



**TOUGH**

**TEXTS**

# THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. When was it written?
2. Is it reliable?
3. Has it been corrupted?

## THE NEW TESTAMENT

# 1. When was it written?

Why don't we have the originals?

Technology – no parchment or vellum in 1<sup>st</sup> century

People used them!

# INTERNAL EVIDENCE

- Acts 18:12 Gallio was Proconsul
- Pliny writing in 1<sup>st</sup> century knows about Gallio but never calls him Proconsul. Therefore, historians thought the Acts material was redacted.
- Delphi inscription: Gallio was Proconsul for one year in A.D. 52! Luke got it right!

# EXCLUDED EVENTS

- Deaths:
  - James – 62
  - Paul – 64
  - Peter – 65

Insurrection of the Jews – 66

Destruction of Jerusalem - 70

# WHY AREN'T THESE EVENTS INCLUDED?

- Acts was written before the events happened!
- What are the implications for this?
- Since Acts was written before 62, Luke must have written his gospel prior to that since he is the author of Acts. Paul would have written all his letters. Matthew and Mark do not describe the destruction of Jerusalem as an event that has happened or the deaths of important figures, we can conclude they were written prior to 62. All of this 20-30 years after the death of Christ!

## THE NEW TESTAMENT

# 2. Is it reliable?

# MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE

- We have about 24,000 manuscripts
  - 5,664 Greek
  - Around 10,000 Latin
  - Around 9,284 in other languages
  - Around 230 **BEFORE 7<sup>th</sup> cent.**
  - John Ryland's, Bodmer, Chester Beatty

# COMPLETE MANUSCRIPTS

- Codex Sinaiticus – 330-350 (mid 4<sup>th</sup> century\*)
- Codex Alexandrinus – 5<sup>th</sup> century
- Codex Vaticanus – 4<sup>th</sup> century
- *\*Vellum did not come around until the 4<sup>th</sup> century.*

# **SECULAR MANUSCRIPTS**

No one questions the  
authenticity of these documents.

Author	Written	Earliest fragment	Time span	# of manuscripts
Plato	427-347 BC	900 AD	1200	7
Thucydides	460-400 BC	900 AD	1300	8
Suetonius	75-160 AD	950 AD	800	8
Caesar	100-44 BC	900 AD	1000	10
Tacitus	100 AD	1100 AD	1000	20
<b>Homer (Iliad)</b>	<b>900 BC</b>	<b>400 BC</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>643</b>

# NEW TESTAMENT

- Written 40-100 A.D.
- Earliest copy/fragment 125 A.D. (P52) John's gospel
- Time span: 25-50 years
- # of Manuscripts: 24,000
- **NO OTHER PIECE OF LITERATURE CAN MAKE THIS CLAIM!**

# EXTERNAL EVIDENCE

- Thallus (52 A.D.) - in a debate mentions that at the death of Christ the sun went dark and the earth shook.
- Tacitus (80-84 A.D.) – talks about the death of Christ in the time of Tiberius under Pontius Pilate in Judea
- Josephus (90-95 A.D.) – death of Jesus, his brother James, John the Baptist, and Christians who talk about the resurrection (historians say this is a gloss)
- Pliny (112 A.D.) – Christians sing to Jesus as God.

## THE NEW TESTAMENT

# 3. Has it been corrupted?

# ACCUSATION

- The New Testament has been corrupted.
- Jesus was “made” God by the “church”
- The Koran is true but the N.T. has been changed.
- When? Where?

# TRANSLATIONS

- 15,000 translations in 11 languages
- Latin - 10,000 – 150 A.D.
- Syriac – 350 – 2<sup>nd</sup>. Cent.
- Coptic – 100 – 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Armenian – 2500 – 5<sup>th</sup>
- Georgian/Slavic – 4000 – 5<sup>th</sup>
- Gothic, Ethiopic, Nubian

# ALL BEFORE THE KORAN EXISTED!

- If we wanted to change the manuscripts, we would have to go back through all 15,000 in these other languages and make consistent changes, without anybody knowing or complaining about it, and there not be one reference to it ever happening!
- Not even the Koran itself makes the accusation of a corrupted text. Islam would not make that claim until the 11<sup>th</sup> century in a debate. In fact, the Koran encourages Muslims to look into our scriptures!

# EARLY CHURCH FATHERS

- When the gospel was being spread, sectarian groups would spring up because they did not like what orthodox Christianity was teaching. Most of these groups are from the second century (Gnostic, Docetic, Nestorian, etc.).
- The early church fathers would confront the error by using scripture!
- By writing against these and other heresies they left a record of the N.T. account.

# **SIR DAVID DALRYMPLE**

- Researcher who made a compilation of these scripture quotations.
- Found 86,489 of these quotations!

# HOW MANY PRE-DATE THE 4<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY?

- Before Sinaiticus, Alexandrinus, Vaticanus
- Before Nicea
- Before Chalcedon
- 36,289 quotations
- Note: there are over 5,000 verses in the N.T.

# **WE HAVE AUTHORITY!**

- Every verse in the N.T. except for 11 verses that are not 'important' !
- All of this 300 years before the Koran even existed!