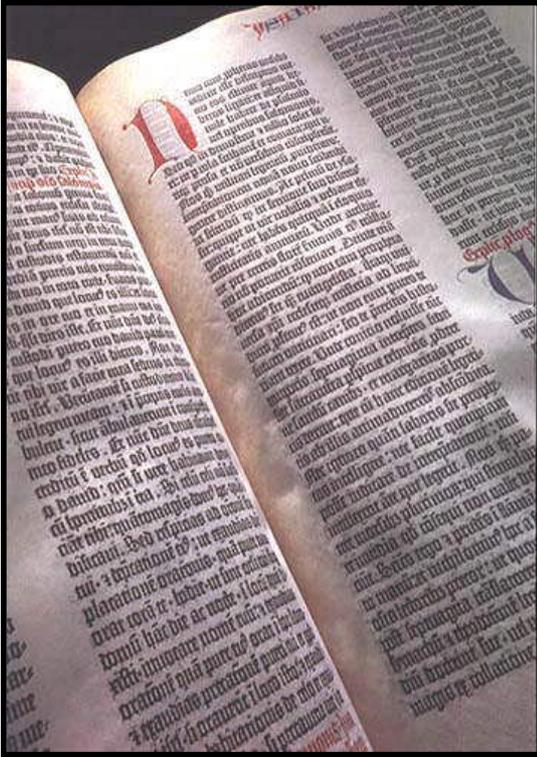


# The Origin of the Bible

## 4. HOW WAS THE BIBLE WRITTEN?



Page from the 42-line, 1453 Gutenberg Bible

For many the question on how was the Bible written is a mystery. Even if someone agrees on the inspiration of the Bible, for many the mystery remains on how the Bible became the Bible? If God revealed His words to Moses, how did those words get from Moses to us today? The question easily extends itself to all 40 writers of the 66 books, which make up the Bible. What was the language was the Bible written in? What was it written on? These questions among others face the student of Bible origins. Critics who attack the Bible play on the lack of historical and archeological knowledge to level their charges.

Critics ask the question, how did the Bible become the Bible? Charging the Bible was the result of "Oral transmission", claiming, writing did not exist in the days of Abraham and Moses. Therefore, the Bible was written down after long periods, its words are not reliable. In fact, they theorize the Bible is a collection of near-east mythology.

### *Was the Bible transmitted orally?*

Before we understand this question, we need to understand *Oral Transmission*. Oral transmission (tradition) is the process of verbal transmission as opposed to written transmission. Oral transmission relies on the ability of the previous generation, to pass on the stories, traditions and history verbally, from one generation to the next.

One of the most well known bible critics is *Julius Wellhausen* (1844-1918). Wellhausen

is a German biblical scholar who put forward the *Documentary Hypothesis* theory concerning the Bible. His theory was based on the idea, that the Bible, specifically the Torah (5-books of Moses,) was not authored by Moses but by different authors via oral tradition. He identified these strands (authors) as J-E-D-P<sup>1</sup>, each letter representing a different source of authorship, according to Wellhausen the different strands were collected and put together in the Torah, at a later period. His theory dismisses the authorship of Moses, branding the Torah as a fabrication.

Wellhausen based his theory on the idea that writing did not appear amongst the Hebrews until many years after Moses. R.K. Harrison, rejects the basis of the Wellhausen theory, writing,

"Contrary to the contentions of Wellhausen, who maintained, against archaeological evidence already available in his day, that writing did not appear among the Hebrews until the early monarchy; they had the means of producing written records at their disposal from very early times"<sup>2</sup>

Hebrew is a Semitic language, and Abraham was from the city of Ur, which was a very literate culture even during the times of Abraham. From the region of Babylon, one of the most famous written documents preserved in stone



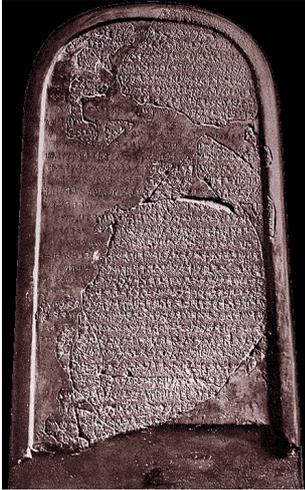
Stele of the code  
Hammurabi

<sup>1</sup> Each letter represents a separate strain of authorship according to Wellhausen, J-Jehovah, E-Elohim, D-Deuteronomy, P-Priestly. Wellhausen based his theory on the use of the names for God, to determine who wrote the Torah.

<sup>2</sup> R.K. Harrison, Introduction to the Old Testament (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1969, pg. 201)

is the *Code of Hammurabi* (1792-1750 B.C.), who lived within 250 years of the life of Abraham. On the stele,<sup>3</sup> the laws of ancient Babylon were recorded for generations to come. Hammurabi, also lived 300-years before the time of Moses. So Wellhausen contention of Hebrews not being able to write down the events in their past is not founded on fact, but is completely without merit.

In addition to the Code of Hammurabi, there are many proofs of the "Literate" culture, which both Abraham and Moses existed.



Moabite Stone

Moses who is credited with writing the Torah (Five books of Moses; Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy) was educated in the house of Pharaoh, he would have been literate not only in Egyptian but the surrounding cultures in his day. In the book of *Job*, dated to the Patriarchal period (2100-1800 B.C.) before the time of Moses, Job refers to writing and the material on which one writes. Writing with an Iron pen upon stone and lead is clearly described; lead a soft material could be inscribed with an Iron stylus. Soft Clay was also a material used to write upon, preserving the words of the writer.

23 "Oh, that my words were written! Oh, that they were inscribed in a book!

24 That they were engraved on a rock With an iron pen and lead, forever! Job 19:23-24

Other documents exist clearly documenting the existence of writing in the time of Moses, and the invasion of the Hebrews into the land of Canaan. These documents are the *Letters from the Tell El-Amarna*. A peasant woman digging in the dirt discovered these letters in 1887. The letters were written in Akkadian (Babylonian) script with some Canaanite glosses. These letters dated to the conquest of Joshua, mention the invasion of Habiru (Hebrews).

Also Confirming the written language outside of the Bible is the Moabite stone<sup>4</sup> (Mesha Stele), which is dated to the time of *King Mesha* of Moab. He was a contemporary of *Jehoshaphat*, king of Judah (870-848 BC), and *Joram*, king of the northern kingdom of Israel (852-841 BC). The Moabite Stone gives King Mesha's point of view of the events of 2 Kings 3. The alphabet and the language on the stone were both Moabite, which a language closely related to Hebrew. Encyclopedia Britannica says the following on the Moabite Language



Ahirom Sarcophagus

"Eastern subdivision of the Canaanite branch of the early Semitic alphabet, closely related to the early Hebrew alphabet. The best-known example of the Moabite alphabet is from the Mesha□, or Moabite, Stone (Louvre, Paris), which was discovered in 1868 at Dibon, east of the Dead Sea. The stone bears a 34-line inscription of Mesha□, king of Moab, dating from the middle of the 9th century B.C. Until the discovery of the Ahirom inscription in 1923 at Byblos, the Mesha□ Stone was considered the earliest extant alphabetic inscription.<sup>5</sup>

The Moabite stone is incontrovertible evidence of a rich Hebrew language and culture, which corresponds to the Moabite civilization, the Moabites were a subject nation to Israel, during the time of Mesha. Even older than the Moabite stone by almost 400 years, is the inscription on the sarcophagus of Ahirom king of Byblos (1250 B.C), which is the earliest "known" writing of the Phoenician alphabet.

The existence of written language and communication during the time of Abraham (2100 B.C.) and Moses (1450 B.C.) is demonstrated by both history and archaeology. There is no need for oral transmission of scripture when the written language was so pervasive. The books of Moses lay claim to a

<sup>3</sup> Stele: (Greek: "shaft," or "pillar") plural Stelea standing stone slab used in the ancient world primarily as a grave marker but also for dedication, commemoration, and demarcation.

<sup>4</sup> discovered in 1868 at Dhiban, the ancient [Dibon](#), four miles north of the River Arnon. When first seen by Europeans (including a German missionary named Klein) it was an inscribed slab of black basalt 3½ feet long by 2 feet wide. The Arabs of the neighborhood, dreading the loss of such a talisman, broke the stone into pieces; but a squeeze had already been obtained by Clermont-Ganneau, and most of the fragments were recovered and pieced together by him. The reconstructed monument is now, together with the squeeze, in the museum of the Louvre in Paris.

<sup>5</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica 2004 DVD version, Moabite Alphabet

written transmission of the Torah. The king of Israel was to write a copy of the Law (Torah), and read from his copy.

18 "Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites.

19 "And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, Deuteronomy 17:18-19 (1450 B.C.)

Literacy was both expected and common in the culture of the Exodus, contrary to the critics of the Bible.

### The development of Alphabets

Archeology has clearly demonstrated the existence of a written alphabetic communication dating to the time of Abraham, and an even earlier cuneiform methods. There are several theories about the development of alphabets. An interesting point to note, the early *Hebrew Alphabet* is nearly identical with the *Phoenician Alphabet*, which is dated as early as the time of Joseph. Greeks writers have even proposed the Hebrews as the inventors of the alphabet. Quoting Encyclopedia Britannica,

Over the centuries, various theories have been advanced to explain the origin of alphabetic writing, and, since classical times, the problem has been a matter of serious study. The Greeks and Romans considered five different peoples as the possible inventors of the alphabet—the Phoenicians, Egyptians, Assyrians, Cretans, and Hebrews. Among modern theories are some that are not very different from those of ancient days. Every country situated in or more or less near the eastern Mediterranean has been singled out for the honor.

The early Hebrew alphabet, the *Paleo-Hebrew* alphabet could have been the source behind the Phoenician alphabet; since many agree that the Proto-Canaanite alphabet preceded the Phoenician, which was the source behind the Greek alphabet which is the source behind the alphabets in the Western world. Encyclopedia Britannica continues regarding Hebrew as the origin of today's alphabets.

	Proto-Canaanite	Early Phoenician	Greek		Proto-Canaanite	Early Phoenician	Greek
א			Α	י			Ι
ב			Β	מ			Μ
ג			Γ	נ			Ν
ד			Δ	ס			Ξ
ה			Ε	ע			Ο
ו			Υ	פ			Π
ז			Ζ	צ			Μ
ח			Η	ק			Ϟ
ט			Θ	ר			Ρ
י			Ι	ש			Σ
כ			Κ	ת			Τ

The inventor or inventors of the alphabet were, no doubt, influenced by Egyptian writing—perhaps also by other scripts. Indeed, it is probable that those who invented the alphabet were acquainted with most of the scripts current in the eastern Mediterranean lands at the time. Though the nationality of the inventor or inventors of the alphabet is unknown, it is now generally agreed that he or they belonged to the Northwest Semitic linguistic group, which includes the ancient Canaanites, Phoenicians, and Hebrews.....Originally, graphs were perhaps "motivated" pictorial signs that were subsequently used to represent the initial sound of the name of the pictured object. The North Semitic alphabet remained almost unaltered for many centuries. If the signs' external form (which, it must be emphasized, had no particular significance) is ignored and only their phonetic value, number, and order are considered, the modern Hebrew alphabet may be regarded as a continuation of the original alphabet created more than 3,500 years ago. The Hebrew order of the letters seems to be the oldest. The earliest evidence that the Hebrew alphabet was learned systematically was left in the form of a schoolboy's scribbling on the vertical face of the upper step of a staircase leading up to the palace at Tel Lakhish, in southern Israel. It includes the scratching of the first five letters of the early Hebrew alphabet in their conventional order, and it belongs to the 8th or 7th century BC.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Encyclopedia Britannica, 2004, Alphabets

## The Biblical languages

The history behind the development of alphabets formed the basis and history of how the Bible would be written from the time of Moses to the New Testament. The Bible was composed in a very literal environment, with well-developed literal methods of recording, thoughts, history and communication. Using this literal environment, God revealed Himself to the Hebrew prophets who recorded His messages not only to the Hebrew nation, but to the world around them. Many people would be able to read the Paleo-Hebrew writing, and understand the Semitic language of the Hebrews.

The Bible in the original is written in three languages, Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek. Hebrew and Aramaic are both related languages, being Semitic in nature. After the conquest of Alexander the Great (c. 332 B.C), Greek became the *lingua franca*<sup>7</sup> of the Mediterranean. Today all three of these languages are still living and existing languages. In fact, the recent movie by Mel Gibson, the Passion was in the Aramaic tongue, the language of Babylon.



**The Gezer Calendar with ancient Hebrew writing**

*Hebrew*

1450-516 B.C.

From the time of the Exodus, Moses in all likelihood recorded the Torah, in the Paleo-Hebrew script; this script was nearly identical with the Early Phoenician script. This same script was used throughout the land of Canaan as recorded by Isaiah in 19:18. This was the main script used until the time of the exile. It is at this point the armies of Babylon (586 B.C.), destroyed the city of Jerusalem and the Temple, taking the survivors into Babylon for seventy-years. The hostages during this period would include the Daniel and Ezekiel. (Daniel 1, Ezekiel 1:1).

539 B.C. to A.D. 500

In 539 B.C., the armies of Cyrus the Great, king of Persia, defeat Babylon, he allows the Jews to return and rebuild of the Temple to begin. This is the beginning of the *Second Temple Period*. After Seventy-years of captivity, many of the descendents of the Jewish captives had forgotten the Hebrew tongue and alphabet. The Aramaic alphabet was adopted for the Hebrew language, this helped the Jews make the transition, to still be a distinct people and yet being able to communicate with the society around them. Manuscripts of the Torah and Prophets were written in the *Aramaic square script* (Current Hebrew) rather than the earlier *Paleo-Hebrew script* (*Ancient Hebrew*). Nehemiah records the problems facing the restored Hebrew nation in 440 B.C.



**Example of vowel points**

23 In those days I also saw Jews who had married women of Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab.  
24 And half of their children spoke the language of Ashdod, and could not speak the language of Judah, but spoke according to the language of one or the other people.  
Nehemiah 13:23-24

The use of Babylonian (Aramaic) square script would become the dominate form of Hebrew in the Biblical manuscript for the future. Although, there were Paleo-Hebrew manuscripts found at the Dead Sea and Bar Kochba<sup>8</sup> introduced them on the coins, the square script

remains until this day the current letters used for Hebrew.

<sup>7</sup> Auxiliary or compromise language used between groups having no other language in common. Examples are English and French for diplomatic purposes

<sup>8</sup> Bar Kochba was Jewish leader who revolted against Roman authority A.D. 132. He attempted to restore a Jewish nation.

### 500 to 1000 A.D. Masorites

Around A.D. 500, a group of Jewish scribes, based in the Galilee, the Masorites, helped preserve the Hebrew text from the sixth to the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. They added vowel points to the Hebrew manuscript to ensure proper pronunciation. Earlier manuscripts had no vowel points, since most were familiar with the Hebrew words.

The Hebrew manuscripts produced by the Masorites form the basis of current Old Testament translations. These manuscripts are known as the *Masoretic Text*.

### *Aramaic*

The second language in the Old Testament is Aramaic, named after the Arameans, the people of Aram. Arameans spoke a Semitic language closely related to Hebrew, Syriac and Phoenician, with an alphabet derived from the Phoenician manuscript. Abraham is described as an Aramean, his wife Sarah and her relatives settled in the land of the Arameans (Syria) (Deut. 26:5, Genesis 25:20)



**Scene from the Black Obelisk of Shalmeneser III, where Jehu King of Israel bows before the Assyrian King**

The Arameans established city-states throughout Syria; one of the oldest Aramean settlements is Damascus, a constant threat to Israel. David defeated Damascus, the leading city of Aram (Syria) (2 Samuel 8:3-5), establishing the Hebrew in the area. The Assyrians under *Shalmeneser III* 841 B.C. headed west subduing the Arameans, displacing them from their lands and relocating populations. This process continued until Babylonians defeated the Assyrians in 609 B.C. The northern kingdom, Israel, removed and transplanted to the East, like many of the Aramean city-states, in 722 B.C. This was the Assyrian policy in conquered territory to subdue populations they moved people.

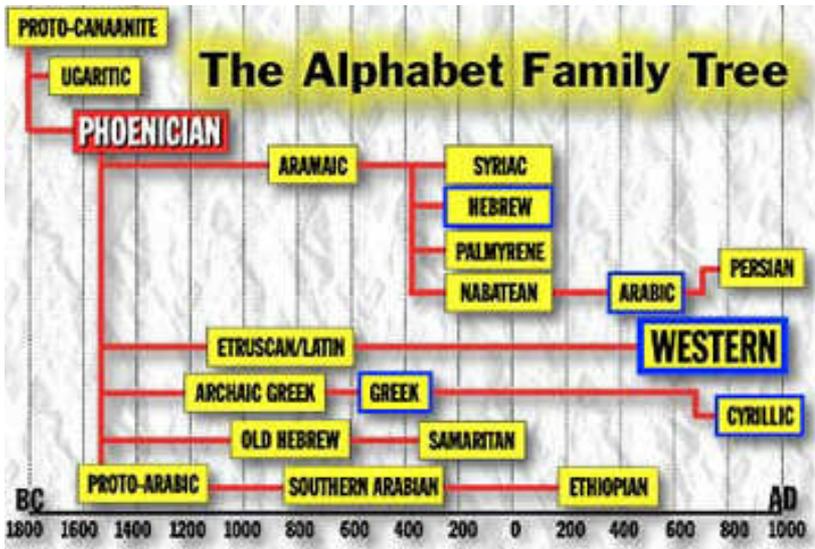
The displaced Arameans throughout Assyria caused Aramaic to become the language of common use, throughout the Assyrian kingdom. Educated Hebrews would be familiar with both Hebrew and Aramaic in the time of Hezekiah (785-686 B.C.). When the Assyrian army surrounds Jerusalem, the leaders in Jerusalem urge the Assyrians to communicate in Aramaic, so the common people do not understand (Isaiah 36:11). Aramaic eventually became the common language of the Babylonian and Persian kingdom.

In 586 B.C., the Babylonians destroyed Jerusalem and took the surviving Jews into exile; during the exile in Babylon, the Jews acquired Aramaic as their common language. Daniel chapter 2:4 to 7:28, Ezra 4:8-6:18, 7:12-26 are written in Aramaic.

After the Jews return from the exile, the *Aramaic square script* replaced the *Paleo-Hebrew script* used before the exile. Even after the conquest of Alexander the Great, and the spread of the Greek Language, Aramaic was still the common language in Palestine.

Jesus is quoted in Aramaic demonstrating the pervasive nature of Aramaic in the first century. In Aramaic, Jesus is quoted as saying, *talitha kour* "Little girl arise" [Mark 5:41]; *ephphatha* "be opened" [Mark 7:34]; *Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani*, "My God, My God why have you forsaken me?" [Mark 15:34].

Jews would maintain Aramaic-speaking communities many years after the Temple is destroyed in A.D. 70. *Targums*, the Aramaic word for *translation* became known as paraphrases of the Old Testament, they were read along with the Hebrew to help Aramaic speaking Jews understand the scripture.



### Greek

In 334 B.C., the armies of Alexander the Great crossed the Dardanelles, with 30,000-foot soldiers and 5000 horsemen. Within the next 10-years, the Persian Empire would completely fall to the armies of Greece. In 323 B.C., Alexander the Great died in Babylon at the age of 33. His kingdom was divided between his generals. As a result, Greek became the common language in the Mediterranean world, and former Persian Kingdom. In 163 B.C., the Jews were able to reestablish a Jewish Kingdom for about 100-years until Rome arrived.

After the region of Palestine fell (the Maccabean Kingdom) to the Romans in 63 B.C., under the general Pompeii, Greek

remained the language of trade and commerce in the Roman world. Greek was the language of communication through the East and Europe. Latin was still a western language, foreign to the people of the East. Greek became the common spoken language in the east and west, thanks to Alexander and his kingdom. The Greek language allowed the New Testament to spread, in the Roman and Greek speaking cities and throughout Asia, Europe and Africa.

According to Paul D. Wegner, both the language and alphabet of the Greeks are related to the Phoenicians.

#### Stages of Greek Language

1. Pre-Homeric	1500-900 B.C.
2. Classical	900-330 B.C.
3. Koine	330 B.C.– A.D. 330
4. Byzantine	A.D. 330-1453
5. Modern	1453-onward

Most scholars believe that the Greek alphabet was derived from the Phoenician alphabet, with at least five letters showing direct resemblance. The following evidence suggests that these two languages are related.

1. Nearly all the early Greek letters reflect a Semitic origin.
2. Phonetic values of the majority of early Greek letters are the same as Semitic values and their order is very similar.
3. Until about 500 B.C., Greek was written from right to left, similar to the Semitic languages.
4. Most Greek letter names are meaningless in Greek but mean something in Semitic languages. For example, *alpha* and *beta* are simply letter names in Greek but are almost identical to the names of the first two letters of the Hebrew alphabet, *alep* and *bet*, which can also denote objects represented by their shapes, namely, ox and house respectively.<sup>9</sup>

There are five stages to the history of the Greek language. Homer, who wrote the *Illiad* and *Odyssey* during the classical age, used classical Greek. *Koine* (common) Greek was used to write the *New Testament* and *Septuagint*. The *Septuagint*, the Greek translation of the Old Testament, was written between 250-100 B.C. and is used in eighty-percent of the Old Testament quotes in the New Testament. According to F.F. Bruce, the Greek of the *Septuagint*, has Greek words but



Rosetta Stone

<sup>9</sup> Wegner, Paul D. *Journey from Text to Translation*, Baker Academic, 1999, pg. 87

Hebrew idiom.

### *From Inspiration to Manuscript*

#### *Writing Materials*

The way writing was transmitted varied in the ancient world, the oldest surviving materials were written on stone and metal. While manuscripts written on paper and leather only survived if kept, dry to prevent rot, such as the Dead Sea scrolls and Egyptian Papyri. The greatest numbers of ancient manuscripts surviving were written on stone and clay.

#### Stone

The Bible records stone being the preferred method, since the Lord choose stone. The 10-commandments written by the finger of God were written on stone (Exod. 24:12; 31:18; 32:15-19). Job refers to his words being inscribed on stone and lead using an iron pen (Job 19:24). Stone however was not practical for everyday use.

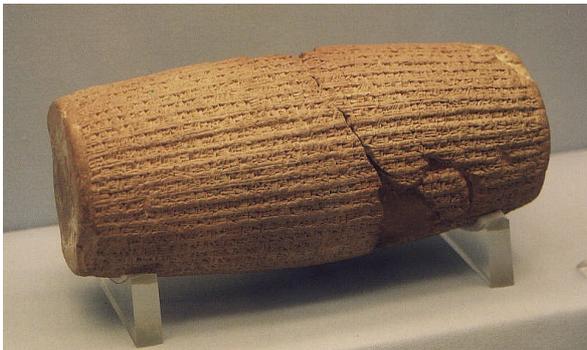
The *Code of Hammurabi* written on black basalt (volcanic stone) has been preserved for more then 3700-years, because it was written on stone. The code written during the time Israel was captive in Egypt, lists many laws with a similar nature to the Mosaic covenant, such as marital faithfulness. The code was stolen 600-year later, by the Elamites, who moved it to Suza (Persia) where it was discovered.

The *Rosetta Stone* another import discovery, also written on basalt, helped to crack the code of Egyptian hieroglyphics. Found in 1799, the stone had the same inscription of a decree written in 3-languages *Hieroglyphics* (Egyptian pictographs), *Demotic* (Cursive Egyptian derived from hieroglyphics) and *Greek*.

#### Clay Tablets

Huge numbers of clay tablets have been found verifying many of the events, names and cities found in the Bible. Wagner lists the number of tablets found at various locations.

"Ten thousand at Bogazkoy [Turkey], the Hittite capital; twenty thousand at Nuzi [Iraq]; twenty thousand at Ugarit [Syria] and sixteen thousand at Ebla [Syria]"<sup>10</sup>



**Cyrus Cylinder**

Among the most famous clay tablets found is the *Cyrus Cylinder* dated to about 539 B.C., verifying many of the events in the Bible, which correspond the Persian victory over Babylon.

Clay was cheap and durable but the amount of information was limited and transportation was difficult due to the weight of the document. A three-edged stylus was used with soft clay. The clay was then fired or dried preserving the words.



▲ Writing on a soft clay tablet with a reed pen.

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid, pg. 92

## Papyrus

Papyrus is a plant in the swamps along the Nile River. From Papyrus, we get the word "Paper". The pith (inside part) of the plant was cut into strips and laid in horizontal and vertical layers, allowing the natural sugars of the plant to bond the strips together. Papyrus was used for writing from the earliest periods. According to Herodotus (484-430 B.C.), Papyrus was such a common material, he could not think of a civilized people using anything else (*Herodotus Historia* 5.58).

Papyrus was much easier to use than clay and stone, and could be easily transported, but it was not as durable as clay, and the source for it was limited to Egypt. Many of the Papyrus documents found, only survived, because they were kept in dry environments, like the Sinai desert or the Dead Sea area, where the scrolls were not exposed to moisture.

One of the oldest New Testament Papyrus manuscripts is the *John Rylands manuscript* dated to 125 A.D., containing a portion of John 18:31-33.



**John P. Rylands manuscript**

## Leather

Leather was acquired from sheep, goat, antelope or cowhides; it was dried, shaved and scraped clean for writing. Leather had a greater durability than paper, but still succumbed to the environmental elements. In time like paper, leather dries, cracks and crumbles. From ancient times, leather was used as a writing material. Wagner quoting F.G. Kenyon writes,



**Papyrus preparation**

In Egypt there are references to documents written on skins in the time of the IV Dynasty (c.2900-2750 B.C.), and the actual specimens are extant from the XII Dynasty (c. 2000-1788 B.C.). Ctesias, the Greek historian [of Persia], refers to the royal chronicles being written on leather, by the ancient Persians, but does not specify their precise dates. They may include those to which reference is made in Ezra vi. 1,2 and Esther vi. 1. Herodotus records that once, when papyrus was scarce, the Ionian Greeks used sheep skins and goatskins in its place; and he adds that any of the "barbarians" still did so in his day...More important for our present purpose is the traditional use of leather for the books of the Law in Hebrew. In the Talmud it is laid down that all copies of the Law used in public worship must be written on skins of clean animals, and in roll-form.<sup>11</sup>

One of the most important scrolls found at the Dead Sea, the Isaiah scroll is made of leather. According to the *Letter of Aristeas* (second century B.C.) the scrolls, which the translators of the Septuagint used were also made of leather.

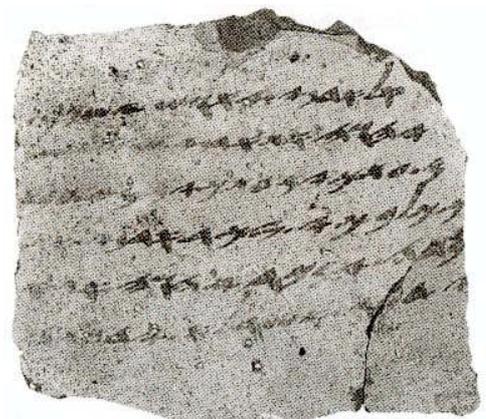
## Parchment

Parchment is also made of the hides of animals; however, they are soaked in limewater to make them white. Younger hides gives a finer quality of material, some hides used were those of yet unborn calves. Parchment was smooth, and the white color and produced a very clear product.

The city of Pergamum in Asia Minor, one of the seven-churches in Revelation, was one of the centers of Parchment production. The name parchment is derived from the city. Use of parchment was widespread in the 2<sup>nd</sup>



**Copper Scroll**



**Lachish Ostraca dated 586 B.C.**

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, pg. 95

century B.C., and became the preferred writing material for scriptures.

### Metal

One of the most famous Dead Sea Scrolls is the famed Copper Scroll, which is a list of the Temple treasures and their locations.

### Potsherds (Ostraca)

Pieces of pottery were used to jot notes on, the material preserved messages thousands of years old. One of the most famous is the Lachish Ostraca, which records events taking place in the city during the Babylonian siege in 586 B.C.



### **The Silver Amulets**

In 1979 two small rolled pieces of silver were discovered in a burial cave in Jerusalem, Israel. When the little scrolls were carefully unrolled, researchers found words from the Book of Numbers inscribed into the silver, written in characters from an ancient Hebrew script.

The scrolls contain the text of the Priestly Benediction, which appears in Chapter 6 of Numbers, and which is still recited today by Jews in synagogue prayer throughout the world.

The dating of the silver scrolls is based on new laboratory techniques. The results were very recently published in a scientific journal in the United States. Tests carried out in NASA laboratories confirm that these words were written around 600 B.C.E., in the days when Solomon's Temple still stood on the Jerusalem mountain.

"Archaeologist Gabi Barkai of Bar Ilan University, who discovered the amulets during a salvage excavation on the slopes overlooking the Hinnom Valley in Jerusalem, said that additional fragments of texts on the amulets have been deciphered and one identified as a verse from the book of Deuteronomy."

