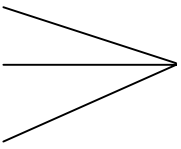


THE OLD TESTAMENT TEXT

I. THE FORM OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

- A. *Torah*: The **L**aw
 - B. *Nebi'im*: The **P**rophets
 - C. *Kethubim*: The **W**ritings
- 
- acronym **TaNaK** = *Tanak*

II. WRITING AND THE LANGUAGES OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

- A. Forms of Writing and Writing Materials
 1. Mesopotamia: Cuneiform Script on Clay Tablets
 2. Egypt: Hieroglyphic Script on Papyrus, Ostraca
 3. Palestine/Phoenicia: Alphabetic Script
- B. Materials
 1. clay tablets
 2. ostraca: broken pieces of pottery with writing
 3. papyrus: paper-like material made from a reed plant
 4. parchment: animal skin (vellum = calf skin)
- C. 2 forms of books: **scroll** and **codex**

III. THE LANGUAGES OF THE OT

- A. Hebrew
- B. Aramaic

IV. TRANSMISSION OF THE OT TEXT

- A. No Autograph or Original Manuscript is Extant
- B. Role of the Scribes
 1. Emphasis on Understanding
 2. Ezra (ca. 458 BC) as Archetypical Scribe (Neh 8); Preserving and Teaching
 3. Standardization of Text: Brought on by Crises
 - a. The Exile and Return: initial canonization and work of Ezra
 - b. First Jewish Revolt Against Rome, AD 66-70
 4. In NT times, 3 textual traditions in Palestine
 5. After destruction of Temple, "official" text decided on
- C. The Diaspora/Dispersion of Jews: work of the **Masoretes**
 1. Jewish Scholars of 2nd-10th centuries, AD
 2. Preservation, Standardization, Transmission, Vocalization of text
 3. Resulted in the Masoretic Text (MT)

D. Earliest Hebrew Manuscripts

1. Before 1948, earliest substantial MSS were 10th century AD
 - a. reverence for the scriptures led to ritual disposal to avoid profane use
 - b. **Genizah** = storage place for worn-out manuscripts
2. Earliest Fragment = Nash Papyrus: Decalogue, 1st c. BC

V. THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS

A. Library of Essene community at Qumran on Dead Sea; Left in caves surrounding Qumran in AD 68

1. Fragments of every OT book except Esther
2. Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphical books
3. Sectarian Literature

B. Biblical Texts 1000 yrs. older than Masoretic Text

1. Show 3 text families in use in 1st c. AD Palestine
2. Discoveries from AD 135 are only of proto-Masoretic family

VI. THE SEPTUAGINT (LXX)

A. Greek Translation of Hebrew OT; Also Contains Apocrypha

1. For Greek Speaking (Hellenistic) Jews of Egypt (Alexandria)
2. 3rd thru 1st centuries BC

B. Became Bible of Early Christians; therefore rejected by Jews

C. Textual Importance; different family

1. Provides different readings of some passages
2. Provides some missing material; e.g. Gen 4:8

VII. FORMATION OF THE OT CANON

A. In the OT Period; The Torah (Law)

1. Josiah found "Book of the Law" (2 Ki 22:8-11); ca. 621 B.C.
2. Ezra Reads "The Law" (Neh 8:1-8, 12); ca. 458 B.C.

B. Between the Testaments

1. Acceptance of Torah and Neviim (Law and Prophets)
2. Some indications of a third division

C. In the New Testament

1. Jesus refers to the "Law and the Prophets"
2. Once, Jesus: "Law, Prophets, and the Psalms" (Luke 24:44); Psalms = Writings?

D. The Council of Jamnia, A.D. 90

1. Rabbinical Leaders debated the status of some books
 - a. Ezekiel questioned (vision of Temple not equal to Torah)
 - b. Esther does not mention the name of God
 - c. Song of Songs (sexual in nature, God not named)
 - d. Ecclesiastes (negative view)
2. Confirmed the Hebrew Bible = books then being used