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THE SINAITICUS AND THE VATICANUS MANUSCRIPTS

The two oldest MSS of the Bible in existence today, which are both based on Origen's Septuagint (LXX) text, are both from the 4th century A.D. . They are known as "SINAITICUS" and "VATICANUS", and both are of shocking textual quality!

For a start, in Greek MSS of that time there were no spaces between the words on a line. This made them much more difficult to read, which in turn demanded a much greater degree of care from anyone making a new copy of the manuscript.

SINAITICUS was found in 1844 A.D. by Tischendorf on the rubbish dump at St. Catherine's Monastery near Mount Sinai. It had been thrown out by the monks because of its terribly poor quality. It contains the Old Testament and nearly all of the New Testament, but in many places anywhere from 10 to 40 words are dropped THROUGH SHEER CARELESSNESS by the scribe (easy to do for a careless scribe, as there are no spaces between the words on a line). Because of this abominable quality, on every page of this MS there are corrections and revisions, often by as many as 10 different people. These corrections have been dated to the 6th and the 7th centuries. SINAITICUS also contains "The Shepherd of Hermes" and "Epistle of Barnabas", obvious forgeries pretending to be inspired scripture.

NO WONDER THE MONKS FINALLY THREW IT OUT AS WORTHLESS!

VATICANUS, on the other hand, was very conveniently discovered in the Vatican Library in 1481 A.D., just before the Protestant Reformation really got going. It is in excellent physical condition, being written on fine vellum. But the textual quality of this manuscript is also shockingly poor! In the gospels alone Vaticanus leaves out 748 whole sentences! Is that how God's Word was to be preserved? In addition it also leaves out (in the gospels) 452 clauses and an additional 237 words! Besides this, Vaticanus also leaves out Genesis 1:1 to 46:28; Psalms 106 to 138; Paul's Pastoral Epistles; Hebrews 9:14 to 13:25 and the whole Book of Revelation. But it DOES contain the Apocrypha.

When these two "oldest" manuscripts (Sinaiticus and Vaticanus) are compared with each other, here is what emerges: in the four gospels alone, Sinaiticus and Vaticanus disagree with each other OVER 3000 TIMES! They also disagree with each other in very many places in the text of the Old Testament, but for that there is no exact statistic available. And yet both of them represent for the Old Testament the LXX text from Origen's Hexapla.

These two MSS, in their Old Testament text, are the oldest representations of the LXX. There simply is no older version of the text of the LXX available anywhere. Yet these two manuscripts are both of abominable textual quality. And then there are people who would have us believe that Sinaiticus and Vaticanus represent the translation of the Hebrew Scriptures that the Jews, the writers of the books of the New Testament, and the early Christian Church used in preference to the inspired original Hebrew Scriptures.

There is no way that God would have guided the people, whom He was going to inspire to write the books of the New Testament, to rely on corrupt translations of the original Hebrew text.

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