

## Text and Translations

- Textual criticism
- Texts of the OT and NT
- How to read marginal notes
- Habits of scribes
- Examples of textual issues
- Translation philosophies
- Examples of translation issues

© 2001 Brenda B. Colijn 1

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Textual Criticism

- Although it's a divine/human work, the Bible has come to us through a human process and is mediated by human language.
- Textual criticism = The study of the variants in the text of the Bible.
- Involves examining manuscripts to find out what was the original text of the Bible.

2

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Textual Criticism

Why do we need textual criticism? Why don't we just read the original text?

3

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### The “bad news”...

- We don't have the original manuscripts (**autographs**).
- We have copies of copies of copies...
- About 5,000 Greek manuscripts with all or part of NT, no two identical.
- Fewer variants for OT (Hebrew).

4

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### The good news...

- We have more evidence for the text of the Bible than we do for any other ancient text.
- Klein estimates that 97% of the NT and 90% of the OT is beyond doubt.
- No major article of doctrine is called into question by a textual issue.

5

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Texts of the OT

- **MT**

6

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Texts of the OT

- **MT - Masoretic Text** - traditional Hebrew text of OT, standardized around AD 100. Earliest manuscripts from AD 800-900. May appear in marginal notes as MT or Heb. or Hb.

7

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Texts of the OT

- MT
- **LXX**

8

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Texts of the OT

- MT
- **LXX - Septuagint** - Greek translation of the OT made by Greek-speaking Jews in 250-200 BC. May appear in marginal notes as LXX or Gk. or Sept.

9

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Texts of the OT

- MT
- LXX
- **DSS**

10

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Texts of the OT

- MT
- LXX
- **DSS - Dead Sea Scrolls** - Manuscripts from the Qumran community; includes some OT Hebrew manuscripts from 200 B.C.

11

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Texts of the OT

- MT
- LXX
- DSS
- Modern Hebrew text is based on the MT, with corrections from the LXX and DSS.
- This is the OT for Catholics and Protestants.
- Eastern Orthodox still use LXX.

12

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Texts of the NT

- **Textus Receptus** or **Received Text**

13

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Texts of the NT

- **Textus Receptus** or **Received Text** - OT and NT that serves as the basis of the King James Version. Based on the few, late manuscripts available at the time (1611).

14

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Texts of the NT

- Textus Receptus or Received Text
- **Critical text** - reconstruction of the original text by scholars who compare manuscripts using textual criticism. Consensus of scholars from different traditions.
  - Based on earlier manuscripts.
  - Examples: United Bible Society's Greek New Testament, Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament

15

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Texts of the NT

- Textus Receptus or Received Text
- Critical text
- **Majority Text** - text based on the majority of manuscripts, most of which are late.
  - Approach taken by very few scholars.
  - Example: Greek text by Zane Hodges.

16

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Marginal Notes

- Textual notes will often use words like “manuscripts” or “authorities” or “ancient authorities” or “witnesses.”
- MS = manuscript; MSS = manuscripts.
- In the OT, marginal notes may refer to LXX or Gk or Sept for the Septuagint.
- MT or Heb for the Masoretic Text.

17

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Introducing some  
manuscripts of the NT...

18

---

---

---

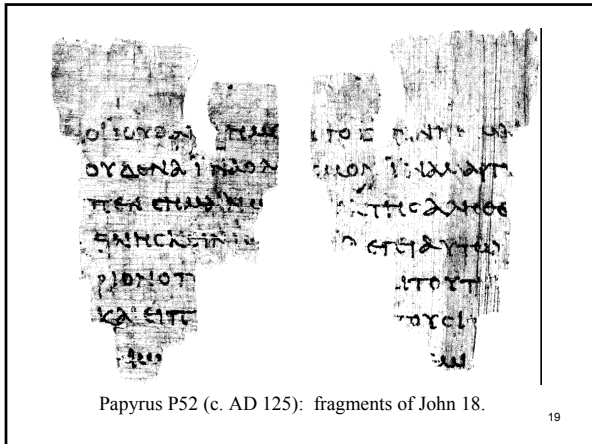
---

---

---

---

---



Papyrus P52 (c. AD 125): fragments of John 18.

---

---

---

---

---

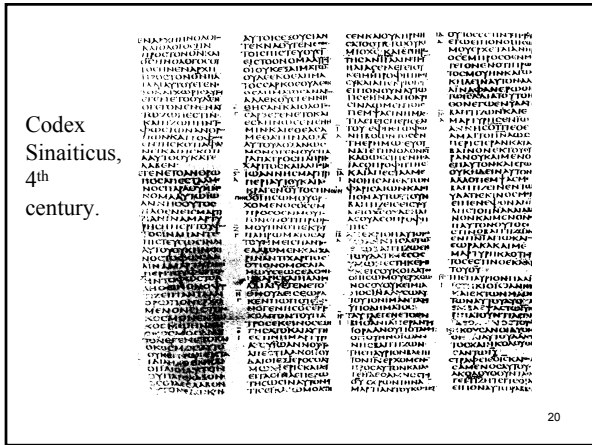
---

---

---

---

---




---

---

---

---

---

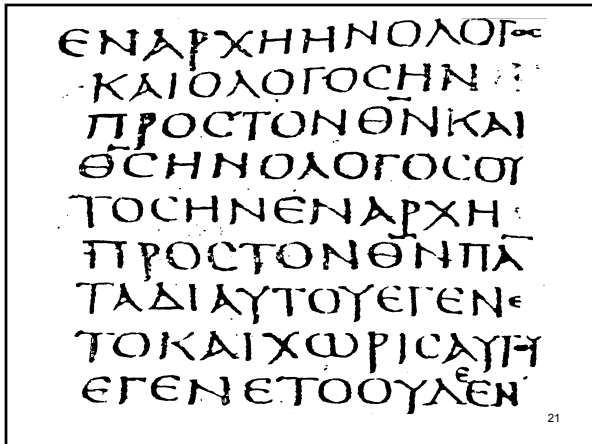
---

---

---

---

---




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

What does this mean?

**GODISNOWHERE**

22

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

What does this mean?

**GODISNOWHERE**

**RHWNSDG**

23

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

What does this mean?

**a woman without her man is nothing**

24

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Habits of Scribes

“Oh, no! Is there another word I can use instead of ‘verily’ that starts with a ‘B’?”



25

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Habits of Scribes

- Manuscripts were copied by hand.
- Copying a printed manuscript led to errors of the eye.
- Copying a manuscript read aloud led to errors of hearing.
- Sometimes they made deliberate changes.

26

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Examples of Textual Issues

- Genesis 10:4 - the Rodanim or Dodanim?
  - See 1 Chronicles 1:7 - Rodanim.
  - NRSV has “Rodanim.”
  - NRSV marginal note: Heb. MSS Sam Gk See 1 Chr. 1:7; MT Dodanim.

Rodanim = רֹדָאֲנִים      ר

Dodanim = דֹּדָאֲנִים      ד

27

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Examples of Textual Issues

- Luke 2:14 - “on earth peace, good will toward men” (KJV) or “on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests” (NIV)?
- Late MSS - ΕΥΔΟΚΙΑ - “good will”
- Earlier MSS - ΕΥΔΟΚΙΑΣ - “of [God’s] good will”

28

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Examples of Textual Issues

- John 7:53-8:11 - the woman caught in adultery.
- What do the marginal notes say?
- Overwhelming manuscript evidence against its originality.
- It may be a true story, but it probably wasn’t in the original version of John.
- See marginal notes for Mark 16.

29

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Translation Philosophies

- Formal equivalence (literal) - word for word
- Dynamic equivalence - idiom for idiom (Gorman: functional equivalence)
- Free (paraphrase) - idea for idea

See handout 2.3.

30

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Translation Philosophies

	Literal	Dynamic equivalence	Free
Updates history/culture?	No	No	Yes
Updates language?	No	Yes	Yes

31

---

---

---

---

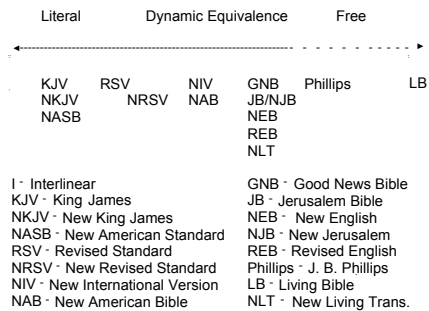
---

---

---

---

## Translation Philosophies



32

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Translation Philosophies

- Language – Proverbs 25:21-22
- Culture - 1 Peter 5:14
- To translate is to interpret.
- No translation is perfect.

33

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Translation Philosophies

Every translation has strengths and weaknesses....



“On second thought, Mr. Smith, the King James Version may be just right for you.”

34

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Translation Philosophies

- **Literal translations**

- Stay close to original language.
- Harder to understand in receptor language.
- Can create ambiguity or difficulty.

35

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Translation Philosophies

- **Literal translation**

- **Dynamic equivalence**

- Easier to understand than literal translation.
- Faithful to both original and receptor language.
- You have to trust that they have understood the idioms in the original language correctly.

36

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Translation Philosophies

- Literal translation
- Dynamic equivalence
- **Free translation**
  - Easiest to understand.
  - Contains the most interpretation/commentary.

37

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Translation Philosophies

- Literal translation
- Dynamic equivalence
- Free translation
- **King James Version**
  - History of use, poetic value, familiarity in worship.
  - Language can be difficult to understand.
  - Inadequate textual basis.

38

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Translation Issues

- Idiom - 1 Corinthians 7:1; 2 Timothy 2:15; Amos 4:6
- Euphemism - 1 Samuel 24:3
- Cultural practice - 1 Corinthians 7:36
- Theological perspective - 2 Peter 1:10; 1 Corinthians 11:10

39

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Translation Issues

- Select a translation that meets your purpose.
- For study, use several that tend to differ.
- Beware of study Bibles that give you all the answers in their notes.
- Identify the textual basis, translation philosophy, strengths/weaknesses, theological perspective of any translation.
- See Gorman 45-46.

40

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

## Translation Issues

- Look up Paul's discussion of freedom in Christ (with respect to food) in the end of 1 Cor. 10. Where does this sub-topic end?
- Look up Paul's instructions to households in Ephesians 5. Where does this sub-topic begin and end?
- Do different translations alert you to interpretive issues?

41

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---