

Dr. Ted Hildebrandt, OT History, Lit., and Theology, Lecture #3

The Transmission of the Bible from God to us

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This is lecture number 3 by Ted Hildebrandt on Old Testament History, Literature, and Theology. This lecture was on the transmission of the Bible from God to us.

A. Quiz Preview [0:0-2:43]

What are we working on for next week? Genesis 26 to 50. You'll finish the book of Genesis next week. So that will take care of that and then there's basically some other things. There will be an article by a guy named Sailhammer on "Cosmic Maps." So where will you get the article? Did anybody listen to it at all? Was it helpful or not? All right, so you will be reading Genesis 26 to 50 and the Sailhammer article. Also this week we are going to break into *Our Father Abraham* and there's select pages there. We won't read the whole book, but there are select pages for *Our Father Abraham*. So you will work with *Our Father Abraham* and then two memory verses. What haven't we got finished? Bible-robics. We'll finish the Genesis Bible-robics today. So basically there's Genesis reading, *Our Father Abraham*, the Sailhammer article, memory verses, and Bible-robics. That should do it, for next week.

There will be ten questions, worth ten points each, and largely what'll happen is if somebody misses this, I think there was a soccer game or something like that, they get a week to make it up, so I can't turn them back until the following Thursday. What I try to do is turn them back on Thursday night or Friday morning, so you'll get them returned probably next Friday. So then we'll just do quiz, quiz, quiz every Thursday and about every five quizzes then we do an exam. (*Someone asks a question*) No, that's for the exam; you have to get a score above a certain point on the exam and also on the quizzes to be included in the honors option.

So that's the assignment coming for next week. The other thing is, don't forget to turn in your ten bucks for the course materials, don't leave that go or it will be double this next week, I think it's next Thursday or something so just get that in ASAP.

B. Bible: from God to us [2:44-3:58]

Today is one of the most difficult lectures that I do in this course. Why do I introduce this at the freshmen level? I want to be honest with you guys and I want you to understand how the Bible came from Moses, and how the Bible came from Isaiah, and got down to us. So rather than leaving these things unsaid, then what happens is you jump into a university context and the university professor claims the Bible is full of errors and you have no clue what he's talking about. I want to give you these broad categories. The material I'm talking about today, frankly there are whole courses on canonization. There are whole courses, I've taken whole courses on textual criticism and so I'm giving you in about 30 minutes what took a whole course. I try to make things simple but I struggle with expressing these things to you. I really feel committed to tell you about them just so you know ahead of time what's going on. Today will actually be a pretty factual day. Some of the lectures, when we get into Genesis a lot of it will be my opinion and how I interpret texts in this context. What we're talking about today is not really my opinion, these are facts of manuscripts and we'll try to work with that.

C. Canonization [3:59-5:53]

So, canonization--last time we talked about this and basically we said that in the case, for example, with Peter and Paul, Peter said that Paul's writings were on the same level as Scripture. He said, "they distort Paul's letters as they do the other Scriptures." So the letters of Paul were accepted by Peter automatically as authoritative and Paul accepts that Peter accepts those letters as authoritative. Now, by the way, did it take quite a while for the church to collect all of Paul's letters? Paul wrote letters to the church at Colossae. That church kept the letter and other people didn't even know Paul had written that letter. In other words, did

Jesus have a New Testament? No. Did any of the apostles, ever see the whole New Testament? No. They wrote their books and then it was put out and it would have to be circulated. Do you realize that circulation—you say, “why didn’t they just email a copy of it to everyone, that’s what they should have done.” It took a long time actually to spread and to go from place to place.

So Peter accepts Paul’s books. Did Peter know of all Paul’s writings? There’s no way he did. So Paul wrote various things, Peter knew of some of them but he undoubtedly didn’t know of all of them.

So here’s another example with Daniel. Daniel lived at the same time Jeremiah did. Daniel was with Nebuchadnezzar in Babylon, Daniel was in the Lion’s Den and all that. Daniel says, “Hey, Jeremiah said that God told him, we’d be in Babylon for 70 years (Dan. 9:2, 24).” So Daniel quotes Jeremiah, saying this is what God told Jeremiah and he accepts Jeremiah’s authority immediately. Daniel accepts it immediately and says we’re going to be here for 70 years. Now again, did the Jewish books also have to be collected and spread, and things like that? So that makes time.

D. Criteria for Canonization: Does it claim to be from God? [5:54-7:30]

Now certain books are accepted and certain books are not accepted. How did you tell whether a book got into the sacred collection and which ones got rejected? There are certain principles for that and so this moves to criteria. The first main criteria that was used for the canonization process—the canonization process means: what it takes to get a book accepted into the canon, the sacred scriptures. The number one question, and this is the big question, is: “Is the book inspired by God?” In other words, “Does the book claim to speak for God?” So, for example, does it say, “Thus saith the Lord”? Does the book of Isaiah claim to speak for God? Yes. Does Moses say, “God told me and I wrote it down”? Moses says that. The books claim that God spoke and the author wrote it down. Jeremiah, “Thus, saith the Lord/The Lord told me this.” Ezekiel has got all these visions of

bones, these dry bones coming together. Ezekiel sees the bones and he claims that God showed him this vision.

Now, by the way, think about this criteria. Is this criteria good enough to establish which books are authoritative and which books are not? Were there some books that claim to speak for God that probably were not included? Did some prophets say “thus saith the Lord,” and were not true prophets of God? Yes. Were there a lot of false prophets? Yes. So does this criteria by itself establish canonicity or do we need other things?

E. Canonization criteria: Was it written by a prophet of God? [7:31-8:28]

One of the other factors you can weigh is: was it written by a prophet? If it's written by somebody like Isaiah, do you say, “Isaiah's a pretty good guy, a prophet of God, a pretty good man.” Now suppose it was written by a prophet and I say I penned this one. I say, “I am a prophet of Ahab and Jezebel and I wrote this book.” Would you accept it into your canon? No. By the way, would it probably be very interesting reading? It would probably be very interesting reading, but you would not accept it into the canon because it probably was from a guy who was a Baal prophet. There were 400 Baal prophets. So, in other words, you've got to ask: what about the character of the person who wrote this? Isaiah, Jeremiah, Moses, Samuel, David, in the Psalms. So you ask, was it written by a prophet of God? Was it written by a man of God or woman of God? So, was it written by a prophet? What do you know about the person? That is a check and balance on this.

F. Canonization criteria: Does it agree with previous revelation? [8:29-9:04]

Does it agree with previous revelation? If you get a book written and in the middle of the book it says, “You know, Jehovah is ok, but Baal is better.” Is that going to be put in the canon or thrown out? Thrown out. Why? Because it disagrees with previous revelation, because God said, “You should worship the Lord your God and him only should you serve.” So if this book comes in and says Baal's the one, you've got to ask: does this contradict previous revelation? This

becomes a criterion then for whether a book is canonical and accepted as sacred Scripture.

G. Canonization criteria: Does it come with the power of God? [9:05-9:59]

Here's another one: Does it come with the power of God? Now this one is subjective. Do certain books come with the power of God? When you read Scripture, does it change your life? Yes. The books are powerful. Now when you read your math book, question: does that have power to change you? Most of you go, I read the math book. You say, first of all reading a math book is almost like an oxymoron. Anyway, you know what I'm saying? But it doesn't get into your soul. You read, I was referencing just before I came here, Eli Wiesel's book *The Night*. Has anybody read that--Eli Wiesel's book *The Night*? When you read that book, does that penetrate your soul? Now I ask you, the books of Scripture do they move you? Is the power of God there? And the answer is: yes, but that's a subjective thing.

H. Canonization criteria: Was it accepted by the people of God? [10:00-10:50]

Here's another criterion: is it received by the people of God? In other words, did the people of God receive the word of God? In the Old Testament, who were the people of God? The Jews. So the Jews in the Old Testament, the nation of Israel, the 12 tribes, did they receive these books as the canon, as coming from the hand of God, or coming from the mouth of God? Therefore, we as Christians, where do we get our Old Testament from? Do we get it from Jesus and the apostles? No, the Old Testament canon comes to us from the people of God in the Old Testament which is the Jewish nation. They give us the Old Testament canon. So the Old Testament canon comes from the people of God in the Old Testament. Did they sort through which books should be in and which books should not be in the canon? They sorted through that stuff and they were the ones that were the experts on that.

I. Antilegomena: Books spoken against [Proverbs, Esther...] [10:51-11:52]

These books are called the Antilegomena. Now what is "anti"? "Anti" means what? Against. *Anti* is against. *Lego* (are there any of my Greek students in here?) *lego* means "to speak." So these are: the books that are "spoken against."

The Antilegomena are the books that are spoken against. There are five of these books. These five books were spoken against by the Jewish people. The Jewish people had questions about these and so they were “spoken against [Anti-legomena].” Now what’s the problem with these five books? By the way, do the Jews today accept these five books? Yes, they do. They accept them but they were questioned at one time. Is that helpful to know that the Jews questioned these books? Were the Jews careful about which books they accepted into the canon? It wasn’t just “Boom,” automatically you’re in. They questioned the books and were careful.

J. Antilegomena: Why was Proverbs questioned? [11:53-19:42]

Who’s got a Bible here? Can we do Proverbs chapter 26. If you guys have your Bibles, we’ll be using them quite a bit today--Proverbs chapter 26 verse 4. Then can I have somebody that’s a little bit more ornery give me, why don’t you do Proverbs chapter 26 verse 5. She’s going to do Proverbs chapter 26 verse 4 and he’s going to do Proverbs chapter 26 verse 5. So let’s, first of all let’s focus our attention on Proverbs 26:4. Proverbs 26:4 says, “Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him.” So you meet a fool, should you answer him? No, it says “Do not answer a fool according to his folly” because if you try to answer you’re going to be like him. By the way, have you ever seen anyone come up and they’re asking a stupid question and I’m thinking, by the time you try to answer the question, you end up getting trapped within their folly? So Proverbs chapter 26 verse 4 says, “Do not answer a fool according to his folly, lest you be like him.”

Now, what’s Proverbs 26:5 say? “Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own eyes.” So the question comes up, do those two verses contradict each other? By the way, you can take this home and you can say to your parents, “Hey, my Bible professor showed me a contradiction in the Bible.” Here we go, these two, they contradict. One says to answer not a fool according to his folly and the very next verse says to answer a fool according to his folly. The Bible’s got a contradiction in it, that’s what we learn at Gordon College. Is there a

contradiction there? Yes, but the word of the Lord is flawless.

Now you know where he's getting this? If you ever want some place that tells you about the word of God and says how flawless it is and says it over and over and over, like a million, well actually 176 times. What chapter in the Bible has 176 verses? Does anybody know that? It's the longest chapter in the Bible. Psalm 119 is all exactly what he said, "The word of the law is flawless" and it goes on, over and over, 176 times. Psalm 119.

Question: Is there a contradiction here? Let's get out of quoting Bible verses and look at these verses. These verses contradict each other. [Student:] "I want to make a quick comment on the contraction. My Bible is in Portuguese and English and the Portuguese version, it made sense." Ok, so what's the Portuguese version say? ("Ok it says, "Don't respond to the folly with foolishness just like his....otherwise you will equal yourself to him. Respond to him with the foolishness he deserves, or the contrary, he will think that he's wise.")

[Hildebrandt's response] All right. Do you see what they did there? Did they try to explain the verse? Now is that a translation or is that an explanation? It's an explanation. That's actually not what the literal Hebrew says. The literal Hebrew, I'm sorry, says, "do not answer a fool." So in other words what I'm saying is, did the Portuguese people realize there was a conflict here? What they did was they wrote an explanation so that it would, modify it and that kind of thing. So that's what they were doing.

Now I will say this, so is there a contradiction there, yes. Is this wisdom literature? Wisdom literature says: Should you answer a fool or should you not answer a fool? Is there a time to answer a fool and is there a time not to answer a fool? Have you guys ever been in those situations? Sometimes is it appropriate to answer a fool according to his folly? Yes, what's worse than being a fool? Being wise in your own eyes. So if you see a fool and he's sliding down to arrogance, if you don't answer, he's going to become wise in his own eyes. The Bible says, "Hey, stop him from becoming worse than a fool, by being wise in his own eyes."

However, if he's a fool and he's just asking dumb questions and you're going to get caught in the question, don't answer a fool according to his folly. So, in other words, the Proverbs 26:4-5 clash like this, but what does it call from you as the reader? Do you have to be wise and discerning to know when this applies? So, in other words, is that the very point of wisdom, to see these conflicts and say, "Hey, I've got to be wise enough to know when to answer and when not to." That's part of wisdom.

So the Jews accept the book of Proverbs and I actually think, that's my area of expertise, Proverbs is one of the most wonderful books in the world, but I love these little conundrums in Proverbs. They just kind of annoy people and if they don't know the Bible, you can really harass people. "Look up this verse, Mom, read this verse and then that verse. Don't they contradict each other?" Then just watch them respond.

What I want you to do, is give up some of the stuff you got on your back. Read the text of Scripture. No, don't bring in Psalm 119. Psalm 119 is way over here. Read the verses themselves. They do conflict. There's no way you get around that. They do conflict. I mean read the first part A of 4 and A of 5, they conflict. If you can't see that, you need to see that. By the way, did the Jews see that? Yes, they did. That's why they spoke against these books; because they saw the conflict. So you have to see the conflict. "Don't answer a fool," the next verse says, "answer a fool." Those two things are contrary.

Now you can try to resolve the conflict, but you need to see the conflict so that you can resolve it. If you don't see the conflict, then there's nothing to resolve. What I'm saying is you need to see the conflict. The Jews saw the conflict. Most everybody who reads it sees the conflict, you need to see the conflict. You need to allow yourself to be jarred a little bit. So that you can work on resolving it and come to a solution.

Yes, it depends on the fool. It depends on the situation and so I don't think you want a one-answer-fits-all with this. It's trying to say, you've got to figure it

out on the fly. What its doing is calling for discernment within you. It says, “Here are two options you have, you need to have discernment to figure out when to use this or not.” Let’s go on to the next one.

K. Antilegomena: Why was Ezekiel questioned? [19:43-21:23]

Why did some Jews speak against the book of Ezekiel? Because Ezekiel talks in chapters 40 to 48 about this temple structure that is too big for the temple mount. Now do you know what the Temple Mount is? In Jerusalem, there’s this place with a gold dome on top and basically this is the temple mount. When Ezekiel describes the Temple Mount, he’s got it way too big. There’s not enough room on the Temple Mount for what Ezekiel describes. So what the Jews say is, it doesn’t work. When you go to start putting this miles long temple structure up there on the Temple Mount, the Temple Mount’s not that big. It won’t hold it. So some of the Jews who live in Israel, know Jerusalem, they know this is way too big. Does that make sense? So they questioned it. The solution to this is to ask: Ezekiel is talking about which temple? It is the future temple.

Is the geography of Palestine going to change? Is the Mount of Olives going to split open? Yes. So there’s going to be a geographical change and so what he’s describing is in the future. The future third temple, that’s to come and there’s going to be this massive earth movement. So apparently the temple’s going to be bigger than it is now. But you have to look into the future. It won’t fit there now. There’s going to have to be some geographical upheavals. By the way, does the Bible say there will be geographical upheavals in the end times? Yes. So we’re good. So they questioned Ezekiel because of the size of the temple. But we’re okay with that because it’s during the apocalypse in the future.

L. Antilegomena: Why was Esther questioned? [21:24-22:26]

Now, why was the book of Esther questioned? You know they said, “Esther’s a woman, you know we don’t like woman stuff, so we’re going to get rid of that book” [joke]. Now why was the book of Esther questioned? Do the Jews take real pride in God’s name--the name Yahweh or Jehovah? It’s a big deal for

them. The book of Esther never once uses the name of Jehovah, never once. The Jews went through the book of Esther and they said, “You know, that book never mentions the name of God.” By the way, when you read the book of Esther, is God all through the book? Yes. God’s all over the book but his name is never referenced in the book. So the Jew’s questioned the book of Esther. Did the Jews accept the book of Esther? Do they even have a feast called Purim to memorialize Esther’s deliverance of the Jews from a Persian genocide? Purim is a famous feast to this day, we’ll talk about that later. But anyway, the book of Esther was questioned yet accepted even though it didn’t mention the name of God.

M. Antilegomena: Why was Ecclesiastes questioned? [22:27- 26:51]

What’s the problem with Ecclesiastes? My mother’s actually given me a lecture about Ecclesiastes. She says, “You don’t teach Ecclesiastes to those college kids do you?” And I say, “No, mom, it’s ok, we never get there.” She says, “Oh, I just can’t understand that book. I don’t know why that’s in the Bible.” And she goes off like that. Why do people have trouble, with the book of Ecclesiastes? It’s a kill-joy. We’re Christians actually so we’ve got to be happy all the time. When you read the book of Ecclesiastes, what is the major message? The major message is vanity, vanity, and all this vanity. In the book of Ecclesiastes he says, “Meaningless, meaningless, all is meaningless.” Question: do we as Christians like to say life is meaningless? No, because we’re Christians and everything’s got to fit together. However, have some of you felt at major points in your life, the meaninglessness of life? Yes. The book of Ecclesiastes expresses that. That’s why I love the book. My mother hates it.

Now, how do people get out of the book of Ecclesiastes? Don’t do this. But this is how they do it. They grab the last chapter. In chapter 12 it says, “Fear God, keep his commandments, this is the whole duty of man.” Have any of you ever heard Ecclesiastes taught as vanity, vanity, all is vanity but that’s messed up but in the end he comes around to “fear God and keep his commands.” So you’ve got eleven chapters of bad stuff and then in chapter 12 he redeems himself by saying

“Fear God and keep his commands.” Have any of you heard Ecclesiastes taught like that? Eleven chapters of meaninglessness and then chapter 12 pulls it together.

I want to ask you, is God going to put eleven chapters in his Bible of things that are all wrong so we can hold onto the good? I want you to think about embracing the first eleven chapters. Are there going to be times in your life when you need to know that one of the wisest men that ever lived felt the meaninglessness of life? He felt that life was vapor. That’s when you look around and notice there’s a lot of life like that. I want you to embrace that rather than ignore it because frankly you’re going to feel that at various points in your life. No, life is not one big happy time; I love Jesus, everything’s cool. Maybe for you guys at 18, but I’ve got a 22 year old at home that’s been through war. He doesn’t do the happy-Jesus thing because he’s seen his buddies blown to smithereens. So all I’m saying is be careful about your Christianity. Ecclesiastes can broaden you in ways you need to understand with some of the bigger questions of life that jar some people at the core of their being. If you go around “happy Jesus all the time,” there are people who are going to blow you off as being shallow and trite. They will blow Jesus off as well because they are going to say that Jesus doesn’t have anything to say to the real. What I want to tell you is, “Can Jesus speak to the meaninglessness of life?” Yes, he can. But you need to understand and embrace that and engage that in order to see Jesus’ redemption engage there and what Jesus speaks to is the deepest part of human beings. Go back to the *Night*. Remember Eli Wiesel’s *Night*.

So, anyway, Ecclesiastes is a wonderful book, don’t throw out the first eleven chapters. Listen to the Byrds old song. There’s an old music group after the Civil War called the Byrds and they sang, “There’s a time for everything, there’s a time to be born, there’s a time to die. There’s a time to...” So then think about it, think about Hildebrandt back in the Civil War with their muskets, singing the Byrd’s song. But the Byrds did a wonderful song on this called, “Turn, Turn, Turn,”--“A time to born and a time to die” “there’s a time for peace, there’s a time

for...” What? And for Gordon College, you’ll like this. “There’s a time for peace” Peace, peace, peace, do we do peace? Ecclesiastes says, “there’s a time for peace” and a time for what? “A time for war.” “A time to be born, there’s a time to die.” It is very interestingly balanced out like that. We only like one side of the balance sometimes. But Ecclesiastes is a wonderfully balanced book.

N. Antilegomena: Why was Song of Songs questioned? [26:52-30:36]

The other one my mom’s given me lecture on is Song of Solomon. It is called the “Song of Songs.” “You don’t teach that to college kids, do you?” And the answer is: “No, mom, we never get there.” So Song of Solomon is Christ’s love for his church, portrayed in physical terms of a love relationship between a man and his wife. Do you believe that? A lot of the early church people taught it that way. They maintained the Song of Songs was the love relationship of Christ to the church. Is Song Songs a love song? Once upon a time they hired me to do a revision of the Jamieson, Fausset and Brown commentary. It is a famous old Bible commentary. They hired me to basically go in the Song of Songs and update the commentary from the 1800’s up into the 20th century. So I was going through it, I knew it was bad, but I didn’t know it was that bad. What happens is, there’s a place called Ugarit. If this is Israel, up above Israel, just north of Israel, they’ve got a place called Ugarit. They found a bunch of tablets there from about 1200 BC in a language called Ugaritic that I’ve had the unfortunate privilege to be forced to learn. In Ugaritic, there is all sorts of imagery and guess what that imagery is very similar to? The imagery in Song of Songs. Do we know what he means when he’s talking about all these lilies and all these plants, do we know what that means now? Yes, we do. Is it really, how should I say, is Song of Songs a very sexual book? And the answer is: yes. By the way, the good part is, a lot of it is based on imagery so you don’t know what it’s talking about and that’s probably good. But what I’m saying is, yes. You respond, “Hildebrandt you’re just making this up.” I’m not making this up, this is the truth and we know what those images are and they are very, very, very explicit. By the way, who made sex? God did. So what

you see here is this beautiful romantic relationship. By the way, does your generation have a problem with this? I call it the decade of decadence. You guys mature when? About 14, 15. People don't get married until they are in their 20s, you've got ten years. That has created a huge problem in our culture in terms of this whole sexuality thing? What Song of Songs says is, "No, it's beautiful. It's one of the most beautiful things in all of life."

The Bible describes it as just trees and flowers and so that's cool. So by the way, did the Jews have problems with the Song of Solomon? The Jews knew what it was talking about. These guys are all wearing their black hats and curly cues. All I'm saying is, did they know what this thing meant? They knew what it meant and they questioned whether it should be in the Bible. Now did they include the Song of Songs in the Bible? Yes, they included it but there were some questions about it, that's all I'm saying.

So those five are what they call the "Antilegomena." Now this is the canon of the Old Testament, these are the accepted books. Who gave us the canon of the Old Testament? The people of God in the Old Testament. Now who were the people of God in the Old Testament? The Jews. So the Jews give us the canon of the Old Testament. Did the Jews themselves question five of their own books? Yes, they didn't just get in automatically. They questioned. These are the Antilegomena. They questioned Proverbs, they questioned Ecclesiastes, they questioned Esther, Song of Songs, and they questioned Ezekiel. So those are the Antilegomena.

O. Apocrypha or Deutero-canonical books [30:37-35:18]

Now the Old Testament Apocrypha, what is the Old Testament Apocrypha? The Old Testament Apocrypha are books that are accepted by the Catholic Church but not accepted by Protestants generally. These will be books like Maccabees. Has anyone heard of the book of Maccabees? Maccabees 1 and 2, Bel and the Dragon, the Wisdom of Ben Sirach, the Wisdom of Solomon and others. By the way, are the Apocrypha books very important reading? Yes, they are. The Old

Testament was started when Moses starts writing. The big question of the date of Moses, 1400 or 1200 BC there is a big debate on that. When does the Old Testament end? I always say, I call this guy Malachi, the last of the Italian prophets. Anyway, Malachi ends it 400 BC. What happens between 400 BC and Jesus? What happens between 400 and 0? Does the Old Testament tell us anything that happened after 400, when Malachi prophesied? No. There's nothing, zero.

The Apocrypha books come from that 400 year period, between the time of Malachi and the time of Jesus. One of those books that is very interesting and actually when I do New Testament, we end up reading the book of Maccabees. There's this guy, Antiochus Epiphanes, he's kind of like a pseudo anti-Christ and he goes around killing Jews and doing some really nasty stuff. The Maccabees boys rise up and they're the hammers. They go out and hammer these Syrians. So the Syrians are beating up on the Jews and the Jews go after them. This is all recorded in the book of Maccabees [ca. 167 BC].

Now, the question: is that part of the word of God or not? It is really interesting history and it is really important history. By the way, you all know this, the Maccabees fought against the Syrian Antiochus Epiphanes and they overcame him. They cleansed the temple and they had a Feast of Lights to celebrate the cleansing of the temple from this anti-Christ figure, Antiochus. They called it the "Feast of Lights." You guys all know it, it's called happy what? You're Jewish. Happy what? Happy Hanukah! Where do you think Hanukah comes from? Hanukah comes from the Maccabees. About 167 BC, the details aren't important to us in Old Testament times but what I'm saying is the book of Maccabees is important reading. It is fascinating reading, but is it the word of God? These are two different questions? So it's important reading. Did the Jews accept the Apocrypha as the Word of God? Is the Apocrypha a part of the Jewish sacred canon? The answer is: no. Where do we get our Old Testament canon from? The Jewish people. The Jewish people don't accept the Apocrypha and so we don't accept it either. So the Apocrypha is very interesting reading but it's not on the

level of the word of God and largely as Protestants we don't accept that. There are some conflicts with other parts of Scripture and things like that but I do recommend reading it. It's fascinating.

There is a tradition where those books were put with the Septuagint (ca. 150 BC) and into the Latin Vulgate (AD 400). And so they did a lot with the Latin Vulgate. They were in there. Now a lot of people think they were put alongside of the canonical books, that they were important reading but they were kept separate. But they said they were put in separate and all of the sudden like that and they slid in. Some of the doctrines that the Roman Catholic Church holds that the Protestants don't are included in the Apocrypha. By the way, the first church council that accepted the Apocrypha explicitly was the Council of Trent, 1545. I don't know the exact date but it was in the 15 or 16 hundreds AD. Is that a little late? 1500 AD, that's a little late. So what I'm saying is that was a reaction against Protestantism. The Jews do not accept it. They read Ben Sirach. The Jews are experts on the Apocrypha because it tells their history for that 400 year period but they do not accept it as Scripture. There are big debates on this.

P. Pseudepigrapha [35:19-38:51]

Pseudepigrapha. "Pseudo" means what? If something is "pseudo"--it's false. So the Pseudepigrapha are the "false writings" accepted by no one. These are the writings that everyone accepts are bogus. They are false. Does anyone remember when you read Genesis in chapter 5 I think it was? It says, "Enoch walked with God and he was not for God took him." Do you know there's a book called the Book of Enoch? Wouldn't you like to read about Enoch? The Book of Enoch. When you're in the New Testament, the New Testament Pseudepigrapha, you've got a book called the Gospel of Thomas. Wouldn't it be really cool to read about Thomas. Remember doubting Thomas? He's got a gospel--The Gospel of Thomas. Now is this close to the Word of God or do these things get weirder and weirder? Actually, does anybody remember, this was about four years ago, critics of the Bible and Atheists pre-Easter they have what I call "an Easter Surprise."

No, I'm serious, every Easter they come up with something in an attempt to discredit Christianity. This time they did the Gospel of Judas. Does anybody remember that? It came out right around Easter, the Gospel of Judas. So I got a copy and thought I'm going to read this just because I have to argue against it. I was really disappointed to be honest with you. After you read the first paragraph, it is obvious that the Gospel of Judas is a Gnostic text. As soon as I say Gnostic text you're talking second or third century AD. It's way late. In other words, it's written way after Jesus, it's a Gnostic text. I was really disappointed. It wasn't even a challenge. You want to be able to get a little meat to fight with. Even in the opening it was clearly a Gnostic text. So I read the whole thing, but it was just disappointing. It's clearly a late Gnostic text. As soon as I say Gnostic text is that going to be Scripture because that's like a hundred years, two hundred years after the New Testament so it just doesn't fit time-wise. I hope they come up with a better one this year.

So that's the Pseudepigrapha. By the way, have any of you guys ever read stories about Jesus? Have you ever wondered what Jesus was like between when he was one and when he was sixteen--no wait before he was thirty? Some of these Pseudepigrapha have stories of young Jesus when he gets out there and he fights with kids. He picks up dust and makes it into a dove and he goes (like that) and the dove flies away. So all this is really cool stuff. The Pseudepigrapha will try to reconstruct the early life of Jesus based on the New Testament Pseudepigrapha. Does anybody accept the Pseudepigrapha as being gospel? No. But, by the way, will critics attempt to use it to discredit Jesus because they have wild and wacky stories. They are pretty interesting though. So yes, that's the kind of stuff they use. But again, for believers this is the canon, this is the Apocrypha, this is in the ball park. Nobody accepts the Pseudepigrapha as sacred Scripture.

Q. Scribal Copying of the Bible: Transmission of the text over

3000 years [38:52-40:36]

Transmission--this is where the going gets tough. Pay attention, this stuff is

tricky. Did God use flawed processes to preserve his word? Did God use flawed people to preserve his word? How do you get the Bible down from Moses, who say wrote from 1440 or 1200 BC (there's a big debate as to whether Moses was 1440 or 1200). How do you get it from 1200 BC down to the 21st century? How did the Bible come down to us? The scribes had to copy it over and over and over again. But what's the problem when a book gets copied by hand without spell check over and over and over again? Do errors come in? Could you copy by hand, or do you know anyone who could copy a thousand page book without making a mistake? Now did God speak to the prophets? Yes, so we've got a direct God connection there. Are the scribes regular human beings copying? When did the Dead Sea Scrolls come up though? For 2000 years have people had the Dead Sea Scrolls? No. That's something that's only happened since 1948. So anyone before that didn't even know about them. We'll come back and hit the Dead Sea Scrolls later.

R. I Samuel 13:1 text variant/copyist error [40:37-46:48]

Let me show you a copyist problem in your scriptures. Let me show you in your Bibles. Who's got a King James version? Anybody got a King James? Can you look up 1 Samuel 13:1. Has anybody got an ASV or NASV? Can you look up 1 Samuel 13:1? Who's got an NIV? Then who has an ESV or NRSV? Remember I told you the ESV was kind of a knock off of the RSV. 1 Samuel 13:1. Now what I want you to do is, if you guys got your Bibles, I want you to open them to 1 Samuel 13:1, and look and see what your Bible says. This is a scribal error. Now, by the way, does this mean you can agree with me or disagree with me or is this fact? This is fact. These are the manuscripts we have. They're reflected in your Bibles; listen to the various translations of the Bible.

By the way, the New King James version says basically the same thing as the Old King James. The King James Version for 1 Samuel 13:1 says, "Saul reigned one year and then he reigned two years over Israel." I want you to think about that. Does that verse really make much sense? Normally, if the guy reigned

two years you would say, “He reigned two years.” Does that cover that he reigned one year? It assumes that he reigned one year. So the King James says, “Saul reigned one year and then he reigned two years over Israel.” Does that strike you as a little bit odd? I want you to think about it.

The NASV, shall I do the NASV out of my head? This is the NASV from 1977. It says what? She’s got the new one that they fixed. It’s more current. I’m going back to the original NASV and the ASV of 1901 and the NASV of 1977. In the original one it says, “Saul was 40 years old when he began to reign and he reigned 32 years over Israel.” That’s what the original NASV Bible said not the new one, they’ve corrected it. But the 1977 one says, “Saul was 40 years old when he began to reign and he reigned 32 years over Israel.” How old was Saul when he died? 72.

Now many of you have the NIV. Look at the NIV. It says, “Saul was 30 years old when he began to reign and he reigned 42 years over Israel.” How old was Saul when he died? 72. Is that different? One says that he was 40 years old and he reigned for 32 years and the same verse translated in the NIV says he was 30 years old and reigned for 42 years.

Now the ESV (and RSV) says, “Saul was...years old when he began to reign and he reigned...and 2 years over Israel.” Now honestly which one’s giving us exactly what the text says? What did the Hebrew text say? Is the ESV and RSV right? The number is gone. By the way, did many of your translations in the footnotes tell you that the number is gone? Yes. Is that why you use the footnotes from your Bible? Are they important? So basically they put in the footnote: the numbers are gone. Now question: does it matter to you? Well, you say, I don’t believe it’s gone. Does it matter what you believe? To be honest it doesn’t matter what you believe, it’s gone. That’s the honest truth. It’s gone. It doesn’t matter whether you, your mother, your father, your pastor, your missionary...doesn’t matter what they believe. The number’s gone. The RSV tells it like that. Where did the NIV get the 30 and the 42? Actually, they went over to the book of Acts

and Acts 13:21 gives some indication and they read the number back from Acts. They made up a number and put it in there. Yes, so the Hebrew text does not have 40. If you go over to Acts chapter 13, it has some of the numbers that help us. The Septuagint would also fill in the numbers. So what happened there? This a scribal error.

S. Mark 16 textual problem [46:59-49:50]

By the way, do your modern Bibles tell you when there's a scribal problem? Are they honest with you telling you there's a scribal problem? Turn in your Bibles to Mark 16, see how your Bible handles Mark 16. Mark 16 is a major scribal problem: it is very difficult to solve. Look at Mark chapter 16, the last chapter of the book of Mark. What does your Bible say after verse 8? What does your NIV do in Mark 16:8-9? Between those, what's it got? "They went out and said nothing to anyone because they were afraid." What comes right after that in the NIV? There's a line. Then what does it say? Does it say anything on the line or does it just give you a line? (person talks) Yes, so "Mark 16:9-20, some of the best manuscripts we have do not have those verses" and they indicate that with the line. By the way, are they being honest with you? They're just telling you, "Hey, be careful with this." Do they put it in there? They put it in there but they give you that warning. Some people say there are changes in diction and therefore it was added later. So there's a big debate on this. By the way, was it fair for the Bible to put it in but put that line there and explain some of this? Yes.

Does the King James version put in a line? Did the King James, when it says, "early witnesses," did the King James have any of the early witnesses we have today. The answer is: "No." The King James was done in 1611. In 1611 AD, did they have all or any of these manuscripts? No, they didn't have them. Does that mean the King James is totally flawed forever? Did they do the best they could at 1611? Do we know more now than they did in 1611? Do we have thousands more manuscripts than they had in 1611? Yes. By the way, do we know about manuscripts all over the world now? They were in England doing this in

1611, they couldn't email somebody in Budapest and say, "Hey, give me your manuscript." They were in England, it was 1611, and they were stuck. Don't fault the King James translation for that.

T. 1 John 5:7 textual problem: Compare KJV and NIV/NRSV [49:51-52:18]

Another place that King James has a real problem is 1 John 5:7 and that verse was added later. All of your modern translations will drop this verse. By the way, have you got 1 John 5:7? Let me just tell you about the early church. The early church in the first couple to three hundred years of the church, did they argue over the doctrine of the Trinity? Did it take them a while to establish that doctrine? So they argued back and forth about it. When the church fathers argued back and forth, did they quote Scripture back and forth to prove their points? Yes, they did. We've got records of the argumentation. Did they argue using Scripture? It's what you'd expect Church fathers to do, back in 200, 300, 400 AD, that kind of age.

Here's what the King James says, in 1 John 5:7. I want you to think about the doctrine of the Trinity here. "So there are three that bear witness in heaven: the Father, the Word," who's the word?—Jesus, the *logos*, "and the Holy Spirit. These three are one." That verse teaches very, very clearly what doctrine? "The Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one." Is that the most clear presentation of the Trinity you can find anywhere in the Bible? There is no verse that's even close to that. Did you know that that verse was never once quoted by the early Church fathers? When they were debating the Trinity, they never quoted that verse. Does that tell you anything? That verse wasn't there. As a matter of fact, the first time that verse pops up is basically in the 16th century AD. Is that a little late? Actually, most people believe, there's a guy named, I call him Erasmus the Rascal. Erasmus the Rascal wrote that into the Bible, some people think, on a wager. Somebody bet him he couldn't so he translated it from Latin, back into Greek. And then what happened? The King James version used the Erasmus Greek text but Erasmus had written this verse in and so they put it in their KJV translations. So there's no note in there, it just says that verse. You'll notice all

modern translations drop it because it is not found before the 16th century. Do you understand early manuscripts? Do we have it in the papyrus manuscripts? No.

U. General discussion of the accuracy of the text of Scripture [52:19-57:00]

I need to say this at this point. I worry about going over this stuff. Even last class one of the students said this is like, all of the sudden you say, “Holy cow, there’s all these errors, the whole Bible’s going up in flames. Who knows? Adam and Eve, maybe they didn’t live. I mean maybe, you know, Cain and Abel maybe that was a scribal error. The whole thing goes up.”

Now do you understand, the Bible. Let me just use the New Testament for example. We have 5,000 manuscripts of the New Testament. Can we compare those 5,000? Do we have means and mechanisms? There’s a guy down at Princeton, that’s all he’s done for his life for 67 years is study these manuscripts and their variances. Bruce Metzger is his name. This guy’s incredible. He studied these manuscripts all over the world and put them together. 5,000 manuscripts. We know about them, they’re codified and all this kind of stuff. Tell me, have you ever heard of a guy named Plato? I forget this last name. Plato also wrote back then, how many manuscripts do we have of Plato? We’ve got 5,000 of the New Testament, how many manuscripts have you of Plato? You probably have what, 7-13 manuscripts of Plato. Oh, you say what about Aristotle? Has anybody ever seen the Aristotelian text? Ok, it’s about this thick? Aristotle, he’s got logic, rhetoric, ethics, that kind of stuff. You know it’s really important philosophy, *Nicomachean Ethics*. Just worked through that a little bit ago myself. It’s a wonderful text, Aristotle was quite a guy. You know how many manuscripts we have of Aristotle? 120 or less. How many do we have in the New Testament? 5,000. How many do we have of Aristotle? 120 or less. Do you see the comparison? Is the New Testament, better established than any book on the face of this planet? There is no close second. Do you realize not only do we have early manuscripts that the King James version translators in 1611 didn’t have. We’ve now got papyrus. We’ve got a papyrus called P52, papyrus 52. It has part of the book of John on it and guess

when this papyrus dates from? First of all, when did the apostle John die? Did he live into the 90s AD? We've got a piece of the book of John from within 30 years of when John lived. Within 30 years of when the man lived. We've got a piece of papyri. That's pretty incredible. Tell me what other book has that kind of documentation from back two or three thousand years ago. No, it's unique.

There's a guy named Dan Wallace, I taught with him when I was at Grace College. Wallace is a Greek geek. You know you have geeks of technology. He's a geek of Greek. He's got all bushy black, dark hair he's growing this beard now. He's got this big old beard, bushy beard, and he looks like he's really Greek. And he's even got Greek black robes and he's got this beard now. You know what he's doing? Dan Wallace has found that there's a manuscript over in Istanbul, where Constantinople was. He's going like he's Greek. Is he going over there so he can find this manuscript? He knows it's there. Does the rest of the world know about this manuscript? No, nobody's seen this manuscript. He's going over there trying to pry it out of their hands. So he's getting all Greeked up and he's going over there, all Greek to fit into this monastery. He's going after that manuscript. That's the truth. You'd have to know this guy. I hope he doesn't pack any heat on him. I swear he'll get pictures of it or something but he's going after it. I mean he has thought about this a long time and he's worked at it and I think he's been over there and talked to them. He's trying to develop friendships with them.

By the way, why does he have to do that? Because the manuscript Sinaiticus was found at what place? Sinaiticus was found at Mount Sinai, at St. Catherine's Monastery. Do you realize what the guy did in the 1800s? He went out and stole the manuscripts from the monks. Are the monks still mad about that to this day? You guys laugh, I'm serious. I've been in St. Catherine's monastery. They remember that forever that the manuscript was stolen. Now, by the way, on my part, am I glad that they stole it? Yes, actually because it was sitting in this monastery, do you realize what they were doing with some of these manuscripts? The monks were burning the pages of the manuscripts to stay warm. Is that a

problem? Do you realize that these manuscripts are like some of the best in the world? They were burning the manuscripts to stay warm! I'm glad the guy stole them. Okay, I'm sorry.

V. Why did God preserve his word imperfectly?—a suggestion [57:01-59:23]

We've got all these manuscripts, how do you correct for all the differences in the manuscripts? Now, by the way, can you guys do that? You don't read Greek and Hebrew so you can't do that. Does somebody else who's an expert like a Bruce Metzger do that evaluating of manuscripts. Now what happens is they edit together a Greek text or Hebrew text and then that's published and then guys like me read it. In the footnotes they tell you the various readings? Yes, they do, it's very handy. In the footnotes you can see all the different manuscript readings.

Now how do we correct for all this stuff and why didn't God preserve it perfectly? The answer is we don't know why God does what he does. I'm going to make up something here. So for this I'm going to walk over here because this is me making this up. Several other people have suggested this, a lot of people hold this. Why didn't God preserve his Word perfectly? Could he have preserved it perfectly? Is there any manuscript that's perfect? We don't know because all we've got are manuscripts that come from a hundred years after and we've got to compare manuscript to manuscript, we wouldn't even know if we had it.

Do the manuscripts have errors? Yes, they do. Do you realize some of the scribes in the margins he says, "it is so cold in here that my ink is freezing up on me." I have a question: do you write well when you are freezing like that? No. So these scribes had really hard conditions. I don't fault the scribes. They did the best they could. They didn't have spell check and Word and that kind of support. Why didn't God preserve it? The suggestion is: if God had preserved his perfect Word like the ten commandments and left it in a box, what would people do to the box? They'd end up worshiping the relic. Do human beings make relics out of that kind of stuff? They would worship the relic rather than the God who gives the ten commandments. So I think that he purposely had his Word lost. I want you

worshiping me instead of some text. So therefore the text is lost and we've got no relic, we've got thousands of manuscripts.

W. Evaluating Scribal Errors [59:24-60:38]

Let's talk about scribal errors. Do we know the types of errors scribes make? Yes, we do. Here's one: Genesis chapter 10 verse 4. What's the difference between the letter ד (d) and the letter ר (r)? First of all can you see that there's a difference? What's the difference? Does anybody see the little bump on the end of that one? That's a tiddle. Does anybody remember a jot and tiddle? That's a tiddle. This is a D (ד). This is a R (ר). Do you think the scribes ever confused D (ד) and R (ר)? Do you see how close those are? Let me give you an example. This guy's name is Dodanin, if you've got them all memorized from Genesis 10. This guy's name is Dodanin. But if you look in some of your Bibles, it won't say "Dodanin," it will say "Rodanin." Do you see that the R and D have been confused? So was his name Dodo or was his name Rodo? The problem is the letter looks so similar that they confuse letters like that on occasion. So the D and the R get confused. Now we know that's a problem so can we correct for that? Yes, we can. Comparing manuscripts you would expect that.

X. Orality and Manuscript transmission [60:39-62:53]

Here's another one. Let me just do this to you in English. Sometimes they spoke manuscripts. What's the advantage of doing an oral manuscript? I would be up here reading, "In the beginning was the Word" or "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" copy this down. What's the advantage? From one manuscript in this class I could produce how many? 100. Do you see the advantage of doing it orally? But what's the problem with its being oral? Here's the problem orally: write down the word for me the word "there/their/they're". What's the problem? You've got "there", "their", and "they're" all sounding the same.

Now, let me just do Psalm 100 as an example of that. In the King James version of Psalm 100, it will say, "make a joyful noise to the Lord! Come into his

presence with singing. Know ye, that the Lord, he is God. It is he who hath made us and (*lo' anaknu*) not we ourselves.” Does anybody remember hearing this? That’s the King James. If you look in your NIV and most modern translations, you’ll see it’s like this, “make a joyful noise to the Lord! Come into his presence with singing. Know ye, that the Lord, He is God. It is he who hath made us and we (*l'o anaknu*) are his.” That is very different from “not we ourselves”--and “we are his.” You know how those are pronounced? “and not we ourselves”: *lo' anaknu*. You know how, “and we are his” is pronounced? *L'o anaknu*. What’s the sound difference between, *l'o anaknu* and *lo' anaknu*? Tell me which one’s which. You can’t. It’s pronounced the same way. It’s *l'o anaknu*. But it can be taken as “not we ourselves,” that’s the way the King James Version translates it, “and we are his” is the way most modern translations because we understand more about the poetry now.

Y. Metathesis [62:54-63:28]

Metathesis—have you ever typed this: “thier”? Are your fingers used to doing “ie”? What’s the benefit of MS Word? MS Word flips them. Have you ever had that happen? It flips them, so that’s beneficial. So I recommend Microsoft Word. This is called “Metathesis,” when you switch the order of the letters. When you switch letters, that’s called metathesis. If you ever read that in a manuscript, you’d know what that should be. It doesn’t fake anybody out.

Z. Fission and Fusion [63:29-64:02]

So here’s one. In the early Greek manuscripts, they were all written in capital letters with no spaces between the words. Do you like having spaces between the words? Tell me what this says. You guys read English. (people trying to read CHRISTISNOWHERE). Yes, you guys are a bunch of pagans. This is beautiful, this is liturgical, “Christ is now here.” [Students read: Christ is nowhere]. Do you see what the problem is when you don’t have spaces between words?

AA. Homeoteleuton: same endings [64:03-65:08]

Here's another one. This is called "homeoteleuton." I just like it because it's kind of a cool word. "Homo" means what? Same. "Homeoteleuton" means "same-ending." You guys all know this: same ending problem. Have you ever read across the page and you come across a word here and it's repeated down about three lines here and your eye skips down the page because you come across and then jump down. Let me take you to Jesus doing the parable of the Good Samaritan. The guy was beat up. There was a priest and he comes up to him and "he passes by on the other side." And then there's a Levite, he comes up to this poor guy who's beat up and "he passes by on the other side." What's the problem?—"Pass by on the other side," and "pass by on the other side" is repeated. In certain manuscripts, what would the scribe do? Did his eye jump down the page? He skipped one of the guys because his eye jumped down the page. Now have you ever read like that and you jump down the page? That's called "homeoteleuton," same ending, you jump down the page skipping some of the material.

AB. Dittography and Haplography [65:09-65:45]

Now here's another way to make an error, "Dittography." "Dittography" means, have you ever typed something and you type it twice when it should have only been written once? Then you realize you did the same thing twice. Then I get really mad at myself, "Oh, I can't believe I just typed that." So then you erase it. That's "Dittography." It means it was written twice but it should've been written once. **Haplography** means it should've been written twice but they only wrote it once. So dittography and haplography are the opposites. Dittography means it was written twice but it should've been written once. Haplography means it was written once and it should've been written twice. You know you have made these kinds of errors.

AC. Harmonizing Corruptions [65:46-67:18]

Here's another one: harmonizing corruptions. This comes from the book of Job chapter 3. In Job chapter 3 it goes like this. What's happening to Job? Job gets the tar beat out of him. So Job's getting the tar beat out of him and his wife comes up in chapter 3, her kids are dead, everything's been blown up. She comes to her suffering husband. Now I'm going to quote you literally the Hebrew, tell me what's wrong. In the Hebrew it says literally: "Job's wife comes up and says, [Job's got all these boils] 'Job, bless God and die.'" This is quoted directly from the Hebrew, "baruk," it means "bless"--"Bless God and die." Now when you read that coming from Job's wife, is it real clear what she really said. Did she say, "Bless God and die"? Yes, she was a very pious woman. No. when she comes to Job and all this tragedy and she's says what? "Curse God and die." What was one of the problems? Did the scribes not want to write "curse God"? Scribes did not like to write that. They put "bless God" there instead. Now, by the way, anybody reading that text, do you know that it should be "curse God and die"? Let me say that again: anybody reading that text, do you know that it should be "curse God and die"? Anybody reading it knows that. So what happens is the readers flip that. The scribes didn't like to write that, so they put "bless God and die" instead. So that's called "harmonizing corruptions." They didn't like writing "curse God and die" so they harmonized it into something they were more comfortable with.

AD. Conflation [67:19-68:15]

Now here's conflation. Conflation is an interesting one. Some manuscripts, this comes from the book of Revelation I believe or Acts. It says, So you've got fifty manuscripts that say "Church of God", "Church of God", "Church of God", and "Church of God". Then you've got fifty other manuscripts that say, "Church of the Lord", and "Church of the Lord". Now you're a later scribe, you've got fifty manuscripts that say "Church of God", and you've got fifty manuscripts that say "Church of the Lord", which one are you going to copy? Yes, so what did you do? By the way, let me ask, what would you do? If you have one manuscript that says "Church of the Lord", and one that says "Church of God", what would you do?

They combine it and they say, “Church of the Lord God”. So later manuscripts have this “Church of the Lord God.” Now the point with conflation is, the text has a tendency to grow, because of this conflation tendency. So with conflation the text has a tendency to grow because of this conflation problem.

AE. Principles of weighing the manuscript evidence

Older & Shorter are preferred [68:16-68:56]

Now, here are some principles for deciding which manuscript readings are to be accepted into the Bible. Older manuscripts: if you have a manuscript dated from the 16th century and you have one dated from the 3rd century, which one do you put more weight on? 3rd century. Why? Because it’s earlier. The older the manuscript, the more status it has--the older the manuscript, the better.

The shorter reading is preferred. Why do they prefer the shorter reading? You’ve got two sets of manuscripts going, why do they prefer the shorter one? Did the text have a tendency to grow over time? So the shorter one is probably the older and better one. So the shorter reading is to be preferred. “Church of the Lord” or “Church of God” but not “Church of the Lord God.”

AF. Geographically spread out [68:57-69:51]

Now, let me just do this. Suppose we have one hundred manuscripts from Wenham in Massachusetts. We’ve got, on the other hand, a set of five manuscripts that disagree with the Wenham manuscript. One of those manuscripts is from Washington, DC, one is from Philadelphia, we don’t do New York City in Boston here, Boston is the other one, and L.A. is the other one, and Miami is the other one. Only got five, but we’ve got the same reading from Washington, Philadelphia, Boston, LA, and Miami and you have got a different reading from one hundred manuscripts from Wenham. Which reading would you accept? The five or one hundred. The five, why? Because they’re spread all over the place. Would the ones in Wenham all be copied from each other? Would they all have the same mistakes? But the greater the geographical spread, the more valuable the reading.

AG. Manuscript families [69:52-70:31]

Now let's discuss the numbers and type of the manuscripts. What's a manuscript family? A manuscript family is when you have a parent, the parent is copied, that's called "the child." So you have the parent, the child, the child gets copied and do you see that they all go back to the same parent? So one gets copied let's say five times. They all go back to the same parent. Are certain families a better set of manuscripts and other families a worse set of manuscripts? So what happens is you can value these families of manuscripts. You have the Western family, the Alexandrian family, and then you can weigh the manuscripts and you can try to pick the best family of manuscripts.

AH. New Testament and Old Testament Scribes [70:32-72:07]

Let me hit one more thing here, as far as the New Testament. I want to contrast for you the New Testament and the Old Testament. Were the New Testament scribes that copied the New Testament, were they good scribes? The early Christians, were they educated or uneducated? The early Christians were uneducated. Were the early Christians: rich or poor? Poor, mostly. Were the early Christians sitting in their house, air conditioned house, or fleeing from persecution? Fleeing persecution. When you're fleeing persecution, poor and uneducated, do you make a good scribe? No. Are the early Christian manuscripts difficult because they weren't professional scribes? Did the early Christians do the professional scribe training? Not much, later on they did.

Now tell me about the Jewish people. Were the Jewish people good scribes or bad scribes? Good. Professional--give their whole life to copying Scripture? Our best Hebrew manuscripts come from about 1000 AD – 800 AD, they're called Masoretic Texts (MT). These Masoretic Texts they copied sometimes they would say, this page has to have 25 "a"s. And they would count up on the page 25 "a"s. If one of the "a"s was missing, they would destroy your manuscript? Question: were those people very careful? The Jewish manuscripts were very accurate. However, what's the problem? Our best Jewish Masoretic manuscripts are from

800-1000 AD. What's the problem? Is 1000 AD late when Moses was 1400 BC? Yes.

AI. Dead Sea Scrolls [72:08-73:38]

Then, all of a sudden, in 1948, some Arab kid was out for a walk along the Dead Sea, he threw a stone into a cave. He heard a clink instead of a clunk and he said, something's in there. He went in and found a big old canister. He opens the canister and inside there's all this paper. He says, "woah, what's this? You can burn fires with this all night." He pulls it out, turns out I think they sold the first one at 50 bucks. How much is it worth now? Millions. Actually, do you know what they did with the Dead Sea Scrolls? Some of the guys, when they took it up to Bethlehem, they wanted to make more money so you know what they did? They tore it up so they could sell 10 pieces instead of one. You say they didn't do that. Yes, they did. But anyway, we got these Dead Sea Scrolls in 1948. What's the benefit? Why do you say so much with respect the name of Marty Abegg, a good friend of mine who worked on the Dead Sea Scrolls and blew it open? I think it was cave 13 or cave 11, he blew it open with a Mac computer actually. Why do I have so much respect for Marty? The Dead Sea Scrolls are our best Hebrew manuscripts. The Dead Sea Scrolls, in 1948 jumped us back 1000 years to before the time of Christ. That's 1000 year jump. Can we now check how good those late Masoretic texts manuscripts are? Yes, we've got 1000 year jump now. Guess what they found? Are the Hebrew texts accurate? The Hebrew texts are accurate. The Dead Sea Scrolls confirm this generally.

AJ. Gabi Barkai and Numbers 6 [73:39- 76:19]

Now, by the way, let me just tell you a story about a guy named Gabi Barkai, I studied under him in the 1970s, after the Civil War. Gabi Barkai has studied tombs in Jerusalem all his life and I'm talking all his life, some 40 or 50 years. Gabi can walk into a tomb in Jerusalem and as he knows every tomb in Jerusalem. He's a really bright guy. He walks up to the wall, put his hand on the wall and he'll say, that chisel mark was made in 300 BC. This guy is good. He's

the best in the world. He has spent his whole life doing that.

Now what's the problem with tombs? Usually they bury the people with all their riches. Usually what happens to a tomb? The grave robbers get there and rip all the stuff off so you're left a few pieces of barley and fragments. Can you do some carbon-14 dating on it? But you're often left with nothing but mere scraps. Lo and behold, this is in the 1980s, they're digging to make a new hotel and they got the steam shovel out, they're digging up and all of the sudden they hit something. They said, "Holy cow, this a tomb." You've got a tomb in Jerusalem, who are you going to call? Gabi Barkay. "Gabi, get over here, we hit a tomb." What happened was, there was an earthquake and the earthquake collapsed the roof of the tomb onto the tomb. Question: is that good? Yes, all the stuff is still in situ. They opened this tomb and this tomb dates from 700 BC. This is from the time of Hezekiah, king of Judah. The tomb roof was collapsed, there's a woman in there, you can tell from the bones. She has got around her neck, a little amulet made out of silver. It took them 3 years to roll this silver amulet from 700 BC. It said something like this, and this is a good way to end the class, "The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord be gracious unto you and make his face shine upon you and give you shalom." Have you ever heard that? Did your pastor ever say, "The Lord bless you and keep you and make his face shine upon you"? This is the priestly blessing from Numbers 6:24ff. Gabi Barkai found the earliest piece of Scripture ever found—600-700 BC. Does it say the same thing that your Bible says? The same thing. So we can have confidence in Scripture. See you next week.

This is lecture number 3 by Ted Hildebrandt on Old Testament History, Literature, and Theology. This lecture was on the transmission of the Bible from God to us.

Transcribed by Lauren Arzbecker
 Rough edited by Ted Hildebrandt 2