

Chapter 1 : Text and Manuscripts of the New Testament

Textus Receptus (Latin: "received text") is the name given to the succession of printed Greek texts of the New Testament. The term Textus Receptus may also apply to other ancient texts in other languages, traditionally copied and passed down by scribes.

The following article is reproduced here with the permission of the author. Kutilek may be contacted by email at dkutilek@juno.com. However, God in His providence did not choose to protect that infallible original text from alterations and corruptions in the copying and printing process. Scribes and printers made both accidental usually and deliberate occasionally changes in the Greek text as they copied it. As a result, the surviving manuscript copies of the New Testament differ among themselves in numerous details. Many attempts have been made even as early as the second century A. Those who have made such attempts have differed one from another in the resources at their disposal, their own personal abilities as text editors, and the principles followed in trying to restore the original text of the New Testament. The two most famous attempts at restoring the original text of the New Testament are the Textus Receptus, dating from the Reformation and post-Reformation era, and the Greek text of B. Hort, first published in 1881. These two texts were based on differing collections of manuscripts, following differing textual principles, at different stages in the on-going process of the discovery and evaluation of surviving New Testament manuscripts, and, not surprisingly, with often differing results. Any proper and adequate answer given to this question must begin with the matter of definition of terms. First, what is meant by the term "superior"? This may seem an unnecessary question since it might be supposed that all would agree on the answer, namely, the superior Greek New Testament is that one which most closely preserves and presents the precise original wording of the original Greek writings of the New Testament. However, in the rather voluminous popular literature on this issue, some writers have argued that one text or another is superior because it is perceived to contain more proof-texts of the Trinity, the Deity of Christ, or some other doctrine. In fact, to make a selection on such a basis is much beside the point. Additional supporting proof-texts of numerous doctrines can be found in various Greek manuscripts or versions, though the readings are beyond dispute not the original reading of the New Testament. Next, what is meant by the term, "Received Text"? This name was first applied to a printed Greek text only as late as 1516, or almost 100 years after the first published Greek New Testament appeared in 1488. Most notable among the many editors of Greek New Testaments in this period were Erasmus 5 editions: Robertus Stephanus 4 editions: These texts were not independently compiled by the many different editors on the basis of close personal examination of numerous Greek manuscripts, but are genealogically-related. One of these is the reading "book of life" in Revelation. All known Greek manuscripts here read "tree of life" instead of "book of life" as in the textus receptus. Where did the reading "book of life" come from? When Erasmus was compiling his text, he had access to only one manuscript of Revelation, and it lacked the last six verses, so he took the Latin Vulgate and back-translated from Latin to Greek. Unfortunately, the copy of the Vulgate he used read "book of life," unlike any Greek manuscript of the passage, and so Erasmus introduced a "unique" Greek reading into his text. The fact that all textus receptus editions of Stephanus, Beza, et al. In this connection, it is worth noting that the translators of the King James Version did not follow exclusively any single printed edition of the New Testament in Greek. Scrivener produced such an edition though even it differs from the King James Version in a very few places, e. This text does not conform exactly to any of the historic texts dating from the Reformation period and known collectively as the textus receptus. Furthermore, a careful distinction must be made between the textus receptus even in its broadest collective sense on the one hand, and the majority text also known as the Byzantine or Syrian text on the other. Though the terms textus receptus and majority text are frequently used as though they were synonymous, they by no means mean the same thing. The majority of manuscripts and Westcott and Hort agree against the textus receptus in excluding Luke 24:46. Except in a few rare cases, writers well-versed in textual criticism have abandoned the textus receptus as a standard text. It has been customary in England to employ the text of Stephanus as the exemplar of the textus receptus just as the Elzevir text was so adopted on the continent of Europe, and so we will follow this custom. For our purposes

here, the term *textus receptus* means the edition of the Greek New Testament published by Robertus Stephanus. The Westcott and Hort text is much simpler to define. This is the Greek New Testament edited by B. Hort and first published in 1881, with numerous reprints in the century since. It is probably the single most famous of the so-called critical texts, perhaps because of the scholarly eminence of its editors, perhaps because it was issued the same year as the English Revised Version which followed a text rather like the Westcott-Hort text. It needs to be stated clearly that the text of Westcott and Hort was not the first printed Greek Testament that deliberately and substantially departed from the *textus receptus* on the basis of manuscript evidence. Westcott and Hort were preceded in the late 18th century by Griesbach, and in the 19th century by Lachmann, Alford, Tregelles, and Tischendorf and others, all of whose texts made numerous revisions in the *textus receptus* on the basis of manuscript evidence; these texts, especially the last three named, are very frequently in agreement with Westcott and Hort, against the *textus receptus*. It is true that the Westcott-Hort text and the English Revised New Testament of 1881 are rather similar to each other, but they are not identical. Though the Westcott-Hort text was the "standard" critical text for a generation or two, it is no longer considered such by anyone, and has not been for many years. The last two editions of each of these sport an identical text, a new "received text," so to speak. Eberhard Nestle originally used as his text the consensus reading of three editions of the Greek New Testament in his day, Tischendorf, Westcott and Hort, and Weymouth, later substituting Weiss for Weymouth. However, since modern printed Greek texts are in the same respective families of text, namely the Alexandrian Nestle, et al. Age of manuscripts is probably the most objective factor in the process of textual criticism. When Westcott and Hort compiled their text, they employed the two oldest then-known manuscripts, Vaticanus and Sinaiticus, as their text base. Since their day, a good number of manuscripts as old and in some cases a century or more older than these two manuscripts have been discovered. With a general uniformity, these early manuscripts have supported the Alexandrian text-type which the Westcott-Hort text presents. Of the early versions, the Westcott-Hort text has strong support in the various Coptic versions of the third and later centuries, plus frequent support in the Old Latin versions and the oldest forms of the Syriac, in particular the Sinaitic and Curetonian manuscripts whose text form dates to the second or third century though there are also strong Western elements in the Old Latin and the early Syriac. Of early Christian writers before the fourth century, the Alexandrian text has substantial support, especially in the writings of Origen, whose Scripture quotations are exceedingly numerous. On the other hand, the Byzantine text-type, of which the *textus receptus* is a rough approximation, can boast of being presented in the vast majority of surviving manuscripts, as well as several important versions of the New Testament from the fourth century or later, and as being the text usually found in the quotations of Greek writers in the fifth century and after. The most notable version support for the Byzantine text is in the Peshitta Syriac and the fourth century Gothic version. A second-century date for the Peshitta used to be advocated, but study of the Biblical quotations in the writings of Syrian Fathers Aphraates and Ephraem has demonstrated that neither of these leaders used the Peshitta, and so it must date from after their time, i. Therefore, this chief support for a claimed second-century date for the Byzantine text-type has been shown to be invalid. On the down side, the distinctively Alexandrian text all but disappears from the manuscripts after the 9th century. On the other hand, the Byzantine manuscripts, though very numerous, did not become the "majority" text until the ninth century, and though outnumbering Alexandrian manuscripts by more than 100 to 1. Returning to the specific texts, Westcott-Hort vs. Obviously, those readings in the *textus receptus* which are without any Greek manuscript support cannot possibly be original. Additionally, in a number of places, the *textus receptus* reading is found in a limited number of late manuscripts, with little or no support from ancient translations. One of these readings is the famous I John 5:7. Such readings as this are also presumptively not original. And if one holds to the "nose count" theory of textual criticism, i. Besides these shortcomings, others also apparently occur in a number of places where a perceived difficulty in the original reading was altered by scribes in the manuscript copying process. Probable examples of this include Mark 16:7-8. Hort declared the combined testimony of these two manuscripts to be all but a guarantee that a reading was original. Manuscript B shows the same kinds of scribal errors found in all manuscripts, a fact to be recognized and such singular readings to be rejected, as in fact they sometimes were rejected by Westcott and Hort e. What shall we say then? Which text shall we

choose as superior? We shall choose neither the Westcott-Hort text or its modern kinsmen nor the textus receptus or the majority text as our standard text, our text of last appeal. All these printed texts are compiled or edited texts, formed on the basis of the informed or not-so-well-informed opinions of fallible editors. Neither Erasmus nor Westcott and Hort nor, need we say, any other text editor or group of editors is omniscient or perfect in reasoning and judgment. Therefore, we refuse to be enslaved to the textual criticism opinions of either Erasmus or Westcott and Hort or for that matter any other scholars, whether Nestle, Aland, Metzger, Burgon, Hodges and Farstad, or anyone else. Rather, it is better to evaluate all variants in the text of the Greek New Testament on a reading by reading basis, that is, in those places where there are divergences in the manuscripts and between printed texts, the evidence for and against each reading should be thoroughly and carefully examined and weighed, and the arguments of the various schools of thought considered, and only then a judgment made. We do, or should do, this very thing in reading commentaries and theology books. We hear the evidence, consider the arguments, weigh the options, and then arrive at what we believe to be the honest truth. Can one be faulted for doing the same regarding the variants in the Greek New Testament? Our aim is to know precisely what the Apostles originally did write, this and nothing more, this and nothing else. And, frankly, just as there are times when we must honestly say, "I simply do not know for certain what this Bible verse or passage means," there will be and are places in the Greek New Testament where the evidence is not clear cut, 21 and the arguments of the various schools of thought do not distinctly favor one reading over another. This means there will at times be a measure of uncertainty in defining precisely the exact wording of the Greek New Testament just as there is in the interpretation of specific verses and passages, but this does not mean that there is uncertainty in the theology of the New Testament. Dagg has well-stated the theological limits of the manuscript variations in the New Testament, Although the Scriptures were originally penned under the unerring guidance of the Holy Spirit, it does not follow, that a continued miracle has been wrought to preserve them from all error in transcribing. On the contrary, we know that manuscripts differ from each other; and where readings are various, but one of them can be correct. A miracle was needed in the original production of the Scriptures; and, accordingly, a miracle was wrought; but the preservation of the inspired word, in as much perfection as was necessary to answer the purpose for which it was given, did not require a miracle, and accordingly it was committed to the providence of God. Yet the providence which has preserved the divine oracles, has been special and remarkable. The consequence is, that, although the various readings found in the existing manuscripts, are numerous, we are able, in every case, to determine the correct reading, so far as is necessary for the establishment of our faith, or the direction of our practice in every important particular. So little, after all, do the copies differ from each other, that these minute differences, when viewed in contrast with their general agreement, render the fact of that agreement the more impressive, and may be said to serve, practically, rather to increase, than impair our confidence in their general correctness. Their utmost deviations do not change the direction of the line of truth; and if it seems in some points to widen the line a very little, the path that lies between their widest boundaries, is too narrow to permit us to stray. Kenyon, the pre-eminent British authority on New Testament manuscripts at the turn of the twentieth century. No fundamental point of doctrine rests upon a disputed reading: He wrote, This received text contains undoubtedly all the essential facts and doctrines intended to be set down by the inspired writers; for if it were corrected with the severest hand, by the light of the most divergent various readings found in any ancient MS. Hence the interests of orthodoxy are entirely secure from and above the reach of all movements of modern criticism of the text whether made in a correct or incorrect method, and all such discussions in future are to the church of subordinate importance. In truth, all text families are doctrinally orthodox. A dispassionate evaluation of evidence is very much to be preferred to the emotionally charged tirades that characterize much of the current discussion. Some writers calculate the differences between the two texts at something over 5,, though in truth a large number of these are so insignificant as to make no difference in the resulting English translation. Without making an actual count, I would estimate the really substantial variations to be only a few hundred at most. Greek manuscript p72 in 1 Peter 1: Though these three examples give added proof-texts for orthodox doctrines, these readings are universally rejected as not being the original reading of the Greek in these verses.

Chapter 2 : The Printed Text of the Greek New Testament – Christian Publishing House Blog

There are two Greek Majority texts that have been printed, one done by Zane C. Hodges and Arthur L. Farstad, The Greek New Testament According to the Majority Text, and one done by William G. Pierpont and Maurice A. Robinson, The New Testament in the Original Greek According to the Byzantine/Majority Textform, , updated Many of.

English and Greek belong to the Indo-European language family; their earlier versions separated from each other some four thousand years ago. Words of the same origin are often disguised because of changes that have taken place in both languages. For example, an initial [s] sound before vowels in Greek evolved into [h], as in cf. The greatest difference, however, may have resulted from a massive change of consonants in Germanic hence English well before our era. At this time, p, t, k evolved into sounds that today are represented by f, th, h. And the sounds represented by bh, dh, gh in Indo-European were changed to the sounds that today are represented by b, d, g. These sounds were also changed in Greek, as noted above. At the same time, b, d, g were changed to p, t, k. Indo-European had almost no words with b. It is interesting to compare such cognate words, but the changes that both languages have undergone often conceal the relationships, as for the numerals for four and five. Some of the others are transparently related, in spite of changes: Since dictionaries may provide the Greek cognates of English entries, control over the Greek vocabulary can be gained by noting them. Etymological dictionaries are of greater assistance. As noted above, by far the greatest number of similar words are found in academic and ecclesiastical language, where English simply took over the Greek terms through long influence on western culture from these spheres. Words were pronounced in accordance with the English spellings, rather than with their pronunciation in Greek. Some examples are cited here. The academic terms are in accordance with the influence of Aristotle, who conducted his teaching in the Athenian grove known as the Academy, which was named after the hero Akademos. We have already noted terms ending in -logy , to which others might be added like biology and neurology. The last part attained a status of its own, so that further words like sociology, with its initial part from Latin, could be introduced. Other ecclesiastical terms are clergy, clerical, Eucharist and liturgy. In the political sphere the words democrat and democracy are based on the components for people and power, as also in aristocrat and aristocracy for the best or superior people and power, autocracy for self or absolute power, theocracy for ecclesiastical power. The sentence structure of Greek. As is clear from the earlier quotations, the sentence order of Greek may differ considerably from that of English. In an earlier form of Greek, the verb was placed last in the sentence, but in Luke 1: The different position is possible because of Greek inflections. Greek can move elements around for stylistic purposes -- as in Luke 1: In examining a Greek text, one should first identify the verb. Its forms are identifiable through their inflections, with the additional help that nouns are often marked by preceding articles. It is useful, then, to memorize the basic inflections of verbs as well as those of nouns, pronouns, and adjectives. As illustrated by these brief passages, the key to reading Greek is provided by knowledge of its inflections. While these are numerous, memorization of the basic inflections of the article, of nouns and of verbs is generally adequate. The forms of Greek. Thee parts of speech are inflected for four cases, besides a case of address called the vocative. The cases are as follows: Nominative, the case of the subject; Genitive, the case to indicate possession -- possessive, in grammars of English Dative, the case of the indirect object Accusative, the case of the direct object -- objective, in grammars of English Case forms may also be determined by prepositions. I is nominative, my is genitive, me is accusative. Adjectives are not inflected. Greek nouns are also inflected for -- number, that is, singular and plural; Classical Greek also maintained a dual. Paradigms are given in the various lessons.

Chapter 3 : Editions of the Greek New Testament

The History of the Printed Greek Text of the New Testament, With the Materials Available for Its Revision Considered Being a Lecture Delivered at the Hartley Institution, Southampton, Jan, 30th, , With a Supplement by Willett L. Adye.

Novum Instrumentum omne and Editio Regia Erasmus had been working for years on two projects: In , he began his work on the Latin New Testament. He collected all the Vulgate manuscripts he could find to create a critical edition. Then he polished the Latin, declaring, "It is only fair that Paul should address the Romans in somewhat better Latin. I have already almost finished emending him by collating a large number of ancient manuscripts, and this I am doing at enormous personal expense. Though some speculate that he intended on producing a critical Greek text or that he wanted to beat the Complutensian Polyglot into print, there is no evidence to support this. Rather his motivation may have been simpler: He wrote, "There remains the New Testament translated by me, with the Greek facing, and notes on it by me. In the second edition Erasmus used also Minuscule 3. Typographical errors attributed to the rush to complete the work abounded in the published text. Erasmus also lacked a complete copy of the book of Revelation and translated the last six verses back into Greek from the Latin Vulgate in order to finish his edition. Erasmus adjusted the text in many places to correspond with readings found in the Vulgate, or as quoted in the Church Fathers ; consequently, although the Textus Receptus is classified by scholars as a late Byzantine text, it differs in nearly two thousand readings from the standard form of that text-type, as represented by the " Majority Text " of Hodges and Farstad Wallace The edition was a sell-out commercial success and was reprinted in , with mostâ€”though not allâ€”the typographical errors corrected. Consequently, most modern scholars consider his text to be of dubious quality. Many other publishers produced their own versions of the Greek New Testament over the next several centuries. Rather than doing their own critical work, most just relied on the well-known Erasmusian text. Robert Estienne , known as Stephanus â€” , a printer from Paris, edited the Greek New Testament four times, in , , and , the last in Geneva. The first two are called O mirificam; the third edition is a masterpiece of typographical skill. It has critical apparatus in which quoted manuscripts referred to the text. Among these are included: Codex Bezae , Codex Regius , minuscules 4 , 5 , 6 , , 8 , 9. The first step towards modern Textual Criticism was made. The third edition is known as the Editio Regia. The edition of contains the Latin translation of Erasmus and the Vulgate. It is not nearly as fine as the other three and is exceedingly rare. It was in this edition that the division of the New Testament into verses was for the first time introduced. The third edition of Estienne was used by Theodore Beza â€” , who edited it nine times between and In the critical apparatus of the second edition he used the Codex Claromontanus and the Syriac New Testament published by Emmanuel Tremellius in The preface reads, Textum ergo habes, nunc ab omnibus receptum: In his Novum Testamentum Graecum, cum lectionibus variantibus MSS Oxford he reprinted the unchanged text of the Editio Regia, but in the index he enumerated 30, textual variants. He claimed that the autographs of the New Testament were identical to the Textus Receptus, and that the text had never been corrupted. Whitby claimed that every part of the New Testament should be defended against these variants. Bengel divided manuscripts into families and subfamilies. He favoured the principle of lectio difficilior potior "the more difficult reading is the stronger". He introduced the practice of indicating the ancient manuscripts by capital Roman letters and the later manuscripts by Arabic numerals. Griesbach â€” combined the principles of Bengel and Wettstein. He enlarged the Apparatus by considering more citations from the Fathers , and various versions, such as the Gothic, the Armenian, and the Philoxenian. Griesbach distinguished a Western, an Alexandrian, and a Byzantine Recension. Karl Lachmann â€” was the first who broke with the Textus Receptus. His object was to restore the text to the form in which it had been read in the ancient Church about A. He used the oldest known Greek and Latin manuscripts.

Chapter 4 : GreekNT - Greek New Testament Texts

The original New Testament authors were inspired by God, and error-free. The copyists were not inspired, and errors did show up in the texts as a result.

After the invention of printing by Johannes Gutenberg – Gutenberg Press. Image from Wikipedia around 1450, one of his first projects was the printing of a magnificent edition of the Latin Vulgate during to 1469. At least prints of these editions were undertaken by different printing houses during the following 50 years. Most of these translations were made from the Latin Vulgate since it was the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church. Any printed Greek text posed the danger that anyone with knowledge of both Latin and Greek could criticize the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church. To reproduce so many letters would be time consuming and extremely expensive. As time went by, the Greek alphabet was reduced to the present 24 characters keeping only one alternative letter viz. It was based on excellent source texts. This edition in six volumes contained the first printed Greek New Testament. Unfortunately Ximenes waited for the sanction of Pope Leo X before he could publish distribute it. This sanction was only given in 1516. The Polyglot was made available only in 1582. Desiderius Erasmus, – a Dutch authority on Latin wanted to publish a Greek New Testament and discussed the project with Johann Froben, a publisher inBasle during a visit in August 1516. The work was started, and he compared the manuscripts with his copy of the Vulgate. Later he acquired a few more manuscripts. I quote from the Wikipedia, with addition of the century in brackets: Gospels XII , No. Revelation XII , No. Epistles of Paul XI and No. In the second edition Erasmus used also Minuscule No. Typographical errors attributed to the rush to complete the work abounded in the published text. Erasmus also lacked a complete copy of the book of Revelation and was forced to translate the last six verses back into Greek from the Latin Vulgate in order to finish his edition. Erasmus adjusted the text in many places to correspond with readings found in the Vulgate, or as quoted in the Church Fathers ; consequently, although the Textus Receptus is classified by scholars as a late Byzantine text, it differs in nearly two thousand readings from the standard form of that text-type. Unfortunately, his manuscript on Revelation was not complete, it lacked the final leaf, which contained the last six verses of the book. Instead of delaying the publication, on account of the search for another manuscript, he decided to translate the missing verses from the Latin Vulgate into Greek. He used a corrupted manuscript of Vulgate with textual variant libro vitae book of life instead ligno vitae tree of life in Rev 22. Even in other parts of the Book of Revelation and other books of the New Testament Erasmus occasionally introduced self-created Greek text material taken from the Vulgate. Scrivener remarked, that in Rev 22. And so I have revised the whole New Testament as they call it against the standard of the Greek original. I have added annotations of my own, in order in the first place to show the reader what changes I have made, and why; second, to disentangle and explain anything that may be complicated, ambiguous, or obscure. In only five months Erasmus prepared the text, the movable case letters were fabricated and the whole New Testament printed. On March the first it was finished. With his second edition in 1519, Erasmus made some alterations. In his third edition 1John 5: Erasmus could find no Greek manuscript with those words and promised to add the words even if only one Greek manuscript could be found with those words. Codex Montfortianus, a manuscript being written during that time, is the only Greek manuscript with those words part of the text. In a footnote, Erasmus himself expressed his suspicion that this codex had intently been prepared for that purpose. Again Erasmus made a further alterations on the previous text. With his fourth edition in Revelation alone, 90 alterations were made. His last edition was published a year before his death. How do we evaluate the Textus Receptus? Erasmus had only late manuscripts of the eleventh to sixteenth centuries to his avail, all being of the inferior Byzantine text type. For the last six verses of Revelation he had no Greek manuscript and therefore translated from the Latin into Greek, even creating his own new word! He made many alterations in following editions of his own text. Other printing houses also made several alterations in their versions of his text. Because of the availability of the printed edition, and it being more easily read than a hand written manuscript, most of the older translations were made using the TR without questioning or verifying or comparing it with older manuscripts. One could honestly ask whether it is

sufficient to completely rely on such a text. Even so, not one truth concerning faith, or the Trinity, or the deity of Jesus Christ, or the commission and work of the Holy Spirit, or any other aspect of importance in the Christian Faith is affected by the differences between the Textus Receptus and the compiled Greek text of the present Bible Societies.

Chapter 5 : Greek New Testament Texts | NTGateway

An account of the printed text of the Greek New Testament: with remarks on its revision upon critical principles: together with a collation of the critical texts of Griesbach, Scholz, Lachmann, and Tischendorf, with that in common use.

The books commonly called the Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of Scripture: Calumny and misrepresentation, persecution and murderous hate, assailed Him continually. And the Written Word in like manner, in the earliest age of all, was shamefully handled by mankind. Not only was it confused through human infirmity and misapprehension, but it became also the object of restless malice and unsparing assaults. Behind this restless malice and unsparing assaults is the enmity of him who "was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Accordingly, the earliest great achievement of those days was accomplished on giving to the Church the Scriptures of the New Testament, in which, authorised teaching was enshrined in written form, There exists no reason for supposing that the Divine Agent, who in the first instance thus gave to mankind the Scriptures of Truth, straightway abdicated His office: That a perpetual miracle was wrought for their preservation - that copyists were protected against all risk of error, or evil men prevented from adulterating shamefully copies of the Deposit - no one, it is presumed, is so weak as to suppose. John Owen in the "Divine Original of the Scripture", states: And hence the malice of Satan hath raged no less against the Book than against the truth contained in it. Hills, "was not explicitly stated in any creed until the seventeenth century, when two formulations appeared, the one in the Westminster Confession and the other in the Swiss Declaration I is the doctrine of the Scriptures, and of Christ Himself. Our Lord evidently believed that the Old Testament had been thus preserved. There are two passages especially which clearly indicate this. The first is Matt. In the concluding verses of the Gospel of Matthew we find His "Great Commission" not only to the twelve apostles but also to His Church throughout all ages, "Go ye therefore and teach all nations. The God who inspired the Scriptures and gave them to His people to be an authoritative guide and consolation cannot allow this perfect and final revelation of His will to perish. Because God has inspired the Scriptures, He has also preserved them by His providence. Hills, "involves this basic idea, that God authenticates as well as preserves, that He has placed His Church in actual possession of the genuine text. God chose the Jewish Church to be the guardian of the Old Testament Scriptures and the Greek Church to guard the New, and at the time of the Reformation, Protestants received from the Jews and the Greeks the genuine texts of holy Scripture Therefore, if the New Testament really has been divinely inspired and providentially preserved, the theory of Westcott and Hort cannot be correct because it has neglected the two special factors which make the textual criticism of the New Testament different from that of all other books The nature and results of this providential preservation of the New Testament text can be summarised in the six following axioms of consistently Christian New Testament textual criticism: This text is usually called the Byzantine Text, because it was the text of the whole Greek Church during most of the Byzantine Period It is found not only in the vast majority of the extant New Testament manuscripts but it also very familiar to the vast majority of Bible readers all over the world, for it is the text of the King James Version and of the other early Protestant translations. It is the best extant text. It represents the inspired original text very accurately, more accurately than any other New Testament text which survives from the manuscript period. In other words, the Byzantine Text is the Standard Text. Brown, "Greek Scholarship was virtually non-existent in Western Europe. In Constantinople, the eastern capital of the eastern part of the Empire and the centre of the Eastern Church, fell to the Moslem invaders. One far-reaching result of this calamity was that Christian scholars with a knowledge of Greek, and with Greek copies of the Holy Scriptures in their possession, fled to Western Europe where their influence gave a new impetus to the study of the Greek language. This edition was printed in and was followed by four later editions. At Alcala Complutum University, in , Cardinal Ximenes gathered manuscripts and men under the direction of Stunica, who published the "Complutensian Polyglot" in , again from comparatively few manuscripts. Robert Stephens, relying largely upon Erasmus and Stunica, and with a possible sixteenth manuscripts at this disposal, produced editions of the Greek text in , , and In he withdrew to Geneva and joined the Protestant cause. Theodore Beza

produced five editions of the Greek between and These followed Stephens fairly closely, although Beza had some ancient manuscripts not available to Stephens. The Elzevir edition of has had this title on the Continent. The Protestant versions in England and on the Continent in the 16th and 17th centuries were based on these editions of the Greek text. These early printed Greek editions were themselves based on comparatively few manuscripts, which have nevertheless proved to be representative of the Greek text embraced many centuries earlier throughout the Greek Church. At the Hampton Court Conference of the Puritan leader Reynolds made the suggestion - which was first opposed and then adopted by the Conference with the enthusiastic approval of King James 1 - that there should be a new translation of the Holy Scriptures in English, to replace the different versions then in common use. The greatest Hebrew and Greek scholars of the age, formed six companies to undertake the task. Using their Greek sources and the best commentaries of the European scholars, and referring to Bibles in Spanish, Italian, French and German, they expressed the sense of the Greek in clear, vigorous and idiomatic English. Geddes wrote, "If accuracy and strictest attention to the letter of the text be supposed to constitute an excellent version, this is of all versions the most excellent. Recent Discoveries and Textual Criticism. During the next three hundred years vast numbers of documents were brought to light and Biblical scholars made many attempts to reconstruct the Greek New Testament. There are now about 4, Greek manuscripts, including papyrus fragments 2nd-7th century ; Uncial copies 4thth century 2, Minuscules 9thth century and 1, Lectionary copies. The overwhelming majority of these manuscripts agree so closely that they may be said to present the same Greek Text, called by some the "Byzantine Text" because it prevailed throughout the Church in the Byzantine period A. In addition to these Greek sources scholars have recovered copies of ancient translations in Latin, Syriac, Egyptian, Ethiopic, Armenian, Gothic, etc. Some of these originated before our oldest existing Greek copies and thus testify to the contents of still earlier manuscripts. The great weight of this evidence is favourable to the "Received Text" underlying the Authorised Version. Early Greek and Latin Writers - The "Fathers" The writings of early champions of the truth and heretics contain copious references to the Scriptures and again testify concerning the Greek text as it was in the 2nd century onwards - in a period earlier than our oldest copies. The majority of these witnesses support the so-called "Byzantine" or "Received" or "Traditional" text underlying the Authorised Version, and they establish the antiquity of this text and its superior acceptance in the earliest period. The Papyri It is alleged that the most ancient papyrus fragments are hostile to the Received Text, but it must be remembered that the fragments that remain are few in comparison with the many that must have perished through long and frequent use. It is probable that the surviving minority survived because they were not much used and that they fell into disuse because of their deficiencies. Twenty-nine papyri of the 6th and 8th centuries do not contain a distinctively "Byzantine" type of text, although it is beyond question that the "Byzantine" text was dominant in that period. These papyri are surviving representatives of a defective and discarded text. Favourable Evidence of the Papyri Some of the papyrus fragments of earliest date do contain reading which 19th century scholars had wrongly rejected as belonging to a late "Syrian" or "Byzantine" revision. The attacks on the Received Text are based on the assumption that the new versions of the Bible are based on more reliable manuscripts than those available in the 16th and 17th centuries. But this claim is not supported by the facts. Terence Brown, "that the earlier translators had fewer manuscripts at their disposal, but the vast majority of the documents discovered since exhibit the same kind of Greek text as that which underlies the Authorised Version. There are now about 4, manuscripts of the New Testament, varying greatly in their age, extent and state of preservation. The bulk of these documents contain the Greek text in a form similar to that found in the copies available in A. In the 19th century it became the fashion among Biblical scholars of the schools of Lachmann, Tischendorf, Tregelles, and Westcott and Hort, to evaluate this small cluster of ancient but defective manuscripts to a position of supreme and infallible authority. Five of these copies were held to be of greater weight than one thousand or more documentary witnesses arrayed against them. This division though convenient is misleading. The earliest of the "Cursives" are more ancient than the latest of the "Uncials" by fully one hundred years. The later body of the "Uncials" belongs virtually, as will be proved, to the body of the "Cursives. The number of the Uncials is largely inferior to that of the Cursives, though they usually boast a much higher antiquity Now it is not so much an exaggerated, as an utterly mistaken estimate of the importance of the textual decrees of the

five oldest of these Uncial copies, which lies at the root of most of the criticism of the last fifty years. We are constrained in consequence to bestow what will appear to some a disproportionate amount of attention on these five codices: The Vatican Codex also known as Codex B and the Sinaitic Codex also known as Codex Aleph which are supposed to be both of the fourth century; the Alexandrian Codex A, and the fragmentary Parisian Codex Bezae at Cambridge, which is supposed to have been written in the sixth. It will be found in the end that we have been guilty of no exaggeration in characterising B, Aleph and D at the outset as three of the most corrupt copies in existence. Let not anyone suppose that the age of these five MSS. They can be proved to be wrong time after time by evidence of an earlier period than that which they can boast. Mere antiquity is no guarantee of authority. These are old copies but they are bad copies and the Greek Church as a whole in the 4th century rejected their unreliable testimony and permitted them to sink into undignified oblivion. They have been recently disinterred and permitted to foist their ancient errors upon undiscerning readers of our own times. The Codex Sinaiticus derives its name from the fact that it was discovered by Dr. Tischendorf in the Convent of St. Catherine at the foot of Mount Sinai in a basket full of old parchments to be used as fuel. This Codex is also known as Aleph. The Codex Vaticanus, Codex B, also dating back to the fourth century, has been in the custody of the Vatican for over years. Hills, "between B and all the other manuscripts commonly classed as Alexandrian. They exalt B and Aleph and D because in their own opinions those copies are the best. They weave ingenious webs, and invent subtle theories, because their paradox of a few against the many requires ingenuity and subtlety for its support. Hort revelled in finespun theories and technical terms, such as "Intrinsic Probability," "Transcriptional Probability," "Internal evidence of Readings," "Internal evidence of Documents," which of course connote a certain amount of evidence, but are weak pillars of a heavy structure. Even conjectural emendation and inconsistent decrees are not rejected. They are infected with the theorising which spoils some of the best German work, and with the idealism which is the bane of many academic minds especially at Oxford and Cambridge. In contrast with this sojourn in cloudland, we are essentially of the earth though not earthy. We are nothing if we are not grounded in facts: We imitate the procedure of courts of justice in decisions resulting from the converging product of all evidence, when it has been cross-examined and sifted. In the end I shall ask the reader to allow that where these seven tests are found to conspire we may confidently assume that the evidence is worthy of all acceptance, and is to be implicitly followed. A reading should be attested then by the seven following: Antiquity or Primitiveness; 2. Consent of Witnesses, or Number; 3. Variety of Evidence, or Catholicity; 4. Respectability of Witnesses, or Weight; 5. Continuity, or Unbroken Tradition; 6. Evidence of the Entire Passage, or Context; 7.

Chapter 6 : The Text of the New Testament | Religious Studies Center

The Printed Greek Text. After the invention of printing by Johannes Gutenberg (-) around , one of his first projects was the printing of a magnificent edition of the Latin Vulgate during to

Blumell is an assistant professor of ancient scripture at Brigham Young University. According to the explicit instructions of King James that the translation of the Bible he ordered be based on manuscripts written in the original languages of the Bible, Hebrew for the Old Testament and Greek for the New Testament, the two committees assigned the task of providing a translation for the New Testament employed the Greek texts of the day. Though he would earn a reputation as a capable litigator, his real passion was not law but classical literature, and he would eventually earn some notoriety for publishing a collection of Latin poetry in . Shortly after the publication of this work, he fell seriously ill. When he recovered, he took it as a sign of divine providence and abandoned his legal career in favor of ecclesiastical pursuits. Later that same year, he went to Geneva and joined the Calvinist movement and formally renounced the Catholic faith. In he became a professor of Greek at the academy in Lausanne, and in Calvin invited him to return to Geneva so that he could hold a professorship at the newly founded academy there. First, in he published an annotated Latin edition of the New Testament and then in he added a Greek text. Over the course of the next forty years, Beza would go on to publish nine different editions of the Greek New Testament. However, it should be noted that Beza did attempt with his editions to find older Greek manuscripts upon which to base his Greek text. This codex, like Codex Bezae, dated to the fifth or sixth century and contained the Pauline epistles written in parallel columns of Greek and Latin. Therefore, even though Beza would consult the Syriac Peshita, Codex Bezae, and Codex Claromontanus, his editions of the Greek New Testament were virtually identical to an earlier Greek New Testament published by Stephanus that was based on much later manuscript evidence. Robert Estienne 1559 , more commonly known by the Latin form of his name, Stephanus, was a famous Parisian printer and publisher who had a penchant for printing classical and ecclesiastical literature. Besides producing his famous Thesaurus Linguae Latinae in , which was used for many subsequent centuries, he also published a number of Bibles. After he turned his attention primarily to publishing Greek texts and during his lifetime published four different editions of the Greek New Testament , , , and . In his first two editions, he relied principally on the earlier Greek New Testament text published by Erasmus but also to a lesser extent upon the text published under the direction of Francisco Ximenes de Cisneros and known as the Complutensian Polyglot. His third edition was noteworthy because it was the first Greek edition of the New Testament to include a critical apparatus where textual variants and alternative readings for select passages were noted. The versification introduced by Stephanus was subsequently followed and applied in the KJV New Testament, and it is used in virtually all Bibles today. It essentially formed the basis of almost all subsequent Greek New Testaments published in the sixteenth century, because it was the first widely used Greek New Testament text to appear after the invention of the printing press. Desiderius Erasmus 1516 , the famous Dutch humanist from Rotterdam, was ordained a Catholic priest in . Shortly thereafter, he decided to pursue a doctorate in theology and so in went to the University of Paris. During the course of his studies in Paris, he determined to seriously take up the study of ancient Greek, since a substantial portion of early Christian literature was written in Greek. As he became more immersed in the study of ancient Greek, he felt he could best pursue his interests elsewhere. So he left Paris in without finishing his doctorate and eventually enrolled at Cambridge. After only one year he left, again without obtaining his doctorate, and moved to Italy to pursue his study of ancient Greek. At the time, Italy was the real center of Greek learning because a number of scholars had left Constantinople when it had fallen into Muslim hands in and had relocated to Italy. Erasmus would receive his doctorate at the University of Turin in . In Erasmus returned to Cambridge, where he would hold a professorship in Greek. This lasted only about three years, however, because the promised financial support for this position never fully materialized. In the summer of , Erasmus left for Basel, Switzerland, where he was approached by a well-known printer named Johannes Froben about the possibility of producing a Greek New Testament. However, when a mutual friend, Beatus Rhenanus, approached Erasmus on behalf of Froben with

a lucrative promise that if he should produce a text, Froben would pay him handsomely, Erasmus readily agreed. Erasmus hoped that there might be some readily available manuscripts of the Greek New Testament in Basel that he could use. However, the only manuscripts he could find required some degree of correcting, and there was no one manuscript that contained the entire New Testament. In total, Erasmus used seven different manuscripts to create his edition of the New Testament, and all but one of them were owned by the Dominican Library in Basel. The manuscripts relied on by Erasmus may be outlined as follows: Codex 1r, a minuscule containing the book of Revelation except for the last 6 verses Revelation Codex 2e, a minuscule containing the Gospels, dated to the twelfth century. Codex 2ap, a minuscule containing Acts and the Epistles, dated to the twelfth century or later. Codex 4ap, a minuscule containing Acts and the Epistles, dated to the fifteenth century. Codex 7p, a minuscule containing the Pauline Epistles, dated to the eleventh century. Codex e, a minuscule containing the Gospels, dated to the fifteenth century. In total, then, Erasmus had three manuscripts of the Gospels and Acts, four manuscripts of the Pauline epistles, and one manuscript of Revelation. Since Erasmus was in such a hurry, he simply submitted Codex 2e and 2ap to the printer, compared these two manuscripts with the others, and wrote in any corrections or emendations for the printer in the margins or between the lines of the two manuscripts. Remarkably, it took Erasmus only a couple of months to finish his edition, and by October the manuscript was headed to the press. Part of the reason for the extreme haste with which the project was undertaken was that the printer, Johannes Froben, was aware that another version of the Greek New Testament, the Complutensian Polyglot, was also going to be published, and he wanted to ensure that his version came out first. The production of the Complutensian Polyglot was overseen by cardinal primate of Spain Francisco Ximenes de Cisneros. The annotations were printed following the text. Besides the typographical errors, however, there were other serious problems with the first edition. For example, the manuscript that he relied on for the book of Revelation lacked the final page upon which was written the last six verses Revelation. To remedy this problem, Erasmus simply used the Latin Vulgate and translated these verses back into Greek. But the problem with the translation supplied by Erasmus was that it was different in many respects from earlier Greek texts and subsequently had the effect of altering and changing certain Greek readings. Elsewhere, when Erasmus ran into difficulties with these Greek manuscripts, he simply provided his own Greek translation based on the Latin text and subsequently introduced a number of Greek variants into the New Testament that were previously unattested in the Greek. However, he came under increasing fire from a number of ecclesiastical quarters because these verses were long thought to be important Trinitarian proof texts. Erasmus therefore remarked that if he could find them in a single Greek manuscript, he would include them in a subsequent edition. A Greek manuscript suddenly appeared with these verses, so he included them in his third edition. Scholars have long recognized that this particular manuscript was produced for the very purpose of including these verses. By this time the Complutensian Polyglot was available, and so Erasmus judiciously made use of it and corrected certain readings that he had either created via his Latin-to-Greek translations or were the result of the generally inferior nature of the manuscripts he had consulted in Basel to create his Greek text. In fact, the Greek text of Erasmus would eventually become the standard Greek text of the New Testament for the next two hundred years because it was largely transmitted by Stephanus and Beza.

Conclusion While the King James Bible effectively set the standard for all subsequent English translations of the Bible and its New Testament translation was regarded with special reverence for many years, it has come under increasing criticism in the past century. The central criticism leveled at the King James New Testament has not so much to do with the actual English translation but rather with the textual basis of the Greek subtext. The textual basis for the King James New Testament is essentially a handful of late Greek manuscripts that range in date from the twelfth to the fifteenth century and that were known to Erasmus during the time he put together his Greek New Testament. In fact, complete copies of the Greek New Testament have been discovered that date to the fourth century. These textual variants, as they are called, are significant because in many cases it is likely they more accurately represent the original text of the New Testament. Consequently, the King James New Testament, which was produced long before many of these manuscripts came to light, contains some readings that are clearly secondary interpolations not attested in the oldest and most reliable New Testament manuscripts. While this is clearly a shortcoming of the King James New Testament, these

textual discrepancies do not substantially affect more than twenty to thirty verses in the entire New Testament, and in only about five or six of them do these variants significantly alter the meaning of a verse or passage. Therefore, the shortcomings of the King James New Testament should not be exaggerated. All the same, neither should they be disregarded and ignored. Only four of the editions published by Beza, 1589, and were independent editions, as the others were simply smaller reprints. Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration, 4th ed. New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1968. Cambridge University Press, 1968, vii. Ashgate, 2003. The reason for the different spelling, Bezae instead of Beza, is that it reflects the Latin genitive case, which typically expresses possession. On the history of Codex Bezae, see David C. Cambridge University Press, 1968. The first seven verses of Romans in Greek are missing due to a lacuna. The ordering of the Pauline epistles is standard, and Hebrews is placed after Philemon. Rhodes Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1968. Cambridge University Press, 1968. To escape the hostilities the following year, he moved to Geneva, where he would later become a Calvinist. Second, Greek fonts were more difficult to manufacture than Latin fonts, especially since Greek required a number of diacritical marks. When the project was completed, it occupied six volumes. The first four volumes covered the Old Testament, the fifth volume the New Testament, and the sixth and final volume contained various Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek dictionaries and study aids. While the fifth volume was completed and printed in 1516, its publication and dissemination had to wait until 1517, when the four volumes of the Old Testament were completed. As a set, its publication was further delayed until Pope Leo X sanctioned it, which he did in 1517. Thus it did not begin to be distributed very widely before Complutum where it was printed. The word polyglot is of Greek origin and simply refers to any book that contains a side-by-side version of different languages of the same text. For the New Testament, there were simply the Greek and Latin texts in parallel columns. The First Printed Editions, ed. Immediately after this, the Annotations fill pages 1-10. Somewhat ironically, in later years Erasmus would not infrequently defend certain of his readings by reference to the Aldine version without realizing that this version was simply a recopy of his own text. It contains the entire Greek New Testament written in miniscule script with one column per page. It has long been recognized that this manuscript was basically produced to induce Erasmus to include the Johannine Comma, since there was now a Greek manuscript that contained these verses. It is currently housed at Trinity College in Dublin. It is written with capital Greek letters uncial script and is laid out with three columns of text per page. Codex Sinaiticus is a fourth-century codex that contains complete copies of every book in the New Testament.

Chapter 7 : The first Printed Greek New Testament. | Bible Differences, the Facts.

*Scrivener's text has been reprinted in the Greek New Testament published by the Trinitarian Bible Society as "Ἡ—
Ἰσχυρὰ ἡ ἀποστολικὴ ἰσχυρὰ ἡ ἀποστολική: The New Testament. The Greek Text underlying the English Authorised Version of " (London:
Trinitarian Bible Society,).*

Of the sacred books of the Hebrew Bible there is no known copy antedating the 10th century AD. Of Homer there is no complete copy earlier than the 13th century. Of Herodotus there is no manuscript earlier than the 10th century. Of the New Testament, however, we have two splendid manuscripts of the fourth century, at least ten of the fifth, twenty-five of the sixth and in all a total of more than four thousand copies in whole or in part of the Greek New Testament. To these copies of the text itself may be added the very important and even more ancient evidence of the versions of the New Testament in the Latin, Syriac, and Egyptian tongues, and the quotations and clear references to the New Testament readings found in the works of the early Church Fathers, as well as the inscriptions and monumental data in Syria, Asia Minor, Africa, Italy, and Greece, dating from the very age of the apostles and their immediate successors. It thus appears that the documents of the Christian faith are both so many and so widely scattered that these very facts more than any others have embarrassed the final determination of the text. Now however, the science of textual criticism has so far advanced and the textual problems of the Greek Testament have been so well traversed that one may read the Christian writings with an assurance approximating certainty. Professor Eberhard Nestle speaks of the Greek text of the New Testament issued by Westcott and Hort as the "nearest in its approach to the goal. It is the purpose of the present article to trace, as far as it can be done in a clear and untechnical manner, the process of connection between the original writings and this, one of the latest of the editions of the Greek New Testament. Sources of Evidence for the Text of the New Testament 1. Autographs of the New Testament Writers Until very recent times it has not been customary to take up with any degree of confidence, if at all, the subject of New Testament autographs, but since the researches in particular of Dalman, Deissmann, Moulton W. Ramsay goes so far as to claim that "antecedent probability founded on the general character of personal and contemporary Greek of Greek-Asiatic society" would indicate "that the first Christian account of the circumstances connected with the death of Jesus must be presumed to have been written in the year when Jesus died" Letters to the Seven Churches, 7. Flinders Petrie argues to the same end and says: The mass of briefer records and Logia which the habits and culture of that age would produce must have been welded together within 10 or 20 years by the external necessities" The Growth of the Gospels, 7. The autographs of the New Testament writers have long been lost, but the discovery during the last few years of contemporary documents enables us to form fairly clear notions as to their general literary character and condition. In the first place papyrus was probably the material employed by all the New Testament writers, even the original Gospel of Matthew and the general Epistle of James, the only books written within Palestine, not being excepted, for the reason that they were not originally written with a view to their liturgical use, in which case vellum might possibly have been employed. Again the evidence of the writings themselves witnesses to the various literary processes followed during the first century. Dictation was largely followed by Paul, the names of at least four of his secretaries, Tertius, Sosthenes, Timothy, and Sylvanus, being given, while the master himself, as in many of the Egyptian papyri, appended his own signature, sometimes with a sentence or two at the end. The method of personal research was pursued, as well as compilation of diverse data including genealogies, together with the grouping of cognate matters in artistic forms and abundant quotation in writings held in high esteem by the readers, as in the First and Third Gospels and the Book of Acts. Rendel Harris and Sir F. Comparatively few papyrus fragments of the New Testament are now known to be extant, and no complete book of the New Testament has as yet been found, though the successes in the field of contemporary Greek writings inspire confidence that ere long the rubbish heaps of Egypt will reward the diligent explorer. Of the Septuagint Greek Old Testament somewhat more has come to light than the New Testament, while the papyrus copies and fragments of Homer are almost daily increasing. The list below is condensed from that of Sir Frederick G. Found at Oxyrhynchus in , now in the University of Pennsylvania. P2 - John In book form, at

the Museo Archeologico, Florence. P3 - Luke 7: In the Rainer Collection, Vienna. P4 - Luke 1: P5 - John 1: An outer sheet of a single-quire book. Found at Oxyrhynchus and now in the British Museum. P6 - John P7 - Luke 4: Archaeological Museum at Kieff. P8 - Acts 4: In the Berlin Museum. Found at Oxyrhynchus; now in Harvard University Library. P10 - Romans 1: In the Imperial Library at Petersburg. P12 - Hebrews 1: In the Amherst Library. P13 - Hebrews 2: Found at Oxyrhynchus; now in the British Museum. P16 - Romans P17 - Titus 1: P18 - Hebrews 9: P19 - Revelation 1: Greek Copies or Manuscripts of the New Testament Text Greek copies or manuscripts of the New Testament text have hitherto been and probably will continue to be the chief source of data in this great field. For determining the existence of the text in its most ancient form the autographs are of supreme value. For determining the content or extent of the text the versions are of highest worth. For estimating the meaning and at the same time for gaining additional data, both as to existence and extent of usage of the New Testament, the quotations of its text by the Church Fathers, whether as apologists, preachers, or historians, in Assyria, Greece, Africa, Italy or Gaul, are of exceeding importance. But for determining the readings of the text itself the Greek manuscripts or copies of the original autographs are still the principal evidence of criticism. About 4, manuscripts, in whole or in part, of the Greek New Testament are now known. These manuscripts furnish abundant evidence for determining the reading of practically the entire New Testament, while for the Gospels and most important Epistles the evidence is unprecedented for quantity and for clearness. They are usually divided into two classes: Uncial, or large hand, and Minuscule, or small hand, often called Cursive. The term "cursive" is not satisfactory, since it does not coordinate with the term "uncial," nor are so-called cursive features such as ligatures and oval forms confined to minuscule manuscripts. The uncials comprise about copies extending from the fourth to the tenth centuries. The minuscules include the remaining manuscripts and fall between the ninth century and the invention of printing. Herewith is given a brief description of a few of the chief manuscripts, both uncial and minuscule, of the New Testament. Sinai and now in the Imperial Library at St. This is the only uncial which contains the New Testament entire. It also has the Epistle of Barnabas and part of the Shepherd of Hermas and possibly originally the Didache. The marks of many correctors are found in the text. The open sheet exposing eight columns resembles greatly an open papyrus roll. There is but rudimentary punctuation and no use of accent or initial letters, but the Eusebian section numbers are found on the margin of the Gospels. Codex Alexandrinus A, so named since it was supposed to have come from Alexandria, being the gift of Cyril Lucar, at one time Patriarch of that Province, though later of Constantinople, to Charles I, through the English ambassador at the Turkish court in , and in presented to the Royal Library and now in the British Museum. It doubtless belongs to the fifth century, and contained the entire New Testament lacking now only portions of Matthew, John, and 1 Corinthians as well as the two Epistles of Clement of Rome and the Psalms of Solomon. Several different hands are discovered in the present state of the manuscript. Codex Vaticanus B, since , at least, the chief treasure of the Vatican Library, and universally esteemed to be the oldest and best manuscript of the Greek New Testament; fourth century. It is without accents, breathings or punctuation, though corrected and retraced by later hands. In the Gospels the divisions are of an earlier date than in Codex Sinaiticus. Codex Ephraemi Rescriptus C. This is the great palimpsest twice written manuscript of the uncial group, and originally contained the whole New Testament. Now, however, a part "approximately half" of every book is lacking, and 2 Thessalonians and 2 John are entirely gone. Enlarged initials and the Eusebian marginal sections are used and several hands have corrected the manuscript. This is the early known manuscript which Theodore Beza obtained in from the monastery of Irenaeus at Lyons and which he gave in to the University of Cambridge, where it now is. It is a Greek-Latin text, the Greek holding the chief place on the left-hand page, measuring 8 X 10 inches, and dates probably from the end of the fifth century. Both Greek and Latin are written in large uncials and divided into short clauses, corresponding line for line. The hands of no less than nine correctors have been traced, and the critical questions arising from the character of the readings are among the most interesting in the whole range of Biblical criticism and are still unsettled. It contains only the Gospels and Acts with a fragment of 3 John. It is a complete codex of the Gospels, in a slightly sloping but very ancient hand, written upon good vellum, in one column of 30 lines to the page, and 6 X 9 inches in size. By all the tests ordinarily given, it belongs to the period of the earliest codices, possibly of the fourth century.

Like Codex Bezae D , it has the order of the Gospels: Matthew, John, Luke, Mark, and contains an apocryphal interpolation within the longer ending of Mark for which no other Greek authority is known, though it is probably referred to by Jerome. It has been published in facsimile by Mr. Freer of Detroit, who obtained the manuscript in Egypt in , and is edited by Professor H. Sanders for the University of Michigan Press, Out of the thousands of minuscule manuscripts now known only the four used by Erasmus will be enumerated. This is an 11th-century codex at Basel. It must have been copied from a good uncial, since its text often agrees with Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus. Of the 12th century, and now at Mayhingen, Bayaria. This is the only manuscript Erasmus had for Revelation in his editio princeps, and being defective at the end, Generally speaking, this manuscript is of high quality. This is a fifteenth-century manuscript at Basel, and was that on which Erasmus most depended for his first edition, It reflects a good quality of text. Some have assigned this manuscript to the 12th century, though it was probably later. It is at Basel, and was the principal text used by Erasmus in the Acts and Epistles.

Chapter 8 : Preserved Greek Text

Novum Testamentum Graece (The New Testament in Greek) is a critical edition of the New Testament in its original Koine Greek, forming the basis of most modern Bible translations and biblical criticism.

This article is one of a series we are running this year. The series is called "The Integrity of the New Testament" and deals with textual criticism. Can the New Testament be trusted? Has it been corrupted through time? Can we know what God has said? It should be obvious how important this topic is. This is especially so given the climate of society today and its attitudes toward the Bible. Near the end of the year we are planning to publish these twelve articles in book form Kindle, Nook and old fashioned print and ink. To preserve most things is relatively easy, even for man. I have often thought about the fact that the books of the NT were written on perishable papyri. Papyrus is basically a tall grass. Because each generation that followed, put new ink into fresh writing material and much was preserved, actually too much material for the common man. There are about twice as many Latin manuscripts as there are Greek. It would take about animal hides and seven miles of text put end to end to produce one Latin Bible. Goderannus, a scribe, did this for the second time in his life in AD. He put in a note in this manuscript that it took himself and a colleague four years to make this one manuscript De Hammel, These Bibles were almost exclusively used in monasteries and church buildings. It is about AD when the Bible could be commonly purchased *ibid*. Men from the first century have dedicated themselves in preserving the great treasure of the scriptures in their own language. I thank God for these men, and those who followed. Which manuscripts should be used and compared on which to base a printed Greek text? With so many manuscripts, it is no wonder conscientious and truth seeking scholars do not always agree on which set manuscripts should take priority. My main objective will be to let the general reader, who is not an expert in textual matters, get a sense on how to view these editions. Prior to the invention of the printing press which took place in about AD, there were no editions of the Greek New Testament. It is worth pausing to consider that the language of the first printed Bible was in Latin, not Greek or English. What eventually brought about a need to have a printed edition of the Greek New Testament? There are at least three factors that come into play. First of all, Greek scholars and Greek manuscripts had been fleeing from the Muslim conquest of Byzantium. Greek-speaking refugees escaped some bringing books. Secondly there was an academic need that was growing stronger in Western Europe, i. This need was not purely academic, but if one were to correct some of the erroneous readings imbedded in the Latin Vulgate, it would have to have a justifiable basis, so Erasmus turned to the underlying Greek text for his justification. Thirdly, the printers or those who sponsored a book had to see a market for their book before they would risk the high price of publication. Nevertheless, the Greek text finally came off the press, and to the public. The public forgot about his revision of the Vulgate and held onto his Greek printed text. We will pick up with Erasmus after we overview the Greek manuscript text types. The chart below is a limited summary of the Greek manuscript tradition at a glance. I will be referring back to chart 1 in the paragraphs below so it is worth taking a moment to familiarize yourself with it. There are about manuscripts placed in this chart, most of them in the M group. Based upon similar readings we have three groups or families of manuscripts. On the left we have the centuries listed, from the 1st century to the 15th. The A group of manuscripts is seen from the 2nd century to the 13th; the W group is from the 3rd to the 6th; and the M group is from the 5th to the 15th as charted. Which group is more accurate? Now beginning with this next step scholars disagree, and a few of them very sharply. Which manuscripts should be considered in comparing or collating for printing a Greek text? So as you look at the chart, what group of manuscripts would you choose that most accurately reflects the original writings? Yet, in fact you have most likely already chosen without realizing it. Our English versions are based upon different manuscripts and different Greek Texts generally. If you are reading the American Standard Bible, you are reading a translation based upon a merger of at least two previous Greek Texts, one of Westcott and Hort and secondly of Tregelles Comfort, This text would be located in group A. The Westcott and Hort text is based predominately upon two fourth century manuscripts of high standing of group A, along with other early manuscripts. Now let me assume that you have spent time in a Bible class where these different translations

have been used. The differences you are reading in English are most often the difference in the English vocabulary rather than the difference between Greek words. There is no commonly used English version based upon this free and paraphrastic text. The Greek manuscript tradition of the Western text died out when the Vulgate became popular which replaced it in the West as it retained some of its readings. Why did the M group begin to have so many copies beginning with the ninth century? Why did group A begin to dwindle out in the ninth century? By AD they expanded greatly as the map shows. It is not hard to understand what transpired when the Muslims invaded Palestine and Egypt; those churches became much smaller and under duress. Therefore the Alexandrian type of text dwindled along with the churches in those regions. It is no wonder we have an abundance of manuscripts from Byzantium in this later period. The Byzantium text type is also known as the Majority text; in chart 1 is labeled the M text. Having overviewed the textual tradition, we return once more to Erasmus. Erasmus had a half a dozen manuscripts to compare in producing his printed Greek Text which became the standard Greek Text. So all together they translated from a Greek text based upon about 25 Greek manuscripts Lewis, These 25 Greek manuscripts are not old, but generally go back to the 12th centuries. Yet these were the manuscripts available and accessible to the translators of the KJV. After the completion of the KJV there were many manuscripts being found and compared to this standard text, the Textus Receptus. Some of these manuscripts were almost years earlier. Scholars continued to print the Textus Receptus, but adding more and more of their notes that referred to older readings of earlier manuscripts. As time and manuscripts began to accumulate more editions came out, but no one was willing to print a different Greek Text than the Textus Receptus. John Mill produced a Textus Receptus that had 30, variant readings from manuscripts; the text was printed around AD. But it was Karl Lachmann in who finally took courage to dethrone the Textus Receptus and print a different Greek Text from the wording found in the manuscripts of the 4th century. Men such as Griesbach , Tregelles , and Tishendorf , were convinced that the older manuscripts contained the readings that were closer to the originals. This took time, investigation, and affirmation to the next generation who were reluctant to leave their KJV and its underlying Textus Receptus. After working about 28 years on this edition from about to , Brooke Foss Westcott Professor Hort wrote the introduction by which he laid down the principles and method they used in producing their Greek Text. These same methods are being used today. They realized that ten manuscripts could simply be copied from one manuscript. Therefore the ten copies should be treated as one witness, not ten. They also put manuscripts into large groups like chart 1 above, although they used different names for these groups, as well as one additional grouping. Also it was understood that when later scribes who had two exemplar manuscripts before them, they often did not like choosing between two different readings. So, instead of choosing, they often put them together into a longer reading. Then that longer reading was copied for the next generation. There were many other observations that Hort made in his introduction that greatly aided the next generation of scholars. Of course, I think that they gave too much weight to Codex Vaticanus alone, and this needs to be tempered. This criticism aside, the Westcott and Hort text is extremely reliable. I came to this conclusion after doing my own textual studies. This revealed to me that I was working on the same methodological basis as they. One of the manuscripts found since Westcott and Hort is P75, that is papyri 75, dated about AD which reads extremely close to Vaticanus, pushing the text of Westcott and Hort into the 2nd century AD and in many ways affirming that Westcott and Hort were correct in their underlying assumptions. Westcott and Hort do not mention the papyri manuscripts, which today number up to Also, early manuscripts written in other languages, as well as more accurate Patristic quotations have been supplemented since Westcott and Hort. They would rather pick the manuscripts from the M group in chart 1. These scholars realize that this M group or Byzantine type of manuscript is found only in the beginning in the 5th century, prior to that there is no Byzantine type of manuscript which has survived. So what is called today as the Majority Text is the minority text until about the 9th century, please see chart 1. There are two Greek Majority texts that have been printed, one done by Zane C. Hodges and Arthur L. Pierpont and Maurice A. Many of these scholars who endorse the Byzantine text do so on the basis of a theological argument, that God providentially had this type of manuscript available to more people throughout history. But in making such an argument they gloss over the period from the 2nd century to 8th century where this text was not providentially the majority.

Chapter 9 : Westcott & Hort vs. Textus Receptus: Which is Superior?

** Greek text according to the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople (/12) * Orthodox illustration * Chapters divided in paragraphs * With an introduction (in English and Greek) on the meaning of the New Testament for us today, and the special importance of the text of the Orthodox Churches.*

He has authored ninety-two books. Separated Into Families We have textual traditions or families of texts, which grew up in a certain region. For example, we have the Alexandrian text-type, which Westcott and Hort called the Neutral text that came from Egypt. Then, there is the Western text-type, which came from Italy and Gaul as well as North Africa and elsewhere. There was also the Caesarean text-type, which came from Caesarea and is characterized by a mixture of Western and Alexandrian readings B. In other words, manuscripts grew up in certain areas, just like a human family, becoming known as that text-type, having their own characteristics. In reality, it is not as simple as this because there are mixtures of text-types within each text-type. However, generally, each text-type resembles itself more than it does the others. It should also be remembered that most of our extant manuscripts are identical in more than seventy-five percent of their texts. Thus, it is the twenty-five percent of variation that identifies a manuscript as a certain text-type, i. However, this practice is fading because technology has allowed the textual scholar to carry out a more comprehensive comparison of all readings in all manuscripts, supposedly blurring the traditional classifications. Carlson The original New Testament authors were inspired by God, and error-free. The copyists were not inspired, and errors did show up in the texts as a result. These errors help us to place these texts into certain families. Very early in the transmission process copies of the originals worked their way to these four major religious centers and the copying traditions that distinguish these text-types began to take place. The Alexandrian text-type is the earliest and reflects the work of professional and semi-professional scribes who treated the copying process with respect. The text is simple, without added material, and lacking the grammatical, stylistic polish sometimes imposed by Byzantine scribes. The Western text-type is early second century. These manuscripts reflect the work of scribes that were given to paraphrasing. Scribes freely changed words, phrases, clauses, and whole sentences as they felt it necessary. At times, they were simply trying to harmonize the text, or even add apocryphal material to spice it up. The Caesarean text-type is a mixture of Western and Alexandrian readings. The Byzantine text-type shows the hand of scribes who, as noted, attempted to smooth out both grammar and style, often with a view to making the text easier to understand. These scribes also combined differing readings from other manuscripts that contained variants. The period of 50 to C. In short, the rise of the Byzantine Empire gave rise to the Byzantine text. After Constantine legalized Christianity, giving it equal status with the pagan religions, it was much easier to have biblical manuscripts copied. Over the next four centuries or so, the Byzantine Empire and the Greek-speaking church were the dominant factors in making the Byzantine text the standard. It was not a matter of its being the better, i. From the eighth century forward, the Byzantine text had displaced all others. Worse still, it would be this inferior text what would lay at the foundation of all English translations until the Revised English Version of and the American Standard Version of It was not until that two Cambridge scholars, B. Hort, replaced the Textus Receptus with their critical text. I long for the ploughboy to sing them to himself as he follows his plough, the weaver to hum them to the tune of his shuttle, the traveler to beguile with them the dullness of his journey. Clayton , Dutch scholar Desiderius Erasmus penned those words in the early part of the 16th century. Much time has passed since the Reformation, and 98 percent of the world we live in today has access to the Bible. There is little wonder that the Bible has become the bestseller of all time. It has influenced people from all walks of life to fight for freedom and truth. This was especially true during the Reformation of Europe throughout the 16th century. These leaders were of great faith, courage, and strength, such as Martin Luther, William Tyndale, while others, like Erasmus, were more subtle in the changes that they brought. Thus it has been said of the Reformation that Martin Luther only opened the door to it after Erasmus picked the lock. There is not a single historian of the period who would deny that Erasmus was a great scholar. Remarking on his character, the Catholic Encyclopedia says: He was not a happy boy, living in a home as the illegitimate son of a Dutch

priest. His guardians ignored his desire to enter the university; instead, they sent him to the Augustinian monastery of Steyn. Erasmus gained a vast knowledge of the Latin language, the classics as well as the Church Fathers. In time, this life was so detestable to him that he jumped at the opportunity, at the age of twenty-six, to become secretary to the bishop of Cambrai, Henry of Bergen, in France. This afforded him his chance to enter university studies in Paris. However, he was a sickly man, suffering from poor health throughout his entire life. It was in that Erasmus was invited to visit England. It was around this time that Erasmus penned a treatise entitled *Handbook of the Christian Soldier*, in which he advised the young Christian to study the Bible, saying: It was there that he fell in love with the study of textual criticism while visiting the Praemonstratensian Abbey of Parc near Louvain. Within the library, Erasmus discovered a manuscript of Italian scholar Lorenzo Valla: *Annotations on the New Testament*. Thereupon Erasmus commissioned to himself the task of restoring the original text of the Greek New Testament. Erasmus moved on to Italy and subsequently pushed on to England once again. This is his subtle way of exposing the abuses of the clergy. It is these abuses that had brought on the Reformation, which was now festering. One of his friends, Martin Dorpius, attempted to persuade him that the Latin did not need to be corrected from the Greek. Is it probable that so many holy fathers, so many consummate scholars would have longed to convey a warning to a friend? However, he was delaying publication until he had the whole Bible completed. The first printed Greek critical text would have set the standard, with any other being all but ignored. The fact that Erasmus was terribly rushed resulted in a Greek text that contained hundreds of typographical errors alone. This comment did not even take into consideration the blatant interpolations into the text that were not part of the original. Erasmus was not oblivious to the typographical errors, which were corrected in a good many later editions. This did not include the textual errors. I long for the ploughboy to sing them to himself as he follows his plough. Regardless of its imperfections, the Erasmus critical edition began the all-important work of textual criticism, which has only brought about a better critical text, as well as more accurate Bible translations. Erasmus was not only concerned with ascertaining the original words; he was just as concerned with achieving an accurate understanding of those words. Herein he introduces his principles for Bible study, his interpretation rules. Erasmus saw the Bible as a whole work by one ultimate author, and as such, it should interpret itself. Erasmus Contrasted With Luther Erasmus penned a treatise called *Familiar Colloquies* in , in which again he was exposing corruption in the Church and the monasteries. Just one year earlier, in , Martin Luther had nailed his 95 theses on the church door at Wittenberg, denouncing the indulgences, the scandal that had rocked numerous countries. Many people likely thought that these two could bring about change and reform. This was not going to be a team effort, though, as the two were at opposite ends of the spectrum on how to bring reform about. Luther would come to condemn Erasmus because he was viewed as being too moderate, seeking to make change peacefully within the Church. The seemingly small bond they may have shared by way of their writings against the Church establishment was torn apart in when Erasmus wrote his essay *On the Freedom of the Will*. What Luther failed to understand was that Paul was writing about the works of the Mosaic Law. However, Erasmus would not accept such faulty reasoning, in that it would make God unjust because this would suggest that man would be unable to act in such a way as to affect his salvation. As the Reformation was spreading throughout Europe, Erasmus saw complaints from both sides. Many of the religious leaders who supported the reform movement chose to leave the Catholic Church. While they could not predict the result of their decision, they moved forward, many meeting their deaths. This would not be true of Erasmus, though, for he withdrew from the debate, yet he did refuse to be made cardinal. His approach was to try to appease both sides. Thus, Rome saw his writings as being that of a heretic, prohibiting them, while the reformers denounced him as refusing to risk his life for the cause. Here was a man emotionally broken over criticism, but in fear of burning bridges with Rome, so he cautiously sat on the sideline. The affairs of Erasmus in relation to the Reformation can be summarized as follows: The distance between his career and that of Luther was therefore continually enlarging, until they at length moved in opposite directions, and met each other with mutual animosity. In fact, the English-language person has over different translations from which to choose. From these 16th-century life and death struggles, in which Erasmus shared, there has materialized dependable and accurate Bible translations. Moreover, with the fall of Constantinople to the

Turks in C. About fifty years later, or at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Ximenes, archbishop of Toledo, Spain, a man of rare capability and honor, invited foremost scholars of his land to his university at Alcala to produce a multiple-language Bible—“not for the common people, but for the educated. The outcome would be the Polyglot, named Complutensian, corresponding to the Latin of Alcala. For the Greek New Testament, these scholars had only a few manuscripts available to them, and those of late origin. One may wonder why this was the case when they were supposed to have access to the Vatican library. This Bible was completed in 1514, providing the first printed Greek New Testament, but it did not receive approval by the pope to be published until 1526 and was not released to the public until 1542. Froben, a printer in Basel, Switzerland became aware of the completion of the Complutensian Polyglot Bible and of its pending consent by the pope to be published. Immediately, he saw a prospect of making profits. He at once sent word to Erasmus, who was the foremost European scholar of the day and whose works he had published in Latin, pleading with him to hurry through a Greek New Testament text.