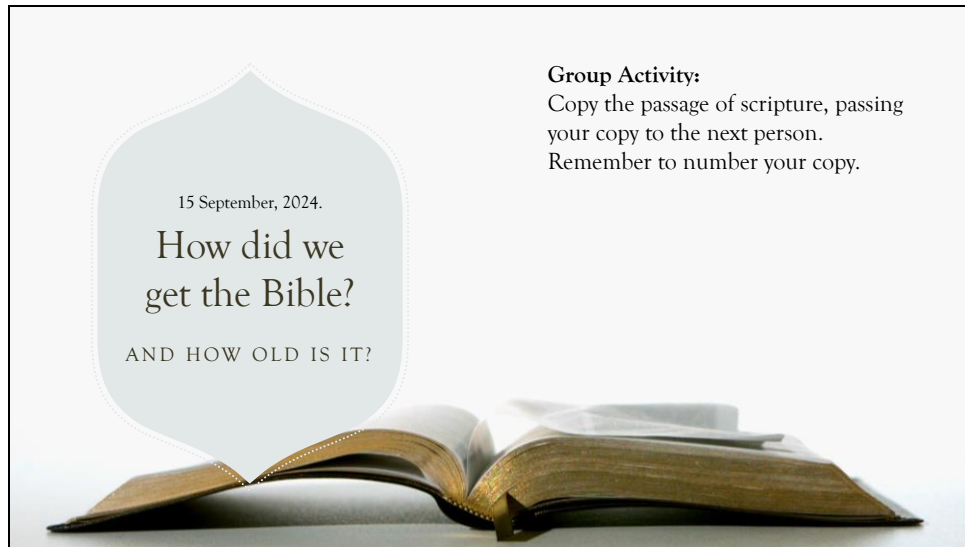


Slide 1



15 September, 2024.

How did we
get the Bible?

AND HOW OLD IS IT?

Group Activity:
Copy the passage of scripture, passing
your copy to the next person.
Remember to number your copy.

Slide 2



The Bible exists. This is the most basic assumption that we can make about the Bible. We are not talking about a secret book which is inaccessible to us. We all have a copy. We can all read it for ourselves. When we hear claims from people about what the bible says, we can open it and read it for ourselves. Acts 17:10-12

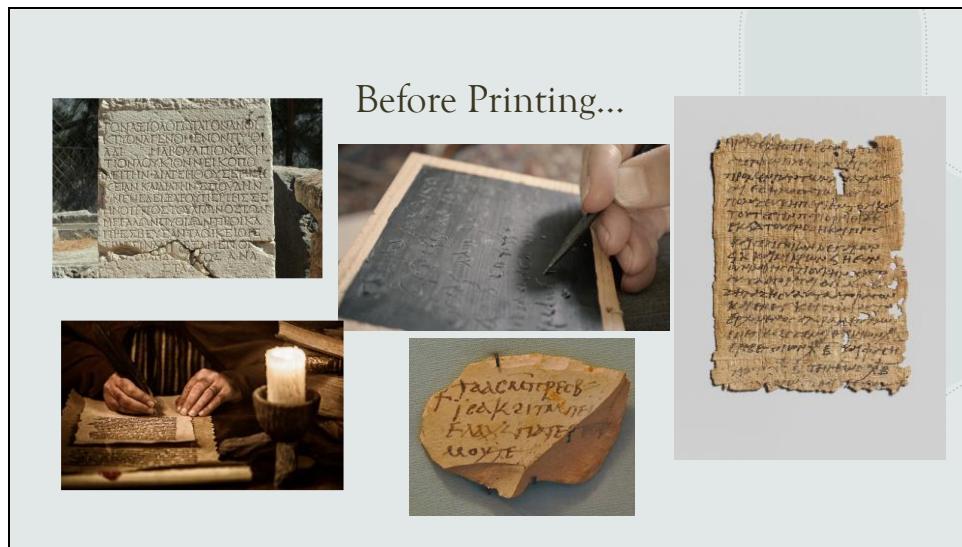
Slide 3

How old is your Bible?



- If I open my bible, it might give a date the front. e.g. ESV = 2001, KJV = 1611.
- Has anyone heard of the Gutenberg Bible? One of the oldest printed books (1455). 40 copies remain. Latin translation. One of the most valuable books in the world (£30M).
- Since the invention of the printing press, the Bible has been printed 5-7 billion times.

Slide 4



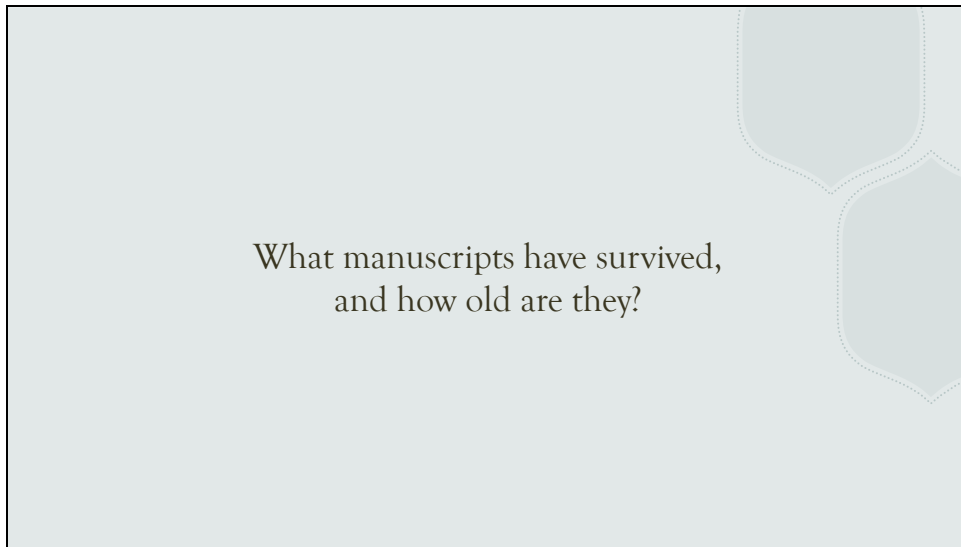
- How were books made before printing? Copied by hand. Written on paper, stone, clay, wax, ostraca, papyrus, parchment. Most ancient copies of the bible were written on papyrus and parchment. Paper became more common in the 12th century. (12th century means 1100's).

Slide 5



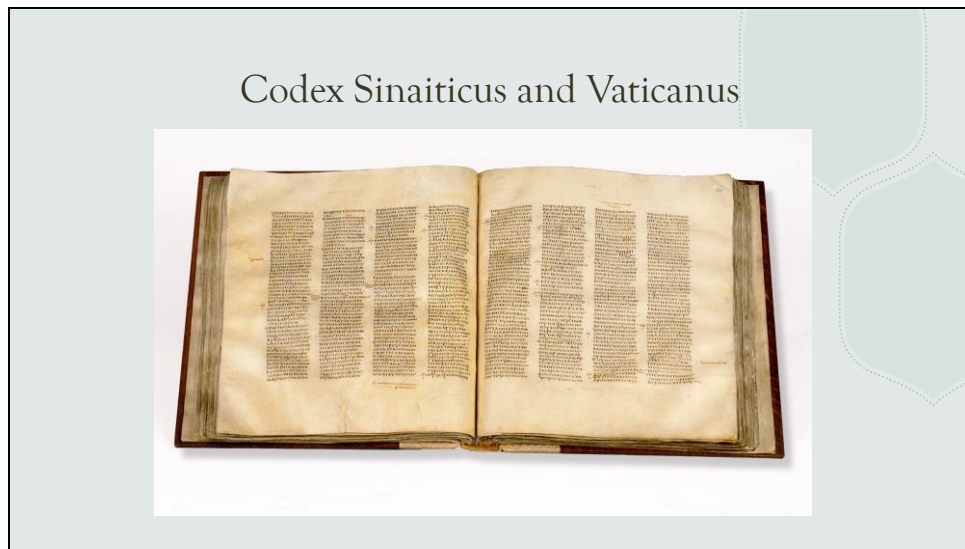
- Scrolls were long stretches of material rolled up. This is likely how the original books of the Bible were written.
- Codices (sing. Codex) allowed Christians to bind collections of writings into something like the modern book.
- These materials do not last forever. They decay and fall apart!

Slide 6



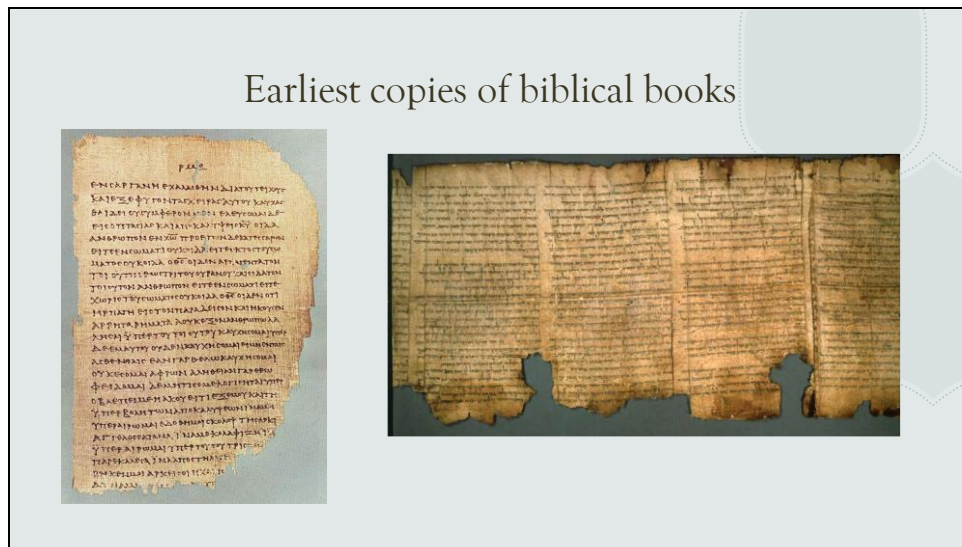
- Around 25000 manuscripts have been catalogued. Various languages and centuries. Mostly incomplete or damaged. Some were disposed of and destroyed. Some were written over. Some of them are just fragments. The Bible is far better preserved than other ancient works, for example Tacitus or Babylonian myths.
- How are these dated - usually handwriting, but other factors can be considered.

Slide 7



- The oldest (nearly) complete copies of the bible. 4th century. Sinaiticus. Held in a monastery in Sinai and was about to be burned before being spotted by a visiting scholar. Now in the British museum.

Slide 8



- The books of the bible were originally circulated separately.
- Oldest collection of Paul's Letters: P46 (2nd -3rd century AD). Kept in Chester Beatty collection in Dublin.
- Oldest copy of Isaiah: the great Isaiah scroll (c. 1st century BC/AD)

Slide 9



- Even older fragments exist.
 - Oldest fragment of the new testament. P52. john's gospel. 1st/2nd century AD
 - Oldest fragment of the old testament. Ketef-Hinnom scroll, a silver amulet containing the Priestly blessing (Numbers 6:24-26). 6th/7th century BC

Slide 10

Challenge

If you trying to convince someone NOT to believe the Bible, what would you tell them?