

Practical Theology – Lesson 8 – “Scripture”

“Original Authorship, Manuscripts and Translations”

Old Testament Authors

- Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy - Moses
- Job – probably Moses
- Psalms – David, Solomon, Ezra are primary authors
- Proverbs – Solomon and others
- Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes – Solomon
- Ruth – probably Samuel
- Esther – probably Mordecai
- 1 & 2 Samuel – Samuel, Nathan, Gad
- 1 & 2 Kings – Jeremiah
- Major and Minor Prophets – as named (Lamentations is by Jeremiah)
- Nehemiah – Ezra/Nehemiah
- Ezra - Ezra
- 1 & 2 Chronicles – Ezra

New Testament Authors

- Gospels named after authors – Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
- Acts – Luke
- James, Jude, 1-2 Peter, 1-3 John – named after authors
- Revelation – John
- Hebrews – [AD 64-68] unknown with multiple traditions (**2 Thessalonians 1:1, 3:17** [AD 51])
- All others - Paul

Note that most of these are declared by Scripture – either in the Book written, or stated in another Book. Others are historically/traditionally ascribed to an author. **Also note** that most are contemporary first-hand accounts, but some (Genesis, Job, Chronicles, Luke) are based on verbal or written source material.

Inspiration of Scripture – Using Men, using Sources

- **Genesis** – Genesis is comprised of 11 ‘toldots’ or records based on ‘generations’ (Genesis 2:3-4, 5:1, 6:9... 37:2). The Book is a compilation of 11 separate records, which may have been either verbal or written as source material.
 - The authorship of Moses is based on Scripture substantiating him in other Books as author of the Pentateuch, of which Genesis is included.
 - The fact of Moses’ father-in-law being a Priest (Exodus 2:16,21) means it is reasonable that he provided this verbal/written source material which Moses used.
- **Job** – Job is a ‘Book of Poetry’ for reasons lost in English translation, but in the original language it is written in metered couplets, clearly revealing that the Book existed as a verbal account, ostensibly recorded by Job or Elihu.
 - Moses is traditionally held (Talmud) as the author of Job, but is not the only traditional author – he is the closest suggested author (apart from Job/Elihu) in time and geography, as Moses’ priest-father-in-law lived in the same region Job had lived, likely about 100-150 years after the time of Job.

- **Chronicles** – Chronicles (1 & 2 Chronicles) was written by Ezra, in Aramaic, after returning to Israel from Babylonian captivity, based directly on Kings (1 & 2 Samuel, 1 & 2 Kings is all one book).
- **Luke** – The Gospel of Luke (and Acts), was written by a Gentile, as revealed in **Colossians 4:10-11...14**. Also, **Acts 16:7-10** shows change in use of ‘they’ to ‘we’ indicating that Luke first joined Paul in Mysia (Galatia) on his 2nd missionary journey, making his entire account of the Gospel second-hand. There is an 8 year gap when Luke is afterwards separated from Paul (**Acts 17:10** – ‘they’) so during at least part of these 8 years he probably was in Jerusalem with the disciples who WERE eye witnesses to the ministry of Christ.

Old Testament Manuscripts

- **Septuagint (LXX)**
 - Greek translation (Common Greek)
 - Earliest MSS 300 BC
 - Used by Christ and the Apostles, Early Church
 - NOT used for modern English translations, except in support (why some NT quotes of (LXX) OT don’t match (Masoretic) OT if compared)
 - Dead Sea Scrolls substantiated accuracy of LXX, now in higher regard
- **Masoretic Text**
 - Hebrew “Official” Jewish text
 - Earliest MSS AD 200
 - Used as primary text for Vulgate and modern English translations

New Testament Manuscripts

- **The Textus Receptus** – The manuscripts used in the Tyndale family of Bibles, including the King James Version, were essentially a collection of manuscripts which were not based on the later-defined ‘families’ defined by primary source manuscripts, but are considered to be of Byzantine ‘family’.
- **The Families of Manuscripts** – Modern translations using ‘critical texts’ are based on primary source manuscripts, including comparative analysis. Selected highlights below:
 - Byzantine MSS (400 AD) vast majority of later manuscripts, used in earliest printings, MSS used for TR (King James)
 - Codex Sinaiticus (AD 340-350), first edited in 1938
 - Codex Alexandinus (5th century, first edited in 1657, 1720, and 1828) The Gospels of which are of ‘Byzantine’ family.
 - Codex Vaticanus (4th century, first edited in 1889) is of Alexandrian family.

The Primary Latin Versions

- **Old Latin Version** – New Testament from original 2nd century Greek, Old Testament from LXX
- **The Vulgate** – New Testament revised Old Latin, Old Testament from Masoretic

Evaluating Modern Translations

- Literal vs Dynamic Equivalence
- Does not use Gender Neutral conversions (“he” to “they”, “son” to “children”)
- General Quality and Consistency of Translation
- Purpose of Translation – easy reading, amplified text, extremely literal/interlinear
- Recommended: ESV, NASB, ASV 1901, or KJV – or by specific purpose