Kings Series esson #110 August 8, 2010

Dean Bible Ministries www.deanbible.org Dr. Robert L. Dean, Jr. Can We Really Trust the Greek New Testament? Isn't the Bible just another human book, subject to error and expressing different opinions about God?

Isn't the Bible full of contradictions and errors?

Hasn't the Bible been changed over the years because it has been copied and translated so many times?

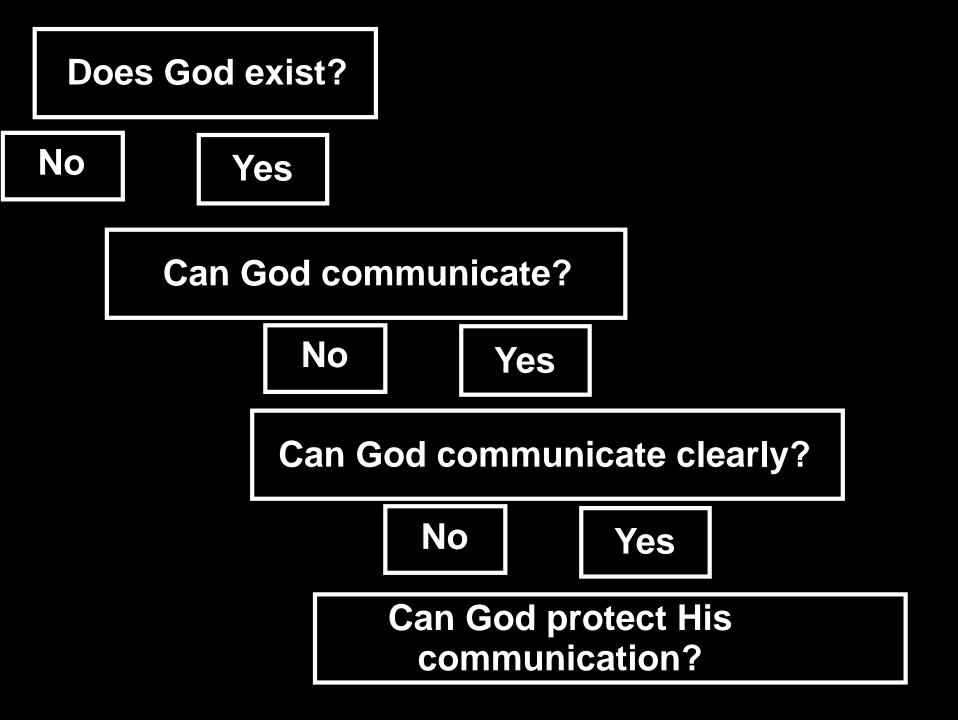
How can we be sure the Bible we have today is the same as what was originally written?

Didn't the Rabbis or the Church [a few powerful men, Constantine, etc.] just arbitrarily decide which books should be included in the Bible and which books should be rejected (and didn't this just reflect their male-dominated, power-hungry agenda)?

There are so many different interpretations of the Bible, how can we know which is right?

Isn't the Bible the product of an evolving religion that originated with the Babylonians and Assyrians?

Doesn't the Bible contain historical and scientific errors?



Can God protect His communication?

If God can communicate clearly, and protect His communication, then

what would its characteristics be?

Consistent,

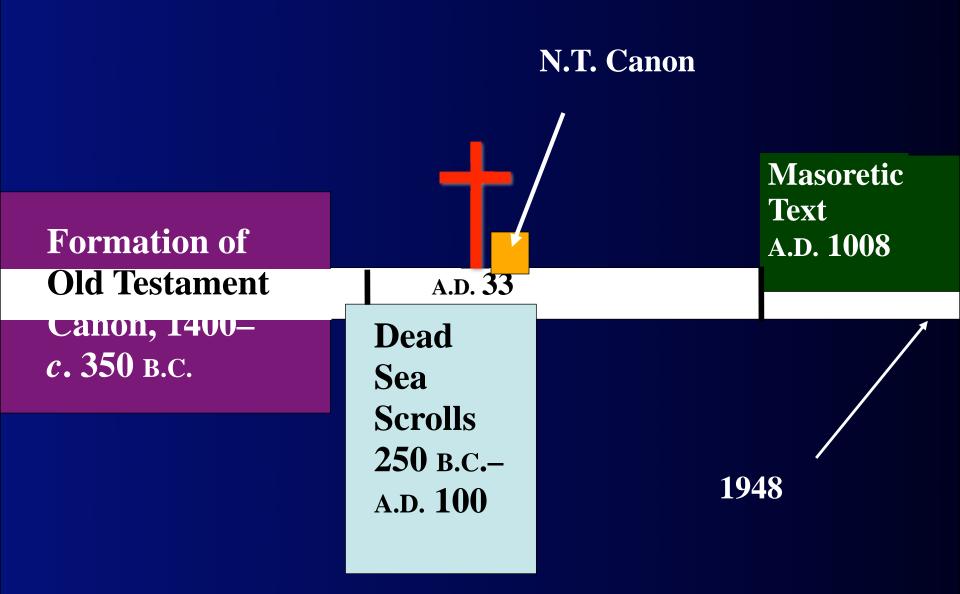
accurate,

be supported through evidence, internally logical and rational, without error

The Canon of Scripture

The word "canon" derives from the Hebrew term *qāneh* and the Greek term *kanōn*, meaning "reed."

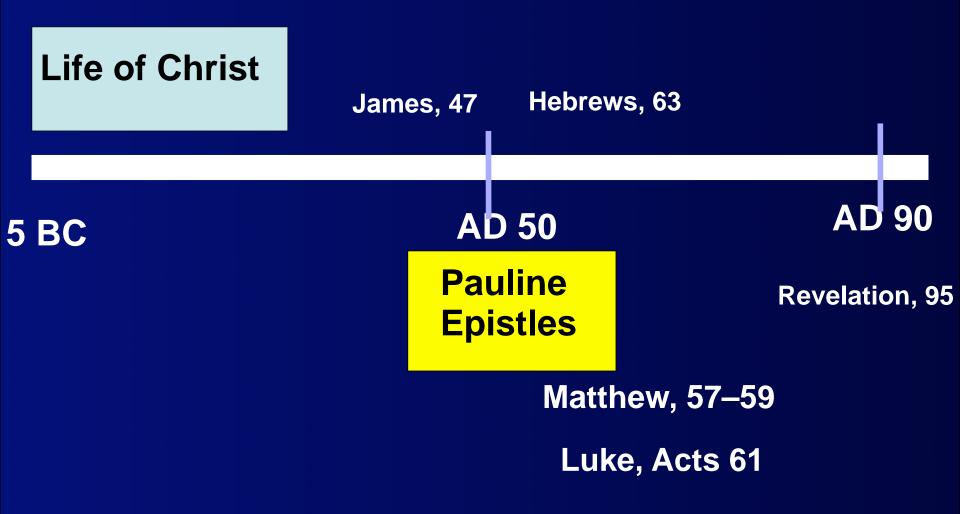
A reed was used as a measuring device; as such *canon* came to mean something that was a standard, or accepted authority.



The New Testament

Historical Gospels: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John Acts (Luke) **Epistles** Pauline (13) General Johanine (3) Petrine (2) **Hebrews** James Jude **Revelation**

The New Testament



The Bible Compared to Other Ancient MSS

AUTHOR BOOK DA	ATE WRITTEN	EARLIEST	GAP #	<i>‡ COPIES</i>
Homer Iliad	800 вс	400 вс	400	645
Herodotus <i>History</i>	480-425	ad 900	1,350	8
Thucydides History	460-400 вс	ad 900	1,300	8
Plato	400 вс	ad 900	1,300	7
Demosthenes	300 BC	ad 1100	1,400	200
Caesar Gallic War	s 100-44 вс	ad 900	1,000	10
Livy History of Roi	те 59 вс ад 17	ad 4 th p 10 th	1,000	1 p 19
Tacitus Annals	ad 100	ad 1100	1,000	20
New Testament	ad 50-95	ad 114-200	30-15	0 5,366

THE OXYRHYNCHUS PAPYRI

Over 35 mss containing portions of the New Testament

THE CHESTER BEATTY PAPYRI (NAMED AFTER THE OWNER, CHESTER BEATTY)

Three papyri including P45 (third century) contains portions of all four Gospels and Acts; P46 (late first century) has almost all of Paul's epistles and Hebrews; and P47 (third century) contains Revelation 9–17.

THE BODMER PAPYRI (NAMED AFTER THE OWNER, M. MARTIN BODMER)

The three important papyri in this collection are P66 (c. 175, containing almost all of John), P72 (third century, having all of 1 and 2 Peter and Jude), and P75 (c. 200, containing large parts of Luke 3–15).

CODEX SINAITICUS

This manuscript was discovered by Constantin von Tischendorf in St. Catherine's Monastery situated at the foot of Mount Sinai. It dates around A.D. 350, contains the entire New Testament, and provides an early and fairly reliable witness to the New Testament autographs.



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Codex Alexandrinus

"it is not possible that the gospels can be either more or fewer in number than they are."

-Irenaeus, *ca.* A.D. 160

"I accept the traditional view of the four gospels which alone are undeniably authentic in the church of God on earth."

> –Origen Eusebius, *History of the Church*, VI, 25

"I know a certain gospel which is called The Gospel according to Thomas, and a Gospel according to Matthis, and many others have we read—lest we should in any way be considered ignorant... Nevertheless, among all these, we have approved solely what the church has recognized, which is that only the four gospels should be accepted."

–Origen

Recognition of the Canon

Period of Separate Circulation (70–170 A.D.).

Period of Separation (170–303 A.D.).

Period of Completion (303–397 A.D.).

Tests for Canonicity

- **1. Apostolic supervision and authority.**
- 2. Theological consistency.
- 3. Usage and acceptance by the Christian Church.