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That Bible We Give You

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Recommended Citation
I. W. E. gives a $5.00 Bible to each convert.
   A. Do you know what it is?
   B. May I tell you some of its features?

I. Bible intended for your mind.

Matt. 22:37 "Love the Lord your God with all your heart.

2 Tim. 1:12 "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded.

Jn. 8:22 "Ye shall know the truth

A. You are not blind.
   B. Faith rests on evidence.

III. Your Unique Bible = one & only, single, sole; different from all others, having no equal.

A. Unique in Continuity.
   1. 1600 yrs.
   2. 60 generations.
   3. 40+ authors = Kings, peasants, philosophers, fishermen, poets.
      (a) Moses - Political leader.
      (b) Peter - Fisherman.
      (c) Amos - Herdsman.
      (d) Joshua - General.
      (e) Nehemiah - Cupbearer.
      (f) Daniel - President.
      (g) Luke - Dr.
      (h) Solomon - King.
      (i) Matt. - Tax collector.
      (j) Paul - Rabbi & Tent maker.

4. Written in different places.
   (a) Moses - Wilderness.
   (b) Jeremiah - Dungeon.
(c) Daniel - Palace.
(d) Paul - Prison.
(e) Luke - While traveling.
(f) John - Patmos.
5. Many different moods, continents (Asia, Europe), languages.
6. Subject matter - controversial - yet 1 theme - salvation.
(a) Tree of life closes in Gen. 1 opened in Rev. 22.
7. Great types of writing - poetry, parable, allegory, biography, personal correspondence, etc.
8. Get 10 men to write today - any harmony?
B. Unique in Circulation.
1. More people, more languages than any other book.
2. Clip from British #1.
3. 1st Book translated - Septuagint - Heb. to Gk.
4. 3000 translators at work 1950-60.
C. Unique in survival.
1. Copied hundreds of years.
2. MMS evidence of any other 10 books.
3. 13000 MMS copies of portions of N.T. - no other document so attested (Geisler Clip #2).
4. Jews had men to just keep tab on letters, syllables, paragraphs, words. (Whoever counted Plato?) (300 yrs. ago)
5. Compare c Shakespeare (Bible went 1500 yrs. in only MMS form - no printing).
(a) Confirm every vs. of NT with 12 to 20 exceptions & none concern vital meaning.
(b) 37 plays - 100 disputed reading that affect meaning.
(c) Iliad #3.

(a) Voltaire's presses used 50 yr. after his death by Geneva Bible Society to print Bibles but he said none here in 100 yrs.
(b) About like tack hammer on the pyramids.
(c) Documentary Hypothesis - one vs. had 3 authors, no writing in time of Moses (?) yet Hammurabi law discovered even pre-Abraham - all written!
(d) Hittities found!

D. Unique in its teachings.
1. Prophecies - nothing about Mohammed - all about Jesus.
2. Chafer, "The Bible is not such a book a man would write if he could, or could write if he would!"
3. Taken to outer space.
4. Hi price -
   (a) Codex Sinaitus $510,000.
   (b) Longest telegram RSV from N.Y. to Chicago.

E. Unique in Preservation.
1. Perishable papyrus - needed dry caves.
2. Parchment - skins scraped & shaved.
4. All capital letters, no breaks.
   (a) Some chapters 350 margin.
   (b) But really 13th century by Stephen Langton.

IV. How do you know which books belong?
A. Canon = rule, then list.
B. Did church decide - no God inspired & we recognized what He'd earlier done.
(a) Is it authoritative?
(b) Is it prophetic?
(c) Is it authentic?
(d) Is it dynamic?
(e) Was it received, collected, read, used?

V. Is it Reliable?

A. No Original!

1. 150,000 variant readings.
   (a) Dismiss 19/20th.
   (b) Leaves 7500 - 19/20th have no impact - only form of expression.
   (c) This leaves 400 that affect meaning. Schaff quote #4.

2. No fundamental doctrine rests on it.

3. Compare c Sophocles & Caesar Iliad. #5.

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Hy Pickering says that about 30 years ago for the British and Foreign Bible Society to meet its demands, it had to publish: "one copy every three seconds day and night; 22 copies every minute day and night; 1369 copies every hour day and night; 32,876 copies every day in the year. And it is deeply interesting to know that this amazing number of Bibles were dispatched to various parts of the world in 4583 cases weighing 490 tons." 36/227

Geisler and Nix cite S. L. Greenslade (ed.), The Cambridge History of the Bible
Geisler and Nix sum it all up when they relate in *General Introduction to the Bible* that Sir David Dabrymple (Charles Leach, *Our Bible: How We Got It*, pp. 35-36) was wondering about the preponderance of Scripture in early writing when someone asked him, “Suppose that the New Testament had been destroyed, and every copy of it lost by the end of the third century, could it have been collected together again from the writings of the Fathers of the second and third centuries?”

After a great deal of investigation Dabrymple concluded:

“Look at those books. You remember the question about the New Testament and the Fathers? That question roused my curiosity, and as I possessed all the existing works of the Fathers of the second and third centuries, I commenced to search, and up to this time I have found the entire New Testament, except eleven verses.” 14/357
Geisler and Nix conclude it by a comparison of the textual variations between the N. T. documents and ancient works: “Next to the New Testament, there are more extant manuscripts of the Iliad (643) than any other book. Both it and the Bible were considered ‘sacred,’ and both underwent textual changes and criticism of their Greek manuscripts. The New Testament has about 20,000 lines.”

They continue saying that “the Iliad [has] about 15,600. Only 40 lines (or 400 words) of the New Testament are in doubt whereas 764 lines of the Iliad are questioned. This 5 percent textual corruption compares with one-half of 1 percent of similar emendations in the New Testament.

“The national epic of India, the Mahabharata, has suffered even more corruption. It is about eight times the size of the Iliad and the Odyssey together, roughly 250,000 lines. Of these, some 26,000 lines are textual corruptions (10 percent).”
Philip Schaff in *Comparison to the Greek Testament and the English Version* concluded that only 400 of the 150,000 caused doubt about the textual meaning and only 50 of these were of great significance. Not one of the variations Schaff says altered “an article of faith or a precept of duty which is not abundantly sustained by other and undisputed passages, or by the whole tenor of Scripture teaching.” 42/177

Benjamin Warfield in *Introduction to Textual Criticism of the New Testament* quotes Ezra Abbot’s opinion about nineteen-twentieths of the New Testament textual variation saying: “... have so little support that, although they are various readings; and nineteen-twentieths of the remainder are of so little importance that their adoption or rejection would cause no appreciable difference in the sense of the passages where they occur.” 54/14

*Geisler and Nix* make the following comment about how the textual variations are counted: “There is an ambiguity in saying there are some 200,000 variants in the existing manuscripts of the New Testament, since these represent only 10,000 places in the New Testament. If one single word is misspelled in 3,000 different manuscripts, this is counted as 3,000 variants or readings.” 14/361
Sir Frederic G. Kenyon, who was the director and principal librarian of the British Museum and second to none in authority for issuing statements about MSS, says, "... besides number, the manuscripts of the New Testament differ from those of the classical authors, and this time the difference is clear gain. In no other case is the interval of time between the composition of the book and the date of the earliest extant manuscripts so short as in that of the New Testament. The books of the New Testament were written in the latter part of the first century; the earliest extant manuscripts (trifling scraps excepted) are of the fourth century—say from 250 to 300 years later.

"This may sound a considerable interval, but it is nothing to that which parts most of the great classical authors from their earliest manuscripts. We believe that we have in all essentials an accurate text of the seven extant plays of Sophocles; yet the earliest substantial manuscript upon which it is based was written more than 1400 years after the poet's death." 24/4

Kenyon continues in The Bible and Archaeology: "The interval then between the dates of original composition and the earliest extant evidence becomes so small as to be in fact negligible, and the last foundation for any doubt that the Scriptures have come down to us substantially as they were written has now been removed. Both the authenticity and the general integrity of the books of the New Testament may be regarded as finally established." 56/288

3C. MANUSCRIPT EVIDENCE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT COMPARED WITH OTHER AUTHORS AND WORKS OF ANTIQUITY

The great scholar F. F. Bruce in The New Testament Documents vividly pictures the comparison between the New Testament and ancient historical writings: "Perhaps we can appreciate how wealthy the New Testament is in manuscript attestation if we compare the textual material for other ancient historical works. For Caesar's Gallic War (composed between 58 and 50 B.C.) there are several extant MSS, but only nine or ten are good, and the oldest is some 900 years later than Caesar's day. Of the 142 books of the Roman history of Livy (59 B.C.–A.D. 17), only 35 survive; these are known to us from not more than 20 MSS of any consequence, only one of which, and that containing fragments of Books III–VI, is as old as the fourth century. Of the 14 books of the Histories of Tacitus (c. A.D. 100) only four and a half survive; of the 16 books of his Annals, 10 survive in full and two in part. The text of these extant portions of his two great historical works depends entirely on two MSS, one of the ninth century and one of the eleventh.