

# myBible

## The Transmission of the Bible

The Anchor MBC – F.A.I.T.H. Night

# What are We Talking About?

Inspiration – The process by which God inspired men to write the words of Scripture

Canonization – The authoritative list of books recognized as Holy Scripture

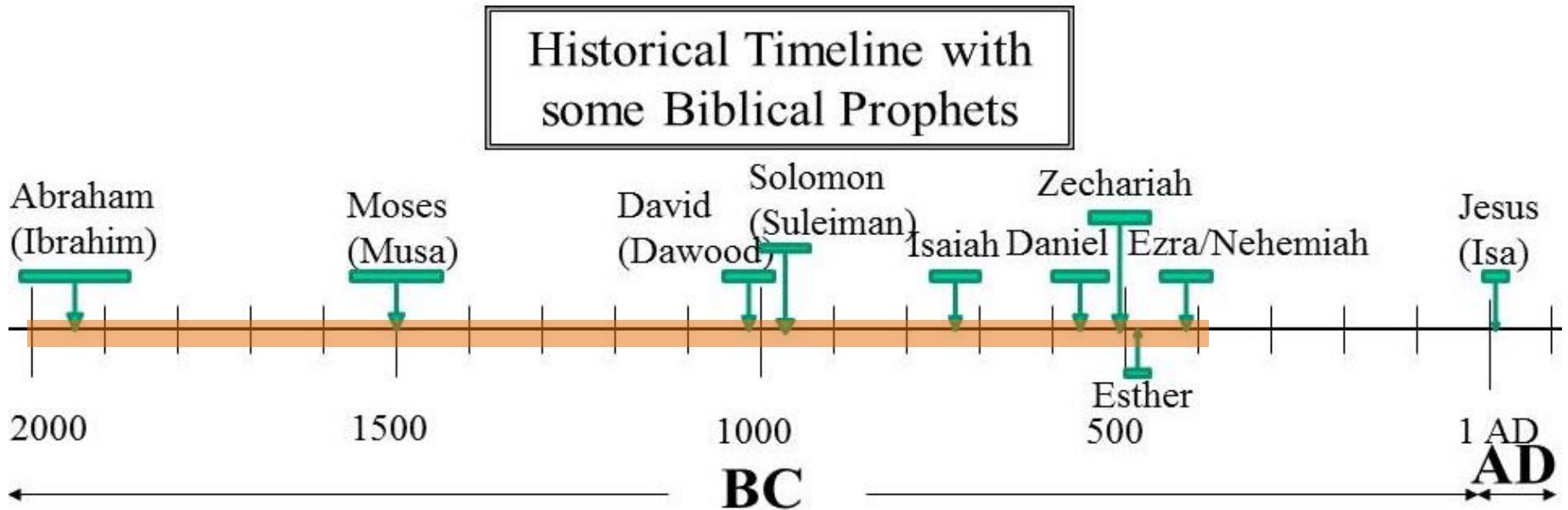
Transmission – The history of how the Word of God was passed down over the generations to the present day



# The Old Testament: Timeline

- The oldest: Job
- The newest: Nehemiah or Malachi?

From First to Last Book = almost 1,500 years



# The Old Testament: Authors

- At LEAST 23 different writers
  - Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Solomon, Asaph, Ezra, Daniel, David, the 12 “minor” prophets
- Some books are collections (Psalms, Proverbs)



# The Old Testament: Language

- Hebrew – almost all the Old Testament
- Five Old Testament passages were written in Aramaic

<i>Cheth</i>	<i>Zain</i>	<i>Vau</i>	<i>He</i>	<i>Daleth</i>	<i>Gimel</i>	<i>Beth</i>	<i>Aleph</i>
ח	ז	ו	ה	ד	ג	ב	א
<i>Ain</i>	<i>Samech</i>	<i>Nun</i>	<i>Mem</i>	<i>Lamed</i>	<i>Caph</i>	<i>Yod</i>	<i>Teth</i>
ע	ס	נ	מ	ל	כ	י	ט
<i>Point</i>	<i>Tau</i>	<i>Shin</i>	<i>Resh</i>	<i>Koph</i>	<i>Tzade</i>	<i>Pe</i>	
◊	ת	ש	ר	ק	צ	פ	
<i>Extended forms of</i>							
<i>Tau</i>	<i>Mem</i>	<i>Lamed</i>	<i>He</i>	<i>Aleph</i>			
ת	ם	ל	ה	א			
<i>Final forms of</i>							
<i>Tzade</i>	<i>Pe</i>	<i>Nun</i>	<i>Mem</i>	<i>Caph</i>			
ץ	ף	ן	ם	ך			

# O.T.: Original Manuscripts (2,000 – 400 BC)

- The oldest example of Scriptural text is the Silver Amulet, discovered in Jerusalem in 1979-1980

“May Yahweh bless you and keep you;  
may Yahweh cause His face to shine upon  
you and grant you peace.”

**Number 6:24-26** - *“The LORD bless thee,  
and keep thee: The LORD make his face  
shine upon thee, and be gracious unto  
thee: The LORD lift up his countenance  
upon thee, and give thee peace.”* (KJV)



# O.T.: Original Manuscripts (2,000 – 400 BC)

- What happened to the originals?
  - 1440 BC: Deuteronomy 31:24-26
  - 830 BC: Solomon's Temple
  - 620 BC: 2 Kings 22:8-13
  - 587 BC: 2 Chronicles 36:18-19
  - 516 BC: Ezra 5:13-15
  - 70 AD: Matthew 24:2



# O.T.: Original Manuscripts (2,000 – 400 BC)

- What were the originals like?
  - Language: Proto-Canaanite or Early Hebrew?
  - Did they have spaces between the letters?

## Activity:

What does this say?

**GODISNOWHERE**

Did you say, “God is nowhere” or  
“God is now here”?



# O.T.: Original Manuscripts (2,000 – 400 BC)

- Amos 6:12 may be an example:

אם־יחושכבקרִים

How will you divide these Hebrew letters?

כבקרִים

יחוש־

אם

(with oxen)

(will one plow)

(or)

ים

כבקר

יחוש־

אם

(the sea)

(with oxen)

(will one plow)

(or)

## O.T.: Original Manuscripts (2,000 – 400 BC)

- Look at **Amos 6:12** in context. Which translation best fits the context of the passage? Here are two different translation options based upon dividing the words in two different places:
  - *“Shall horses run upon the rock? Will one plow there with oxen? For ye have turned judgment into gall, And the fruit of righteousness into hemlock:”*  
(King James Version)
  - *“Do horses run on rocks? Does one plow the sea with oxen? But you have turned justice into poison and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood—”*  
(New Revised Standard Version)

# O.T.: Era of the Scribes (500 BC – 100 AD)

- Ezra was a scribe (**Ezra 7:6**)
- Scribes had two important jobs regarding the Old Testament texts:
  - Preservation
  - Reproduction
- Some of their work remains today in the Dead Sea Scrolls



One of the caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found

# O.T.: Era of the Scribes (500 BC – 100 AD)

- The scribes from this era made some enduring changes:
  - See the end of **2 Chronicles** and beginning of **Ezra**.  
**Why would they do this?**
  - Developed and added the Hebrew vowels: *he* (ה), *yod* (י), and *waw* (ו)



Psalm 19 found in the Dead Sea Scrolls

# O.T.: Standardizing the Text (100 BC – 100 AD)

- The text was standardized
- Jesus used this text and authorized it with His endorsement in **Matthew 5:18**.

**Matthew 5:18** - *“For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.”* (KJV)



A view of Masada from the air

# O.T.: Tannaim & Amoraim (100 – 500 AD)

- Tannaim – Repeaters

- Developed very strict rules for copying the text

1. Only parchments made from clean animals were allowed; these were to be joined together with thread from clean animals.
2. Each written column of the scroll was to have no fewer than forty-eight and no more than sixty lines whose breadth must consist of thirty letters.
3. The page was first to be lined, from which the letters were to be suspended.
4. The ink was to be black, prepared according to a specific recipe.

# O.T.: Tannaim & Amoraim (100 – 500 AD)

## – Rules (continued)

5. No word or letter was to be written from memory.
6. There was to be the space of a hair between consonant and the space of a small consonant between each word, as well as several other spacing rules.
7. The scribe must wash himself entirely and be in full Jewish dress before beginning to copy the scroll.
8. He could not write the name *Yahweh* (Jehovah) with a newly dipped brush, nor take notice of anyone, even a king, while writing this sacred name.

# O.T.: Tannaim & Amoraim (100 – 500 AD)

- Amoraim – Expositors (explainers)
  - Explained the Scriptures in their writings.
  - Developed “Masorah” (explanatory notes) beside the text or within the text when there was a minor error to address





# O.T.: The Masoretes (500 – 1000 AD)

- They are the most well known of the scribes
  - We still use their text today
  - They counted everything that could be counted:
    - Number of verses of Deuteronomy - 955
    - Middle of Deuteronomy - 17:10
    - Total verses in the Pentateuch – 5,845
    - Total words in the Pentateuch – 79,856
    - Total letters in the Pentateuch – 400,945

# O.T.: The Masoretes (500 – 1000 AD)

- Added vowel points and accents
  - Vowel points aided in pronunciation
  - Accents aided in chanting the words in the synagogue



The image shows the Hebrew text "וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹהִים יִקְוּ הַמַּיִם" (Wayyomer Elohim Yiquw hamayim) with Masoretic vowel points and accents. The vowel points are in red, and the accents are in blue. The text is written in a stylized font with a light blue glow around the letters.

The Masoretic vowel points are in red; the accents are in blue.

- Added verse breaks in the text using a large colon (:) at the conclusion of each verse

# O.T.: The Masoretes (500 – 1000 AD)

- Added new Masorahs to guard the text from error and provide corrections:

## Activity: Moses or Manasseh

Moses (מֹשֶׁה)

Manasseh (מְנַשֶּׁה)

Read the context of **Judges 18:30** and determine which name better fits the context:

*“And the children of Dan set up the graven image: and Jonathan, the son of Gershom, the son of Manasseh, he and his sons were priests to the tribe of Dan until the day of the captivity of the land.” (KJV 1900)*

*“And the people of Dan set up the carved image for themselves, and Jonathan the son of Gershom, son of Moses, and his sons were priests to the tribe of the Danites until the day of the captivity of the land.” (ESV)*

# O.T.: The Masoretes (500 – 1000 AD)

- Changed the vowel pointing on the name of God (Yahweh) to that of the word, Lord (Adonai)

*“Then the **LORD** God said, “It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.”” (ESV)*

- **Genesis 2:18**

אֲדֹנָי



יְהוָה

# O.T.: The Modern Text (1000 AD – Present)

- Masoretic text was regarded as the gold standard, even after the printing press.
- Chapter divisions added
  - Jewish chapter divisions may differ from Christian
- 1488 – First Hebrew Bible printed
- Most respected edition of the Old Testament:
  - Biblia Hebraica Stuttgartensia (1976)



# New Testament Transmission: Basic Principles

1. Initial transmission of the New Testament was oral.

– Acts 1:21-22

– 2 Cor. 12:12

*“Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, it seemed fitting for me as well, having investigated everything carefully from the beginning, to write it out for you in consecutive order, most excellent Theophilus; so that you may know the exact truth about the things you have been taught.” - Luke 1:1-4*



# New Testament Transmission: Basic Principles

## 2. Distinction between OT and NT transmission

- Old Testament – central body of people responsible for taking care of Scriptures  
([Deuteronomy 31:24-26](#))
  - Priests, Scribes, Tannaim, Amoraim, Masoretes
- New Testament – very different
  - Transience
  - Persecution
  - Immediate copying and distribution
  - No centralized body to oversee Scriptures ([Rev. 1:20](#))

# New Testament Transmission: Basic Principles

## 3. We are still in the New Testament age!

- Old Testament – best text resolved a long time ago
- New Testament
  - Lots more manuscripts available (we are closer to the time of their writing)
  - The learning and evaluating process is ongoing
  - Many of the issues and debates may be resolved in another 100 years



# New Testament Transmission: Pre 100 AD

- New Testament: approximately 49-95 AD
- Oldest fragments date back to 100-199 AD
  - No original manuscripts!
- What do we know about the originals?
  - **Colossians 4:7-9** – Messengers used
  - **Romans 16:22** – Some were dictated
  - **Colossians 4:16** – Likely copied immediately

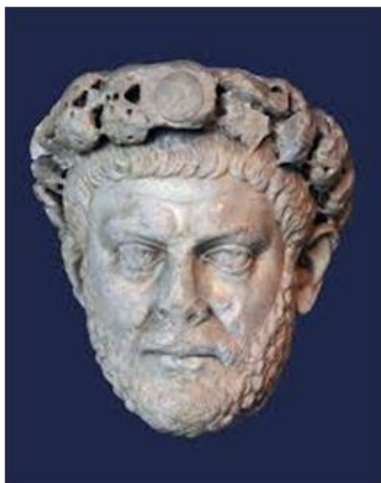
# New Testament Transmission: Pre 100 AD

- The use of amateur scribes or volunteer church members.
  - In 300 AD, the cost of copying a Bible would be approximately 30,000 denarii, for high-quality work.
  - A Roman legionary may have made about 1,000 denarii per year.



# New Testament Transmission: Post 100 AD

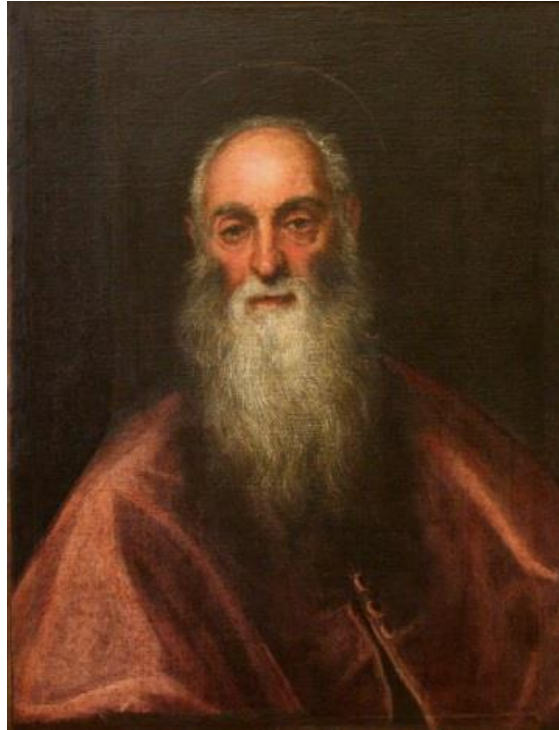
- Move from papyrus to parchments (2 Timothy 4:13)
- The effect of the Roman Empire
  - Persecution in 303 AD
  - Professional printing in 325 AD
- From 400 AD on, monks copied the Greek NT



# New Testament Texts: What are the Differences?

It is important near the beginning of our discussion on New Testament textual criticism to note that the verbal agreement between various New Testament manuscripts is closer than between many English translations of the New Testament and that the actual number of variants in the New Testament is small (approximately 10 percent), none of which affect any matter of doctrine. The greatest number of variants are differences or errors in spelling. (For example, the author of Codex Vaticanus spells “John” with only one n instead of the common spelling with two... This type of variant makes no difference in the meaning of the text. – The Journey from Texts to Translations

# New Testament Texts: What are the Differences?



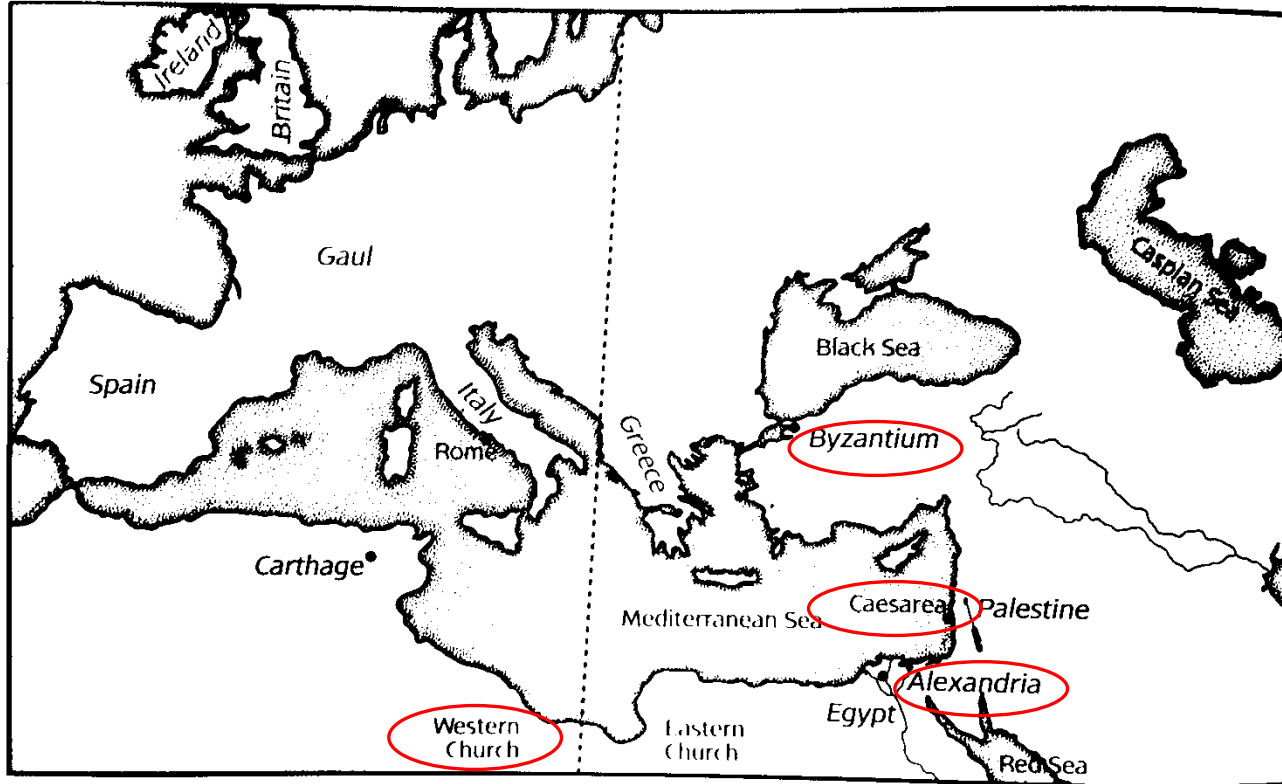
- **Jerome (347-420) – “there are almost as many different translations as there are manuscripts.”**

# New Testament Texts: What are the Differences?



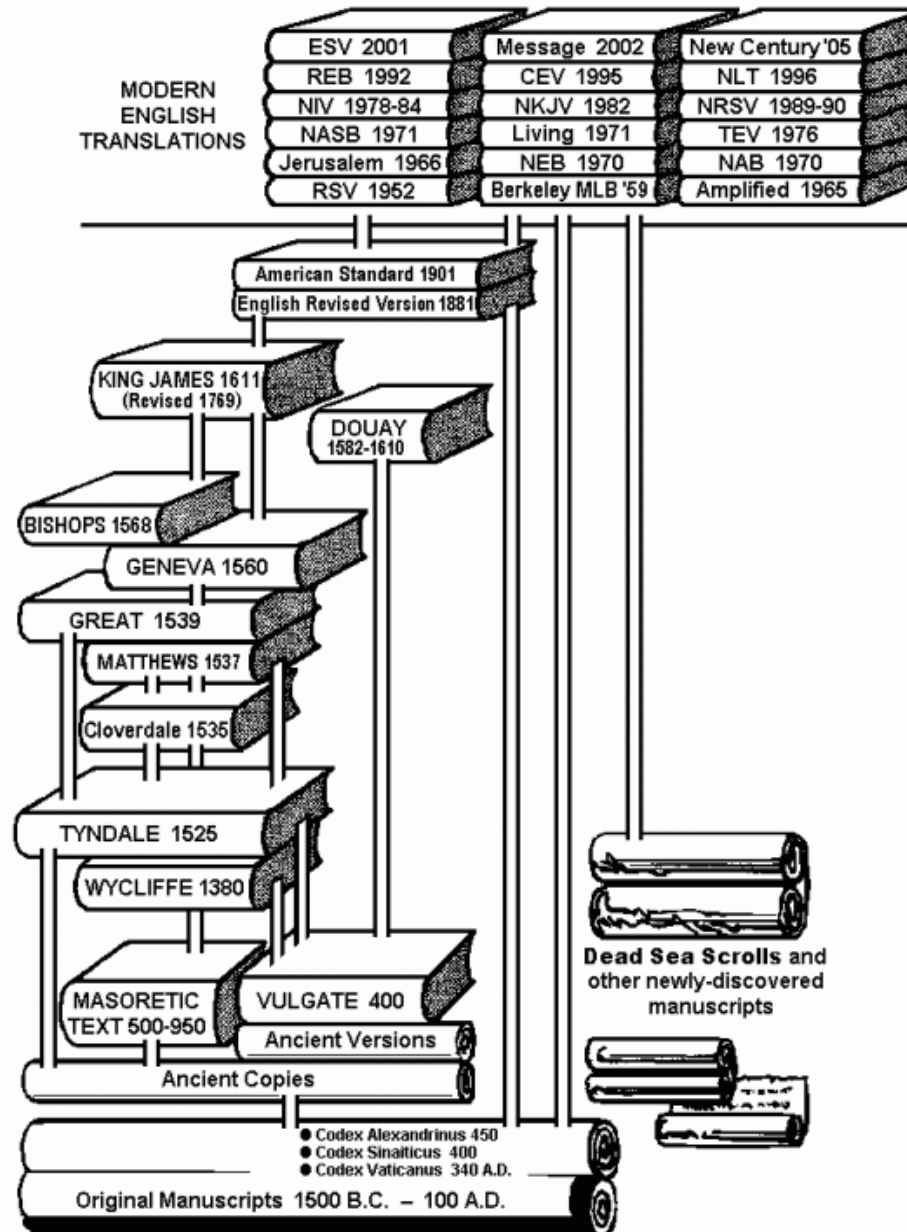
- **Johann Bengel (1687-1752) – Determined that no variant affected any article of evangelical doctrine.**

# New Testament Texts: What are the Differences?



**Four Families: Western, Byzantine, Caesarean, Alexandrian**

# New Testament Texts: What are the Differences?





# New Testament Texts: What are the Differences?

Correct Reading	Support Correct Reading	Support Incorrect Reading
'Father'	Alexandrian	Western, Caesarean, Byzantine
'Your kingdom come'	Alexandrian, Caesarean, Byzantine	Western
'sins'	Alexandrian, Caesarean, Byzantine	Western
'Lead us not into temptation'	Alexandrian	Western, Caesarean, Byzantine

- "...Father, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves also forgive everyone who is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation." - Luke 11:2-4 (NASB)*
- "...**Our** Father **which art in heaven**, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. **Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth**. Give us day by day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; **but deliver us from evil**." - Luke 11:2-4 (KJV)*

# New Testament Texts: What are the Differences?

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- “...Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our **debts**, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil. **For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.**” - Matthew 6:9-13 (NASB)

# New Testament Texts: What are the Differences?

- Why are there differences in the texts?
  - If the original text in Luke 11:2-4 did not originally contain all the words found in the KJV, why were they added?
  - What if the original text did contain all the words we see in the KJV. Why would a scribe eliminate portions of Luke 11:2-4?