 3 Each **literary form**, then and now, has its individual rules of interpretation
- D To read and understand the Bible properly, we need some introduction to the literary forms of the various booklets
 - 1 This instruction should color the way we read the material in the booklet
 - 2 The best example can be the hardest book for us to understand: "Revelation"
 - a It is written in the strangest of all **literary forms in the Bible: Apocalyptic**
 - (1) Examples of this form are also used in Daniel and early forms of it in parts of Ezekiel
 - (2) In addition, we have over 20 examples of Jewish religious literature using the apocalyptic form in "Intertestamental Literature"
 - (a) These are Jewish works written from about 150 BC to about 150 AD
 - (b) They are not included as inspired works in any modern Bible
 - (c) Despite this exclusion from the Bible itself, this literature is very important - it introduced many ideas we take for granted like angels and Satan that were not really part of the Old Testament culture
 - b It a literary form completely foreign to us: we have nothing like it at all
 - 3 Most of the characteristics of Apocalyptic are explained by the historical circumstances at the time the works were written
 - a They are written during periods of persecution or great stress
 - (1) Therefore, they are designed to help the battered faithful endure
 - (2) And they reflect no love for their enemies; indeed, they demand a bitter hatred for the forces of evil
 - b They reflect a dualistic view of reality: "us" [forces of God, of good] versus "them" [forces of Satan, of evil]
 - (1) The Church vs. the persecuting Roman Empire
 - (2) Light vs. Darkness

Topic

- (3) God vs. Satan
- c There is no middle ground – Church members or prospects can't straddle the issue
 - (1) Such a view is crucial to a persecuted group
 - (2) The author must encourage those facing persecution to remain loyal to the booklet's religious views
- d The writing reflects a deterministic view of history
 - (1) Revelation 9:13
 - (a) The sixth angel sounded his trumpet, and I heard a voice coming from the horns of the golden altar that is before God. 14 It said to the sixth angel who had the trumpet, "Release the four angels who are bound at the great river Euphrates."
 - (b) 15 And the four angels who had been kept ready for this very hour and day and month and year were released to kill a third of mankind.
 - (2) History is laid out by God in set periods of time "weeks of years"
 - (a) Revelation 11:10
 - [1] The inhabitants of the earth will gloat over them and will celebrate by sending each other gifts, because these two prophets had tormented those who live on earth. 11 But after the three and a half days a breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck those who saw them.
 - [2] 12 Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies looked on.
 - [3] 13 At that very hour there was a severe earthquake and a tenth of the city collapsed. Seven thousand people were killed in the earthquake, and the survivors were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven.
 - (3) This view of history enabled the faithful to endure the persecution
 - (a) It explained why God was allowing His People to endure suffering
 - (b) God was just waiting out the period of time necessary before final victory
 - (4) Since all of history was determined, the victory of the Church was 100% assured
 - (a) Revelation 18:1
 - [1] After this I saw another angel coming down from heaven. He had great authority, and the earth was illuminated by his splendor. 2 With a mighty voice he shouted: "Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! She has become a home for demons and a haunt for every evil spirit, a haunt for every unclean and detestable bird.
 - [2] 3 For all the nations have drunk the maddening wine of her adulteries. The kings of the earth committed adultery with her, and the merchants of the earth grew rich from her excessive luxuries."
 - (b) Such an assurance was important to the beleaguered Church
- e And the end is just around the corner, another assurance important to the persecuted
 - (1) It would be no help to them to be told they have just 1543 more years of pain
 - (2) Revelation 3:11
 - (a) I am coming soon; hold fast to what you have, so that no one may seize your crown.
 - (3) Revelation 22:7
 - (a) See, I am coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book."
 - (4) Revelation 22:12
 - (a) See, I am coming soon; my reward is with me, to repay according to everyone's work.
 - (5) Revelation 22:20
 - (a) The one who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!
- f The work is written as if it were the product of another person, a famous person
 - (1) Such deception seems dishonest to us
 - (2) But it was a standard way of gaining additional authority for some writing that was used at this time
 - (a) Many similar works were written using another person's authority between 150 BCE and 150 AD
 - (b) Many of the letters once attributed to Paul are now felt to be penned by a disciple of Paul using Paul's name
 - [1] Ephesians
 - [2] 1 & 2 Timothy
 - [3] Titus
 - (3) We can't use our standards of honesty to judge their modes of sharing
- g The work seems to predict the future but actually includes very little future prediction

Topic

- (1) Actually 98% of the booklet describes events of the past
- (2) A modern example of an apocalyptic would be a book which pretends to have been written before the 1929 Great Depression but is actually written in our time
 - (a) **America is too materialistic, worshipping Mammon, not God**
 - (b) **Therefore:**
 - [1] America's children will soon be begging for food in your streets: **The Great Depression 1929-1941**
 - [2] They won't learn: their sons will be sent to strange lands to shed blood: **WW II 1941-45**
 - [3] They still won't learn, so their sons will be sent to even stranger shores: **Korean Wars 1958**
 - [4] They still won't learn, so there must yet be the most violent eruption of all: **Vietnamese Conflict**
 - [a] Violence in your streets
 - [b] A war with no fronts
 - (c) **Then:**
 - [1] **Will you learn your lesson?**
 - [2] **Or must there be a final catastrophe?**
 - [3] **This future threat is cast in the form of a prediction, the only true prediction in the booklet**
- h Much symbolism is used -- don't anger the persecutors even more than they are now
 - (1) Beasts
 - (2) Dragons
 - (3) Horns
 - (4) The Whore of Babylon sitting on seven hills: Rome
- i Because the writing is so mysterious, people today can read anything into it -- and many do
- 4 Revelation reflects this literary style
 - a It was written during the first great universal persecution of the Church
 - b And it was written to encourage Christians to remain loyal: remember, everything but the final coming has happened by the time the booklet was written
- V INERRANCY
 - A God only guarantees the truths He intended to be taught in and through each individual booklet!
 - 1 The truths God intends to teach in each booklet, at its simplest, are:
 - a The experience of God enjoyed by the Biblical author.
 - b And the consequences of this experience for him/her and for us in our lives and in our relations with God and with others
 - 2 The Bible in its entirety is not intended to be an encyclopedia of truths -- through its booklets, God does not intend to teach and guarantee:
 - a Archeology
 - b Astronomy
 - c Geology
 - d Physics
 - e Medicine
 - f History
 - 3 The Bible is limited in its guaranteed teachings to those truths, not facts, that the inspired writer intended to share
 - a **The writer needed to use the language, factual understandings, and cultural customs of his time to communicate**
 - (1) These truths
 - (2) His experience of God upon which the truths are founded
 - b He also uses the wrong presuppositions of his time as he communicates these truths
 - (1) The entire Bible was written by people who assumed the world was flat
 - (2) The writer of Genesis described God creating just such a flat world with the sun circling this world
 - c **Remembering what God guarantees will explain many of the problems that confront us in the opening chapters of Genesis**
 - (1) These chapters were written later than the rest of Genesis; very late in Jewish history
 - (a) They were written after the Jewish exiles had been exposed to the Babylonian religion, the religion that seemed mightier than theirs

Topic

- (b) In exile, they were introduced to pagan religious ideas radically different from their own
 - [1] The existence of many gods and goddesses
 - [2] Worship of the forces of nature, the sun, stars, and the moon which were identified with these gods
- (c) The opening chapters of Genesis attempted to refute these false teachings and to keep the Jewish people loyal to their God
- (2) **They taught and teach**
 - (a) **There is One God**
 - (b) **He made the world and everything in it**
 - (c) He made everything good
 - (d) He made us special
 - (e) **We, not God, are responsible for evil in the world**
 - (f) **Once introduced into our world, evil spreads, and we are powerless before it**
- (3) **They do not teach that**
 - (a) **Creation was done in 7 days – days of any length**
 - (b) **The first sin was the eating of the fruit of some specific tree**
 - (c) **A universal flood occurred killing all animal life in the world except for the people and animals on some boat**
- (4) Contradictions within the texts show that these facts are not being stressed or taught
- d **The religious struggles of Jews at the time the stories were written shed light on many of the details**
 - (1) Details were selected to insult the Canaanite religion: like the snake in the Garden (the snake was the symbol of the main Canaanite goddess)
 - (2) It is like an Oklahoman using images in a story to insult Texas just before the OU/Texas game – a story in which a steer is denigrated
- B The Bible is the Living Word of God
 - 1 This Word, we must remember, is the same Word who was made flesh at Bethlehem
 - a **John 1:1**
 - (1) **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 He was in the beginning with God...**
 - (2) **14* And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.**
 - b Jesus is the "Word" who is God and who in human flesh reveals God
 - c We can experience the unseen God through the actions of the "en-fleshed Word" whom we can see
 - 2 **The Bible reveals God**
 - a The Bible is God revealing Himself
 - (1) **It is a series of love letters in which God reveals different aspects of Himself to different people**
 - (2) **And He invites us to respond to these facets of His love**
 - (a) Individually
 - (b) And as a community
 - b God reveals Himself to the author (or editor) who must use the ideas of his time and place to communicate to others this experience
 - c Commentaries, therefore, are often needed to unlock the meanings of some texts
 - (1) **An example is the Bible's call to avenge "An eye for an eye"**
 - (a) **Exodus 21:23**
 - [1] **"But if any harm follows, then you shall give life for life, 24* "eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot. 25 "burn for burn, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.**
 - (2) This rule seems harsh to us
 - (3) Actually in the culture in which it was offered, it was and is a reflection of an experience of a merciful God
 - (4) There is an explanation that shows how the rule revealed a merciful God
 - (a) **The Israelites had no local police force to insure the rights of people**
 - (b) **Their only insurance against mayhem came from the duty of a clan to defend each member and avenge any harm, even the slightest, done to a member**
 - [1] This duty was called "blood vengeance"
 - [2] The enforcer was called "The Avenger"
 - [3] **When a person suffered harm**

Topic

- [a] The clan responded with violence upon the harmer -- usually killing him
- [b] The "harm-doer's" clan, then, had a "blood vengeance" duty to attack the victim's clan
- [c] Numbers 35
 - {1} 19 The avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death: when he meets him, he shall put him to death. 20 If anyone with malice aforethought shoves another or throws something at him intentionally so that he dies 21 or if in hostility he hits him with his fist so that he dies, that person shall be put to death: he is a murderer. The avenger of blood shall put the murderer to death when he meets him.
- [d] This back and forth vengeance led to feuds with bloodshed like the feud between the Hatfields and the McCoys
- (c) Someone experienced our God
 - [1] **He/she realized this God didn't want the violence of feuds**
 - [2] Through this person, God offered the only solution possible at that time
 - [a] **Limit the harm inflicted on the harmer to that experienced by the victim**
 - [b] **In reality, the "eye for an eye" rule was merciful, not cruel, considered against the reality of the time**
- (5) Later, Jesus offered the next step of growth in knowing God and realizing the implications of this experience for our relationships
 - (a) God doesn't resist or seek vengeance for our insults to Him
 - [1] Mark 14:63
 - [a] The high priest tore his clothes. "Why do we need any more witnesses?" he asked. 64 "You have heard the blasphemy. What do you think?" They all condemned him as worthy of death.
 - [b] 65 Then some began to spit at him; they blindfolded him, struck him with their fists, and said, "Prophecy!" And the guards took him and beat him.
 - (b) So we who are filled with His life and Spirit should strive to act as He does
 - [1] Matthew 5:38
 - [a] "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' 39 But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also...."
- 3 In reading, therefore, we should not search for facts or catechism doctrines as our primary goal
 - a We should be open to an experience of a living, loving, serving God
 - (1) **This experience can guide a person through the maze of facts and details used as the framework of the booklet**
 - (2) **We must open our hearts, our spirits, to be touched -- more than our minds to be taught**
 - b **There is teaching in the Bible, and at times the teaching is important**
 - (1) But we must experience God first if we are to grasp the essence of the teaching
 - (2) **Later we will see the order Mark, Matthew, and Luke follow**
 - (a) **People must first receive preaching:**
 - (b) **Accepting the preaching results in healing**
 - (c) **They will then need and want teaching to protect and to deepen the healing**
 - (d) **Without the preaching and healing, the teaching is a burden, not a blessing, not part of the "Good News"**