

Can we Trust the Text of the Bible?

Exhibition and presentations by Dr Trevor R Allin

Session 1: Introduction to the oldest manuscripts of the Bible

Conspiracy Theories: 1

Were all the MSS containing the word “Jehovah” gathered in and destroyed?

See “God’s Sacred Name in the Bible” Was the word for “God” written in Hebrew letters in the ancient Greek manuscripts of the Jewish Scriptures?” https://livingwater-spain.com/Heb_in_LXX_MS.pdf
This is a palaeographical analysis of a fragment of a Biblical manuscript.

See ‘What is the real meaning of Matthew 6:9? Should we call God “Jehovah”?’
<https://livingwater-spain.com/yhwh.pdf>

Conspiracy Theories: 2

Did scribes or church leaders change the text to make it line up with their doctrine?

“Revisiting the Corruption of the New Testament”, edited by Daniel B Wallace
A response to claims made by Bart Ehrman

Conspiracy Theories: 3

Did a church council reject some gospels and choose others?

Michael J Kruger <https://michaeljkruger.com/books-new/>

The earliest harmony of the four gospels: The Diatessaron of Tatian. c. 140 – 150 AD
Hill, J. Hamlyn, “The Earliest Life of Christ, The Diatessaron of Tatian”, Piscataway, NJ: Gorgias Press, 2001 A reprint of the 1910 edition of the translation into English of the Diatessaron, including a short introduction to Tatian and the text by the translator. Marginal notes give references to the exact sources used from the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

Irenaeus: “there can be no more and no fewer than four Gospels” c. 175 AD (in “Adversus Haereses, 3.11.8.)

The languages of the Bible

- The Jewish Scriptures (the Old Testament): Hebrew (& some Aramaic)
- New Testament: Greek
- The ancient Greek translation of the Jewish Scriptures: the Septuagint (“LXX”)

What were the documents written on?

- A. Papyrus
- B. Parchment

Format

- The Scroll
- The Codex (made up of a Quire or Quires)

The discovery of older manuscripts

Example: Grenfell and Hunt: Oxyrhynchus (upper Egypt)
January 1897: ʔ1

Changes of the text in manuscripts

ʔ1 has ΙΔ, where Vaticanus has ΔΕΚΑΤΕΤΤΑΡΕC.

= 14

= fourteen

Dating of manuscripts

Palaeography, etc

Trevor R Allin 2026