The Story of the Bible

Part I

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A former Benedictine monk, Professor Johnson has taught previously at Yale Divinity School and Indiana University. He is the author of more than 20 books, including *The Real Jesus: The Misguided Quest for the Historical Jesus and the Truth of the Traditional Gospels* and *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*, which is used widely as a textbook. He has also published several hundred articles and reviews.

At Indiana University, Professor Johnson received the President's Award for Distinguished Teaching, was elected a member of the Faculty Colloquium on Excellence in Teaching, and won the Brown Derby and Student Choice awards for teaching. At Emory University, he has twice received the On Eagle's Wings Excellence in Teaching Award.

Professor Johnson is married to Joy Randazzo. They share seven children, thirteen grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Johnson also teaches the *Apostle Paul, Early Christianity: The Experience of the Divine, Great World Religions: Christianity, Jesus and the Gospels, and Practical Philosophy: The Greco-Roman Moralists* for the Teaching Company.

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Part I

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Scope:

The Bible contains many fine stories, ranging from the sagas of the ancient patriarchs to the parables of Jesus. Even people who do not regard it as a religious authority appreciate the Bible as a collection of ancient literature that tells wonderful stories and as the source of many others. But the Bible as a book also has a story, one as fascinating in its way as any of the stories told within its pages.

This is a course about the world's most famous, most read, most debated, and sometimes, most detested book. How, when, and why did it enter the world? What have been the stages of its growth? In how many forms has it appeared? How has it exercised its influence?

The story is a long one, stretching from the first collections of ancient Jewish Law hundreds of years before the Common Era, down to the present day, when the translation and production of Bibles in all the world's languages and dialects remains a publishing phenomenon, making the Bible more reliably available in hotel rooms than the Yellow Pages.

Because this is the story of a book, it must include consideration of the material elements that go into the production of all books, starting with the writing and collection of scrolls and moving through the writing and copying of manuscripts and the invention of printing, which made it possible for the Bible to be in every hand in every land. And because this is a book that has spread through the world, the story is also about languages and the process of translation. What happens when the original Hebrew of Torah is translated into Greek or when the Greek of the New Testament is translated into Latin and then into all the languages of the ancient and modern world? What new meanings do translations allow and what older meanings do they obscure?

The story of the Bible is also complex. Indeed, because there are actually several Bibles, several stories must be told more or less simultaneously. Jews and Christians call different collections of compositions "the Bible" and read them in different languages. Different groups of Christians also have distinct collections that they call the Bible; although the collections of Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant Christians overlap, they are by no means identical. Both the causes and consequences of such diversity deserve attention, especially given that the process by which canonical decisions were reached, particularly within Christianity, was by no means undisputed—and remains disputed by some even today.

The Bible's story includes the history of its reading and interpretation within the diverse religious traditions that accord it a special authority. Jews and Christians not only read different Bibles, but they interpret their sacred texts from distinct perspectives and premises. Biblical interpretation lies at the heart of Jewish and Christian identity, and the story of the Bible is inextricable from the history of these religious traditions.

Interpretation takes place through the deliberate work of sages and theologians, to be sure, as a book that generates countless other books. Interpretation of the Bible also occurs through communal practices of worship and through the prayer, poetry, works of art, and musical compositions of individuals inspired by biblical imagination.

This course tells the story in four stages. The first stage focuses on antiquity, tracing the way in which compositions that were written by different authors for different readers in different times and places were gathered together into collections to form, first, the Hebrew Bible, then, the New Testament. The second stage follows the process of text transmission, translation, and interpretation within Jewish and Christian communities through the medieval period. The third recounts the critical period of the Protestant Reformation, with particular attention to the implications of printing (and the possibility of individual interpretation of Scripture) and the translation of the Bible into English. The fourth stage considers the romance of the recovery of ancient manuscripts, the construction of critical editions, and the rise of critical historical scholarship on the Bible, as well as the role played by biblical translation in missionary efforts around the world.

No short course can provide "everything you ever wanted to know about the Bible," but this one makes a responsible start on a story that especially needs telling because it is at once so little known and so widely misapprehended.

Lecture One
Telling the Story of a Book

Scope: The Bible is a powerful book even when it is not read. Regarded with fear and distrust by some, it is revered as the source of truth by many others throughout the world. Yet both responses often have little to do with the Bible's actual contents; they are directed to the Bible as a book that has exercised peculiar influence in world history. This opening lecture addresses the odd status of the Bible as a book that has transcended the limitations of normal literature, so that it can truly be said to have a story of its own, distinct from the many fine or frightening stories it happens to contain. This lecture also sketches the general approach, governing premises, and broad outline of the course.

Outline

I. The Bible is perhaps best known for the many stories it contains, stories that separately and together have had a major impact on Western culture.

- **A.** Most known and loved are the vivid accounts drawn from the Hebrew Bible or New Testament that many have learned as children.
  - **1.** The Hebrew Bible is filled with individual vignettes that evoke a world of passion and drama.
  - **2.** In the New Testament, Jesus is portrayed as a speaker of parables that are impressive for their brevity and pointedness.
  - **3.** The New Testament also contains highly colored accounts concerning Jesus and his followers.
  - **4.** These individual stories constantly appear as moral lessons and as the subject of art.
- **B.** In addition to such smaller vignettes, the Bible contains stories of an epic character.
  - **1.** The account of Abraham and the other patriarchs is the saga of a people's ancestors.
  - **2.** The story of Exodus and conquest is an epic foundation for a people's claim to a land and an identity.
  - **3.** The account of Jesus' death and resurrection forms the mythic basis for a new sort of religious identity.
- **C.** It is even possible to speak of "the story of the Bible" as encompassing the entire sweep of narrative from Genesis to Revelation.
- **D.** For many readers, the positive shaping accomplished by the Bible's stories is sometimes eclipsed by the negative impact of its "texts of terror," but it is difficult to deny the impact of the Bible's stories on the soul of the West.

II. The Bible considered as a book (or, more properly, collection of books = *ta biblia*) also has a story quite apart from its contents.

- **A.** The Bible is a publishing phenomenon, making it the "book among books."
  - **1.** Since 1815, it has been printed an estimated 5 billion times, in some 2,100 languages.
  - **2.** It is more reliably present in hotel rooms (the Gideon Bible) than the Yellow Pages.
  - **3.** It is undoubtedly read—and misread—by more people around the globe than any other book.
- **B.** The Bible as a book has an almost personified power that goes beyond the sum of its contents.
  - **1.** The Bible speaks as an authority ("the Bible says") and provides surety for oaths.
  - **2.** In houses of worship, the Bible occupies a special place, and in acts of worship, it is shown honor.
  - **3.** It can even represent a mindset, as in "biblical religion," or "the Bible-belt," or "Bible-thumping."

III. Telling the story of the Bible as a book involves a number of complex considerations.

- **A.** Where does the story begin?
  - **1.** It is not entirely clear when we can first speak of "the Bible" as a book.
  - **2.** Both the obscure origins of the respective biblical compositions, as well as the process by which they adhere as a collection, require attention.
- **B.** In what forms does the Bible appear?
  - **1.** The story requires attention to the technology of book-making, both ancient and modern.
  - **2.** There are decisive differences in what is meant by a "book" as compositions are first copied on scrolls, then in codices, and then are printed.

C. How many Bibles are there, and how many stories are there to tell?
  1. There is an obvious difference between the collection of compositions that Jews and Christians call the Bible.
  2. Even among the three major groups of Christians, there are differences in the actual books included in the Bible.
  3. Both in ancient and modern times, the standard collection has been challenged from within 75 traditions.

D. In how many languages (and cultural forms) does the Bible appear?
  1. For the Hebrew Bible, both the Hebrew and the early translations into Greek and Aramaic are significant.
  2. For the Christian Bible, the Greek version of the Old Testament (called the Septuagint, or LXX) is important, as are the original Greek of the New Testament and the many early versions (translations).
  3. For the Christian Bible in particular, translation into popular languages has been a key aspect of missionary activity.

E. How does the interpretation of the Bible become part of its story?
  1. The Bible is interpreted from distinct religious perspectives in Judaism and Christianity.
  2. Modern historical interpretation stands in tension with both religious traditions.
  3. Interpretation happens in a variety of cultural forms beyond the literary.

IV. This course traces the story of the Bible(s) through four chronological stages, attempting at each stage to take into account all of the complexities already identified.

A. Stage one takes up the origins of the biblical compositions and the process by which they reached the form of a collection within Judaism and Christianity.

B. Stage two considers the multiple versions of the Christian Bible in antiquity and the patterns of interpretation within Judaism and Christianity through the Middle Ages.

C. Stage three takes up the multiple strands of the Bible's story as a consequence of the Renaissance, the Reformation, and the Enlightenment.

D. Stage four carries the story into modernity, with special attention to the development of historical criticism and contemporary responses to it.

Essential Reading:

J. B. Gabel and C. B. Wheeler, *The Bible as Literature*.

Supplementary Reading:

N. Frye, *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How does the organization of this course already lead to the perception of the Bible as a historical and literary phenomenon inextricable from the histories of peoples?

2. What are the implications of referring to both the Jewish and Christian Scriptures as "the Bible"?

Lecture Two
Making TaNaK

Scope: The story of the Bible begins with the slow, centuries-long gathering of Hebrew writings in ancient Israel. This lecture discusses the early stages of the formation of TaNaK, the Jewish Bible. The acronym identifies the three components of Torah (the five books of Moses), Neviim (the Prophets), and Ketuvim (the Writings). The literature of ancient Israel, written on scrolls, arose out of the circumstances and needs of the people at different stages of its life. Each composition provides a window to those historical situations. But the compositions, singly and together, also weave an impressively coherent sense of the people's story and of the God who creates the world and reveals through prophets how humans are to honor God by the way they live in God's world.

Outline

I. The Hebrew Bible (TaNaK) is the literature of an ancient people that was composed over a long period of time in circumstances that are not entirely clear.

- **A.** Convictions concerning the divine inspiration of the Bible are, in both Judaism and Christianity, entirely consistent with the human and historical origin of the actual compositions.
  - **1.** Inspiration serves in both religious traditions as a statement concerning authority more than a theory of literary composition.
  - **2.** Discovering the human origins is not at all easy and requires the piecing together of several kinds of evidence and a certain amount of controlled speculation.
- **B.** Some general statements concerning the origins of the Hebrew Bible are widely acknowledged.
  - **1.** Its contents came into being as the literature of a formerly nomadic people that inhabited the tiny strip of land between the ancient empires of Babylon (and Assyria) to the east and Egypt to the west.
  - **2.** The compositions were written over an extended period of time and reflect interaction with several stages of ancient Near Eastern culture.
  - **3.** The original language of the Bible was Hebrew, a distinctive consonantal language with cognates in several other ancient Near Eastern languages; the exception is the second part of the Book of Daniel, which is composed in Aramaic, a dialect of Hebrew.
- **C.** The process by which biblical compositions came into being involved both oral and written practices.
  - **1.** Oral performance is most obvious in the prophetic literature and in the psalms, but it is likely that writing was also a feature in prophetic activity.
  - **2.** The great written narratives may well also have begun as oral recitations in the manner of the folklore of other peoples.
- **D.** The creation of literature presupposes certain social settings and technical capabilities.
  - **1.** As in other ancient Near Eastern cultures, Israel developed a scribal class whose writing capabilities served both court and temple.
  - **2.** The most obvious times when such activity could be carried out in conditions of reasonable stability were the period following the establishment of court and temple by Solomon and the period after the exile, when a more modest version of court and temple were reestablished.

II. The most authoritative part of the Hebrew Bible is called Torah, or the five books of Moses (Pentateuch).

- **A.** Although religious tradition ascribes these five books (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy) to the prophet and lawgiver Moses (c. 1250 B.C.E.), who led the people out of Egypt, scholars unanimously agree that their composition involved a complex process over a considerable period of time.
  - **1.** Nineteenth-century source criticism of the Pentateuch observed several features of the five books that called out for explanation (such as doublets and the use of different designations for God).
  - **2.** Although the precise delineation of the sources is debated, many scholars perceive four distinct sources: the Yahwist, the Elohist, the Deuteronomist, and the Priestly.
  - **3.** Even more vigorously debated is the assignment of distinct periods of composition according to the supposed outlook of the sources, with the Yahwist and Elohist representing the more ancient voices

(perhaps 10th century B.C.E.), the Deuteronomist representing a reform voice (6th century), and the Priestly outlook serving as editor of the whole.

B. The five books of Moses provide the grand narrative of the formation of Israel as a people and the terms of its covenant with God.

1. After the account of creation and the legends of the Fall, the stories of the patriarchs from Abraham to Joseph dominate Genesis (Breshit).

2. Exodus (Shemot) describes the enslavement of Israel in Egypt, the call of Moses and the plagues that come upon Egypt, the deliverance of the people from bondage, and the giving of the Law through Moses, climaxing in the description of the tent for worship in the wilderness.

3. Leviticus (Wayikra) continues the legislation given to the people through Moses, with particular attention given to the practices of worship, especially sacrifice.

4. Numbers (Bamidbar) recounts the events of the 40 years of wandering in the wilderness under the leadership of Moses, including the rebellion of the people and the mighty works of God.

5. Deuteronomy (Devarim) consists of long discourses delivered to the people by Moses before entering the land of Canaan, summoning them to obedience and describing the blessings that came with obedience to the covenant and the curses that came with disobedience.

III. The Prophets (Neviim) are 21 writings that make up the second major portion of TaNaK.

A. The first portion of the Prophets is made up of six narrative books that continue the story of the people from the time of entering the land (Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings); these books are also called the *Former Prophets*.

B. The Jewish Bible counts as the *Latter Prophets* those spokespersons for God to the people; the term *Major Prophets* refers to the books of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel.

C. The term *Minor Prophets* is given to a collection of 12 books, not because of their importance but because of their length (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi).

IV. The 13 Writings (Ketuvim) make up the final and least internally organized portion of the Jewish Bible, making a total of 39 compositions.

A. An ancient designation for five of these writings is *megillot* ("scrolls"): the Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes (Qoheleth), and Esther.

B. A second loose grouping contains the Psalms, Proverbs, and Job, which can also be seen as wisdom literature.

C. The final group again takes up aspects of Jewish history: 1 and 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel.

V. The most remarkable aspect of this variegated literature is that in each of its parts and as a whole, it imagines a world that is at once astonishing and coherent, a world that is in every respect created by and answerable to God.

Essential Reading:

Deuteronomy, Isaiah 1–11, Psalm 78.

Supplementary Reading:

J. D. Levenson, *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible*.

M. D. Coogan, *The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What factors might contribute to the shaping of such a consistent worldview in a literature composed over hundreds of years?

2. Why is Torah considered the most central and authoritative part of the Jewish Bible?

Lecture Three
Forms of Jewish Scripture

Scope: In the 1st century C.E., we catch a glimpse of the Jewish Bible as the central symbol of Jews throughout the world, yet also as diverse in its forms and in its interpretations as Judaism was itself diverse and even divided in its response to Hellenistic culture and Roman rule. Different groups of Jews disagreed on what books constituted Scripture. They read their texts in different languages: While the Hebrew text was read by many in Palestine, other Jews both in Palestine and in the Diaspora read Scripture in Greek. Distinct lines of biblical interpretations also developed in this period. An examination of the Bible at Qumran (in the Dead Sea Scrolls) reveals some of the complexity.

Outline

I. Our knowledge of the Jewish Scriptures in the 1st century of the Common Era (C.E.) is based mainly on literary evidence that is itself based on those Scriptures.

- **A.** Judaism in the 1st century is both distinctly unified and internally divided. From the outside, it appears as an extended family, a "second race" among the nations. From within, Judaism takes many and competing forms.
- **B.** The term *Torah* can stand as a central symbol that unified Jews throughout the Mediterranean world.
  - **1.** Torah signifies a shared set of texts that are read in worship and study, above all, the Law of Moses.
  - **2.** Torah connotes as well a shared story found within those texts, a story that provides all Jews with a sense of identity among the nations.
  - **3.** Torah means also a set of fundamental convictions, especially that God is One, that God has elected the people Israel, and that God and Israel are bound by covenant.
  - **4.** Torah contains the commandments that spell out the demands of covenant on the side of the people, and Jews everywhere were linked by shared observance of circumcision, the Sabbath, and other moral and ritual obligations.
  - **5.** Torah also provides the basis for a wisdom, or philosophy of life, based on the covenant and commandments.
- **C.** Jews in the Mediterranean world of the 1st century C.E. were diverse and, sometimes, divided.
  - **1.** Geographically, more Jews lived in the Diaspora than in Palestine (*eretz Israel*).
  - **2.** Linguistically, Jews in the Diaspora predominantly spoke Greek (in the west) or Aramaic (in the east), whereas in Palestine, Hebrew and Aramaic dominated, although Greek was widespread as well.
  - **3.** Culturally, Jews in the Diaspora were a tiny minority among pagan neighbors, whereas in Israel, Jews were an oppressed majority.
  - **4.** The most important divisive factors were ideological: Jews disagreed on how to respond to the aggressive cultural challenge posed by Greco-Roman culture and Roman imperial rule. In Palestine, Jewish sects (the Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, Zealots) had political, as well as religious, differences.
- **D.** This combination of factors generated a large amount of literature in both Hebrew and Greek that forms the basis, together with archaeological information, of our knowledge.

II. If Torah is a symbol of unity in 1st-century Judaism, it is also a source of contention among competing groups.

- **A.** There was not firm agreement on what actually constituted Torah—which writings were to be regarded as Scripture.
  - **1.** The Samaritans, centered in their temple at Shechem, and the Sadducees, centered in the national temple in Jerusalem, each recognized only the five books of Moses as authoritative and based their beliefs and practices on Torah in the narrowest sense.
  - **2.** In Alexandria, the Hellenistic Jew Philo also seemed to focus almost exclusively on the Law of Moses in his extensive writings, although he was aware of the Prophets and other writings.
  - **3.** At Qumran, the Essene sect recognized and commented extensively on both the Law and the Prophets but also collected and wrote a number of apocryphal texts of their own.

4. The Pharisees seem to have had the most inclusive sense of Scripture, including the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings, as well as their distinctive understanding of *Oral Torah* (continuing interpretation).

B. Diversity also appears in the version of Scripture used by Jews.
1. In the western Diaspora, the Hebrew text had been translated into Greek already by 250 B.C.E. This translation was regarded as divinely inspired by Hellenistic Jews, who exclusively used the LXX, perhaps little aware of the differences between the Greek and Hebrew.
2. In Palestine, Hebrew seemed to have been exclusively used in synagogue worship and in study. The appearance of Aramaic *Targums* (highly interpretive translations of the Hebrew), however, suggests that Hebrew was not familiar to many worshiping Jews even in Israel.

C. Jews in the 1st century also interpreted their Scripture from distinctive perspectives.
1. Our knowledge on this point (as on others) is selective and based on the extant literature: We may suspect that the Zealots, for example, interpreted Torah from their perspective, but we don't have evidence of that.
2. Philo of Alexandria read the LXX in the manner of a Greek philosopher, seeking moral instruction and interpreting difficult passages allegorically in order to find a deeper wisdom.
3. Pharisees used *midrash* (from Hebrew *darash* = "seek") as a way of contemporizing ancient written commandments to new circumstances in accord with their commitment to a priestly life of purity.
4. The Qumran sect interpreted the Hebrew text from the perspective of their sectarian identity as a community of the pure, formed and instructed by the Teacher of Righteousness, using *pesher* interpretation to apply all of Scripture to the life of their community.

III. The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls at Qumran and subsequent archaeological and literary study is of foremost importance for the knowledge of the Hebrew Bible in the 1st century.

A. Among the compositions were many biblical manuscripts in Hebrew, the oldest extant witnesses to the text.
1. The numbers of copies of certain compositions suggest the importance they held for the community.
2. Comparing biblical compositions to the LXX and to later standard versions of the Hebrew (the Masoretic text) indicates a highly fluid textual situation.

B. The sect's practice of collecting (e.g., the Book of Jubilees) and writing biblical apocrypha (e.g., the Genesis Apocryphon) suggests simultaneously the central position of Torah and its malleability.

C. The same combination is found in Qumran's sectarian mode of interpretation: Torah is all important, but it is also read in light of contemporary experience.

Essential Reading:

Philo of Alexandria, *Allegorical Laws*.

Supplementary Reading:

K. H. Jobes and M. Silva, *Invitation to the Septuagint*.

M. Abegg, Jr., P. Flint, and E. Ulrich, *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English*.

Questions to Consider:

1. To what extent could Philo of Alexandria and a member of the Qumran sect say that they had (and read) the "same Scriptures"?
2. Given the degree of fluidity and diversity found in the 1st-century Jewish experience of Torah, how could it remain such a central and compelling symbol?

Lecture Four
Birth of the Christian Bible

Scope: One Jewish sect of the 1st century, which quickly became a Gentile rather than a Jewish movement, also read the Jewish Bible in its Greek form (the Septuagint), from a perspective established by the death and resurrection of Jesus, whose followers called him Christ and Lord. Christian writers engaged the Jewish Scripture in their effort to communicate and understand the meaning of their own experiences and are legitimately regarded as a form of sectarian Jewish interpretation. The 4 Gospels, 21 Letters, and 1 apocalyptic composition that comprise the earliest Christian literature all seek to place Jesus and their experience of him within the longer story of Israel, but do so in a manner that marks them as distinctive and the start of an unanticipated sequel to that story. Indeed, the virtually simultaneous birth of Christianity and the birth of the codex will also give distinctive shape to the Christian form of the Bible.

Outline

I. The process by which the New Testament came into being is best understood by being placed within the context of a divided 1st-century Judaism.

- **A.** This literature is produced in circumstances different than those that generated Torah.
  - **1.** In contrast to centuries of community life in ancient Israel, Christianity produced its formative literature within roughly 70 years.
  - **2.** In contrast to a literature formed out of the cult and court of a nation, the New Testament arose out of the religious claims of a Jewish sect.
  - **3.** In contrast to working in the Hebrew language, the New Testament was written entirely in Greek and interpreted the Greek Scriptures (LXX).
  - **4.** In contrast to Torah, which remained and remains the text of the Jewish people, the New Testament everywhere reflects the inclusion of Gentiles.
- **B.** There are also some points of similarity to the development of Torah.
  - **1.** The writings undoubtedly emerged from community experience, but there is even less confirming archaeological evidence for earliest Christianity than for ancient Israel.
  - **2.** Both oral and scribal activities were involved in the process of composition, but it is not always possible to distinguish them.
  - **3.** The dating of compositions and the relationships among them are a matter of scholarly guesswork, with few external controls to provide certainty.
  - **4.** The rapid and prolific production of a body of literature suggests certain social dynamics in earliest Christianity, but even more, its place within a highly literary Jewish and Gentile world.
- **C.** Four factors in particular account for the overall shape of the New Testament compositions:
  - **1.** The fundamental starting point for the religion and for its reflection is the conviction that Jesus is Lord, not only resurrected from the dead but exalted to the status of God.
  - **2.** The fundamental issue that the first Christians needed to resolve was the manner of Jesus' death: Crucifixion created a cognitive dissonance with both Jewish and Greco-Roman ideas of how God works.
  - **3.** Not only the experience of the resurrection but the continuing experiences—both positive and negative—of believers within communities needed to be addressed and interpreted.
  - **4.** The framework for the interpretation of Jesus and of the "New Creation" and "New Covenant" was the text of the Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of Torah.

II. In various ways and in diverse literary genres, the first Christian writings sought to interpret the story of Jesus in the past, in the present (in the lives of believers), and in the future (in God's final triumph).

- **A.** The earliest datable Christian compositions took the form of letters written by leaders of the movement to communities (*ekklesia* = "church").
  - **1.** Thirteen letters are ascribed to the Apostle Paul, who began as a Jew, persecuted the movement, and then became a missionary to Gentiles. Seven letters (Romans, Galatians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians, Philemon) are certainly by Paul, while three (Colossians, Ephesians, 2

Thessalonians) are disputed, and three others (1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus) are rejected by many scholars as pseudonymous.

2. Eight other letters were ascribed to known leaders (1 and 2 Peter; 1, 2, and 3 John; James; Jude) or were anonymous (Letter to the Hebrews). Some of these may well be very early (James, Hebrews); others are almost certainly late (2 Peter).
3. Characteristic of these letters is a practical focus on the moral life of specific communities, an appreciation both for the death and resurrection of Jesus and his continuing presence, and—in most—an intense engagement with the symbolic world of the Septuagint.

B. During the time when the earliest letters were being addressed to communities, the memory of Jesus was handed on in communities and, sometime around 70 C.E., began to be literarily shaped in the form of Gospels (*euangelion* = "good news").

1. The earliest Gospel is attributed to Mark; within 15 years, it was used as a source (together with another collection of sayings, called Q, and other materials) by Matthew and Luke in the composition of their respective narratives. The close literary relationship among Mark, Matthew, and Luke is expressed by the term *Synoptic Gospels*.
2. The author of the Gospel of Luke extended his version of the good news into a second volume, which has come to be called the Acts of the Apostles: It provides a selective and theologically weighted account of Christian beginnings with a particular focus on Peter and Paul.
3. Characteristic of the Gospels is the presentation of Jesus' ministry of teaching and wonder-working, his conflicts with religious authorities, and his death and resurrection. Implicit in the depiction of Jesus and his disciples (*mathetai* = "students"), however, is moral instruction of the readers. The Gospel of John (also called the Fourth Gospel) provides a distinctive account of Jesus' ministry, death, and resurrection, not dependent literarily on the other Gospels but using some of the same traditions.

C. The Book of Revelation, like its literary prototype, the Book of Daniel, is a mixed genre of letters to the churches of Asia Minor (chapters 1–3) and heavenly visions by John the Seer (chapters 4–21), which assure readers that God's ultimate triumph in history is grounded in the exaltation of Jesus to God's throne.

D. The writings of the "New Testament" are the earliest known Christian compositions, although there is no "New Testament" as such in the earliest period.

1. There may well have been many more things written in the first generations that have been lost.
2. There were certainly a great many things written in the first half of the 2nd century.
3. Some of these writings (the Apostolic Fathers) clearly acknowledge a secondary position with regard to earlier compositions.
4. Others of these writings (New Testament Apocrypha) seem rather to continue or even compete with earlier compositions.

III. In the first of many technological changes that affect the story of the Bible, the New Testament compositions were predominantly written on the codex rather than the scroll.

A. Ancient "books," including those of the Jewish Scriptures, were written on scrolls, made up of papyrus or parchment and stitched together in rolls; writing could be on only one side, and texts were limited by the length of the scroll. Specific passages, furthermore, could be found only by "unscrolling."

B. The *codex* is a compilation of "pages" (usually of papyrus), folded and stitched together in quires to form a "book" in the proper sense. The codex was cheaper, more mobile, could contain more text, and allowed easier access to specific passages in a composition.

C. The codex appears for the first time in the 1st and 2nd centuries C.E. and, from the first, is associated with Christian literature.

Essential Reading:

Gospel of Luke, Acts of the Apostles, Romans.

Supplementary Reading:

L. T. Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Compare and contrast the literary production of the first Christians and of the Essenes at Qumran: What did the "Bible" look like for each group, and from what perspective was it interpreted?
2. How might the codex form of earliest Christian writings have aided in the spread of this movement and in maintaining communication among communities?

Lecture Five
Formation of Jewish and Christian Canons

Scope: Although Christians interacted with Jewish Scriptures in their earliest writings, the canon formation of the Jewish and Christian Bibles occurred over the same time period of the first centuries of the Common Era. This presentation traces what we can know of the process within each tradition. In Judaism, formation of the canon was largely a matter of confirming earlier usage, especially that found among the Pharisaic party. In Christianity, canon formation was more contentious. An early period of exchange and collection of writings was interrupted in the 2nd century by controversies that argued, on one side, for the truncation of authoritative writings and, on the other side, for their expansion. The official Christian Bible was not fully ratified until the end of the 4th century, but the basic conflict was resolved in principle by the end of the 2nd century.

Outline

I. The course of biblical canonization took a distinct route in Judaism and Christianity, corresponding to the way the two traditions developed.

- **A.** Not every religious tradition has a canonical Scripture, and the term has a different sense even in the traditions that do have the concept of canon. In Judaism and Christianity, *canonization* means essentially the writings to be read in worship and regarded as authoritative guides to doctrine and practice.
- **B.** In Judaism, the triumph of the Pharisaic movement after the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E. meant that the definitive formation of the canon would be part of a larger sense of tradition, including the critical concept of the Oral Torah.
- **C.** In Christianity, canon formation was a more conflict-filled process, one that was connected to controversies over the identity of this religious movement and never fully and finally resolved.

II. The path to canonization in the Jewish tradition is partly the confirmation of an internal tradition and partly a response to external developments.

- **A.** Second-Temple literature suggests that by the 1st century C.E., there was a general sense of a Jewish canon in three parts but also considerable fluidity. This impression is supported by the survey of usage by Philo and the Essenes.
- **B.** The destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 C.E. was a critical turning point.
  - **1.** The loss of the sacrificial system made Judaism even more a text-centered religion.
  - **2.** The loss of other competing sects (Essenes/Sadducees/Zealots) made the Pharisaic/Scribal tradition the dominant ethos shaping Judaism.
- **C.** The rise of Christianity and its spread to Gentiles encouraged a clearer definition of the boundaries marking normative Judaism.
  - **1.** Christian use of the LXX to establish its "proof from prophecy" led to a rejection of this version. Other Greek translations by Theodotion, Aquila, and Symmachus did not displace the supreme position of the Hebrew text, which was now alone authoritative in Judaism.
  - **2.** The popularity of certain apocryphal writings (such as the Enoch literature) among Christians encouraged a more definite decision concerning the content of the Writings (Ketuvim).
- **D.** Between the years 70 and 135, the fundamental decision concerning the Jewish canon seems to have been made.
  - **1.** Critical analysis of the tradition concerning a Rabbinic Council of Jabneh (c. 90 C.E.) makes it less certain that it defined the Jewish canon of Scripture.
  - **2.** Nevertheless, the discovery of Torah scrolls at Wadi Murabba'at (c. 135) shows a standardization even of text.
  - **3.** Certainly, by the middle of the 2nd century, the threefold division of TaNaK was in place, and the number of compositions set at 24 (or 22, depending on how they are grouped): 5 books of Moses, 8 of the Prophets (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the 12 Minor Prophets

counted as one book), and 11 Writings (Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Qoheleth, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles).

III. Canonization within the Christian tradition was both more rapid and more filled with conflict.

A. The first stages of the process were natural and organic, with communities exchanging and collecting letters and gospels.

B. In the middle of the 2nd century, debates concerning Christian identity forced a selection of authoritative compositions.

1. From one side, such authors as Tatian and Marcion sought a contraction in the traditional authorities.

2. From the other side, Gnostic teachers sought an expansion of authoritative compositions.

3. In both cases, fundamental issues of identity—especially with respect to the creator God and the goodness of the world—were involved.

C. Teachers, such as Tertullian and, especially, Irenaeus of Lyons, pushed for a defined collection of writings by which to measure Christian teaching.

1. Irenaeus in particular devised a threefold strategy of Christian self-definition: rule of faith, canon of Scripture, and apostolic succession.

2. Most important was the affirmation of the "Old Testament" as an authoritative witness to the work of God continuous with God's revelation in Jesus.

3. The Muratorian Canon, a fragmentary list, probably from late-2nd-century Rome, is an important witness to the combination of stability and fluidity in the New Testament canon.

D. In the early 4th century, the historian Eusebius points to a more stable canon, and by the end of the 4th century, the Paschal Letter of Athanasius and the Council of Carthage define the Christian Bible.

1. The New Testament consists of 27 writings: the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; the Acts of the Apostles; the 14 Letters of Paul (Hebrews is counted in this number); the Letters of James, Jude, Peter (2), and John (3); and the Apocalypse of John.

2. The Old Testament consists of the compositions found in the LXX (in addition to the writings in TaNaK: Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah, 1 and 2 Maccabees).

IV. In both Judaism and Christianity, defining the Bible was also an act of self-definition, but the implications were different in the two traditions.

A. In Judaism, the writings of Torah were read liturgically and ritually honored, but Scripture was an essential part of a continuous and living tradition of practice and interpretation.

1. By 200 C.E., Judah ha Nasi codified the *halakhic* interpretations of Torah in the Mishnah.

2. Between 200 and 600 C.E., further debate on the Mishnah in light of TaNaK led to the development of the two great compilations that guided Jewish practice through the centuries: the Babylonian Talmud and the Talmud of the Land of Israel.

B. In Christianity, the Bible was read liturgically, but Scripture also played a role in continuing debates over self-identity.

1. Including the "Old Testament" in the Christian Bible meant sustaining an (often rancorous) conversation vis-à-vis Judaism and an internal debate concerning the Law within Christianity.

2. The Bible served as a source of proof-texting for every side during the long and shifting debates among "orthodox" and "heretical" Christians.

Essential Reading:

J. A. Sanders, "Canon, Hebrew Bible," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 1:837–852.

H. Y. Gamble, "Canon, New Testament," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 1:852–861.

Supplementary Reading:

L. M. McDonald, *The Formation of the Christian Biblical Canon*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How can debates over canonization illustrate the conviction that "you are what you read"?

2. What are the implications of Jews canonizing the Hebrew text and Christians canonizing the Greek?

Lecture Six
Writing and Copying Manuscripts

Scope: Before the invention of printing, the production of books was literally a matter of writing and copying by hand. This presentation takes up the technology of manuscript production: the materials used, the techniques of writing, and the habits of scribes. It discusses the formation of letters and words and the presence or absence of punctuation and how that can make a difference in meaning. It considers some of the earliest known biblical manuscripts and discusses the ways in which scribes inevitably changed texts even as they sought to be nothing more than faithful copyists. Finally, the lecture discusses the nature of the codex and what happens when writings become a book.

Outline

I. Speaking of the Bible as a "book" is anachronistic during the period before the 4th century C.E.

- **A.** Before the 4th century, there is little or no evidence of all the biblical books (*ta biblia*) appearing together in a single form, whether in scrolls or codex.
- **B.** Instead, *ta biblia* are found either individually or in loose collections (e.g., Paul's Letters), making the importance of a canonical list more obvious.
- **C.** Before the invention of printing in the 15th century, indeed, all productions of biblical compositions are by human handwriting.
- **D.** We are in possession of no "autographs" (original manuscripts) of any biblical books; it is important, therefore, to consider the technology of writing and copying manuscripts if we are to appreciate the actual experience of "Scripture" within much of the history of Judaism and Christianity.

II. The technology of writing in antiquity becomes increasingly democratized but never loses entirely the aura of authority with which it began.

- **A.** In the ancient Near East, writing began as a royal prerogative and was, therefore, rare, arduous, expensive, and vested with authority.
  - **1.** The cuneiform of ancient Babylon and the hieroglyphs of Egypt delivered public messages from on high in the form of letters or pictographs chiseled on stone.
  - **2.** Writing on stone remained a constant medium both in the public (royal inscriptions) and private spheres (contracts and letters) throughout much of antiquity.
  - **3.** The Law revealed to the people by Moses was "the writing of God, graven on the tables [of stone]" (Exodus 32:16).
- **B.** A scribal culture grew up in the royal courts of the ancient Near East (including Israel) that drew its prestige from the rarity, expense, and importance of writing.
  - **1.** Oral performance had its own authority, but the writing of wisdom or prophecy added to its seriousness.
  - **2.** Writing enabled greater control and consistency than was possible with oral delivery: Writing fixes content, controls tradition, and resists change.
  - **3.** The use of papyrus (as early as 2600 B.C.E.) and parchment as writing materials made it possible to spread literacy even further.

III. The production and copying of manuscripts continued to be an expensive, arduous, and fallible process.

- **A.** The materials for writing themselves offered resistance to speed and efficiency.
  - **1.** Because of the way it was produced (by the overlaying of split reeds), papyrus offered one smooth surface (the *recto*) and one rough surface (the *verso*), more resistant to the formation of letters.
  - **2.** Parchment made from animal skins required careful cleaning and preparation, as well as stitching together to form scrolls. Because it was rarer (made from the skin of calves), vellum was even more expensive.
  - **3.** The formation of letters by means of a stylus and ink was slow (the development of a *cursive* style of writing came late), especially when the scribe wrote in *majuscules* (capital letters) rather than *minuscules* (non-capital letters).

B. The copying of manuscripts was made more difficult because of the lack of separation between words and sparse indicators of punctuation. Often, scribes were faced with blocks of letters decipherable as words because of oral acquaintance.

C. The process of manuscript copying was fallible because of the practices of scribes, whether unintentional or intentional, that altered manuscripts in transmission.

1. Among unintentional errors made by scribes are altering letters that sound alike, repeating or skipping words because of similarity in appearance, harmonizing with a similar text, or adding a previous scribe's explanatory gloss into the body of the text.

2. Intentional changes take the form of alterations to the text undertaken by scribes out of the conviction that the text *should* say something that the copy in front of them does not, sometimes because of doctrinal convictions or because of the memory of an alternative version.

IV. The transmission of biblical manuscripts was much more chaotic in Christianity than in Judaism.

A. Within Judaism, scholars known as the *Masoretes* sought to standardize the Hebrew text from very early on (perhaps late 1st or mid-2nd century), by regulating the spelling of words and providing vowel markings (*matres lectiones*) and accents to the consonantal text to indicate the proper reading.

1. The regulation of the written text through such signs probably developed most fully between 500 and 700 C.E., though it began earlier.

2. With the Aleppo Codex of Rabbi Aharon ben Asher (c. 915), the Masoretic text is fully realized, providing the common abbreviation used by scholars for the Hebrew Bible (MT).

3. Precisely this degree of standardization of the Hebrew Bible makes the discovery of earlier manuscripts with a wider degree of variation (such as the Dead Sea Scrolls) exciting to scholars.

B. Within early Christianity, a variety of factors led to a more diverse manuscript tradition.

1. The lack of a distinct scribal tradition in the Jewish manner and the rapid spread of the religion—necessitating the production of many manuscripts for a variety of populations—meant a proliferation of textual variants.

2. The production of multiple versions (translations) from the beginning also complicated the textual situation.

3. Eventually, one form of the Greek text in the east (known as the *Byzantine* or *Koine*) became standard for medieval Greek manuscripts.

4. The discovery of papyri fragments of early New Testament manuscripts serves as a window into a complex history.

Supplementary Reading:

E. J. Revell, "Masoretes, Masoretic Accents, Masoretic Studies, and Masoretic Text," in *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*, 4: 593–599.

J. R. Royse, "Scribal Tendencies in the Transmission of the Text of the New Testament," in *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, edited by B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes, pp. 239–252.

Questions to Consider:

1. Discuss the intricate connections between oral and written culture in antiquity as they pertain to the writing and reading of Scripture.

2. What social factors help account for the greater control over manuscript production in the Jewish tradition?

Lecture Seven
Imperial Sponsorship and the Bible

Scope: With the Edict of Milan in 313, the emperor Constantine made Christianity a legal cult within the Roman Empire, and over the following years, Christianity displaced Greco-Roman polytheism as the empire's official religion. The consequences for both Christianity and Judaism were profound and wide-ranging. The ultimate triumph of Christianity cemented a supersessionist reading of the Jewish Bible. And as the sacred text of a newly Christian empire, the Bible as book took on the status of sacred object. The role of Constantine was shown not only in his managing the ecumenical Council of Nicea in 325, but also in his financing the publication of four magnificent codices of the Bible in Greek, solidifying the position of the Greek version as the imperial Bible.

Outline

I. The 4th century marks a decisive turning point in religious history and in the story of the Bible.

- **A.** Before the 4th century, Christianity was persecuted and powerless.
  - **1.** Greco-Roman religion (polytheism) was the official religion of the empire and the beneficiary of imperial patronage.
  - **2.** Jews and Christians competed as equal rivals, with Judaism enjoying more official recognition.
- **B.** After the 4th century, Christianity was the privileged and powerful religion of the Roman Empire.
  - **1.** Christianity took over from Greco-Roman religion its place as imperial client, with property and power.
  - **2.** Judaism was increasingly marginalized and regarded as a threat to ecclesial and political order.
  - **3.** Christianity itself found its "orthodox" expression within the bounds of empire, while "heretical" forms of Christianity found refuge beyond imperial reach.

II. Constantine the Great (274?–337) was the key figure behind this epochal change.

- **A.** When Constantine defeated his rival Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge, he claimed that victory was owed to Christ, he adopted the *Labarum* as his standard, and he gave, first, tolerance, then, privilege to the Christian religion.
  - **1.** Eusebius's *Life of Constantine* applauds Constantine's conversion as sincere and as a providential act of God; Constantine is still regarded as a saint by the Greek Orthodox tradition.
  - **2.** Constantine may have simply recognized the inevitable triumph of the Christians and decided that it was a more cohesive religious glue for the empire than paganism; the effect, in any case, was the same.
- **B.** Like emperors before him, Constantine wanted the imperial religion to secure the unity of the empire and, therefore, demanded unity in Christianity.
  - **1.** He used his imperial influence to settle the Donatist dispute in North Africa, in 316 deciding against the schismatics in favor of the Catholics.
  - **2.** His concern for unity also led him to call the Council of Nicea in 325, to settle the rancorous doctrinal disputes caused by Arianism.
- **C.** By moving his capital to Byzantium (rebuilt and renamed Constantinople) in 330, Constantine inadvertently opened the way for another sort of division in the empire.
  - **1.** The Eastern Empire would remain steadfastly Greek in language and culture, and the patriarch of Constantinople would work in close harmony with the emperor for a millennium.
  - **2.** The Western Empire would become increasingly Latin in language and culture; the Church in Europe, under the bishop of Rome (the pope), would be increasingly a political, as well as a religious, force.

III. The full integration of the Christian religion into imperial society had an effect on the story of the Bible as well.

- **A.** The decisions of Church councils (and of orthodox bishops) had the backing of imperial force; thus, the canonical declarations of the Council of Carthage (397) or the Paschal Letter of Athanasius (367) had a certain coercive effect.

B. Constantine put the services of imperial scribes to work in the production of 50 uncial codices that included the entire "Christian Bible" (the LXX and the New Testament), the first time we can confidently speak of the Bible as a "book."

C. As an imperial (Christian) literary publication, the Bible now appeared as the official religious literature of the state, so that empire and Bible were in a mutually legitimizing role.

IV. The new status of the Christian Bible had consequences for interpretation within the two religious traditions.

A. Within Christianity, the Bible as book abetted certain forms of liturgical and ideological performances.

1. As a book with covers (often adorned) that could be closed and even locked, the Bible served as an object of veneration, whether carried in processions or placed in a shrine.

2. The form of this book, with the Old Testament preceding the New and the two testaments "facing" each other, abetted supersessionist forms of interpretation, in which Judaism and paganism are replaced in God's story by Christianity.

B. The Jewish Bible, in contrast, did not enjoy official approval or sponsorship but continued to be read as God's Word for the children of Abraham.

1. The Bible was inevitably read, by a Diaspora people, as a "religious" text rather than as the legitimizing text for a "people on the land."

2. Jewish interpreters were free to read Scripture, not as a divine history that made winners out of some, but as a divine commandment that placed freeing obligations upon God's people.

Essential Reading:

J. R. Pelikan, *The Excellent Empire: The Fall of Rome and the Triumph of the Church*.

Supplementary Reading:

B. D. Ehrman, *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament*.

Questions to Consider:

1. To what extent should the "triumph" of the Christian religion under Constantine be considered a positive thing for Christians?

2. How would the Christian Bible be read differently as the Scripture of a persecuted minority and as the religious literature of the world's rulers?

Lecture Eight
Texts and Translations—The Ancient East

Scope: Early translations of the Bible are of intrinsic interest for several reasons: They often are among the earliest surviving examples of the language; they provide fascinating glimpses into the way the Bible was understood by different linguistic populations; and they offer some of the best evidence for the way Christianity spread throughout the ancient world. In this presentation, two ancient Eastern versions are considered. The Syriac version of the Bible (Old and New Testament) provides evidence for the strength of the Christian movement on the eastern edges of the empire and has generated an extensive Christian literature in the same language. The Coptic language developed in Egypt from the 3rd century C.E. and is extant in versions of the Bible, as well as in the Gnostic literature that challenged the traditional canon.

Outline

I. The study of the early versions (translations) of the Christian Bible is useful in several ways.

- **A.** The base languages of the Bible remained Hebrew and Greek, but from earliest times, the Bible appeared in multiple languages.
- **B.** The Jewish Bible had only three ancient versions: the Greek (LXX), the Aramaic (Targums), and the 10th-century translation into idiomatic Arabic by Saadia Ben Joseph.
- **C.** The case of Christianity is quite different, and attention to its many ancient translations provides important knowledge.
  - **1.** We gain knowledge concerning the receptor language; sometimes, the translation of the Bible is the first time a language becomes written.
  - **2.** We gain knowledge of the spread of Christianity to different lands and peoples that lay outside the interest of imperial historians.
  - **3.** When the same compositions are rendered in distinct languages, we learn how the Bible was understood in different cultures.

II. The Syriac Scriptures form part of a complex development in early Christianity that is only partially known.

- **A.** Syriac is a northwest Semitic language (with 22 consonants and no vowels) based on the East Aramaic dialect of Edessa and was the language for a substantial and ancient Christian population.
  - **1.** The New Testament relates how Christianity came to Antioch, a center of Hellenistic culture, but does not say how the good news spread to East Syria.
  - **2.** Although traditions connecting Christianity in Edessa (modern-day Urfa in Turkey) to apostolic times are legendary, churches existed there by the mid-2nd century.
  - **3.** Adiabene was another center (east of the Tigris) that was Christian by the early 2nd century; evangelization also took place in the countryside.
- **B.** Syrian Christianity was noted both for its intensity and its divisiveness.
  - **1.** The noted ascetic Tatian (mid-2nd century) was Syrian, and it has been argued that such compositions as the Acts of Thomas stand for a wide understanding of Christianity as ascetical.
  - **2.** Theological disputes divided Syriac-speaking Christians in the 5th century into Nestorians (who gathered in East Syria under Persian influence) and Monophysites (in West Syria under Byzantine influence).
- **C.** Such historical complexities are matched by the convoluted character of the Syriac translations of the Bible—East and West Syrians even developed, over time, distinct dialects because of the pronunciation of vowels and the systems of vowel markings.
  - **1.** The first portion of the New Testament translated into Syriac may have been the Diatessaron of Tatian, although the earliest manuscript of the composition, discovered at Dura-Europas, was in Greek.
  - **2.** In the 19th century, two manuscripts were discovered containing a Syriac version of the four Gospels in the sequence Matthew, Mark, John, Luke; that version has been designated the "Old Syriac."
  - **3.** The most important Syriac translation of the entire Bible was the Peshitta ("simple" or "widely current"), begun before the end of the 4th century and eventually to supplant the Diatessaron. The New

Testament had 22 books (lacking 2 Peter, Jude, and 2 and 3 John), and the Old Testament was possibly the work of Jews, showing some influence of the Targums.

4. The Philoxenian/Harclean version is either one translation (carried out for Bishop Philoxenus in 508 and revised in 616 by Thomas Harkel [Harclea]) or two separate translations; in either case, the Harclean is the only edition extant and found in a very few manuscripts.
5. The Palestinian Syriac version is actually misnamed because it is really in the form of Aramaic used by Christians in Palestine but uses a Syriac script form. The date of the translation is between 300 and 600 C.E.

III. In similar fashion, Coptic translations of the Bible provide some of the earliest information concerning Christianity in ancient Egypt.

A. As in the case of Antioch in Syria, Christianity is best known in its Hellenistic guise in the city of Alexandria, which produced some of the greatest early Christian theology in such figures as Clement and Origen.

B. The native population of Egypt, however, especially in Upper Egypt, spoke the Coptic language. The term *Copt* derives from an Arabic corruption of the Greek designation *Aigyptoi* ("Egyptians").

1. Coptic was the last stage of the language of ancient Egypt, incorporating a number of Greek words, and in its written form (from the 3rd to the 10th centuries), had an alphabet that used the 24 Greek letters, plus 7 that expressed sounds in Coptic not made in Greek.
2. Upper Egypt was particularly important as a center of the monastic life, witnessed to by many Coptic "Lives of Saints" and "Sayings of the Fathers."
3. From the 5th century forward, the Egyptian church was isolated because of its adherence to the Monophysite heresy; it passed under Persian dominance in 616 and was conquered by the Arabs in 642.

C. The extensive spread of the New Testament among the Egyptian population is supported by translations of the New Testament into several dialects of Coptic. One scholarly reconstruction finds the following hypothetical sequence:

1. A preliminary stage (150–200) of oral translations from the Greek in liturgical settings (compare the Targums).
2. A pre-classical Sahidic stage (200–250), when several biblical books (e.g., Joshua) were translated into this Upper Egypt dialect, and the Gospel of John was translated into Bohairic (northern part of the Delta).
3. A classical Sahidic stage (3rd century) that saw the translation of the complete Bible.
4. A pre-classical Bohairic stage (4th to 6th centuries) that saw the transmission of the Sahidic into other Coptic dialects.
5. A classical Bohairic stage (6th to 7th centuries), when Christianity penetrated deeply into every part of Egypt, leading up to the conquest under the Arabs.

D. A large number of Gnostic Christian writings were also translated from Greek into Coptic or written in Coptic during the 3rd through 6th centuries; these were lost until the discovery of the Gnostic library at Nag Hammadi in 1945.

IV. In both Syriac and Coptic, an extensive Christian literature developed on the basis of and in concert with the production of the Bible in these languages.

A. Many liturgical and theological tractates in Coptic were translations from the Greek; among the few original Coptic works are the writings of Shenoute, a 4th-century abbot of Athribis.

B. Syriac Christian literature, by comparison, is vast, extending from the 3rd to the 13th centuries and including such outstanding 4th-century figures as Aphraates and Ephraem.

Supplementary Reading:

D. R. G. Beattie and M. J. McNamara, eds., *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in Their Historical Context*.

B. M. Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament*, pp. 3–152.

Questions to Consider:

1. How would the Old Testament or the words of Jesus seem to a Christian hearing them in a translation that was cognate to Hebrew and Aramaic?
2. How is our view of Christianity's ancient expansion truncated if we ignore the evidence of literature in languages other than the imperial Greek or Latin?

Lecture Nine
Old Latin and the Vulgate

Scope: The translation of the Christian Bible into Latin is of particular importance because of its religious and cultural influence. This presentation considers, first, the Old Latin, which shows how Christianity spread throughout North Africa and other Latin-speaking areas of the empire. Then, it takes up the pivotal production of the Vulgate by Saint Jerome: the reasons why it was undertaken; the resistance it met from Saint Augustine; the stages through which it passed; and finally, the way in which this translation helped enable a Western Christendom distinct from the Byzantine Empire—thus becoming the source and shaper of European culture for a millennium.

Outline

I. Of all the ancient versions of the Christian Bible, the Latin has had the greatest influence because of its historical role.

- **A.** When Constantine shifted his capital to Constantinople, the Church in the East remained Greek speaking, continuing to read the LXX as the Old Testament and the New Testament in Greek.
- **B.** The bishop of Rome exercised supreme ecclesiastical (and, increasingly, political) authority in the Western Empire—a dominance that continued through the medieval period.
- **C.** As the East became exclusively Greek, so the West became increasingly Latin, and the adoption of Latin as the official biblical language was of fundamental importance for the shape of Christianity in Europe.
- **D.** This lecture considers the stages leading to Saint Jerome's great translation of the Bible (the Vulgate) and some of its features; because it is part of "imperial history," we know more about this version than any other.

II. The beginning stages of the use of a Latin Bible are obscure both in date and in location.

- **A.** Latin is the ancestral language of Rome and had already developed a great literature during the time of the republic and early empire (with the writings of Cicero, Caesar, Virgil, Horace, and others).
- **B.** During the first centuries of the Christian era, however, it was the second language of the empire; Greek was the first.
- **C.** It is not clear where the first Latin versions began, but Rome is an unlikely candidate.
  - **1.** The first Christian writings connected to Rome (Paul's Letters, 1 Clement, Hermas) are all written in Greek rather than Latin.
  - **2.** The names of all the first Roman bishops are also Greek rather than Latin, and as late as 230, we find Christian authors in Rome writing in Greek (Justin, Hippolytus).
  - **3.** Pope Victor I (190) wrote theological treatises in Latin, and some Latin writings of Novatian (mid-3rd century) are extant.
  - **4.** Rome would experience the need for a Latin translation by the late 2nd or early 3rd century.
- **D.** The Christian communities in North Africa seem a more likely place for the origin of Latin translations.
  - **1.** Rome had many military colonies in North Africa, which would use Latin more than Greek, and had many Roman merchants whose language was Latin.
  - **2.** The *Acts of the Scillitan Martyrs* (180) was composed in Latin, and Tertullian of Carthage (160–225) wrote in Latin, probably using a Latin translation of the Bible in his refutations of heretics.

III. The need for a standard translation into Latin was based on the proliferation of Old Latin versions and their inferior quality, as well as a concern for Church unity.

- **A.** Augustine of Hippo (354–430) bears witness both to the number and haphazard character of Old Latin versions, a view echoed by Jerome.
- **B.** In response to these concerns, Pope Damasus (304–384), a vigorous champion of orthodoxy, assigned his secretary, Jerome of Aquileia (c. 342–420), the task of translating the Bible into a standard version (the Vulgate).

C. Damasus could hardly have picked a better person for the task, because Jerome was, with Origen, the greatest Christian scholar of the Bible in antiquity.
  1. After his baptism as an adult, he committed himself to asceticism and ended his days as leader of a monastery in Bethlehem.
  2. He was a superb linguist, thoroughly versed in Latin and Greek, and he learned Hebrew when living as a hermit in Syria; he also consulted with rabbis in Palestine concerning the meaning of the Hebrew.
  3. He wrote many biblical commentaries filled with linguistic and topographical information based on his "firsthand" research.

D. The translation (revision) of the Latin Bible was Jerome's greatest and most enduring accomplishment as a scholar.
  1. Jerome began with a revision of the Gospels in 382–384, using an excellent manuscript of the Greek text. The remainder of the New Testament was revised by unknown translators.
  2. The translation of the Old Testament began with the Psalms, based on the LXX, the *Gallican Psalter*; Jerome later translated the Psalms from the Hebrew, but his first translation was more widely used in liturgy and became standard in later printed texts.
  3. Jerome increasingly became convinced that the Hebrew text was superior to the LXX and began a fresh translation independent of the LXX. Jerome also preferred the shorter Hebrew canon to the longer one (derived from the LXX used in the Church).
  4. The earliest form of the complete Vulgate we have is from the 6th century, and it contains Jerome's translation of all the Hebrew canonical books and the Gallican Psalter, plus his translations of Tobit and Judith (from the LXX), Jerome's translation of the Gospels, and a revised version of Acts, Letters, and Revelation.

E. Jerome's translation took some time to become standard, and manuscripts of the Vulgate developed as many variants as the manuscripts of the Greek.
  1. Augustine complained to Jerome concerning the abandonment of the LXX for theological and pastoral reasons.
  2. Scribes "corrected" Old Latin versions on the basis of Jerome's work and "corrected" Jerome on the basis of other readings.

IV. Jerome's translation won its way through ecclesial approbation to be sure, but especially through its intrinsic excellence. Jerome was simply an amazing translator.

A. Jerome showed deep insight into the meaning both of the Greek and the Hebrew and rendered them in a vigorous and idiomatic Latin that had genuine literary merit.
  1. Although he translated from the Hebrew, he rendered key "prophetic" texts in such fashion as to retain the "prophecy/fulfillment" found in the LXX and Greek New Testament (as in the translation of *almah* by *virgo* in Isaiah 7:14).
  2. His personal translations and his oversight of other revisions led to a single seamless Scripture that captured the "imaginative world of the Bible" from beginning to end.

B. Together with Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine*, Jerome's Vulgate became the source and shaper of liturgy, literature, and learning during the Middle Ages in the West.

Essential Reading:

Augustine, *Letters* 28 and 71.

Supplementary Reading:

H. von Campenhausen, "Jerome" and "Augustine," in *The Fathers of the Church*, pp. 129–182, 183–276.

B. M. Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament*, pp. 285–374.

Questions to Consider:

1. Consider the influence wielded by a single person through the shaping of a text or translation that becomes the font of literature for a civilization; what parallels come to mind?

2. What potential issues for Christian theology did Jerome pose by his preference for the Hebrew over the Greek Old Testament?

Lecture Ten
Other Ancient Versions

Scope: There were many other translations of the Bible in antiquity, each of which points to the spread of Christianity to another region and suggests something of the religious and cultural influence exercised by the Bible. In the East, the Armenian, Georgian, and Ethiopic versions represent major streams of Christian culture, while other minor translations (Arabic, Nubian, Persian, Sogdian, and Albanian) testify to the influence of the Bible well beyond the boundaries of the empire. Despite the dominance of the Latin Vulgate in the West, other translations (the Gothic, Slavonic, Anglo-Saxon, and Old High German) show the endurance of other cultural realities and anticipate later European developments.

Outline

I. Although the Greek and Latin versions of the Christian Bible dominated in imperial territories, other ancient versions reveal the spread of Christianity into new geographical and linguistic areas and the importance of the Bible to those populations.

- **A.** We have already seen the complex histories of the Syriac version in East Syria and the Coptic version in Upper Egypt. The number of distinct versions in each language shows that interest was not momentary or casual.
- **B.** Other major and minor translations of the Christian Bible show how the story of the Bible became part of the history of diverse populations. For some, the writing of the Bible was the start of a written language and of an ethnic literature.

II. In the East, three versions of the Bible have a special significance: the Armenian, Georgian, and Ethiopian.

- **A.** The ancient realm of Armenia was the first kingdom to officially welcome Christianity.
  - **1.** Gregory the Illuminator (240–332) baptized King Tiridates III around 300 C.E., and Christianity was made the state religion.
  - **2.** Armenian Christians were influenced by both Syriac and Greek traditions but tended toward Monophysitism.
  - **3.** Translation of the Bible is the birth of Armenian literature, through the work of Bishop Mesrob. He devised an alphabet of 36 letters and oversaw the translation of the Bible, based on the Syriac version (410), with himself translating the New Testament and Proverbs.
  - **4.** In 433, Mesrob oversaw the revision of the Armenian Bible on the basis of Greek manuscripts.
  - **5.** The Armenian Old Testament is distinctive for its inclusion of the History of Joseph and Aseneth and the Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs, while the New Testament adds the (spurious) Epistle of the Corinthians to Paul and the (spurious) Third Corinthians; some 1,244 manuscripts of the Armenian New Testament are extant.
- **B.** The origins of Christianity in Georgia (also Iberia) in the south Caucasus region go back to the 4th century, through the evangelizing of a slave woman named Nina.
  - **1.** The church in Georgia may have been influenced by Jewish Christianity but was thoroughly Orthodox, except for a period in the 6th century when it was influenced by Monophysitism.
  - **2.** Bishop Mesrob also developed an alphabet for the Georgian language before the 5th century, and a translation was made of the Gospels and other parts of the New Testament before the middle of the 5th century.
  - **3.** The basis of the translation is disputed, with arguments being made for Greek and Armenian and for traces of Syriac influence.
- **C.** The church in Ethiopia (Abyssinia) got its firm grounding in the 4th century by two missionaries (Frumentius and Edesius of Tyre) sent there as prisoners.
  - **1.** Ethiopian Christianity has a long history but one marked by its geographical isolation ("the ends of the Earth").
  - **2.** The Bible was translated into the Ethiopian language (Ge'ez), probably from the Greek, in the 5th or 6th century; the oldest extant manuscript is from the 14th century and shows the influence of Coptic and Arabic.

D. Other minor versions from the East testify to the missionary success of Christianity outside the boundaries of empire.

1. Efforts to bring Christianity to Arabia began before the 3rd century, and there are a bewildering number of distinct Arabic translations whose precise origin is a matter of speculation; the earliest speculative date is the 7th century.

2. Christianity may have reached Nubia (three kingdoms, with Egypt to the north and Ethiopia to the south) as early as the 3rd century, though formal missionary work began in the 6th. We have only manuscript fragments of a Nubian version dating from the 8th to the 10th century.

3. Christianity was well established in Persia by the 3rd–4th century, and although some Christians read the Bible in Syriac, a translation into Middle Persian was undertaken; only fragments of a few pages of the Psalms are extant.

4. In East Turkestan and Central Asia, the Sogdian language was used as a *lingua franca* for Central Asia in the way Greek was in the West, and fragments of a Sogdian translation of the New Testament have been found, probably dependent on the Syriac.

5. There are traditions stating that Bishop Mesrob also created an alphabet for the Albanians (present-day Azerbaijan), and a Bishop Jeremiah was reputed to have translated the Bible into that language, but no textual evidence of such a translation is extant.

III. In addition to the Latin Vulgate, other versions of the Bible appeared in the West in native languages.

A. The Gothic language was the vernacular of a large portion of Europe. Between the Danube and the Black Sea, two great tribes dominated, the Visigoths and the Ostrogoths.

1. Successful missionary work was done among the Goths already by the 3rd century, but the "Apostle of the Goths" was Ulfilas (311–383), who was trained in Constantinople.

2. He invented a Gothic alphabet out of Greek and Latin characters, as well as Gothic runes, and translated the Bible, leaving out only the books of Kings.

B. The Christian mission among the Slavic peoples may have been undertaken in the 6th century, but our earliest certain knowledge is of the work of the brothers Saints Methodius (826–885) and Cyril (827–869).

1. Greeks of a senatorial class in Macedonia, they were educated in Constantinople and became missionaries to Moravia, where they taught in the vernacular.

2. Before his death, Cyril invented a Slavic alphabet called Glagolitic (the Cyrillic alphabet is later) and began to write liturgical works in Slavonic.

3. After Cyril's death, Methodius oversaw the translation of the entire Bible into Old Church Slavonic, omitting only the books of the Maccabees.

C. Christianity reached Great Britain by the 4th century and, in the 5th and 6th centuries, received both Celtic and Roman missionaries.

1. The very earliest efforts at translating into Anglo-Saxon in the 7th and 8th centuries have been lost, except for an interlinear gloss of a Latin text.

2. More extensive translations were undertaken during the 10th-century Benedictine reform; among the extant manuscripts of the Gospels, it is not clear what version of the Latin was used for translation.

D. Christianity began among the Franks along the middle and lower courses of the Rhine with the baptism of King Clovis I in 496, but only small remnants of either Old High or Low German translations of the Gospels are extant.

Essential Reading:

B. M. Metzger, *The Early Versions of the New Testament*, pp. 153–281, 375–460.

Supplementary Reading:

B. D. Ehrman and M. W. Holmes, eds., *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*, pp. 142–187.

Questions to Consider:

1. In what sense can the translation of the Bible in antiquity be seen as cultural hegemony and in what sense can it be regarded as an affirmation of ethnic identity?

2. Why is it legitimate to speak of a distinct "story of the Bible" for each translation in which it has appeared?

Lecture Eleven
Monasteries and Manuscripts

Scope: Throughout the Middle Ages, both in the East and West, Bibles were produced by means of scribal copying in monasteries. This lecture discusses the social settings and practices that provided a context for such scribal activities and the ways in which the copying of manuscripts expressed both religious and artistic impulses. The paradox of the medieval monastery is that the intense and technical work of the scriptorium was not where the Bible was actually experienced most vividly: Monks lived within a Scripture-shaped world of liturgical prayer, poetry, and song, and it was in such oral-aural expressions of the Bible that medieval Christian piety was most powerfully displayed.

Outline

I. A key role in the history of Christianity and in the story of the Bible was played by monasteries.

A. Monasteries are intentional religious communities organized around worship and work and dedicated to a life of full discipleship.

1. Earliest monasticism in the East (Syria and Egypt) was intensely ascetical and took an eremitic or semi-eremitic form. The focus tended to be on the extraordinary ascetic.

2. In the West, following the lead of John Cassian and, especially, Benedict of Nursia, monasticism was coenobitic. The emphasis was on the common life more than on the individual.

3. From the 5th to the 16th centuries, monasteries were the most vibrant centers of Christian life both in the East and West.

B. Because of their attention to "prayer and work" (*Ora et Labora*, *Rule* of Saint Benedict), monasteries in the West played a number of critical social roles in addition to the strictly religious.

1. Monastic schools enabled the teaching of grammar and rhetoric, as well as the higher arts.

2. Monasteries preserved and extended the crafts of agriculture, both within and outside the cloister.

3. Monasteries were islands of relative literacy and of strict order in a world where illiteracy reigned and civilization was fragile.

C. As monasteries grew in size and prosperity (as their industry and reception of benefits enabled them to grow), they became virtual cities and centers for the production and preservation of biblical manuscripts.

1. In the East, such sites as Mt. Athos (with its 20 monasteries dating to the 10th century) and the monastery of Saint Catherine on Mt. Sinai (6th century) were capable of copying and storing manuscripts.

2. In the West, Cluny (10th century) eventually stood at the head of more than 1,000 other monasteries, and Monte Cassino (founded by Benedict, c. 529) was famous for its size and its scriptorium.

II. Benedictine monks sought to live in imitation of biblical saints and spent much of their lives immersed in the Bible.

A. The basic structure of the monastic life imitated the apostolic church described in Acts 2 and 4.

1. Obedience to the *Rule* and the abbot, the sharing of possessions, and devotion to the life of prayer were all ways of radical discipleship.

2. Virtually every aspect of the monastic day (silence, work, meals, times of prayer, the vows) was supported by reference to Scripture.

B. The meaning of "work and prayer" was distinct for *choir monks* and *lay brothers*.

1. Choir monks spent more than four hours a day performing the *Opus Dei*, made solemn vows, were ordained as priests, and received an appropriate education. Their "work" was correspondingly more intellectual in character.

2. Lay brothers made simple vows, had a less arduous form of prayer, and spent longer hours in manual labor to sustain the community's economic life.

C. The recitation (singing) of the *Opus Dei* in Latin organized the life of the choir monk.

1. The day was divided into eight "hours" of prayer in common: Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, Sext, None, Vespers, Compline.

2. During these hours, the central prayers were the Psalms; the entire Psalter was recited each week, with some psalms repeated many times. New Testament canticles formed part of Lauds, Vespers, and Compline.
3. During the longest session (Matins), monks also listened to sermons and treatises concerning the Bible drawn from "the fathers" (Basil, Augustine, Ambrose, Gregory the Great).
4. Daily celebration of the Eucharist (the Mass) was also part of the choir monk's day—usually in private at a side altar—and engaged Scripture in still another format.

D. *Lectio Divina* ("Holy Reading") either of Scripture or of patristic literature was the basis for monastic contemplation and prayer.

III. The "love of learning and the desire for God" (Jean LeClercq) came together in the work of the monastic scriptorium: Everything was done by hand!

A. The life of choir monks demanded the production of a considerable number of distinct books (in large communities, in large numbers) simply to carry out "the work of God."
1. Psalters were required for the recitation of the Psalms, at least one for every three monks and needing replacement frequently because of use.
2. Lectionaries (organized according to the liturgical year) were used for the public reading of Scripture in the divine office and at Mass.
3. Graduals and antiphonals guided the singing of responses and versicles during the office and at Mass.

B. In addition to all these manuscripts for the continuing prayer life of the community, trained scribes gave their talents to the copying of biblical manuscripts.
1. Such copying was a combination of intellectual and manual labor, carried out with devotion in less than comfortable circumstances.
2. Throughout the medieval period, monks copied both Greek and Latin manuscripts of the Bible, continuing the practice even after the invention of printing (some biblical manuscripts date from the 17th century).
3. At the same time, monks made copies of other literature, both sacred and profane, including such compilations of commentaries as the *glossa ordinaria* (mid-12th century).

C. Monasteries were natural repositories for manuscripts and developed extensive manuscript libraries that were available for looting with the dissolution of many monasteries during the Reformation.

IV. The monastic scriptorium also provided the setting for two expressions of art centered on the Bible.

A. Ingenious and often profound interpretations of biblical texts were developed literarily in the composition of antiphons and responses, and these were, in turn, deepened through musical expression in Gregorian chant.

B. Scribes developed the art of biblical illumination, using the copying of manuscripts as a medium for sometimes astonishing expressions of beauty (as in the Book of Kells).

Essential Reading:

J. LeClercq, *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*, translated by C. Misrahi.

Supplementary Reading:

B. Smalley, *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How do medieval monasteries illustrate the symbiotic features of "oral/scribal" culture?
2. Discuss the ways in which monastic "work and prayer"—especially for choir monks—created a life centered in the Bible.

Lecture Twelve
Interpretation within Judaism

Scope: Jewish life and biblical interpretation in the medieval period centered on the study and practice of God's Law as revealed through Moses and as interpreted, developed, and codified through what was called the Second Torah (or Oral Torah) in the Mishnah (c. 200 C.E.) and the Babylonian Talmud (c. 450 C.E.), regarded as the authoritative expression of Jewish life for more than a millennium. But the direct interpretation of the biblical text also continued in the work of great medieval scholars, such as Rashi. This lecture will touch on the several aspects and levels of Jewish interpretation during this long period.

Outline

I. Jewish interpretation of the Bible through the medieval period was shaped by the conditions of diaspora existence in a Christian world.

- **A.** Marginalization within the larger society helped form strong community bonds.
  - **1.** Jews were not allowed participation in economic or political life and had no public religious role.
  - **2.** From the time of the First Crusade (1095), Jews lived in danger of persecution from Christians and, throughout the period, needed to respond to aggressive Christian polemics.
  - **3.** The formation of strong communities was partly a matter of self-protection, but it also encouraged a strong tradition of worship and study centered in God's Word.
- **B.** The reading of the Bible took place within the context of a lively intellectual life and the practice of the commandments.
  - **1.** Since the destruction of the Temple in the 1st century, the ideals of the Pharisees with respect to the Oral Torah, as made concrete in the Talmud, dominated life in the synagogue.
  - **2.** Jewish interpretation needed always to bear in view the supersessionist tendencies of Christian biblical interpretation.
  - **3.** Internally, Judaism needed to negotiate tensions caused by movements to reject the Talmudic ethos (Karaism), to reduce religion to philosophy, or to slight the literal in favor of the mystical.

II. Not unlike the medieval Christian monastery, the synagogue provided the social setting of worship and study based in Torah.

- **A.** On the basis of the *Seder Rav Amran Gaon* (9th century), we know that there were three times of formal worship daily in the synagogue: morning (*ha shaharith*), afternoon (*mincha*), and evening (*maariv*).
- **B.** The morning service was the most elaborate and shows the central role played by Scripture:
  - **1.** The service opens with a benediction, followed by passages of song taken from the Psalms, leading to the *kaddish*, or doxology.
  - **2.** There follow three long *berakoth* (benedictions) praising God for creation, for the gift of Torah, and for faithfulness; these come before and after the great profession of faith (the *shema*) drawn from Scripture.
  - **3.** Then are the *tefilla*, or prayers, beginning with the *shemoneh esre* ("18 benedictions"), also known as the *amidah* because recited while standing; these are followed by individual petitions (*tahanun*).
  - **4.** From earliest times, there were readings from Torah and the Prophets (*haftorah*), followed by preaching.
  - **5.** The service closes with assorted prayers and psalm passages.
- **C.** Because of the availability of scrolls, the synagogue building also served as the *beth ha midrash*, where rabbis and students could carry out the life of the mind in the study of language and Scripture, as well as the great Talmudic treatises.
- **D.** Many synagogues had an attached chamber called a *geniza*, which was used to store manuscripts that were no longer fit to be used in worship, as well as other (even theologically questionable) writing.

III. Biblical interpretation in the medieval period grounded itself in the close reading of the Hebrew text and sought both to ground practice and to provide wisdom.

A. The mainstream of biblical interpretation stayed within the Talmudic framework and affirmed both the literal sense (*peshat*) and the applied or moral sense (*darash*).

1. Saadia Gaon (c. 880–942) emphasized the need for sound lexical and grammatical knowledge of Hebrew for biblical study, translated the Bible into Arabic, wrote an Arabic commentary on many books, and emphasized the theological and moral senses of Torah (*darash*).

2. Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac (1040–1105), known by the acronym Rashi, is regarded as the greatest medieval commentator both on the entire Bible and on the Babylonian Talmud. His insistence on *peshat* was especially important as a way of countering Christian messianic claims.

3. Abraham Ibn Ezra (d. 1167) is, in contrast to Rashi, terse, allusive, and difficult in his commentaries on the Pentateuch and many other biblical books, but his works show a keen critical intelligence.

4. David Kimhi (1160–1235) continued the tradition of Abraham Ibn Ezra and placed particular emphasis on the countering of Christian readings.

B. Another sort of approach is represented by Moses ben Maimon (Moses Maimonides, or Rambam, 1135–1204). A fierce defender of Judaism during a time of persecution, he seriously engaged Islamic scholars and sought, in his *Guide for the Perplexed*, to provide a reading of the tradition that was consonant with Aristotle. He advanced *sekhel*, or a philosophical reading of the Bible.

IV. Some Jewish interpreters sought a deeper meaning to Scripture (*sod*) as the basis for a mystical way of life and speculation.

A. Already at the heart of the rabbinic tradition—as early as the 2nd century C.E.—there was a form of mysticism based in speculation concerning the *mekavah* ("heavenly throne chariot") described by Ezechiel, a mysticism that spawned a Jewish-Gnostic literature based in ascent to the *hekaloth* ("heavenly palaces").

B. A form of Jewish mysticism flourished in Germany (1150–1250), based on the *Sefer ha-Bahir*, and spread to Spain, where it influenced Moses ben Nachman (Nachmanides, 1195–1270) in his commentary on the Pentateuch.

C. In the late 13th century, a mysterious book called the Zohar ("Book of Splendor") was distributed by Moses ben Shemtov de Leon, which became the foundational text of Jewish *kabbalah* ("tradition"), a way of reading Torah in mystical terms.

Essential Reading:

J. R. Marcus, *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Source-Book*.

Supplementary Reading:

B. W. Holtz, ed., *Back to the Sources: Reading the Classic Jewish Texts*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Discuss how the physical constraints of medieval Jewish life encouraged a rich and adventurous life of the spirit.

2. How is the notion that there are many levels of meaning in Torah connected to convictions of divine inspiration?

Timeline

B.C.E.

1900–1700 ..... Patriarchs
1700–1300 ..... Hebrews in Egypt
c. 1275? ..... Exodus from Egypt
1250–1200? ..... Conquest of Canaan
1000–961 ..... David
961–922 ..... Solomon
742–735 ..... Isaiah
625–587 ..... Jeremiah
587–538 ..... Babylonian Exile
520–515 ..... Rebuilding of the Temple
356–323 ..... Alexander the Great
c. 250 ..... Septuagint (LXX)
167–143 ..... Maccabean period
c. 150? ..... Qumran community
63 ..... Pompey asserts Roman rule
c. 20 B.C.E.–c. 50 C.E. ..... Philo of Alexandria

C.E.

c. 29–32 ..... Ministry and death of Jesus
34–64/68 ..... Ministry and correspondence of Paul
67–70 ..... Jewish War with Rome
70 ..... Destruction of the Temple
70–90 ..... Composition of the Gospels
c. 90 ..... Council of Jabneh
100–200 ..... Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion
135 ..... Bar Kochba Revolt against Rome
135–155 ..... Marcion and Valentinus flourish
160–225 ..... Irenaeus and Tertullian flourish
200 ..... Judah ha Nasi Codifies Mishnah
303 ..... Persecution of Christians under Diocletian
313 ..... Edict of Milan
325 ..... Council of Nicea
330 ..... Constantinople made eastern capital
382 ..... Jerome begins Vulgate translation
c. 450 ..... Babylonian Talmud

c. 480–c. 550 ..... Benedict of Nursia, *Rule for Monks*

c. 550 ..... Talmud of the Land of Israel

742–814 ..... Charlemagne, Holy Roman Emperor

863–885 ..... Cyril and Methodius, mission to the Slavs

c. 880–942 ..... Saadia Gaon, translation into Arabic

910 ..... Monastery founded at Cluny

1054 ..... Schism between Eastern (Greek) and Western (Latin) Churches

1040–1105 ..... Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac (Rashi)

1095–1099 ..... First Crusade

1135–1204 ..... Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides)

1202–1204 ..... Fourth Crusade, sacking of Constantinople

1225–1274 ..... Thomas Aquinas, Scholastic theologian

1250–1305 ..... Moses de Leon, Zohar

1265–1321 ..... Life of Dante, author of *The Divine Comedy*

c. 1330–1384 ..... John Wycliffe, English reformer and translator

1398–1468 ..... Life of Johannes Gutenberg

1453 ..... Constantinople falls to the Turks; start of world exploration

1455 ..... Gutenberg prints the Vulgate Bible

1471–1528 ..... Albrecht Dürer, artist of biblical woodcuts

1483–1546 ..... Martin Luther, German reformer

1484–1531 ..... Ulrich Zwingli, Swiss reformer

1489–1556 ..... Thomas Cranmer, author of the *Book of Common Prayer*

1491–1547 ..... Life of Henry VIII of England

c. 1494–1536 ..... Life of William Tyndale, great English translator

1495–1498 ..... Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper*

1504 ..... Michelangelo's *David* completed

1509–1564 ..... John Calvin, French reformer

1513–1552 ..... John Knox, Scottish reformer

1516 ..... Erasmus publishes Greek New Testament; Thomas More publishes *Utopia*

1517 ..... Luther's 95 Theses

1522–1534 ..... Luther's German translation of the Bible

1533 ..... Divorce of Henry, start of the Church of England

1545–1563 ..... Council of Trent

1560 ..... Geneva Bible

1561–1626 ..... Francis Bacon, author of *Novum Organum*

1582–1610 ..... Douay-Rheims Bible

1606–1669 ..... Rembrandt van Rijn

1611 ..... King James (Authorized) Version of the Bible

1618–1648 ..... Thirty Years War in Europe

1632–1677 ..... Baruch Spinoza, Jewish rationalist philosopher

1638–1712 ..... Richard Simon, pioneer of textual criticism

1645 ..... Herbert of Cherbury's *Religion of the Nations*

1685–1750 ..... Johann Sebastian Bach

1667 ..... John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

1670–1722 ..... John Toland, Deist writer

1678 ..... John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*

1751–1752 ..... John Jacob Wettstein publishes Greek edition of the New Testament

1791 ..... Jewish emancipation in France

1812–1875 ..... Moses Hess, founder of Zionism

1835 ..... David F. Strauss, *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined*

1860–1904 ..... Theodor Herzl, Zionist leader

1894–1906 ..... Dreyfus Affair reveals the depth of anti-Semitism

1906 ..... Albert Schweitzer's *Quest for the Historical Jesus*

1909 ..... Scofield Bible published

1933–1945 ..... The Holocaust (*shoah*)

1948 ..... State of Israel established

Glossary

Allegory: In Christian biblical interpretation, a form of reading that takes elements in the written text as symbolizing other, spiritual realities; the premise is that such meanings were in God's mind even if not in the human author's. In the fully developed medieval framework, the *allegorical* referred to Christ and the Church, whereas the *tropological* referred to the moral life, and the *anagogical* referred to eschatological realities. But allegory can also be used for all "higher" meanings beyond the literal or historical sense.

Apocryphal: Literature that is not included in the official canon of Scripture in Judaism or Christianity.

Asceticism: A way of life characterized by discipline and avoidance of the pleasures of the body. In Christianity, it is often connected to a dualistic view of the world.

Byzantium/Byzantine: The ancient city renamed Constantinople when Constantine made it the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire. *Byzantine* is applied to the empire that survived until the taking of the city by the Turks in 1453 and is also used for the largest family of New Testament manuscripts (also called the *koine* tradition).

Canon: From the Greek term meaning "measure," the standard collection of texts regarded as scriptural and the normative writings of a community, Jewish or Christian.

Christ/Christology: The Greek term *Christos* means "anointed one" and translates the Hebrew term *messiah*; Christology is the understanding of the identity, nature, and functions of Jesus as Christian messiah.

Codex: The earliest form of the "book," with leaves or pages (usually of papyrus) folded and stitched (or glued) together so that writing appears on both sides, the *recto* and the *verso*.

Constantinople: The "New Rome" founded by Constantine the Great in 333; the religious and political rival of Rome from the 4th century forward.

Council of Trent: The Roman Catholic response to the Protestant Reformation, called the Counter-Reformation, was crystallized in a series of meetings between 1545 and 1563 that decisively shaped the Catholic Church for the next 400 years.

Creed: From the Latin *Credo*, "I believe," a formal statement of belief. Christians recite either the Apostle's Creed or the Nicene Creed in worship, but many other professions of faith were produced by branches of the Reformation.

Crusades: Between the 11th and 14th centuries, a series of military expeditions sponsored by popes and Christian kings in an effort to wrest control of the Holy Land from the Muslims. The "crusading spirit" got carried over into the internecine Wars of Religion among Christians after the Reformation.

Diaspora: Any place Jews lived that was not the land of Palestine or *eretz Israel*; after the failed Bar Kochba Revolt in 135 C.E., Judaism essentially became a diaspora religion.

Edict of Milan: The declaration of tolerance for Christianity enacted by Constantine in 313 that gave Christians freedom to practice their faith.

Ekklesia: Greek term that means basically "assembly" and gave rise to disputed translations of "church" or "congregation."

Enlightenment: The intellectual movement in Europe that presented the greatest threat to the "biblical world" because of its reliance on human reason more than on the assumed authority of revelation.

Essenes: A sect within Judaism in 1st-century Palestine, dedicated to the strict observance of the Law and identified by many (though not all) with the sectarians at Qumran who produced the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Gnostics/Gnosticism: Within Christianity, a movement of the 2nd–4th centuries that challenged the organizational form of the religion on the basis of new revelational literature that advanced a strongly dualistic understanding of reality and an individualized spirituality based on a higher form of knowledge (*gnosis* = "knowledge").

Gospel: The Greek term *euangelion* originally referred to the good news from and about God in the death and resurrection of Jesus; it gained the additional sense of a narrative about the ministry of Jesus.

Hellenism: In the broadest sense, the Greek culture that dominated the Mediterranean world after Alexander the Great; both Judaism and Christianity worked out their identity in the context of Hellenism.

Heresy: The Greek term *hairesis* means a "party" or "opinion." In Christianity, it means a misunderstood or distorted understanding of doctrine. Thus, *heresy* is opposed to *orthodoxy*, but which is what depends on the point of view of the speaker.

Hermit: An individual who lives in solitude for the sake of complete devotion to prayer and worship. Early Christian monasticism in Egypt and Syria tended toward the *eremitical* (living completely alone) or *semi-eremitical* style (living alone except for meals and worship).

Inerrant: "Without error"; a conviction some Christians, above all, Fundamentalists, hold with respect to Scripture. Inerrancy is sometimes applied to every word and sometimes to a broader concept, such as "teaching on faith and morals."

Inspiration: The conviction that God's Holy Spirit is at work in the production of Scripture. In Judaism and Christianity, the conviction is a statement concerning the origin and authority of the text and is compatible with human authorship.

Jabneh/Jamnia: A city near Joppa where, according to tradition, a rabbinic council was held around 90 C.E. to determine the canon of the Jewish Bible.

Kabbalah: "Tradition," understood as an esoteric interpretation of Torah and of reality itself; the dominant form of mysticism in medieval Judaism, given greatest impetus by the Zohar ("book of splendor").

Karaism: The Jewish movement started in the 8th century by Anan ben David that challenged the complexity of the Talmudic tradition and called for a return to Torah alone.

Ketuvim: Hebrew term meaning "writings"; the designation for the third and most variable portion of TaNaK, including such works as Job and the Psalms.

Koine: The Greek noun means "common/standard." In language, it refers to the form of Greek used in the Hellenistic period. In text criticism, it refers to the large family of manuscripts also designated as *Byzantine*.

Lectio Divina: Latin that is literally "divine reading" but refers to the practice of individual reading of Scripture in a meditative manner within the monastic context.

Majuscule*/*Minuscule: Two forms of writing manuscripts in Greek. *Majuscule* uses only capital letters, and the letters are not linked. *Minuscule* uses only small (non-capital) letters, often linked together to form *cursive* ("running") script; this is the form in which most manuscripts after the 9th century C.E. were written.

Manuscript: A text written by hand with ink and stylus on a prepared surface, whether parchment or vellum or, more commonly, papyrus.

Marcionism: A Christian heresy named from Marcion of Sinope (d. 160) who advanced a radical dualism: Creation was the work of an evil God (of the Jews), and Jesus revealed a hidden God who called humans from the prison of materiality. Marcion thought that only 10 of Paul's Letters and an edited version of Luke's Gospel should be "canonical."

Masoretic text: The official form of the Hebrew text of the Jewish Bible, supervised for centuries by rabbis called the *Masoretes*, who stabilized the consonantal text by inserting vowel markings and accents.

Merkavah: Literally, "throne-chariot"; a form of Jewish mysticism already, in the early rabbinic period, focused on the divine presence symbolized by Ezechiel's description of God's glory in the opening of his prophecy.

Messiah: In Hebrew, the "anointed one," whose role was to deliver the Jewish people from danger and restore them as a people; the concept is both individual and communal. In Christianity, it is applied to Jesus; in Judaism, it has had several referents.

Midrash: Derived from the Hebrew term *darash*, "to seek," the noun refers to forms of biblical interpretation (and contemporary application) beyond *peshat*, or the simple, literal, historical sense. When applied to legal texts, it is called *halakhic midrash*, and when applied to non-legal texts, it is called *haggadic midrash*.

Mishnah: The authoritative collection of legal opinions (*halakha*) compiled by Judah ha Nasi (Judah the Prince) c. 200 C.E., which formed the basis of the Talmud.

Monophysitism: A Christian heresy that so emphasized the divinity of Christ that it insisted he had only "one nature" (*mono-physis*), namely, the divine, and was less than fully human.

Nestorianism: A Christian heresy stemming from a Syrian teacher called Nestorius (d. 451) that emphasized the humanity of Christ and denied his full divinity and, thus, opposed calling Mary "Mother of God" as the Orthodox insisted.

Neviim: Hebrew term meaning "prophets," the designation for the second section of TaNaK, consisting of the Former Prophets (narrative works) and Latter Prophets (poetic works).

New Testament: The 27 compositions in Greek that form the traditional Christian canon and, with the "Old Testament," form the Christian Bible.

Old Testament: The term used by Christians for the writings of the Jewish Bible (read by the first Christians in the form of the Septuagint), to which the writings of the New Testament were appended to form the Christian Bible.

Opus Dei: Literally, "the work of God," referring to the round of public prayer carried out by choir monks and consisting largely of the recitation of the Psalms and other passages of Scripture. Also called the *Divine Office*.

Ora et labora: The ideal balance of the monastic life as depicted in Benedict of Nursia's *Rule for Monks*: "prayer and work."

Palimpsest: A manuscript on which an original text has been written over (*palin* = "again") with another. The most famous example is Codex Ephraemi rescriptus, on which the original Greek of the New Testament was covered by the sermons of Saint Ephraem.

Papyrus: The writing material produced from the papyrus plant. The writing surface is made by pressing split papyrus reeds together, horizontal on vertical. The horizontal surface (*recto*) is smoother and receives print more easily than the vertical side (*verso*).

Patristic: From the Latin *pater* ("father"), the term used to designate the literature produced in Christianity between the 1st and 6th centuries by the "fathers of the Church."

Persecutions: The series of efforts—some local, some general—to eliminate the Christian movement through force, reaching a climax in the persecution of Diocletian in 303. After the empire became Christian, heretics and Jews were also persecuted. In the period of the Reformation, dissident Christians in various countries were persecuted by the form of Christianity in power.

Peshat: Hebrew term used by medieval Jewish commentators for the literal, historical sense of the Bible. See also ***pesher***.

Pesher: Hebrew term meaning "interpretation" and used at Qumran for its sectarian interpretation of the Prophets and Psalms with reference to the experience of the community. See also ***peshat***.

Pharisee/Pharisaism: The 1st-century Jewish sect in Palestine that was committed to a close fellowship based on the strict interpretation of Torah, which was enabled through *midrash*. The Pharisees regarded such interpretation as the Oral Torah. Their convictions became standard for Judaism after the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E.

Pilgrimage: The practice of traveling (often in groups) to a place considered as holy to gain benefit from the power present through the influence of the saint or martyr commemorated at that place.

Pistis Christou: A Greek phrase found in the Letters of Paul whose translation is debated among scholars today: Should it be understood as "Christ's faith" (in God) or (the Christian's) "faith in Christ"? Both are legitimate renderings of the Greek, but the theological implication is significant.

Presbyter: Greek term for a community official used by the New Testament that could be translated (controversially) either as "priest" or "elder."

Pseudepigrapha: Literally, "things falsely written," referring to literature that is produced in a name not the author's own, usually a famous person of the past, as in the First Book of Enoch. Such literature is also termed *pseudonymous*.

Purgatory: In Roman Catholicism, a place or time of purgation after death for the cleansing of the soul of venial sins.

Reformation: The broad term used for efforts to reform the Church in the 16th century. Usually used with reference to Protestantism (associated with Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Cranmer, and others), but it can also be used for the Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation (see also **Council of Trent**).

Renaissance: Literally "rebirth"; the intellectual and cultural movements in Europe from the 14th through the 16th centuries that ended the medieval period and provided a transition to the modern era.

Sachkritik: German for "content criticism." The principle enunciated by Martin Luther that even the New Testament needs to be tested on the basis of its ability to proclaim the truth of the Gospel. In Luther's view, the Letter of James fell short.

Sacra Pagina: Latin for "sacred page," a term that was used for Scripture within the monastic context, suggesting a reading carried out more for the sake of wisdom than knowledge.

Sadducees: One of the sects or parties in 1st-century Palestinian Judaism made up primarily of the priestly class, whose piety centered in the worship of the Temple and who recognized only the five books of Moses as Scripture.

Samaritans: Inhabitants of the ancient northern kingdom of Israel (Samaria) and rivals of the Judeans (Jews) who worshipped at their own temple at Shechem and recognized only the five books of Moses as authoritative.

Scholasticism: Term used for the methods of argumentation and debate in the great medieval universities, such as Paris and Oxford. From the 12th century, Scholastic philosophy and theology forged a synthesis of Christianity and Greek philosophy (especially Aristotle in the form of translation).

Scribe: Someone who writes. In ancient Judaism, scribes were men associated with the Pharisees as advocating the *midrashic* reading of Torah; in Christianity, the term was used for those who copied manuscripts.

Scriptorium: The place where manuscripts are copied in monastic communities from Qumran to Cluny.

Scroll: The form in which most ancient manuscripts of Torah appear: Pieces of parchment or vellum are stitched end to end to form a long strip that can be rolled over a staff, with writing on one side only; the scroll is read by "unscrolling"—exposing new sections of text by turning the staff.

Sefirot: In Kabbalism, the emanation or radiation of the divine splendor throughout creation, in contrast to the divine being in itself (*Ein-Sof*). The human task is gathering these divine elements back to their source in a process called *tikkun ha olam* ("mending the world").

Septuagint: Abbreviated as LXX because of the tradition concerning 70 translators, the version of the Jewish Bible in Greek that was completed c. 250 B.C.E. and was used heavily by the first Christians as their "Scripture."

Sod: Literally, "secret"; in Jewish biblical interpretation, the finding of esoteric meanings in the exoteric text, beyond *peshat* and *darash*. An early example is *Merkavah* mysticism, and a later example is *kabbalah*.

Sola Fide: Part of the slogan connected to Martin Luther; "by faith alone" challenges the medieval Catholic system of canon law and Scholastic theology on the basis of Paul's teaching that humans are made right with God by faith rather than by works of the law.

Sola Scriptura: Latin, meaning "by Scripture alone"; part of the slogan connected to Martin Luther but widely shared by reformers, namely, that all Christian thought and practice should be measured exclusively by Scripture rather than human tradition.

Synoptics: The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, so called because their literary resemblance and interdependence enables them to be printed in three columns that can be viewed simultaneously (syn-optic).

Talmud: The compilation of rabbinic learning and lore based in the study of Torah. Its basis is the Mishnah of Judah ha Nasi (in Hebrew), to which is added the Gemara, or commentary and discussion, of the rabbis in

succeeding centuries (in Aramaic). The Talmud appears in two versions: the Babylonian Talmud, more authoritative for Jewish life for centuries, and the Talmud of the Land of Israel. The Talmud itself was the basis for further commentary through the centuries.

TaNaK: Proper name of the Jewish Bible (also Tanakh), an acronym formed from the three main parts of the Bible: Torah, Neviim (Prophets), and Ketuvim (Writings).

Targums: Aramaic translations/paraphrases of Torah that were first delivered orally in the worship of the synagogue and, eventually, found their way into writing; the earliest "version" of the Jewish Bible besides the Septuagint.

Teacher of Righteousness: Figure spoken of in the Dead Sea Scrolls as the source of the sectarian interpretation of Scripture practiced at Qumran; possibly the founder of the community.

Textus Receptus (TR): The Greek text of the New Testament on which many Reformation-era translations (including the Authorized or King James Version) were based; it is the Erasmus edition of 1516 emended by the Complutensian Polyglot and further improved by Theodore Beza.

Torah: Jewish designation for the first five books of the Bible and, by extension, to the entire tradition of lore and learning derived from the Bible as a whole.

Uncial: A form of Greek script called *majuscule* (written entirely in capital rather than small letters); the style in which the great codices of the 4th–5th centuries were written.

Vulgate: The translation/revision of the Latin version of the Bible carried out by Jerome by the commission of Damasus I at the end of the 4th century, which became the standard text used throughout Western Christianity and the official version of the Roman Catholic Church.

Zealots: A party or sect (sometimes called the *Fourth Philosophy*) in 1st-century Palestinian Judaism who sought military victory over Rome and the reestablishment of a Jewish nation.

Biographical Notes

Anan ben David (fl. 8th c.). Babylonian Jewish theologian. Anan ben David and his followers, the Ananites, challenged the validity of the Talmudic (or rabbinic) tradition, asserting that theology should be based strictly on Scripture. This position came to be called *Karaism*.

Aquila (fl. 130). Jewish scholar and translator. Born in Pontus (now Turkey), Aquila is known for his translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek. Aquila's literal translation was favored by many Jews who challenged the Christian understanding of the LXX, or Septuagint (translated in the 3rd century B.C.E.).

Athanasius (c. 296–373). Bishop of Alexandria and Doctor of the Church. In 325, Athanasius attended the Council of Nicea, where he was a major force in the rejection of Arianism, which challenged the divinity of Jesus. The council produced the Nicene Creed, which teaches that Jesus was fully man and fully God.

Augustine of Hippo (354–430). Bishop and Doctor of the Church. Augustine fought the heresies of Manichaeism (the idea that the physical world was completely evil and the spiritual world was the only good); Donatism (a North African separatist movement); and Pelagianism (which overemphasized natural human goodness).

Bar Hebraeus (1226–1286). Jacobite Syrian bishop who, among his many other achievements, gathered together and standardized versions of the Bible from the Peshitta and other Syriac translations, in addition to versions from Hebrew, Greek, and Asian sources. Bar Hebraeus was widely respected for his encyclopedic knowledge of theology, philosophy, history, grammar, medicine, and poetry.

Benedict of Nursia (c. 480–c. 550). Patriarch of monasticism in the West. He founded the Order of Saint Benedict at Monte Cassino (Italy). The *Rule* of Saint Benedict emphasized the centrality of work, prayer, and communal life. Benedictine monasteries were often repositories of learning and had a major impact on European culture.

Theodore Beza (1519–1605). French Calvinist theologian. When John Calvin died in 1564, Beza became leader of the Geneva Church and head of Calvin's academy in Geneva, Switzerland. He assisted in developing editions of the New Testament in Greek and Latin, intended to supersede Erasmus's editions.

John Calvin (1509–1564). A French theologian whose ideas, along with those of Martin Luther, guided the Protestant Reformation. Central to Calvin's thought were the ideas of total depravity (man is completely dependent on God's grace) and predestination (God's sovereign will has determined in advance who will achieve salvation). He wrote commentaries on 23 Old Testament books and virtually the whole New Testament. The Geneva Bible, which appeared in 1560, has an introduction by John Calvin, and its many notes reflect Calvin's pro-reform and anti-Catholic bias.

Constantine the Great (274?–337). The Roman emperor whose Edict of Milan in 313 completely legalized Christianity in the empire. Previously, the empire's official religion had been Greco-Roman polytheism. After the 4th century, Christianity was the privileged and powerful religion of the Roman Empire. Constantine's concern for unity led him to call the Council of Nicea in 325 to settle the doctrinal disagreements caused by Arianism.

Thomas Cranmer (1489–1556). Archbishop of Canterbury and a major figure in the English Reformation. Cranmer was influential in efforts to have the Bible translated into English and to secure a royal proclamation (1538) to have Bibles distributed to all parishes in England. During the reign of Edward VI, Cranmer wrote and compiled much of the Book of Common Prayer (published in 1549; revised in 1552). Cranmer's 42 Articles (1553) was the basis for the 39 Articles, a document that officially defines Anglican belief.

Saint Cyril (827–869). Monk, missionary, and linguist. Born into a prominent Greek family in Macedonia, Cyril and his brother, Methodius, were sent as missionaries among the Slavic peoples in Moravia, where they taught in the vernacular. Before his death, Cyril invented a Slavic alphabet called Glagolitic and began to write liturgical works in Slavonic.

Erasmus of Rotterdam (1469–1536). One of the greatest of Christian Humanists, Erasmus produced an edition of the Greek New Testament with his own translation into classical Latin in 1516. This translation, along with contributions by a number of other scholars, formed the basis for the "received text" underlying the King James Bible.

Thomas Erastus (1524–1583). Swiss Protestant theologian. In his *Explicatio* (written in 1568; published in 1589), Erastus argued that the sins of Christians should be addressed through civil law rather than through the Church's practice of excommunication. His argument was later expanded into what is known as *Erastianism*, which asserts the state's absolute supremacy over the Church—a more sweeping declaration than that originally made by Erastus.

Eusebius (c. 260–c. 340). A bishop of Caesarea (in Palestine); commonly called the father of Church history, Eusebius wrote the *Life of Constantine*, which glorified the accomplishments of the emperor who legalized Christianity.

Gregory the Illuminator (240–332). National saint and patron of Armenia. Gregory baptized King Tiridates III around 300, and Christianity was made the Armenian state religion. The ancient realm of Armenia was the first kingdom to officially welcome Christianity.

Johannes Gutenberg (c. 1398–1468). Credited with fundamental contributions to printing in the West. Beginning in 1436, he developed movable metal type, oil-based inks, a mold for casting type accurately, and a new kind of printing press based on those used in wine-making. By 1450, Gutenberg began work on printing the Bible and, in 1455, published a two-volume version of the Vulgate, known as the Gutenberg Bible.

Judah ha Nasi, Judah the Prince (135–c. 220). Revered Jewish scholar and patriarch in Palestine. For five decades, he studied the Jewish Oral Law, codifying it into the Mishnah, the oldest (after the Bible itself) compilation of the Jewish Oral Law. Judah ha Nasi's work was the basis of the Babylonian Talmud and the Talmud of the Land of Israel.

Henry VIII (1491–1547). English monarch. Henry challenged the theology of the Reformation, and as a result, the pope bestowed upon him the title "Defender of the Faith." However, Henry's desire to divorce Catherine of Aragon led to a break with Rome in 1533. Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries in England in 1536 and 1539.

Theodor Herzl (1860–1904). The "father" of modern Zionism. Born in Vienna, Herzl was a journalist whose experiences covering the Dreyfus affair in Paris during the 1890s convinced him of the critical necessity of a Jewish homeland. In 1896, the English translation of his *Der Judenstaat* (*The Jewish State*) appeared, and a year later, Herzl organized the First Zionist World Congress in Basel, Switzerland. Herzl's ideas anticipated the creation of a Jewish state 50 years later.

Irenaeus of Lyons (c. 130–c. 202). Bishop, pastor, teacher, and missionary. Irenaeus worked to establish a defined collection of writings by which to measure Christian teaching and is said to have been the first Christian writer to list the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—as authoritative. He devised a threefold strategy for Christian self-definition: rule of faith, canon of Scripture, and apostolic succession. Most important was his affirmation of the "Old Testament" as an authoritative witness to the work of God continuous with God's revelation in Jesus.

King James I (1566–1625). English monarch. During his reign, scholars developed one "authorized" English translation of the Bible, known as the King James Version. Published in 1611, it was, for many years, the official Bible for English-speaking Protestants throughout the world and went through five editions.

Saint Jerome (c. 342–420). Doctor of the Church and translator of the Bible into the standard Latin version called the Vulgate. His personal translations and his oversight of other revisions resulted in a single, seamless Scripture that captured the "imaginative world of the Bible" from beginning to end. Together with Saint Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine*, Jerome's Vulgate became the source and shaper of liturgy, literature, and learning during the Middle Ages in the West.

Martin Luther (1483–1546). German leader of the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, which explicitly challenged medieval Catholicism on the basis of the Bible. Luther's principle of *sola fide* asserted that man's salvation lay in faith alone, with good works secondary to faith. His principle of *sola scriptura* set forth the supreme authority of the Bible—rather than Church officials—as the criterion for judgments in the area of faith and morals. Luther translated the Bible into German—the New Testament in 1522 and the Old Testament in 1534.

Mesrob (d. 440). Armenian missionary and translator. Bishop Mesrob is credited with developing the Armenian alphabet; overseeing the translation of the Bible (based on the Syriac version) into Armenian; and later, supervising the revision of the Armenian Bible on the basis of Greek manuscripts. The translation of the Bible into Armenian marked the birth of that nation's literature.

Saint Methodius (c. 826–885). Monk, scholar, and archbishop of Great Moravia. Along with his brother, Saint Cyril, Methodius served as a missionary among the Slavs of Moravia. Methodius's greatest achievement was the translation of the Bible into Old Church Slavonic, using the Glagolitic alphabet developed by his brother.

Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides) (1135–1204). Jewish philosopher, theologian, and physician. At a time of persecution, Moses ben Maimon wrote his *Guide for the Perplexed*, which sought to demonstrate the continuities between the philosophy of Aristotle and Scripture. He also seriously engaged Islamic scholars. Many consider his most important achievement to have been the first full systemization of Mosaic and rabbinical laws, called the Mishneh Torah.

Eberhard Nestle (1851–1913). A biblical scholar who played a key role in the effort to establish a fully "critical text" of the Bible in the original languages of Hebrew and Greek. The Nestle-Aland is now in its 27th edition and forms the basis of the United Bible Societies' edition for translators, the most widely used critical edition.

Philo of Alexandria (c. 20 B.C.E.–c. 50 C.E.). Jewish philosopher. His writings, which sought to synthesize Judaism and Greek philosophy, influenced later Christian theologians, including Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Origen. At a time when Jews in the Mediterranean world were sometimes divided about what constituted "Torah" (the definitive texts for Jewish identity, culture, and worship), Philo appears to have focused on the Law of Moses, although he was also aware of the Prophets and other writings.

Pompey (106–48 B.C.E.). Roman general. A rival of Julius Caesar, Pompey conquered Palestine, asserting Roman dominance in 63 B.C.E.

Saadia (ben Joseph) Gaon (c. 880–942). Babylonian rabbi, grammarian, and religious philosopher. He was an ardent opponent of Karaism, a set of ideas challenging the rabbinic tradition of Judaism. In an attempt to preserve religious and cultural identity among Babylonia's Jewish elite, who were drawn to the Arabic language and Muslim culture, he translated virtually all of the Bible into Arabic, wrote the first book of Hebrew grammar and a Hebrew dictionary, and attempted to reconcile Judaism with the thought of Plato and Aristotle, who were highly esteemed in the Arab world.

Cyrus Scofield (1843–1921). American Protestant pastor and author of the *Scofield Reference Bible* (1909). Scofield was a popularizer of dispensationalism, a set of theological ideas asserting that a restored nation-state of Israel would be important in the "end days," during which the Church on Earth would be destroyed and caught up in "rapture" to heaven, and a Jewish kingdom, consisting of Jews who had accepted Jesus as the Messiah, would then become God's kingdom on Earth. Dispensationalism was a precursor of Christian Zionism, whose proponents see the modern state of Israel as one aspect of this prophecy's fulfillment.

Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac (1040–1105). Jewish biblical interpreter, grammarian, and legal authority. Known by the acronym Rashi, Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac is regarded as the greatest medieval commentator both on the entire Bible and on the Babylonian Talmud. His insistence on *peshat*—which affirms the literal sense of biblical interpretation—was especially important as a way of countering Christian messianic claims.

Symmachus (fl. late 2nd century). Scholar and translator. Also called Symmachus the Ebionite, he translated the Old Testament into Greek. His excellent mastery of the Greek language was recognized by Saint Jerome, who used Symmachus's Greek text of the Bible in the writing of the Vulgate.

Tatian (c. 110–c. 180). Second-century Christian apologist. Thought to have been born in Syria, Tatian received a Greek education, converted to Christianity in Rome, and became a student of Justin Martyr. Two works for which he is noted are his *Oratorio ad Graecos*, which denounced paganism and sought to prove the superiority of Christianity, and his Diatessaron, which attempted to show the continuity of Jesus' life among the varied accounts of the four Gospels. The Diatessaron was the primary, if not the only, Gospel text in Syria during the 3rd and 4th centuries.

Tertullian (c. 155–c. 225). Christian apologist. He is important as an early witness to Latin translations of Scripture and for the development of a distinctive Latin theology. He was a pivotal figure in the acceptance of Latin (rather than Greek) as a language for the Church's life and teaching. Among his most famous works were the *Apologeticus* (*Apology*), which defended monotheism and countered pagan accusations that the Church was immoral and aimed to overthrow the power of the state, and *De praescriptione haereticorum* (*On the Claims of Heretics*), which asserted that the Church was the sole authority in the matter of Christian orthodoxy.

Theodotion (mid-2nd century). A Hellenistic Jewish scholar who wrote a Greek translation of the Old Testament. This translation was included along with those of Aquila of Pontus, Symmachus, and others in Origen's famous *Hexapla*, a comprehensive work that attempted to compare and contrast the LXX (Septuagint) with the Hebrew text and other Greek translations. Origen relied on Theodotion's translation for information not contained in the LXX and other translations. Much of the ordinary Greek translation of Jeremiah and Job comes from Theodotion.

William Tyndale (c. 1494–1536). English scholar and religious reformer. Tyndale translated into English the first printed version of the Bible in 1525, and much of his work is apparent in the King James Version, published in 1611. A follower of Martin Luther, Tyndale was burned at the stake for heresy.

Ulfilas (c. 311–383). Translator and missionary, often called the "Apostle to the Goths." Trained in Constantinople, Ulfilas invented a Gothic alphabet out of Greek and Latin characters, as well as Gothic runes, which enabled him to translate the Bible into the vernacular language of the Goths. This translation of the Bible was a key element in the success of Ulfilas's missionary activity.

Valentinus (c. 100–c. 153). A Gnostic scholar whose ideas were the most widely disseminated of the Gnostic heresies. Gnosticism asserted that all matter, including the body, was evil and that a special "spiritual" knowledge was given only to a select few. Educated in Alexandria (Egypt), Valentinus established schools in that city and Rome. He was condemned by Irenaeus, Clement, and other fathers of the Church. In 1945, Coptic Gnostic papyri were found at Nag Hammadi, one of which—the *Gospel of Truth*—is believed to be linked to Valentinus.

Constantin von Tischendorf (1815–1874). A German biblical scholar who recovered the Codex Sinaiticus, a 4th-century manuscript containing a portion of the Old Testament, the entire New Testament, and two other early Christian works known before this only by title. He discovered the Codex Sinaiticus at Saint Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai.

John Wycliffe (c. 1330–1384). English philosopher and theologian; Wycliffe translated the first complete version of the Bible into English (1382). Increasingly discouraged by religious institutions, he developed a theory of the Church that separated the earthly, "material" Church from the divine, "ideal" Church. He argued for the supremacy of civil over ecclesiastical authority and opposed the authority of the pope and religious orders because he believed they were not supported by Scripture.

Bibliography

Essential Reading:

For a modern translation of the Christian Bible that is readable and reasonably accurate, I recommend the *Revised Standard Version*, which is also available in a variety of study versions; for the Jewish Bible, see the *JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1999).

In a course that covers much of the recorded history of the West in 24 lectures, "essential readings" often take the form of surveys rather than of specific primary texts. Many of the topics in this course are treated magisterially in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, three volumes: 1. *From Beginnings to Jerome*, eds. P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans; 2. *The West from the Fathers to the Reformation*, ed. G. W. H. Lampe; 3. *The West from the Reformation to the Present Day*, ed. S. L. Greenslade (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963, 1969, 1970). Other essential readings include the following.

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Marcus, J. R. *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Source-Book.* Cincinnati: The Union of Hebrew Congregations, 1938. A fine archival collection of primary texts illustrating the life of ordinary Jews in Europe during the Middle Ages.

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———. *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1968. An authoritative and accessible introduction to the entire spectrum of issues involved in the text of the New Testament.

Pelikan, J. R. *The Excellent Empire: The Fall of Rome and the Triumph of the Church*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1987. A readable examination of this critical transition by the greatest historian of Christianity in the 20th century.

Philo of Alexandria. *Allegorical Laws*. Translated by F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981 [1929]).

Shuger, D. K. *The Renaissance Bible: Scholarship, Sacrifice, and Subjectivity*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994. A stimulating (and demanding) examination of the way in which the biblical stories and symbols engaged the imagination of great scholars in the rebirth of European learning.

Steinmetz, D. C., ed. *The Bible in the Sixteenth Century*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1990. A collection of essays drawn from an international scholarly conference, with papers on both Jewish and Christian interpretation.

Tyndale's New Testament. Translated from the Greek by William Tyndale in 1534, in a modern-spelling edition and with an introduction by David Daniell. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

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Yarchin, W. *History of Biblical Interpretation: A Reader.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004. A convenient compilation of primary texts.

Young, F. M. *Biblical Exegesis and the Transformation of Christian Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. An influential study that shows the role of biblical interpretation in staking Christian claims against both Jews and Gentiles and forming a distinctive Christian culture in antiquity.

Supplementary Reading:

Abegg, M., Jr., P. Flint, and E. Ulrich. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999. Despite the slightly breathless title, a significant scholarly accomplishment, pulling together thousands of Hebrew fragments into a coherent text.

Aland, K., and B. Aland. *The Text of the New Testament*. Revised and enlarged edition, translated by E. F. Rhodes. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. Two of the editors of the Nestle-Aland critical edition of the New Testament present a rich array of the evidence that must be taken into account.

Alter, R. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. New York: Basic Books, 1981. An early example of an approach to the Hebrew Bible that uses contemporary literary-critical sensibilities in order to engage some of the complexities and richness of the Hebrew text.

Barr, J. *Fundamentalism*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978. A scholar writing from the perspective of the historical-critical method challenges the premises and practices of Fundamentalist interpreters, calling them intellectually incoherent.

Beattie, D. R. G., and M. J. McNamara, eds. *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in Their Historical Context*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 166. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994. The essays in this volume come from an international conference devoted to the Targums and cover a variety of aspects of these important early vernacular translations of the Hebrew Bible.

Campenhausen, H. von. *The Fathers of the Church*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998. This volume pulls together two works published first in 1960 by the great historian of early Christianity and provides short and sharp studies of important teachers from the East and West.

Coogan, M. D. *The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. A thoroughly up-to-date and comprehensive examination of the Hebrew Bible from the perspective of the historical-critical method. The latest word on scholarly debates and decisions.

Couch, M., ed. *The Fundamentals for the Twenty-First Century: Examining the Crucial Issues of the Christian Faith*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2000. A series of essays from the inside of Fundamentalism, beginning with "Can Truth Be Known?" and ending with "Eternity: The New Heavens and New Earth."

Daniell, D. *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003. Written by an expert in William Tyndale, this recent study is particularly valuable for the way it traces the influence of the English Bible in literature and art.

de Lubac, H. *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture*. Two volumes, translated by M. Sebanc and E. M. Macieroski. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998, 2000 (originally published in 1958). A deeply scholarly and influential study that helped revivify the study of biblical interpretation in the Middle Ages by examination of some of its fundamental premises.

Ehrman, B. D. *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993. A scholarly examination of one element in manuscript transmission, providing an awareness of major Christological controversies and many specific textual examples.

———, and M. W. Holmes. *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995. A set of essays offered in honor of B. M. Metzger that provides up-to-date information on a wide range of issues concerning Greek manuscripts and ancient versions.

Frei, H. W. *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974. A difficult but important study that shows the impact of the Enlightenment on the interpretation of biblical narratives.

Frye, N. *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Jovanovich, 1982. The great literary critic turns his always stimulating imagination to the world of the Bible, arguing for a narrative (mythic) logic to the book as a whole.

Grant, R. M., and D. Tracy. *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible.* Second edition, revised and enlarged. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984. A useful starting point, identifying the major periods and figures.

Greetham, D. C. *Textual Scholarship: An Introduction*. New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1994. A wonderful survey of everything pertaining to texts, from manuscripts through printing to critical texts, not just with respect to the Bible but to other compositions, as well.

Hartman, G. H., and S. Budick. *Midrash and Literature*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986. Of interest especially for the essays in the first section, which are written by outstanding Jewish scholars, and cover everything from earliest *midrash* to *kabbalah*.

Hauser, A. J., and D. F. Watson, eds. *A History of Biblical Interpretation*. Volume 1: *The Ancient Period*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003. A fine collection of essays touching on aspects both of Jewish and Christian interpretation up to Jerome.

Holtz, B., ed. *Back to the Sources: Reading the Classic Jewish Texts*. New York: Summit Books, 1984. Essays by leading Jewish scholars on the texts that shaped Jewish identity through the ages, from Torah through Talmud, Zohar, and the Tales of the Hasidim.

Jenkins, P. *Hidden Gospels: How the Search for Jesus Lost Its Way*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. A well-written account of the contemporary battle over the canon of Scripture, played out both in the academy and the Church.

Jobes, K. H., and M. Silva. *Invitation to the Septuagint*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Books, 2000. A readable introduction to the LXX, the important Jewish translation of the Bible into Greek and the Christian "Old Testament" for many centuries.

Johnson, L. T. *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*. Second enlarged edition with Todd Penner. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999. A readable introduction to the earliest Christian compositions, with extensive bibliographies for further reading. Contains a helpful chapter on canonization.

———. "Imagining the World That Scripture Imagines," in *The Future of Catholic Biblical Scholarship: A Constructive Conversation*, with William S. Kurz. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002. An essay proposing that the best way to engage the Bible is through the use of creative imagination, rather than through a rigid literalism.

Knight, D. A., and G. M. Tucker, eds. *The Hebrew Bible and Its Modern Interpreters*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985. A publication of the Society of Biblical Literature at its centennial, this collection of essays surveys the scholarly field, including attention given to the impact of archaeology on the field.

Kugel, J. L., and R. A. Greer. *Early Biblical Interpretation*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986. Two leading historians provide authoritative introductions to Jewish and Christian interpretation before the Constantinian era.

Kugel, J. L. *The Bible As It Was*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997. A wonderful evocation of traditional interpretation within both Judaism and early Christianity, showing how the strangeness of the Hebrew Bible gave rise to diverse interpretations.

Levenson, J. D. *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993. An example of contemporary Jewish academic study that appropriates the richness of both Jewish and Christian traditions in the examination of the Akedah (the sacrifice of Isaac).

———. *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1985. One of the outstanding contemporary Jewish readers of Scripture invites readers into a distinctively Jewish appreciation of TaNaK.

Marty, M. E., ed. *Modern American Protestantism and Its World: Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*. Munich: K. G. Saur, 1993. A number of historians write essays on various aspects of the two distinct yet interrelated phenomena.

McAuliffe, J. D., B. D. Walfish, and J. W. Goering, eds. *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. A collection of essays that combines surveys of all three traditions, as well as detailed studies of individual figures and topics.

McDonald, L. M. *The Formation of the Christian Biblical Canon*. Revised and expanded version. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995. A solid, non-speculative review of the process by which the diverse compositions of the first Christians eventually formed the collection by which all subsequent Christian life would be measured.

Metzger, B. M. *The Bible in Translation: Ancient and English Versions*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Books, 2001. A more accessible treatment of the ancient translations than his *Early Versions*, with attention as well to the King James Version and more recent translations.

Muller, R. A., and J. L. Thompson, eds. *Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996. Scholarly essays devoted to virtually every important Reformation interpreter, including Erasmus, Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, and many less well-known figures.

Pagels, E. *The Gnostic Gospels*. New York: Vintage Books, 1989 (1979). An influential examination of the Nag Hammadi codices that helped open the contemporary debate concerning the canon of the Bible.

Reventlow, H. G. *The Authority of the Bible and the Rise of the Modern World*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984. A study of the impact that the Enlightenment, especially in the form of English Deists, had on the Bible's assumed authority, together with some elements of anti-Deist apologetics.

Smalley, B. *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*. Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 1964. A groundbreaking study of the social contexts and literary endeavors of important medieval interpreters of the Christian Bible, with special attention to the School of St. Victor.

Sternberg, M. *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985. An Israeli scholar engages the ancient Hebrew narratives with an eye to both their literary elements and their ideological import.

Trible, P. *Texts of Terror: Literary Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984. An early and influential example of an examination of the biblical stories from the perspective of female oppression, showing how such stories can misshape, as well as shape, human character.

Warfield, B. B. *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1948. One of the heroes of biblical Fundamentalism—and one of its most coherent representatives—makes the case for its understanding of inspiration and authority.

Westcott, B. F. *A General View of the History of the English Bible*. Third edition, revised by W. A. Wright. New York: MacMillan Company, 1927. An older study but valuable for its many fine excerpts from the various versions.

Wycliffe, John. *On the Truth of the Holy Scripture*. Translated with an introduction and notes by Christopher Levy. Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, 2001. This is one of the major works in which Wycliffe anticipated the Protestant Reformation, by putting Scripture's authority over that of the church.

Internet Resources:

I am still a text- more than an Internet-person, but I have found http://em.wikipedia.org to be a reliable and free resource.

The Story of the Bible
Part II

Professor Luke Timothy Johnson

THE TEACHING COMPANY ®

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Luke Timothy Johnson is the Robert W. Woodruff Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins at Emory University's Candler School of Theology in Atlanta, Georgia. Professor Johnson earned his B.A. in philosophy from Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans, a Master of Divinity in theology from Saint Meinrad School of Theology, an M.A. in religious studies from Indiana University, and his Ph.D. in New Testament studies from Yale University.

A former Benedictine monk, Professor Johnson has taught previously at Yale Divinity School and Indiana University. He is the author of more than 20 books, including *The Real Jesus: The Misguided Quest for the Historical Jesus and the Truth of the Traditional Gospels* and *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*, which is used widely as a textbook. He has also published several hundred articles and reviews.

At Indiana University, Professor Johnson received the President's Award for Distinguished Teaching, was elected a member of the Faculty Colloquium on Excellence in Teaching, and won the Brown Derby and Student Choice awards for teaching. At Emory University, he has twice received the On Eagle's Wings Excellence in Teaching Award.

Professor Johnson is married to Joy Randazzo. They share seven children, thirteen grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. Johnson also teaches the *Apostle Paul, Early Christianity: The Experience of the Divine, Great World Religions: Christianity, Jesus and the Gospels, and Practical Philosophy: The Greco-Roman Moralists* for the Teaching Company.

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The Story of the Bible

Scope:

The Bible contains many fine stories, ranging from the sagas of the ancient patriarchs to the parables of Jesus. Even people who do not regard it as a religious authority appreciate the Bible as a collection of ancient literature that tells wonderful stories and as the source of many others. But the Bible as a book also has a story, one as fascinating in its way as any of the stories told within its pages.

This is a course about the world's most famous, most read, most debated, and sometimes, most detested book. How, when, and why did it enter the world? What have been the stages of its growth? In how many forms has it appeared? How has it exercised its influence?

The story is a long one, stretching from the first collections of ancient Jewish Law hundreds of years before the Common Era, down to the present day, when the translation and production of Bibles in all the world's languages and dialects remains a publishing phenomenon, making the Bible more reliably available in hotel rooms than the Yellow Pages.

Because this is the story of a book, it must include consideration of the material elements that go into the production of all books, starting with the writing and collection of scrolls and moving through the writing and copying of manuscripts and the invention of printing, which made it possible for the Bible to be in every hand in every land. And because this is a book that has spread through the world, the story is also about languages and the process of translation. What happens when the original Hebrew of Torah is translated into Greek or when the Greek of the New Testament is translated into Latin and then into all the languages of the ancient and modern world? What new meanings do translations allow and what older meanings do they obscure?

The story of the Bible is also complex. Indeed, because there are actually several Bibles, several stories must be told more or less simultaneously. Jews and Christians call different collections of compositions "the Bible" and read them in different languages. Different groups of Christians also have distinct collections that they call the Bible; although the collections of Catholic, Orthodox, and Protestant Christians overlap, they are by no means identical. Both the causes and consequences of such diversity deserve attention, especially given that the process by which canonical decisions were reached, particularly within Christianity, was by no means undisputed—and remains disputed by some even today.

The Bible's story includes the history of its reading and interpretation within the diverse religious traditions that accord it a special authority. Jews and Christians not only read different Bibles, but they interpret their sacred texts from distinct perspectives and premises. Biblical interpretation lies at the heart of Jewish and Christian identity, and the story of the Bible is inextricable from the history of these religious traditions.

Interpretation takes place through the deliberate work of sages and theologians, to be sure, as a book that generates countless other books. Interpretation of the Bible also occurs through communal practices of worship and through the prayer, poetry, works of art, and musical compositions of individuals inspired by biblical imagination.

This course tells the story in four stages. The first stage focuses on antiquity, tracing the way in which compositions that were written by different authors for different readers in different times and places were gathered together into collections to form, first, the Hebrew Bible, then, the New Testament. The second stage follows the process of text transmission, translation, and interpretation within Jewish and Christian communities through the medieval period. The third recounts the critical period of the Protestant Reformation, with particular attention to the implications of printing (and the possibility of individual interpretation of Scripture) and the translation of the Bible into English. The fourth stage considers the romance of the recovery of ancient manuscripts, the construction of critical editions, and the rise of critical historical scholarship on the Bible, as well as the role played by biblical translation in missionary efforts around the world.

No short course can provide "everything you ever wanted to know about the Bible," but this one makes a responsible start on a story that especially needs telling because it is at once so little known and so widely misapprehended.

Lecture Thirteen
Interpretation in Medieval Christianity

Scope: Christian biblical interpretation in the medieval period was carried out through commentaries but also through a variety of liturgical expressions, as well as homilies and theological writings. This lecture sketches some of those ritual and literary forms and identifies some of the overarching premises governing biblical interpretation that had developed since the birth of Christianity. Of special interest is the conviction that the Bible bears meaning, not simply as a literal witness of the past, but as a voice that speaks to the present through a variety of "spiritual" senses.

Outline

I. More than at any time before or after, Christianity was biblically shaped during the medieval period.

- **A.** The Bible was critical in the patristic period (3rd–6th centuries), but interpretation was carried out in lively exchange with Greco-Roman culture and Judaism.
- **B.** From the Reformation to the modern period, the Bible has been important, but its place has been controversial.
- **C.** In the Middle Ages, Christians lived in a world that was shaped most powerfully by Scripture.
  - **1.** Christians in Europe were isolated from competing great cultures of the world.
  - **2.** Islam was regarded as a threat from without, whose intellectual challenge only slowly became clear.
  - **3.** Judaism was considered to be a "biblical people" whose failure to recognize Jesus as Messiah removed them from a central place in the biblical story.

II. Before the invention of printing, the experience of the Bible story was less individual and direct than it was communal and indirect.

- **A.** In the liturgy, Scripture was primarily an oral/aural experience of the gathered community.
  - **1.** The monks frequently memorized the Psalter even through they had the texts before them in the stalls; other readings (at Matins) were heard rather than seen.
  - **2.** At Mass, the words of prayer and Scripture were heard as read from a lectionary, and then elaborated through a homily.
- **B.** The symbols of Scripture organized the time and space of monks and laypeople in complex ways.
  - **1.** The stages of life were marked by the sacraments, and the stages of a single year were marked by liturgical seasons: The temporal cycle followed the biblical story, and the sanctoral cycle, the feasts of saints; the times of day were marked by the hours of prayer.
  - **2.** Places were sacred because of their association with a holy person or event: Pilgrimages, crusades, and the use of relics all testify to the connection between place and power.
  - **3.** The great medieval cathedrals gave expression to the biblical stories through the ornamentation of the choir, statuary, and above all, the stained-glass windows.
  - **4.** Before the development of science, technology, and critical history, it was possible to "imagine the biblical world" in the context of the actual empirical world of everyday life.
- **C.** The more direct and individual experience of "reading the Bible" was available to those who were literate and whose work required them to engage the biblical text (almost exclusively the Latin of the Vulgate).
  - **1.** In monasteries, those choir monks who worked in the scriptorium or who served as abbots, priors, or novice masters needed to interpret Scripture in order to teach or preach.
  - **2.** Similarly, great cathedrals had *chapters* (organizations) that met for instruction and gave instruction through attached schools.
  - **3.** In such contexts were composed and copied the medieval scriptural commentaries, homilies, and spiritual writings.
  - **4.** The Abbey of Saint Victor in Paris (1113) was a center for mystics and scholars, including Hugh (d. c. 1142) and Richard (d. 1173).
- **D.** The medieval universities (Bologna, Paris, Oxford) that arose in the 12th and 13th centuries represented a more professional and "scientific" study of Scripture.

1. The Bible was the chief source book for the "science" of theology, which was, in turn, the "queen of the sciences."
2. The shift from the monastic *sacra pagina* to Scholasticism involved both social setting and approach to the text (e.g., Thomas Aquinas).

III. Although the Bible was interpreted through multiple media in the medieval period, there was also an enormous body of literature devoted explicitly to interpretation.

A. The governing premise of all interpretation was that Scripture revealed God's Word to humans.
1. The conviction that all of Scripture was divinely inspired meant that God was regarded as the ultimate author, even though human authorship was acknowledged.
2. Connected to inspiration was the sense of the Bible's authority: The task of human reason was to discover what God said (however cryptically), rather than to challenge what the text said.

B. Given that God was the author of all of Scripture, then the Bible must speak in a unified and harmonious fashion.
1. The Old Testament and New Testament told a single story, which was also the story of the Bible's readers.
2. The Old Testament found its meaning through the "fulfillment of prophecy" in the story of Jesus and the Church.
3. The "moral laws" of the Old Testament were maintained in the New, whereas the "ritual laws"—like the events of the past—found continuing meaning as "types" of Christian sacraments and life.
4. The Bible spoke harmoniously within itself and was also harmonious with the Church's tradition; thus, interpretation must seek the deeper harmonies beneath the apparent discrepancies and disagreements on the surface of the text.

C. Because God was the author of Scripture, every text of the Bible could yield meaning at one of several levels.
1. The literal or historical meaning gave the basic story, and for Christians, unlike Jews, this sense was the least interesting, especially in the case of the Old Testament.
2. The allegorical sense enabled Scripture (even in the Old Testament) to speak about Christ and the Church.
3. The tropological sense enabled the Bible to speak to the moral life and to the soul's progress toward God.
4. The anagogical sense applied the Scripture to heavenly realities.

D. Because Christian identity in this period was so grounded in shared practices and social structures, biblical interpretation—especially in monasteries and chapters—tended to be linked to wisdom and spirituality. In the universities, by contrast, Scripture became a tool for controversy, against both Jews and Muslims.

Essential Reading:

F. M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Transformation of Christian Culture*.

Supplementary Reading:

H. de Lubac, *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Compare and contrast the fourfold levels of meaning that Christians found in the Bible to the perspectives of medieval Jews.
2. How did the way of life in monasteries and cathedral chapters affect the manner in which the Bible was read?

Lecture Fourteen
The Renaissance, Printing, and the Bible

Scope: The rebirth of classical learning in Europe in the 15th century gained much of its impact from the invention of printing, which made available to all interested parties the wealth of learning from Greece that challenged the Latin synthesis of the medieval period. It is not surprising to find that the publication of the Gutenberg Bible was the great achievement of printing with movable type. Nor is it shocking, given the central role of the Bible in shaping European culture, to find Humanists, such as Erasmus, rushing to put into print the Greek version of the New Testament (the Textus Receptus) that would challenge the hegemony of Jerome's Latin Vulgate and thereby elevate the learning of the scholar who knew Greek over the authority of the priest who had only Latin. Erasmus was not alone: The Complutensian Polyglot (1502–1522) was a massive example of Humanistic learning.

Outline

I. The European Renaissance of the 15th and 16th centuries represented both a recovery of a certain kind of learning and a change in the view of the world.

- **A.** The fall of Constantinople in 1453 meant an emigration of scholars and of Greek and Arabic manuscripts to the West, advancing the recovery of knowledge of Greek language, religion, and philosophy.
- **B.** Such new knowledge challenged the medieval synthesis, which had relied on a unified view of Church and state, of philosophy and theology.
- **C.** With an altered sense of the past came a sense of history and, with a sense of history, the sense of the possibility of change.
  - **1.** An appreciation for the human place in the world is reflected in art and literature (Humanism).
  - **2.** A sense of possibility and control in the world is seen in the growth in science and technology (Leonardo da Vinci, 1452–1519).
  - **3.** The development of Italian states was accompanied by theories of politics removed from divine rights (Niccolo Machiavelli, 1469–1527).

II. The invention of the printing press in Europe revolutionized the publication and reading of the Bible.

- **A.** Block printing had been invented in China in 888 (the *Diamond Sutra*), as had movable clay type (1041); the first iron printing press was used in China in 1234. Europeans had used *xylography* (engraving on wood, block printing) by 1423.
- **B.** Johannes Gutenberg (c. 1398–1468) is credited with the fundamental contributions to printing in the West.
  - **1.** Beginning in 1436, he developed movable metal type, oil-based inks, a mould for casting type accurately, and a new kind of printing press, based on presses used in wine-making.
  - **2.** In 1450, Gutenberg began work on printing the Bible and published a two-volume version of the Vulgate in 1455, producing 180 copies, of which 45 were on vellum and 135 were on paper. The Bibles were first printed, then illuminated by hand. Some 60 complete or partial copies are extant.
  - **3.** The first printed Bibles resembled manuscripts, lacking pagination, word spacing, indentation, or paragraph breaks.
  - **4.** Chapter and verse divisions had been introduced (by Stephen Langton) into manuscripts of the Vulgate in 1205 and to some Greek manuscripts by 1400. These did not appear in printed versions of the Bible, however, until added by the Robert Stephanus (Étienne) family of printers, appearing in the New Testament in 1565 and the Old Testament in 1571.
- **C.** The art of printing, which spread rapidly and made books (and Bibles) less and less expensive, had several consequences.
  - **1.** Just as writing created a more stable text than oral tradition, printing offered the theoretical possibility of an absolutely stable and infinitely replicable Bible.
  - **2.** The availability of relatively inexpensive books to many meant the possibility of individual ownership and individual reading.
  - **3.** The ready accessibility of the printed text meant that "reading the Bible" could become primarily a visual rather than an oral/aural experience.

III. The invention of printing combined with the recovery of ancient learning to stimulate the quest for a "better Bible."

A. The availability of manuscripts of the New Testament in Greek had much the same effect as the Greek writings of Plato.

1. The Greek was the earliest and original version, whereas the Latin, however fine, was later and secondary.

2. The expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492 also opened up the possibility for conversation between Christian and Jewish Humanists concerning the Hebrew text.

B. Scholars sought to make available a version of the Bible that was more "scientific" than the Vulgate in ordinary use.

1. In Spain, Cardinal Ximenes organized a group of scholars at the University of Alcala (Latin: Complutum) to publish the Bible in six folio volumes between 1514 and 1522, the Complutensian Polyglot. The New Testament in Greek appeared in print in 1514, and the entire Bible (with Old Testament having parallel columns of Hebrew, LXX, and a Latin interlinear) appeared in 1522.

2. One of the greatest of Christian Humanists, Erasmus of Rotterdam (1469?–1536), produced—on the basis of a handful of late and mediocre manuscripts—an edition of the Greek New Testament with his own translation into classical Latin in 1516.

3. The Textus Receptus ("received text") that underlay the King James Bible was based on the versions of Erasmus and the Complutensian scholars, as well as the contributions of the reformer Theodore Beza (1519–1605) and the printer/editor Robert Stephanus.

IV. These developments began a tension between scholar and priest, university and Church, that has never adequately been resolved.

A. In the life of the Church, the Vulgate held sway and corresponded to the use of Latin in the liturgy. An undereducated clergy could work only in this version.

B. In the academy, the scholar had access to versions of Scripture earlier (and perhaps superior) to the one used in the Church: The Hebrew and Greek called into question the absolute authority of the Vulgate.

C. Soon, there would be an increased demand for Scripture to be available, through the means of printing, in the language of the people.

Essential Reading:

D. K. Shuger, *The Renaissance Bible: Scholarship, Sacrifice, and Subjectivity*.

Supplementary Reading:

R. Griffiths, ed., *The Bible in the Renaissance: Essays on Biblical Commentary and Translation in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How is the law of unintended consequences illustrated respectively by the fall of Constantinople to the Muslims and the invention of printing in the same decade?

2. How does the notion of a "scholar's Bible" challenge ideas of ecclesiastical authority?

Lecture Fifteen
The Protestant Reformation and the Bible

Scope: The Protestant Reformation of the 16th century can be said to place a focus on the authority and reading of the Bible that was unprecedented in Christian history while reducing the number of ways in which the Bible was actually experienced. This lecture takes up the set of convictions concerning Scripture, held especially by Martin Luther, that distinguished the Reformation from the long period of interpretation that preceded it: the exclusive value of the literal sense, the principle of individual interpretation, the perspicuity of Scripture, the necessity of content criticism, and the authority of the individual reader. In some ways, there is a perfect fit between the theological convictions driving the Reformation—especially its notion of the priesthood of all the faithful—and the practices of individual pious reading that the printing press made possible.

Outline

I. The Protestant Reformation of the 16th century explicitly challenged medieval Catholicism on the basis of the Bible.

- **A.** Prophets and Gospel alike provided fuel for the criticism of moral corruption among monks and clergy.
- **B.** The sacramental system and the use of relics and indulgences were called into question because they were not in Scripture.
- **C.** The entire institution of monasticism, with its vows of poverty and chastity, was regarded as an unhappy corruption of robust discipleship in the world.
- **D.** The complexities of canon law and Scholastic philosophy were scorned to the degree that they replaced scriptural piety.
- **E.** The Reformation did not entirely dismiss tradition, but it made the Bible the norm by which tradition is measured.

II. The supreme place given the Bible can be assessed from various Reformation confessional statements compared to the classic Apostles' Creed and Nicene Creed, which never mention Scripture at all.

- **A.** The *Augsburg Confession* (1530) is a moderate and conservative statement of Lutheran belief presented to Emperor Charles V by German princes and cities.
  1. The opening sections state the shared convictions of Christians but conclude with a discussion of faith and works (20) and the cult of the saints (21) that states the Lutheran position, claiming for it: "this teaching is grounded clearly on the Holy Scriptures."
  2. The closing sections (22–28) deal with "Matters in Dispute": the elements of the Eucharist, marriage of priests, the Mass, confession, monastic vows, and the power of bishops. In each case, an argument is made against current Catholic practice on the basis of the New Testament.
- **B.** Early confessional statements from the Reformed tradition are even more explicit in the status assigned to the Bible.
  1. The *Ten Conclusions of Berne* (1528) states as its second principle: "The church of Christ makes no laws or commandments apart from the word of God," and no human tradition is acceptable except as grounded in or prescribed by the Word of God.
  2. The *Second Helvetic Confession* (1566) begins, "We believe and confess the canonical Scriptures of the holy prophets and apostles of both testaments to be the true word of God, and to have sufficient authority of themselves, not of men." The first two sections are devoted to the authority and interpretation of the Bible, before turning to the elements of the traditional creed.
  3. The *Westminster Confession* (1646) devotes its first chapter to a lengthy discussion of the authority of Scripture (which depends not on humans "but wholly upon God [who is truth itself], the Author thereof") and its interpretation: "The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself."
- **C.** Even the theologically more moderate English Reformation took its stand on the authority of Scripture.

1. The *Edwardian Homilies*, composed by Thomas Cranmer (1547), include "A Fruitful Exhortation to the Reading and Knowledge of Holy Scripture," which declares, "there is no truth or doctrine necessary for our justification and everlasting salvation, but that is, or may be drawn out of that fountain and well of truth."
2. The sixth of the Thirty-Nine Articles (1563) is "Of the Sufficiency of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation," which again declares that nothing should be believed except what can be based in Scripture.

III. Martin Luther's principle of *sola fide, sola scriptura* found expression in convictions that were to hold together over time.

A. The slogan *sola fide* was an appeal to a heartfelt religious response rather than a mechanistic ritual, but it made more difficult the consideration of "good deeds"; similarly, *sola scriptura* was a plea for a simpler, biblical religion, rather than the complexities and corruption of medieval Catholicism, but it caused problems of its own.

B. Luther rejected all forms of allegory in favor of the literal sense of Scripture alone.
1. On the positive side, this enabled a reading of the Old Testament in terms of promise.
2. On the negative side, it left all the problems that allegory was devised to solve.

C. To deal with the issue of inconsistencies and contradictions, Luther called for *sachkritik* ("content criticism"): A writing was the Word of God insofar as it testified to Christ.
1. On this basis, Luther dismissed the Letter of James because it did not agree with Paul on faith and works.
2. But content criticism directly conflicts with the notion of "Scripture alone" as adequate norm.

D. Luther's notion of the "priesthood of the faithful" led logically to the principle of individual interpretation of the Bible.
1. The principle and practice were enabled by the rapid proliferation of personal Bibles made possible by printing.
2. But individual reading of the literal sense alone leads inevitably to disunity, given the contradictions and inconsistencies in Scripture.

IV. The Protestant Reformation can be seen as a successful effort to bring the rich experience of Scripture in monasteries to ordinary people.

A. Protestant worship takes many forms, but in all its forms, Scripture holds a privileged place.
1. The pulpit rivals the altar as the focal point of the church, while the readings, sermons, and prayers all have a definite biblical composition.
2. Scriptural piety and theology are expressed in the hymns that replaced Gregorian chant in liturgy, with stunning examples written by Martin Luther and Charles Wesley.
3. The experience of Scripture in worship is continued through Bible study and private devotional reading.

B. The scriptural piety generated by the Reformation had an obvious effect on such artists as Albrecht Dürer (1471–1528), Matthias Grünewald (1475–1528), and Rembrandt van Rijn (1606–1669).

C. The music of Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) was deeply affected by his Lutheran piety and sometimes took its themes from Luther's hymns or the Gospel accounts (*St. John Passion*, *St. Matthew Passion*); similarly, the great oratorios of George Frideric Handel (1685–1759) were based on the Bible.

D. In literature, John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* (1678) and John Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667) are unmistakably marked by the distinctive scriptural outlook of the Reformation.

Essential Reading:

D. C. Steinmetz, ed., *The Bible in the Sixteenth Century*.

Supplementary Reading:

R. A. Muller and J. L. Thompson, eds., *Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How does the assertion of the Bible's supreme value both create and solve problems for its readers?
2. Discuss the ways in which the experience of the Bible remained the same and changed before and after the Reformation.

Lecture Sixteen
Translating the Bible into Modern Languages

Scope: The Reformation shattered the religious and cultural unity of medieval Europe and, at the same time, helped fragment political unity; Christendom broke into separate states defined, in part, by their allegiance either to the Catholic or Protestant version of Christianity and, in part, by distinct national identity. The translation of the Bible into the separate European languages was part of this process. Just as Jerome's Vulgate transformed Latin even as it translated the Bible, so did Luther's translation of the Bible into German (1522) become a formative influence on the shaping of German language and culture. This presentation also notes the other early efforts to make the Bible accessible to populations in their own languages and includes a review of the contents of the Bible for the distinct communities of faith.

Outline

I. European history in the aftermath of the Reformation (and Catholic Counter-Reformation) lost any trace of social and religious unity.

- **A.** The Constantinian premise of the unity of state and Church continued, increasingly in the direction of Erastianism—the supremacy of state over Church.
  - **1.** The dictum *cuius regio eius religio* ("the religion of the prince is the religion of the realm") held sway.
  - **2.** Europe became a checkerboard of Protestant and Catholic countries, with Catholicism in France, Italy, and Spain (the Holy Roman Empire) and one form of Protestantism or another in Germany, Scandinavia, England, and part of the Low Countries.
- **B.** The militaristic spirit of the Crusades expressed itself in a long series of religious wars between Protestant and Catholic nations.
- **C.** This competition between branches of Christianity also extended itself into world exploration.
- **D.** The sense of national identity was sharpened further by the development of modern European languages and literatures.
- **E.** The Bible appears to be a unifying element because all sides appealed to it, but its intrinsic internal diversity enabled any position to be supported.

II. After the Reformation, it is possible to speak of four distinct collections going by the name of "the Bible."

- **A.** The Jewish Bible consists of 39 compositions in Hebrew (if each is counted individually): the 5 books of Moses (Torah), the 21 books of the Prophets (Neviim), and the 13 books of the Writings (Ketuvim).
- **B.** The Protestant Bible has 66 books, retaining the traditional 27 Greek writings of the New Testament (despite Luther's complaints) but adopting the Hebrew canon for the Old Testament:
  - **1.** The books, however, are organized differently: the Pentateuch (5 books), the 12 historical books (Joshua through Esther), the 5 wisdom books, and 17 books of the prophets.
  - **2.** The books that came from the LXX are referred to as Apocrypha and, if included, usually appear in a separate section.
- **C.** The Council of Trent in 1546 affirmed the traditional canon used in Catholicism and asserted the authority of the Vulgate text for faith and morals.
  - **1.** The Catholic canon includes the 27 writings of the New Testament and the Old Testament canon found in the LXX (47), for a total of 74 writings.
  - **2.** The writings that Protestants call *apocryphal* are termed *deuterocanonical* but are included in the separate categories of historical books (see 1 and 2 Maccabees), wisdom books (see Wisdom of Solomon and Sirach), and the prophets (see Baruch).
- **D.** The largest canonical collection is maintained by the Eastern Orthodox tradition (77 writings); it has the 27 writings of the New Testament, plus the 39 writings of the Hebrew Bible, plus 11 (rather than 8) writings from the LXX (1 Esdras, 3 and 4 Maccabees).

III. The Bible became "the people's book" as it was quickly translated into the developing modern European languages.

A. The most significant initiative was taken by Luther himself, who translated the Bible into German, the New Testament in 1522 (in three months!) and the Old Testament in 1534. There had been efforts before him, despite episcopal resistance, but his was the most successful.

1. For the New Testament, Luther used Erasmus's edition of the Greek, and for the Old Testament, he used a Hebrew text prepared by associates.

2. Luther rendered the Bible in a fresh and simple High German that would shape Lutheran piety and the German language for centuries.

3. Luther was not afraid to emphasize points of Reformation theology in his translation (see Romans 3:28), and his introductions to the books of the Bible remained influential.

B. Translations of the Bible quickly appeared in other major European languages.

1. Spanish translations appeared already in the medieval period (1280), notably, the Bible of the Duke of Alba (1430) and the Old Testament by Rabbi Solomon (1420). The first complete Bible from the original languages was the Biblia del Oso by Casiodoro de Reina in 1569.

2. The first printed translation of the Bible into French was by Jacques Lefèvre d'Étaples and appeared in 1530. The Port-Royal version by Antoine and Louis Isaac Lemaistre in 1695 won wide acceptance by both Catholics and French Huguenots.

3. In the Netherlands, the first translation into Dutch from the Hebrew and Greek was ordered by the Synod of Dordrecht (1618) and appeared in 1637.

4. Gustav I Vasa (1496–1560) converted Sweden to Protestantism and ordered the Bible to be translated into Swedish.

C. Among both Protestants and Catholics, translations into other European languages cemented national identity and helped shape national literatures. The Bible was translated from the Vulgate into Czech in 1488, then from the original languages between 1579 and 1593; the New Testament was translated into Finnish in 1548, and the whole Bible appeared in 1642; in Hungarian, the New Testament was printed in 1541, and the entire Bible in 1590; and a Polish translation of the Bible came out between 1541 and 1597.

IV. The faith of Europe was decisively changed in a matter, not of centuries, but of decades, and the Bible was part of this change.

A. From a positive standpoint, it can be said that the Bible was no longer remote from ordinary people.

B. But there were other aspects of this rapid proliferation of the Bible within a divided Christianity that perhaps had less happy results.

Essential Reading:

J. L. Flood, "Martin Luther's Bible Translation in Its German and European Context," in *The Bible in the Renaissance: Essays on Biblical Commentary and Translation in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries*, R. Griffiths, ed., pp. 45–70.

Supplementary Reading:

M. H. Black, "The Printed Bible," in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, Vol. 3: *The West from the Reformation to the Present Day*, S. L. Greenslade, ed., pp. 408–475.

Questions to Consider:

1. In what way is the statement that the Bible's story is the story of many Bibles especially true following the Reformation?

2. What might the proliferation of translations into European languages suggest about a popular thirst for scriptural knowledge (and, perhaps, about publishing opportunities for ambitious printers)?

Lecture Seventeen
The First Efforts at Englishing the Bible

Scope: The subversive effect of Bible translation can be seen in the earliest efforts to render the Bible in English. Before the invention of printing (1382), John Wycliffe translated the entire Bible into English from the Latin Vulgate and was condemned as a heretic for his efforts. Possession of any part of the Bible in English was a capital offense. Despite this disincentive, William Tyndale translated and published the complete New Testament and parts of the Old Testament in English (1525–1534), an accomplishment that had great influence on later translators. Rapidly, other English versions appeared, by Myles Coverdale (1535) and "Thomas Matthew" (1537). Competition was offered from the Roman Catholic side by the Douai-Rheims translation of the Vulgate (1582–1610).

Outline

I. The movement toward translating the Bible into English illustrates the mix of religious and political elements in the period of the Reformation, especially in England.

- **A.** The Reformation in England had a distinctive character because it was tangled in the dynastic concerns of Henry VIII (1491–1547).
  - **1.** Henry himself was "Defender of the Faith" and resisted reform theology until his death.
  - **2.** His desire to divorce Catherine of Aragon, however, led to a break with Rome in 1533, and Henry dissolved the monasteries in 1536 and 1539.
  - **3.** Thomas Cranmer, the archbishop of Canterbury (1489–1556), abetted Henry's divorce and worked for reform.
- **B.** Edward VI, Henry's son by Jane Seymour, was regent from 1547 to 1553 but was guided by Cranmer.
  - **1.** It was under Edward that England moved more toward the Reformation—we saw in a previous lecture the *Edwardian Homilies*, which were written under the influence of Cranmer.
  - **2.** Cranmer composed the Book of Common Prayer in 1549.
- **C.** Mary Tudor (1516–1558), Henry's daughter by Catherine, became queen in 1553 and turned England decisively and violently—her nickname "Bloody Mary" comes from the persecutions that took place under her—back to Roman Catholicism.
- **D.** Elizabeth I (1533–1603), daughter of Henry and Anne Boleyn, ruled England from 1558 to 1603 and brought it decisively within the Protestant camp.

II. The first complete version of the Bible in English came from the efforts of John Wycliffe (c. 1330–1384), who anticipated the Reformation in many ways.

- **A.** Wycliffe was an Oxford don who studied philosophy and was outspoken in his criticism of the Church.
  - **1.** He distinguished between a spiritual ("true") Church and a material ("unworthy") Church and argued for the supremacy of civil over ecclesiastical authority (*On the Truth of the Sacred Scripture*).
  - **2.** In his book *On Apostasy*, he declared that civil government should reform the Church and that there is no basis for the monastic life in Scripture.
- **B.** Wycliffe translated the Bible from Latin into English because of his conviction that it should be available to all.
  - **1.** The Wycliffe translation (1382) was extremely literal, handwritten, and based on the Vulgate.
  - **2.** Wycliffe was assisted in the translation by John Purvey (d. 1428) and Nicholas of Hereford (d. 1420), both of whom were also imprisoned because of their work.
- **C.** Wycliffe was condemned by the Council of Constance. The movement called *Lollardy* (the *Lollards*) may have grown out of his views; in any case, it was a broad-based lay movement of dissent within Catholic England that helped prepare for the Reformation.

III. The greatest figure in the history of Englishing the Bible is William Tyndale (c. 1494–1536), whose work laid the foundation for all that followed.

- **A.** Tyndale studied at Oxford, then Cambridge, from 1510 to 1515; a skilled linguist, he knew Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Spanish, French, Italian, German, and English.

B. He wanted to translate the Bible in 1522, but the bishop of London refused permission (Luther's works were burned at St. Paul's in 1521); thus, in 1524, Tyndale moved to Germany.

C. He worked directly from the Hebrew and Greek. The printing of the first edition of the New Testament was in 1525, and it was attacked in England in 1526. He printed his translation of the Pentateuch and Psalms in 1530 and of Jonah in 1531. At his death, Job through 2 Chronicles was in manuscript.

D. From 1528 to 1530, Tyndale debated with Thomas More. In 1529, Henry proscribed Luther's works and included Tyndale. In 1535, he was arrested near Brussels, strangled, and burned at the stake. Before his death, he is reported to have said, "Lord, open the King of England's eyes."

E. In 1537, Henry VIII allowed the English Bible to be distributed in his kingdom.

F. It is Tyndale who fashioned the idiom of "biblical English" that was taken up by subsequent translations, including the King James Version.

IV. Following Tyndale, a number of other English versions quickly appeared and found readers.

A. Myles Coverdale (1488–c. 1568) was an Augustinian friar who became a reformer and, while in exile on the Continent, produced (in 1535) a translation based on the Vulgate, Luther, and Tyndale, with 188 woodcuts and the Apocrypha placed between the Old and New Testaments. Anne Boleyn supported the effort.

B. John Rogers, under the pseudonym "Thomas Matthew," died as a martyr under Mary Tudor but not before publishing (in 1537 in Antwerp) the Matthew's Bible, based on Tyndale and Coverdale and dedicated to Henry VIII, who had licensed it. The order of the books was Luther's; the Bible appeared in two folio volumes with 199 illustrations and 2,000 annotations.

C. John Tavener, a lawyer and competent scholar in Greek, educated at Oxford and Cambridge, produced a version of the Matthew's Bible in 1539, which was the first actually printed in England.

D. Thomas Cromwell (c. 1485–1540), a strong proponent of the Reformation, sponsored the publication of the Great Bible in 1539, named for its size (15 inches by 9 inches) and notable for its title page. This Great Bible is fundamentally the Coverdale Bible; the Great Bible is also called the Cranmer Bible because Thomas Cranmer wrote the preface.

Essential Reading:

Tyndale's New Testament, a modern-spelling edition of the 1534 translation, with an introduction by David Daniell.

Supplementary Reading:

John Wycliffe, *On the Truth of the Holy Scripture*, translated with an introduction and notes by Ian Christopher Levy.

Questions to Consider:

1. How do the stages of the English Reformation, and of the English translation of the Bible, illustrate the principle of Erastianism?
2. How did the growth of Humanistic learning, associated with the Renaissance, set the stage for English translations?

Lecture Eighteen
The King James Version

Scope: Just as Jerome's translation of the Vulgate brought some order to the chaotic world of ancient Latin translations, so did the Authorized Version of the Bible ordered by King James I of England in 1604 have a similar effect in stabilizing the English Bible. The process by which this revision (not really a fresh translation) was carried out set a pattern for future efforts. It involved teams of scholars who were experts in the original languages, seeking a mediating path among existing translations, among which that of Tyndale exercised the greatest influence. The translation appeared in 1611 (including the Apocrypha) and immediately won widespread approval because of its outstanding literary merit.

Outline

I. The Authorized Version, or the King James Version (KJV), of the Bible came about as an attempt to standardize a chaotic state of affairs.

A. Several English translations vied for primacy in the late 16th and early 17th centuries.

1. The Geneva Bible appeared in 1560, translated by William Whittingham. It was the first English version to have numbered chapters and verses. It had an introduction by John Calvin, and its many notes reflected a pro-reform and anti-Catholic bias (see the translation of *congregation* and *elder*). The Geneva Bible went through 140 printings before 1640 and was used by James I and the Puritans; it was the Bible of Bunyan and Shakespeare.

2. The Bishops' Bible was authorized by Elizabeth I precisely to counter the Geneva Bible. Published in 1568, it retained traditional ecclesiastical terms, but it was less literarily impressive and popular (20 reprints before 1606).

3. Meanwhile, Gregory Martin and Richard Bristow, Catholic scholars in exile in Rheims, produced a New Testament in 1582 with a distinctly Catholic preface. The translation is from the Vulgate but takes the Greek into account. In 1610, Catholic scholars publish the Old Testament in Douay. This version became known as the Douay-Rheims Bible.

B. Similar to the way in which Damasus I assigned Jerome the task of revising existing Latin versions into the Vulgate, so King James desired a version that would be "authorized" and could—and eventually did—supplant other English versions.

II. The process by which the KJV was produced was official and elaborate and set the pattern for many subsequent projects.

A. At the Hampton Court Conference in 1604, James I responded to a petition for a new translation that was needed because of the inadequacy of earlier ones.

1. The conference issued a set of principles to guide the translation, making clear that it was to be conservative and without annotation.

2. Fifty-four scholars from Oxford, Cambridge, and Westminster formed teams to translate assigned sections.

3. In 1609, a review panel of three scholars went over the preliminary work of the six teams.

B. The translation had as its basis the Masoretic text of the Old Testament and the Textus Receptus of the New Testament, but it also made steady use of earlier versions. About 80 percent of the New Testament, for example, agrees with Tyndale. It is fairly literal, with words not found in but implied by the original marked in most printings by square brackets or italics.

C. The Authorized Version (with Old Testament/Apocrypha/New Testament) was published by Robert Barker in 1611. It went through five editions, with the 1769 version (by Benjamin Blayney) being the most commonly cited.

D. The use of the familiar red letters marking the sayings of Jesus in the New Testament is a recent addition, added by Louis Klopsch (editor of *The Christian Herald* magazine) to the New Testament in 1899 and in an edition of the entire Bible in 1901.

III. The Authorized Version became "the Bible" for generations of English-speaking people in England and its many colonies, including America.

A. The merit of the translation is real but can also easily be overstated.

1. Its combination of simplicity, grace, and power is obvious when familiar passages are read.

2. But comparison with the Geneva Bible shows that its rivals also had merit, and it must be remembered how much the language of the KJV is drawn from Tyndale.

3. The supposed influence of the KJV on English literature can also be overstated. Milton and others used it, but Bunyan, Shakespeare, and John Donne used the Geneva Bible.

4. Part of its influence comes from its quasi-"authorized" position and its success in eliminating others (the last printing of the Geneva Bible was in 1644).

B. The deficiencies of the KJV are not due to its translators but to other factors.

1. The textual basis of the KJV is inadequate when measured by the developed science of text criticism of the Hebrew Bible and New Testament.

2. The knowledge of Hebrew and Greek has advanced considerably as a result of intense scholarship in the past 400 years.

3. The English language itself has changed dramatically, so that a translation that was simple and direct in the 16th century appears obsolete and even unintelligible in the 21st century.

Essential Reading:

B. Bobrick, *Wide as the Waters: The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution It Inspired*.

Supplementary Reading:

B. M. Metzger, *The Bible in Translation: Ancient and English Versions*.

Questions to Consider:

1. Compare the translation of 1 Corinthians 13 in the King James and any contemporary version as a way of assessing the beauty and intelligibility of the respective translations.

2. How does an understanding of the process by which the KJV came into existence affect claims made for its unique authority for Christians?

Lecture Nineteen
The Romance of Manuscripts

Scope: With the invention of printing, manuscripts ceased being indispensable instruments of community life and became objects either to be discarded or preserved as art. Scholars began to appreciate the value of manuscripts for more than their antiquity or ornamentation; they were seen as windows into the past. The 19th century in particular was a time of exploration for ancient manuscripts, made urgent by the danger of their disappearance. The quest for ancient biblical manuscripts was supplemented by archaeological discoveries. Some sites contained biblical papyri—the oldest physical evidence for the Bible—and others revealed ancient writings of great importance for understanding the world that produced the Bible.

Outline

I. Once the Bible was printed, the relationship between the book and manuscripts became more complicated.

- **A.** Before the invention of printing, manuscripts *were* the Bibles of specific communities of Christians. The multiplication of differences in manuscripts was less obvious because of patterns of use.
- **B.** Printing held the promise of stabilizing the biblical text and making a single version available to all.
  - **1.** The multiple editions and corrections made to the KJV showed that printing itself could not ensure perfection.
  - **2.** As translations multiplied, furthermore, the question of their basis became more pressing.
- **C.** Scholars also became increasingly aware of how few and how poor were the manuscripts on which the Textus Receptus was based.
- **D.** Thus, there was a three-stage progression: from manuscript as Scripture, to manuscript as the basis for the Bible, to manuscript as challenge to the printed Bible.

II. The 18th through the 20th centuries saw antiquarians and historians scouring monasteries and libraries throughout Europe and the Middle East in the search for biblical manuscripts.

- **A.** The most dramatic tale of discovery is that of the Codex Sinaiticus, found by Constantin von Tischendorf in 1844.
  - **1.** On his visit to Saint Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai, von Tischendorf found monks using leaves of a manuscript of the LXX for kindling and persuaded them to preserve the valuable manuscript.
  - **2.** On later visits, he recovered a large portion of the Old Testament and the entire New Testament in the form of an uncial manuscript dating from the 4th century, including in that manuscript two other early Christian works known before that time only by title.
  - **3.** The manuscript was given to Russia, but after the Revolution of 1917, it was sold to the British Museum.
- **B.** Less dramatic, but equally important, was the location and study of manuscripts that would be older and more reliable than the medieval manuscripts used as the basis of the Textus Receptus.
  - **1.** Of great importance is Codex Vaticanus, stored at the Vatican Library since 1475 and another example of a 4th-century uncial, perhaps one of those ordered by the Emperor Constantine. It contains both Testaments (including Apocrypha), with some *lacunae*.
  - **2.** Codex Alexandrinus dates from the 5th century; it was donated to Charles I of England by the patriarch of Constantinople in 1627 and is today in the British Museum. It contains the Old Testament and substantial portions of the New Testament.
  - **3.** Codex Ephraemi carries another dramatic tale: It is a palimpsest text from the 5th century that had been erased and had sermons of St. Ephraem written over it. Von Tischendorf recovered the original, an important witness to portions of the Old and New Testaments.
  - **4.** Among the oddest of the ancient manuscripts is Codex Bezae (also Codex Cantabrigiensis), a bilingual (Latin and Greek) manuscript of the Gospels, Acts, and a portion of 3 John, written in parallel columns; it was donated to Cambridge by the reformer—and editor of the Greek New Testament—Theodore Beza in 1581.

C. The late 19th and early 20th centuries also saw the discovery of ancient papyrus manuscripts, particularly of the New Testament.

1. The Chester Beatty Papyri include P46, a manuscript from c. 200 that contains Paul's Letters, and P52, the oldest copy of any portion of the New Testament, a tiny scrap of John from the first half of the 2nd century.

2. The Bodmer Papyri include P66, a portion of John dating from c. 200; P72, the earliest known text of Jude and 2 Peter (3rd century); and P75, the earliest witness to the Gospel of Luke (c. 175–225).

III. Over the same period of time, extraordinarily important archaeological discoveries uncovered other ancient manuscripts and gave hope for the discovery of more.

A. From 1897, many thousands of fragments of papyri were found at Oxyrhynchus near the Nile River, containing a wide assortment of material from the late 1st century to the 7th century C.E., including scriptural and apocryphal writings.

B. In 1945, a collection of 13 papyrus codices in leather bindings was discovered at Nag Hammadi in Egypt, containing a variety of Gnostic writings in Coptic from the 3rd and 4th centuries.

C. In 1947, the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered in jars located in a series of caves at Wadi Qumran in Israel, containing an entire library of scriptural and sectarian writings from the ancient sect of the Essenes.

IV. The effect of such discoveries was to stimulate further an already healthy appetite to revisit and retell the story of Judaism and Christianity, as well as the story of the Bible.

A. The overall effect of discovering earlier biblical manuscripts was the realization of greater variation in the manuscript tradition in earlier years rather than in later years.

B. The overall effect of the discovery of other ancient literature was to challenge conclusions drawn on the basis of a much smaller body of data.

Essential Reading:

B. M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*.

Supplementary Reading:

W. F. Albright, "The Bible after Twenty Years of Archaeology (1932–1952)," in W. Yarchin, ed., *History of Biblical Interpretation: A Reader*, pp. 263–275.

Questions to Consider:

1. What effect would the continuous discovery of ancient manuscripts have on widening the gap between the believer's Bible and the scholar's Bible?

2. How does the recovery of manuscripts from the 2nd to the 6th centuries challenge the translations made of texts based on 10th- and 11th-century manuscripts?

Lecture Twenty
Searching for the Critical Text

Scope: The discovery and collection of ancient manuscripts fueled the drive toward the construction of a truly critical edition of the Bible. This lecture describes the character of a critical edition, the materials available for the establishment of a critical edition of the Jewish and Christian Bibles, and stages toward the completion of the task. It discusses the way scholars trace the family history of manuscripts and make decisions concerning the earliest (hypothetical) state of the biblical text. In addition to the quest for the earliest possible text, this discipline also opens the way for another aspect of the history of biblical interpretation, with variant readings showing how specific faith communities of the past heard the Bible.

Outline

I. The most important evidence for the development of a scholar's Bible was the desire for a *critical text* in the original languages of Hebrew and Greek.

- **A.** The Protestant Reformation had placed its emphasis squarely on the literal meaning of Scripture, but where was that literal sense to be found? Early translations were based on few and faulty manuscripts.
- **B.** Comparison among manuscripts indicated that copyists had altered their texts in a variety of ways, raising doubts concerning the reliability of translations.
- **C.** The location, collection, and analysis of manuscripts sharpened the desire to find the earliest—perhaps even original—form of the biblical text.
- **D.** The quest for a critical text is one of the most truly scientific aspects of biblical study, more elaborate and advanced in the case of the New Testament than in the case of the Hebrew Bible.

II. To understand the accomplishment, it is necessary to understand the dimensions of the problem.

- **A.** The most obvious difficulty facing the establishment of the text is the sheer amount and complexity of data.
  1. More than 5,000 Greek manuscripts are extant, many of them in fragmentary condition and all of them requiring deciphering.
  2. In addition to the Greek texts, there are thousands of manuscripts in all the ancient versions, with their own variations from one another; besides these, there are countless citations and allusions in patristic literature, some of which predate our earliest manuscript tradition.
  3. In each of these kinds of texts, scholars find the many kinds of unintentional and intentional alterations that are inevitable in scribal labor; no two manuscripts are exactly alike, and there are tens of thousands of "variants."
- **B.** The process of solving the problem has required infinite patience and hard decisions.
  1. Simply identifying, collecting, transcribing, and collating manuscripts is a monumental labor, itself subject—especially before computerization—to its own "scribal errors."
  2. A necessary step is to identify *families* of manuscripts and trace their descent from the newest back to the oldest.
  3. It is clear that the vast majority of manuscripts from the medieval period belong to one basic family (Byzantine or Koine), but older manuscripts fall into more distinct groups (Alexandrian, Western, Caesarean).
  4. In attempting to establish a critical text, the basic choice is between adopting a single manuscript or family as a base and using a more radically eclectic method.
- **C.** Since the time of J. A. Bengel (1687–1752), scholars have used three rules of thumb in deciding between variant readings.
  1. The weight, not the amount, of evidence should be counted: A few of the older and more reliable manuscripts tend to carry the decision over a multitude of newer and less reliable witnesses.
  2. The shorter reading is to be preferred: This rule is based on the observation that, in general, copyists tend to expand a text rather than shorten it.

3. The harder reading is to be preferred: This sometimes counterintuitive rule is based on the premise that scribes try to "improve" a text in the direction of what they think it "ought" to say—thus, the "easier" reading.

III. Progress toward a fully critical text demanded the dedication of countless scholars over a period of centuries.

A. Among the pioneers were Richard Simon (1638–1712), who challenged the Protestant conception of the adequacy of Scripture on the basis of text criticism; J. A. Bengel; and J. J. Wettstein (1693–1754), whose two-volume edition of the New Testament in 1751–1752 provided a rich set of variants, organized into categories.

B. The scientific method proper began with a clean break from the Textus Receptus with J. J. Griesbach (1745–1812), and Karl Lachmann (1793–1851), who tried to establish the Greek text of the New Testament as it was in the 4th century.

C. The 19th and early 20th centuries were dominated by the labors of von Tischendorff (1815–1874), who not only found and edited manuscripts but produced a number of fine critical editions; B. F. Westcott and F. J. A. Hort, who argued for four basic text groups and, in 1881, produced an influential critical edition based primarily on Vaticanus and Sinaiticus; J. Weiss, whose New Testament in Greek (three volumes) used the eclectic method; and H. F. von Soden, who in 1913, produced a monumental two-volume edition of the Greek text.

D. The most widely used critical edition is based on the work of Eberhard Nestle (1851–1913), who devised a text based on the agreement of any two versions among the editions of Westcott and Hort, Weiss, and von Tischendorff, but who also supplied a wealth of textual variants. The Nestle-Aland is now in its 27th edition and forms the basis, as well, of the United Bible Societies' edition for translators.

IV. What, then, is a critical edition, and how do scholars use it?

A. A *critical edition* contains a Greek (or Hebrew) text that, in the judgment of the editors, best approximates the earliest available form of what was written.

B. The *critical apparatus* provides the manuscript evidence for and against the decisions made by the editors.

C. Scholars and translators are able to use both the judgments reflected in the body of the text and the variants to make their own textual decisions.

Essential Reading:

L. Vaganay and C. B. Amphoux, *An Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*.

Supplementary Reading:

K. Aland and B. Aland, *The Text of the New Testament*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How does the critical text of the New Testament illustrate the fact that the Bible is a "constructed book"?
2. Compare the degree of difficulty in constructing the critical text of the New Testament to producing an edition of other ancient writings.

Lecture Twenty-One
The Historical-Critical Approach

Scope: Alongside the use of the Bible in faith communities as the authoritative guide to life, there arose after the Enlightenment an equal (and often competing) interest in the Bible among scholars as a source for the reconstruction of history. Historical critics were often in tension with faith communities because of their divergent aims, even though many of these critics also had theological commitments of their own. This presentation discusses the aims and methods of historical criticism with respect to the Bible and touches on the results of three great projects: the study of the history of ancient Israel, the study of the history of the early Church, and the quest for the historical Jesus.

Outline

I. The Enlightenment in Europe (17th–18th centuries) initiated a new way of reading the Bible that created tension with traditional readings.

- **A.** In many respects, the Enlightenment continued the ethos of the Renaissance but with a sharper edge.
  - **1.** The effects of world exploration made even clearer the limits of the biblical world.
  - **2.** The effect of the Wars of Religion in Europe was a moral revulsion against dogmatism.
  - **3.** The effect of constant theological debate was a desire for a religion that consisted in moral teaching.
- **B.** The fundamental assumptions of the Enlightenment challenged "the world imagined by the Bible."
  - **1.** The conviction that human reason is the measure of all truth put the authority of revelation in question.
  - **2.** The premise that only verifiable facts can be true removed the value of mystery and metaphor.
  - **3.** The triumph of historical consciousness reduced the Bible to a historical record, whose value was measured by its historical accuracy.
  - **4.** Baruch Spinoza (1632–1677) distinguished between "meaning and truth," and in England, Deist thinkers challenged the revelatory character of Scripture.
- **C.** The *historical-critical method* in biblical studies combines Enlightenment premises, Protestant theological perspectives, and scientific methods.
  - **1.** The Enlightenment premises are found primarily in the reduction of a text's significance to its historical character.
  - **2.** Protestant theological perspectives come out in the value judgments made, for example, on "prophecy and law" or "origins and development."
  - **3.** Scientific methods consist in the accurate assessment of ancient sources for their historical rather than religious value.
- **D.** The relationship between historical criticism and the Church was uneasy from the start.
  - **1.** It was easy for the Church to embrace a "benign" form of historical inquiry that continued a focus on the traditional literal sense, and many scholars, working within theological institutions, saw themselves in service to religion.
  - **2.** Unease grew with the sense that "history" really had a "theological" agenda of subverting the essentials of traditional faith.

II. The study of the history of ancient Israel reveals the distinct way of reading the Old Testament.

- **A.** Archaeology is not only an important ancillary discipline to reading, but it becomes the model for reading.
  - **1.** The ability to "verify" archaeologically biblical accounts becomes a test of biblical truth.
  - **2.** Reading biblical literature is like excavating an archaeological site: Dissection of layers of tradition yields chronological development in history.
- **B.** In combination with archaeology and comparative literature from the ancient Near East, biblical sources are deconstructed and reorganized according to historical periods.
  - **1.** The four sources of the Pentateuch are thought to yield information of a historical character, not about the events they report, but about the interests of their authors.
  - **2.** The division of Isaiah into three distinct prophetic voices in different periods and the location of Daniel in the Maccabean period affect the perception of the meaning of "prophecy."

C. The progress of historical study tends to problematize the "truth" value of biblical accounts far beyond the difficulty of Jonah's whale.
   1. If the patriarchs are simply legend, then what is "the faith of Abraham"?
   2. If the Exodus did not happen, then how is God a "liberator"?
   3. If there is no court of Solomon, then what is "Solomon in all his glory"?

III. The progress of studying the history of early Christianity follows a similar path, with archaeology playing the same role of measure and metaphor.
   A. The material in the New Testament is, if anything, more difficult, with only one narrative about events in early Christianity and the other literature lacking external controls.
   B. The tendency has been to challenge the orthodox account (constructed from the Acts of the Apostles and Eusebius) on the basis of scientific analysis.
   C. Developmental models serve to control the intrinsically fragmentary evidence: the dialectic of Jew and Gentile, the movement from charism to institution, the elimination of diversity through orthodoxy.

IV. For obvious reasons, the most contentious historical-critical project has been the quest for the historical Jesus.
   A. From the start, the quest was as much about theology as it was about history: the recovery of a "usable Jesus."
   B. There are three things we can say about this quest:
      1. The quest has led to diverse results.
      2. The real gain has been in a better understanding of the character of the Gospels.
      3. The degree to which Christians find the quest important is the degree to which historical-critical reading has become the dominant mode even within the Church.

Essential Reading:

B. Spinoza, "Of the Interpretation of Scripture" (from *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*), in W. Yarchin, ed., *History of Biblical Interpretation*, pp. 198–207.

Supplementary Reading:

H. G. Reventlow, *The Authority of the Bible and the Rise of the Modern World*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How do the premises of the historical-critical approach differ from those of biblical interpretation in the patristic, medieval, and Reformation eras?

2. Why is the battle over Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch or the historical Jesus in effect a battle over ways of reading the Bible?

Lecture Twenty-Two
The Bible in Contemporary Judaism

Scope: In classical (Talmudic) Judaism, the Bible had unquestionable authority, but the written Torah was always read within the framework and from the perspective of the Oral Torah. After the Enlightenment, the movement called Reform Judaism represented an attempt to base Jewish life more squarely on the Bible, specifically, on the prophetic literature. The major challenge to Jewish identity, however, has come about because of two 20th-century events: the Holocaust and the establishment of the state of Israel. This presentation touches on several contemporary Jewish views of the Bible in light of these historical developments.

Outline

I. For Jews, as for Christians—though in different ways—the Enlightenment was a mixed blessing.

- **A.** On the positive side, the ideal of tolerance was spelled out in the form of the emancipation of Jews from the constraints of Christendom.
- **B.** From a negative standpoint, official toleration did not mean the demise of anti-Semitism; further, it increased the risks of assimilation and loss of identity.
- **C.** Jews responded to these new challenges—and the even greater ones of the 20th century—in diverse ways.

II. A major issue for Jews in Europe and America was translating traditional marks of identity in a changed world.

- **A.** The development of three major streams of Judaism represents a response to modernity.
  - **1.** The Reform movement began in 19th-century Germany and achieved great popularity in America. It called for a rejection of Hebrew and the Talmudic tradition, putting an emphasis, instead, on the prophets and understanding messianism in terms of social improvement. In 1937, the American Reform movement affirmed a number of traditional Jewish practices.
  - **2.** The Orthodox community maintained the Talmudic framework for reading the Bible in Hebrew, with all its traditional practices, and connected these to specific European cultural observances. Tight-knit Hasidic communities in urban areas are an extreme manifestation.
  - **3.** Conservative Judaism tried to strike a middle position, with an affirmation of the Talmudic framework and the continuation of practices (unlike Reformed Judaism) but with a certain degree of assimilation in cultural matters (unlike Orthodox Judaism).
- **B.** Zionism emerged in the 19th century as an adaptation of the messianic ideal to a new age.
  - **1.** Moses Hess first spoke of a Jewish homeland (1812–1875), and a first Jewish colony started in Palestine in 1869.
  - **2.** A new wave of anti-Semitism in the 1870s gave impetus to the movement, but it was Theodor Herzl (1860–1904) who was the "New Moses" in the quest for a new Jewish homeland, seeking to eliminate anti-Semitism by founding a Jewish state (1896).

III. The Holocaust (*shoah*) and the state of Israel represent distinct yet interrelated challenges to contemporary Jews.

- **A.** The Holocaust (1933–1945) not only threatened the existence of the people but raised severe questions of religious meaning (the biblical promises).
  - **1.** The immediate response? Silence, witness, or abandonment of symbols.
  - **2.** The longer-term response? Survival of the children and the rebirth of *midrash*.
- **B.** The state of Israel (1948) realized the Zionist dream but in a paradoxical way.
  - **1.** Israel is a state among other states: What role should "Judaism" and its laws play in the society?
  - **2.** In the politics of the Middle East, the state of Israel continues to be a focus of anti-Semitism.
- **C.** A radical suggestion for reading the Jewish Bible has been made by Emil Fackenheim (*The Jewish Bible after the Holocaust*).
  - **1.** All interpretation must have as its goal the survival of the people, without necessary reference to Judaism as a religion.
  - **2.** The state of Israel must be taken as "the resurrection from the dead" after the Holocaust.

3. The Jewish Bible should be read, not in religious terms, but as the history of this people, with the Book of Esther as its center.

IV. Jewish biblical scholarship takes a number of positions with respect to the dominant historical-critical paradigm among Christians.

A. Some scholars continue a longstanding commitment to outstanding historical research into ancient Jewish life.

1. Jewish scholars are in the forefront in the study of Judaism and Hellenism in antiquity.
2. They are among the most important participants in the analysis of the Dead Sea Scrolls.
3. They engage in biblical commentaries in the dominant historical-critical mode.

B. Others engage the Bible with a greater focus on its literary dimensions, whether prose or poetry.

1. New translations of Torah by the Jewish Publication Society and by Robert Alter have paid close attention to the character of the ancient Hebrew.
2. Jewish scholars have led in the literary analysis of ancient narrative (Meir Sternberg, Robert Alter) and *inner-biblical exegesis* (Michael Fishbane).

C. Still others have sought to recover the distinctive character of old Jewish interpretive traditions in a contemporary mode (Jon Levenson, James Kugel).

D. In conversations with Christian scholars, it is clear that on every side, apologetics has been replaced by mutual respect and a desire to learn.

Essential Reading:

E. Fackenheim, *The Jewish Bible after the Holocaust: A Re-Reading*.

Supplementary Reading:

J. Kugel, *The Bible As It Was*.

Questions to Consider:

1. How have the conditions of modernity affected the way in which the Bible is read within Judaism?
2. Why should a biblical book that does not mention God (Esther) be recommended as the central text of the Bible for post-Holocaust Jews?

Lecture Twenty-Three
Contemporary Christians and Their Bibles

Scope: This lecture discusses four contested aspects of the Bible's story among contemporary Christians. First is the longstanding conflict between Modernist and Fundamentalist concerning the authority of the Bible and the right way to read it. Second is the debate over the "true Bible" and "true Christianity." Third is the proliferation of and competition among contemporary translations of the Bible. Fourth is the way in which Bible translation and Christian missionary endeavors continue to flourish in the work of Bible societies.

Outline

I. Among contemporary Christians, the Bible remains central to worship and theology but is also the arena for lively disputes. This lecture considers four aspects of the Christian Bible's continuing story.

- **A.** Christians are divided over the authority of the Bible and the proper perspective from which to read it.
- **B.** Christians continue to debate the issue of canon: What is the "true Bible" and how does it measure "true Christianity"?
- **C.** Christians carry internal conflicts over into competitive translations of the Bible.
- **D.** Christians use the Bible in missionary work and engage in the effort to translate the Bible into every human language.

II. The effects of the Modernist-Fundamentalist controversy of the late 19th and early 20th centuries continue to divide Christians.

- **A.** The term *Modernism* refers to Christians (both Protestant and Catholic) who enthusiastically subscribe to the historical-critical approach to the Bible, as well as the Enlightenment premises inherent in the approach. This perspective has been standard in most seminaries since 1900.
- **B.** The term *Fundamentalism* in the strict sense refers to the reaction to Modernism among conservative Protestants, beginning in 1895 with a statement of "five fundamentals": verbal inerrancy of Scripture, divinity of Jesus Christ, the virgin birth, the substitutionary theory of atonement, and the physical resurrection and bodily return of Christ.
  - **1.** The most famous moment in the controversy came in the Scopes trial in 1925, but the conflict between evolution and biblicism continues.
  - **2.** The term *Fundamentalist* unfairly tends to get applied to all conservative and evangelical Christians.
- **C.** Sociologically, the debate concerns the place of the academy in the Church and the Church in the academy. A chief battleground for the conflict has been the seminaries where future Christian ministers are educated.
  - **1.** The religious/political controversies obscure the way in which the extremes actually share basic (distorting) perspectives.
  - **2.** A literalistic focus on the Bible (from either side) also tends to obscure the proper place of the Bible within Christianity.

III. Another dimension of conflict involving the Bible emerged in the second half of the 20th century, in a renewed battle over the canon of Scripture that mirrors the identity debates of the 2nd century.

- **A.** The challenge to the traditional canon has emerged from a combination of two factors.
  - **1.** Archaeological discoveries—above all, that at Nag Hammadi—are used to challenge canonical decisions in the 2nd through 4th centuries.
  - **2.** The discovery of old documents combines with ideological tendencies (feminist, anti-institutional religion).
  - **3.** The basic proposal is to "open the canon" to include a variety of ancient compositions that were once "suppressed."
- **B.** The revisionist project seeks to reform traditional Christianity (regarded as defective) on the basis of an enlightened reading of alternative compositions.
  - **1.** The battle is carried out primarily through publishing and teaching, the instruments of the academy.

2. The power of the Bible is suggested by its use in such titles as *The Complete Gospels*, *The Other Bible*, and *The Lost Bible*.

IV. Conflict and competition is also a feature of the proliferation of new translations of the Bible.

A. For some Fundamentalists, fidelity to the KJV is understood as biblical fidelity.

B. Others felt the need for revising the KJV, which led to the Revised Version (1885), the American Standard Version (1901), and the Revised Standard Version (1946, 1952, 1957), all of which remained faithful to the KJV but brought it in line with modern language usage. The New Revised Standard Version sought to improve that tradition through the elimination of gender-exclusive language. The New American Bible and the Jerusalem Bible are completely fresh translations by Roman Catholic scholars.

C. A variety of other translations tend toward a "literal" or "equivalent" rendering of the ancient languages, privileging either fidelity to the originals (New International Version) or contemporary intelligibility (The New English Bible).

D. Theological concerns appear also in translations and the debates over them, as in debates over the translation of *pistis Christou* or efforts to construct a completely gender-inclusive Bible (*The New Testament and the Psalms: An Inclusive Translation*, 1995).

V. The effort to spread the Word "to all the nations" continues in the work of the United Bible Societies.

A. The British and Foreign Bible Society began in 1804 and now includes groups from more than 141 countries dedicated to biblical renewal and diffusion. The society organizes the worldwide efforts of translators and consultants and provides scholarly resources (including critical texts) to them.

B. The efforts have yielded impressive results. In 1804, the Bible, in part or whole, had been translated into 67 languages. At the end of 2005, the Bible had been translated into 2,043 of the world's 6,500 languages, and the United Bible Societies has distributed, in whole or part, more than 372 million Scriptures.

Essential Reading:

J. A. Carpenter, ed., *The Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict: Opposing Views on Three Major Issues*.

Supplementary Reading:

P. Jenkins, *Hidden Gospels: How the Search for Jesus Lost Its Way*.

Questions to Consider:

1. What do the conflicts over the Bible suggest about the state of the Christian religion in the 21st century?

2. Is there a connection between the geographical location of disputes concerning the Bible and the disparity between the growth of Christianity in the First World and in developing countries?

Lecture Twenty-Four
The Bible's Story Continues

Scope: It is worth pondering the astonishing fact that the Bible—a book whose origins stretch back to earliest recorded history—continues in today's throwaway world to have so much presence and power, even after it has been subjected to the most critical scrutiny and the most sustained attack. It continues to be the world's greatest publishing success, with entire bookstores devoted to Bibles and the tools for reading it. It continues not only to be read by millions around the globe but to be read passionately. It continues to fascinate even those whom it repels. In an age of media overkill, programs and films with biblical themes draw huge audiences. And books that challenge the truth of the biblical account (while still relying on that account) become huge bestsellers. Even when Christianity and Judaism sometimes seem to be on their last legs, their Bibles always seem to find new ones on which to stand.

Outline

I. It is appropriate at this stage (surely not the last) of the Bible's long story to consider its remarkable longevity.

- **A.** The Bible was born, not all at once, but through centuries of human experience and the struggle to interpret reality in light of extraordinary claims.
- **B.** The Bible has never been completely stable or totally without critics, even in periods when it has been most prized.
- **C.** The Bible in the last four centuries has sustained more direct attacks on its truthfulness and worth than any other literature.

II. The Bible has not merely survived, but it continues to exercise impressive power over human minds and hearts.

- **A.** It is not only the world's bestselling book, but also the book most consistently and devotedly read around the world.
  - **1.** The Bible continues to be read aloud every week in church and synagogue, followed by sermons or homilies explicating its meaning and applying its message to contemporary life.
  - **2.** The Bible is the focus of countless gatherings of Jewish and Christian faithful, who meet and study the text together, either in formal schools or in voluntary groups.
  - **3.** Entire bookstores in many cities are devoted to providing materials to assist such study and devotional reading of the Bible.
  - **4.** On high school and college campuses, students gather in voluntary groups to study the Bible.
  - **5.** It is impossible to adequately measure the behavioral effect of such devotional reading, but anecdotal evidence suggests that it is considerable.
- **B.** In still another adaptation to a technological development, the Bible now exists in a variety of electronic formats.
  - **1.** Software exists to place the original languages, dozens of translations, and a multitude of interpretive tools at the fingertips of any interested person.
  - **2.** People can "Google" into Bible blogs and participate in chat rooms through virtual presence.
  - **3.** The effects of these new forms of experiencing the Bible are difficult to assess at such an early stage of development.
- **C.** In a manner quite distinct from the devotional reading found in churches and synagogues, the academic study of the Bible is a flourishing and respectable field of intellectual inquiry.
  - **1.** A Ph.D. in Biblical Studies is offered by the world's best universities and is recognized for its demanding character.
  - **2.** The Society of Biblical Literature and other learned societies devoted to biblical studies count tens of thousands of members throughout the world.
  - **3.** A distinct feature of contemporary biblical studies is its interdisciplinary character, engaging not only theology but also the entire range of humanistic and social-scientific fields in conversation.
  - **4.** This remarkable phenomenon coexists with an increasingly anti-religious bias in many universities, an elite cultural bias against the "Bible Belt," and even a vigorous rejection of the Bible's symbols by Christian critics.

D. News or entertainment concerning the Bible can command cultural attention in a distinctive manner.
   1. Plays or movies concerning the Bible invariably generate controversy and huge box-office profits.
   2. The discovery of new codices is exploited by means of popular publications and sensational television documentaries and talk shows.
   3. Advocates for *creation science* (based in the Bible) both seek and receive media coverage, while both conservative and liberal religious groups seek a way to "teach the Bible" in high school curricula.
   4. For decades, the findings of the Jesus Seminar or other publications command a yearly ritualistic article in news magazines.

III. It is also worth asking the reasons for this book's continuing influence in the face of severe and sustained criticism.
   A. The Bible's influence is not simply the result of cultural inertia—other cultural relics don't stir nearly the same passion.
   B. The Bible's persistence does not derive from its accurate reportage of the empirical world—both science and history have removed the "biblical worldview" from the list of options acceptable to the educated person.
   C. The Bible's power comes from its character as a religious text; its success in witnessing to and interpreting a way of life as deriving from and directed toward a God who creates, sustains, saves, and sanctifies humans; and its ability to imagine a world that provides an alternative to those imagined by science and history and that invites humans to make that world empirical by the manner in which they live their lives.

IV. Whatever the vicissitudes of popular culture, the future of the Bible's story is most bound up with its role within communities of faith.
   A. In Judaism, despite centuries of repression and the shock of the Holocaust, Torah still speaks convincingly and powerfully about the way humans can honor God through the practices of justice and mercy.
   B. In Christianity, the Bible witnesses to God's work in Jesus and the meaning of a life shaped by his ministry, death, and resurrection, through a transformation to the pattern of obedience and love he revealed.
   C. The Bible will continue to flourish as religious literature that gives meaning to and itself draws meaning from the ongoing experience of God in human lives.

Essential Reading:

G. Beckerlegge, ed., *Religion Today: Tradition, Modernity and Change: From Sacred Text to Internet*.

Supplementary Reading:

L. T. Johnson, "Imagining the World That the Bible Imagines," in *The Future of Catholic Biblical Scholarship*, with William S. Kurz, pp. 119–142.

Questions to Consider:

1. Discuss the continuing cultural influence of the Bible in a time when the world seems to run on completely secular principles.

2. Is the desire to place the study of the Bible and its influence in the curriculum of American high schools a sign of its continuing cultural influence or its decline?

Timeline

B.C.E.

1900–1700 ..... Patriarchs
1700–1300 ..... Hebrews in Egypt
c. 1275? ..... Exodus from Egypt
1250–1200? ..... Conquest of Canaan
1000–961 ..... David
961–922 ..... Solomon
742–735 ..... Isaiah
625–587 ..... Jeremiah
587–538 ..... Babylonian Exile
520–515 ..... Rebuilding of the Temple
356–323 ..... Alexander the Great
c. 250 ..... Septuagint (LXX)
167–143 ..... Maccabean period
c. 150? ..... Qumran community
63 ..... Pompey asserts Roman rule
c. 20 B.C.E.–c. 50 C.E. ..... Philo of Alexandria

C.E.

c. 29–32 ..... Ministry and death of Jesus
34–64/68 ..... Ministry and correspondence of Paul
67–70 ..... Jewish War with Rome
70 ..... Destruction of the Temple
70–90 ..... Composition of the Gospels
c. 90 ..... Council of Jabneh
100–200 ..... Aquila, Symmachus, Theodotion
135 ..... Bar Kochba Revolt against Rome
135–155 ..... Marcion and Valentinus flourish
160–225 ..... Irenaeus and Tertullian flourish
200 ..... Judah ha Nasi Codifies Mishnah
303 ..... Persecution of Christians under Diocletian
313 ..... Edict of Milan
325 ..... Council of Nicea
330 ..... Constantinople made eastern capital
382 ..... Jerome begins Vulgate translation
c. 450 ..... Babylonian Talmud

c. 480–c. 550 ..... Benedict of Nursia, *Rule for Monks*

c. 550 ..... Talmud of the Land of Israel

742–814 ..... Charlemagne, Holy Roman Emperor

863–885 ..... Cyril and Methodius, mission to the Slavs

c. 880–942 ..... Saadia Gaon, translation into Arabic

910 ..... Monastery founded at Cluny

1054 ..... Schism between Eastern (Greek) and Western (Latin) Churches

1040–1105 ..... Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac (Rashi)

1095–1099 ..... First Crusade

1135–1204 ..... Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides)

1202–1204 ..... Fourth Crusade, sacking of Constantinople

1225–1274 ..... Thomas Aquinas, Scholastic theologian

1250–1305 ..... Moses de Leon, Zohar

1265–1321 ..... Life of Dante, author of *The Divine Comedy*

c. 1330–1384 ..... John Wycliffe, English reformer and translator

1398–1468 ..... Life of Johannes Gutenberg

1453 ..... Constantinople falls to the Turks; start of world exploration

1455 ..... Gutenberg prints the Vulgate Bible

1471–1528 ..... Albrecht Dürer, artist of biblical woodcuts

1483–1546 ..... Martin Luther, German reformer

1484–1531 ..... Ulrich Zwingli, Swiss reformer

1489–1556 ..... Thomas Cranmer, author of the *Book of Common Prayer*

1491–1547 ..... Life of Henry VIII of England

c. 1494–1536 ..... Life of William Tyndale, great English translator

1495–1498 ..... Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper*

1504 ..... Michelangelo's *David* completed

1509–1564 ..... John Calvin, French reformer

1513–1552 ..... John Knox, Scottish reformer

1516 ..... Erasmus publishes Greek New Testament; Thomas More publishes *Utopia*

1517 ..... Luther's 95 Theses

1522–1534 ..... Luther's German translation of the Bible

1533 ..... Divorce of Henry, start of the Church of England

1545–1563 ..... Council of Trent

1560 ..... Geneva Bible

1561–1626 ..... Francis Bacon, author of *Novum Organum*

1582–1610 ..... Douay-Rheims Bible

1606–1669 ..... Rembrandt van Rijn

1611 ..... King James (Authorized) Version of the Bible

1618–1648 ..... Thirty Years War in Europe

1632–1677 ..... Baruch Spinoza, Jewish rationalist philosopher

1638–1712 ..... Richard Simon, pioneer of textual criticism

1645 ..... Herbert of Cherbury's *Religion of the Nations*

1685–1750 ..... Johann Sebastian Bach

1667 ..... John Milton, *Paradise Lost*

1670–1722 ..... John Toland, Deist writer

1678 ..... John Bunyan, *Pilgrim's Progress*

1751–1752 ..... John Jacob Wettstein publishes Greek edition of the New Testament

1791 ..... Jewish emancipation in France

1812–1875 ..... Moses Hess, founder of Zionism

1835 ..... David F. Strauss, *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined*

1860–1904 ..... Theodor Herzl, Zionist leader

1894–1906 ..... Dreyfus Affair reveals the depth of anti-Semitism

1906 ..... Albert Schweitzer's *Quest for the Historical Jesus*

1909 ..... Scofield Bible published

1933–1945 ..... The Holocaust (*shoah*)

1948 ..... State of Israel established

Glossary

Allegory: In Christian biblical interpretation, a form of reading that takes elements in the written text as symbolizing other, spiritual realities; the premise is that such meanings were in God's mind even if not in the human author's. In the fully developed medieval framework, the *allegorical* referred to Christ and the Church, whereas the *tropological* referred to the moral life, and the *anagogical* referred to eschatological realities. But allegory can also be used for all "higher" meanings beyond the literal or historical sense.

Apocryphal: Literature that is not included in the official canon of Scripture in Judaism or Christianity.

Asceticism: A way of life characterized by discipline and avoidance of the pleasures of the body. In Christianity, it is often connected to a dualistic view of the world.

Byzantium/Byzantine: The ancient city renamed Constantinople when Constantine made it the capital of the Eastern Roman Empire. *Byzantine* is applied to the empire that survived until the taking of the city by the Turks in 1453 and is also used for the largest family of New Testament manuscripts (also called the *koine* tradition).

Canon: From the Greek term meaning "measure," the standard collection of texts regarded as scriptural and the normative writings of a community, Jewish or Christian.

Christ/Christology: The Greek term *Christos* means "anointed one" and translates the Hebrew term *messiah*; Christology is the understanding of the identity, nature, and functions of Jesus as Christian messiah.

Codex: The earliest form of the "book," with leaves or pages (usually of papyrus) folded and stitched (or glued) together so that writing appears on both sides, the *recto* and the *verso*.

Constantinople: The "New Rome" founded by Constantine the Great in 333; the religious and political rival of Rome from the 4th century forward.

Council of Trent: The Roman Catholic response to the Protestant Reformation, called the Counter-Reformation, was crystallized in a series of meetings between 1545 and 1563 that decisively shaped the Catholic Church for the next 400 years.

Creed: From the Latin *Credo*, "I believe," a formal statement of belief. Christians recite either the Apostle's Creed or the Nicene Creed in worship, but many other professions of faith were produced by branches of the Reformation.

Crusades: Between the 11th and 14th centuries, a series of military expeditions sponsored by popes and Christian kings in an effort to wrest control of the Holy Land from the Muslims. The "crusading spirit" got carried over into the internecine Wars of Religion among Christians after the Reformation.

Diaspora: Any place Jews lived that was not the land of Palestine or *eretz Israel*; after the failed Bar Kochba Revolt in 135 C.E., Judaism essentially became a diaspora religion.

Edict of Milan: The declaration of tolerance for Christianity enacted by Constantine in 313 that gave Christians freedom to practice their faith.

Ekklesia: Greek term that means basically "assembly" and gave rise to disputed translations of "church" or "congregation."

Enlightenment: The intellectual movement in Europe that presented the greatest threat to the "biblical world" because of its reliance on human reason more than on the assumed authority of revelation.

Essenes: A sect within Judaism in 1st-century Palestine, dedicated to the strict observance of the Law and identified by many (though not all) with the sectarians at Qumran who produced the Dead Sea Scrolls.

Gnostics/Gnosticism: Within Christianity, a movement of the 2nd–4th centuries that challenged the organizational form of the religion on the basis of new revelational literature that advanced a strongly dualistic understanding of reality and an individualized spirituality based on a higher form of knowledge (*gnosis* = "knowledge").

Gospel: The Greek term *euangelion* originally referred to the good news from and about God in the death and resurrection of Jesus; it gained the additional sense of a narrative about the ministry of Jesus.

Hellenism: In the broadest sense, the Greek culture that dominated the Mediterranean world after Alexander the Great; both Judaism and Christianity worked out their identity in the context of Hellenism.

Heresy: The Greek term *hairesis* means a "party" or "opinion." In Christianity, it means a misunderstood or distorted understanding of doctrine. Thus, *heresy* is opposed to *orthodoxy*, but which is what depends on the point of view of the speaker.

Hermit: An individual who lives in solitude for the sake of complete devotion to prayer and worship. Early Christian monasticism in Egypt and Syria tended toward the *eremitical* (living completely alone) or *semi-eremitical* style (living alone except for meals and worship).

Inerrant: "Without error"; a conviction some Christians, above all, Fundamentalists, hold with respect to Scripture. Inerrancy is sometimes applied to every word and sometimes to a broader concept, such as "teaching on faith and morals."

Inspiration: The conviction that God's Holy Spirit is at work in the production of Scripture. In Judaism and Christianity, the conviction is a statement concerning the origin and authority of the text and is compatible with human authorship.

Jabneh/Jamnia: A city near Joppa where, according to tradition, a rabbinic council was held around 90 C.E. to determine the canon of the Jewish Bible.

Kabbalah: "Tradition," understood as an esoteric interpretation of Torah and of reality itself; the dominant form of mysticism in medieval Judaism, given greatest impetus by the Zohar ("book of splendor").

Karaism: The Jewish movement started in the 8th century by Anan ben David that challenged the complexity of the Talmudic tradition and called for a return to Torah alone.

Ketuvim: Hebrew term meaning "writings"; the designation for the third and most variable portion of TaNaK, including such works as Job and the Psalms.

Koine: The Greek noun means "common/standard." In language, it refers to the form of Greek used in the Hellenistic period. In text criticism, it refers to the large family of manuscripts also designated as *Byzantine*.

Lectio Divina: Latin that is literally "divine reading" but refers to the practice of individual reading of Scripture in a meditative manner within the monastic context.

Majuscule*/*Minuscule: Two forms of writing manuscripts in Greek. *Majuscule* uses only capital letters, and the letters are not linked. *Minuscule* uses only small (non-capital) letters, often linked together to form *cursive* ("running") script; this is the form in which most manuscripts after the 9th century C.E. were written.

Manuscript: A text written by hand with ink and stylus on a prepared surface, whether parchment or vellum or, more commonly, papyrus.

Marcionism: A Christian heresy named from Marcion of Sinope (d. 160) who advanced a radical dualism: Creation was the work of an evil God (of the Jews), and Jesus revealed a hidden God who called humans from the prison of materiality. Marcion thought that only 10 of Paul's Letters and an edited version of Luke's Gospel should be "canonical."

Masoretic text: The official form of the Hebrew text of the Jewish Bible, supervised for centuries by rabbis called the *Masoretes*, who stabilized the consonantal text by inserting vowel markings and accents.

Merkavah: Literally, "throne-chariot"; a form of Jewish mysticism already, in the early rabbinic period, focused on the divine presence symbolized by Ezechiel's description of God's glory in the opening of his prophecy.

Messiah: In Hebrew, the "anointed one," whose role was to deliver the Jewish people from danger and restore them as a people; the concept is both individual and communal. In Christianity, it is applied to Jesus; in Judaism, it has had several referents.

Midrash: Derived from the Hebrew term *darash*, "to seek," the noun refers to forms of biblical interpretation (and contemporary application) beyond *peshat*, or the simple, literal, historical sense. When applied to legal texts, it is called *halakhic midrash*, and when applied to non-legal texts, it is called *haggadic midrash*.

Mishnah: The authoritative collection of legal opinions (*halakha*) compiled by Judah ha Nasi (Judah the Prince) c. 200 C.E., which formed the basis of the Talmud.

Monophysitism: A Christian heresy that so emphasized the divinity of Christ that it insisted he had only "one nature" (*mono-physis*), namely, the divine, and was less than fully human.

Nestorianism: A Christian heresy stemming from a Syrian teacher called Nestorius (d. 451) that emphasized the humanity of Christ and denied his full divinity and, thus, opposed calling Mary "Mother of God" as the Orthodox insisted.

Neviim: Hebrew term meaning "prophets," the designation for the second section of TaNaK, consisting of the Former Prophets (narrative works) and Latter Prophets (poetic works).

New Testament: The 27 compositions in Greek that form the traditional Christian canon and, with the "Old Testament," form the Christian Bible.

Old Testament: The term used by Christians for the writings of the Jewish Bible (read by the first Christians in the form of the Septuagint), to which the writings of the New Testament were appended to form the Christian Bible.

Opus Dei: Literally, "the work of God," referring to the round of public prayer carried out by choir monks and consisting largely of the recitation of the Psalms and other passages of Scripture. Also called the *Divine Office*.

Ora et labora: The ideal balance of the monastic life as depicted in Benedict of Nursia's *Rule for Monks*: "prayer and work."

Palimpsest: A manuscript on which an original text has been written over (*palin* = "again") with another. The most famous example is Codex Ephraemi rescriptus, on which the original Greek of the New Testament was covered by the sermons of Saint Ephraem.

Papyrus: The writing material produced from the papyrus plant. The writing surface is made by pressing split papyrus reeds together, horizontal on vertical. The horizontal surface (*recto*) is smoother and receives print more easily than the vertical side (*verso*).

Patristic: From the Latin *pater* ("father"), the term used to designate the literature produced in Christianity between the 1st and 6th centuries by the "fathers of the Church."

Persecutions: The series of efforts—some local, some general—to eliminate the Christian movement through force, reaching a climax in the persecution of Diocletian in 303. After the empire became Christian, heretics and Jews were also persecuted. In the period of the Reformation, dissident Christians in various countries were persecuted by the form of Christianity in power.

Peshat: Hebrew term used by medieval Jewish commentators for the literal, historical sense of the Bible. See also ***pesher***.

Pesher: Hebrew term meaning "interpretation" and used at Qumran for its sectarian interpretation of the Prophets and Psalms with reference to the experience of the community. See also ***peshat***.

Pharisee/Pharisaism: The 1st-century Jewish sect in Palestine that was committed to a close fellowship based on the strict interpretation of Torah, which was enabled through *midrash*. The Pharisees regarded such interpretation as the Oral Torah. Their convictions became standard for Judaism after the destruction of the Temple in 70 C.E.

Pilgrimage: The practice of traveling (often in groups) to a place considered as holy to gain benefit from the power present through the influence of the saint or martyr commemorated at that place.

Pistis Christou: A Greek phrase found in the Letters of Paul whose translation is debated among scholars today: Should it be understood as "Christ's faith" (in God) or (the Christian's) "faith in Christ"? Both are legitimate renderings of the Greek, but the theological implication is significant.

Presbyter: Greek term for a community official used by the New Testament that could be translated (controversially) either as "priest" or "elder."

Pseudepigrapha: Literally, "things falsely written," referring to literature that is produced in a name not the author's own, usually a famous person of the past, as in the First Book of Enoch. Such literature is also termed *pseudonymous*.

Purgatory: In Roman Catholicism, a place or time of purgation after death for the cleansing of the soul of venial sins.

Reformation: The broad term used for efforts to reform the Church in the 16th century. Usually used with reference to Protestantism (associated with Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Cranmer, and others), but it can also be used for the Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation (see also **Council of Trent**).

Renaissance: Literally "rebirth"; the intellectual and cultural movements in Europe from the 14th through the 16th centuries that ended the medieval period and provided a transition to the modern era.

Sachkritik: German for "content criticism." The principle enunciated by Martin Luther that even the New Testament needs to be tested on the basis of its ability to proclaim the truth of the Gospel. In Luther's view, the Letter of James fell short.

Sacra Pagina: Latin for "sacred page," a term that was used for Scripture within the monastic context, suggesting a reading carried out more for the sake of wisdom than knowledge.

Sadducees: One of the sects or parties in 1st-century Palestinian Judaism made up primarily of the priestly class, whose piety centered in the worship of the Temple and who recognized only the five books of Moses as Scripture.

Samaritans: Inhabitants of the ancient northern kingdom of Israel (Samaria) and rivals of the Judeans (Jews) who worshipped at their own temple at Shechem and recognized only the five books of Moses as authoritative.

Scholasticism: Term used for the methods of argumentation and debate in the great medieval universities, such as Paris and Oxford. From the 12th century, Scholastic philosophy and theology forged a synthesis of Christianity and Greek philosophy (especially Aristotle in the form of translation).

Scribe: Someone who writes. In ancient Judaism, scribes were men associated with the Pharisees as advocating the *midrashic* reading of Torah; in Christianity, the term was used for those who copied manuscripts.

Scriptorium: The place where manuscripts are copied in monastic communities from Qumran to Cluny.

Scroll: The form in which most ancient manuscripts of Torah appear: Pieces of parchment or vellum are stitched end to end to form a long strip that can be rolled over a staff, with writing on one side only; the scroll is read by "unscrolling"—exposing new sections of text by turning the staff.

Sefirot: In Kabbalism, the emanation or radiation of the divine splendor throughout creation, in contrast to the divine being in itself (*Ein-Sof*). The human task is gathering these divine elements back to their source in a process called *tikkun ha olam* ("mending the world").

Septuagint: Abbreviated as LXX because of the tradition concerning 70 translators, the version of the Jewish Bible in Greek that was completed c. 250 B.C.E. and was used heavily by the first Christians as their "Scripture."

Sod: Literally, "secret"; in Jewish biblical interpretation, the finding of esoteric meanings in the exoteric text, beyond *peshat* and *darash*. An early example is *Merkavah* mysticism, and a later example is *kabbalah*.

Sola Fide: Part of the slogan connected to Martin Luther; "by faith alone" challenges the medieval Catholic system of canon law and Scholastic theology on the basis of Paul's teaching that humans are made right with God by faith rather than by works of the law.

Sola Scriptura: Latin, meaning "by Scripture alone"; part of the slogan connected to Martin Luther but widely shared by reformers, namely, that all Christian thought and practice should be measured exclusively by Scripture rather than human tradition.

Synoptics: The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, so called because their literary resemblance and interdependence enables them to be printed in three columns that can be viewed simultaneously (syn-optic).

Talmud: The compilation of rabbinic learning and lore based in the study of Torah. Its basis is the Mishnah of Judah ha Nasi (in Hebrew), to which is added the Gemara, or commentary and discussion, of the rabbis in

succeeding centuries (in Aramaic). The Talmud appears in two versions: the Babylonian Talmud, more authoritative for Jewish life for centuries, and the Talmud of the Land of Israel. The Talmud itself was the basis for further commentary through the centuries.

TaNaK: Proper name of the Jewish Bible (also Tanakh), an acronym formed from the three main parts of the Bible: Torah, Neviim (Prophets), and Ketuvim (Writings).

Targums: Aramaic translations/paraphrases of Torah that were first delivered orally in the worship of the synagogue and, eventually, found their way into writing; the earliest "version" of the Jewish Bible besides the Septuagint.

Teacher of Righteousness: Figure spoken of in the Dead Sea Scrolls as the source of the sectarian interpretation of Scripture practiced at Qumran; possibly the founder of the community.

Textus Receptus (TR): The Greek text of the New Testament on which many Reformation-era translations (including the Authorized or King James Version) were based; it is the Erasmus edition of 1516 emended by the Complutensian Polyglot and further improved by Theodore Beza.

Torah: Jewish designation for the first five books of the Bible and, by extension, to the entire tradition of lore and learning derived from the Bible as a whole.

Uncial: A form of Greek script called *majuscule* (written entirely in capital rather than small letters); the style in which the great codices of the 4th–5th centuries were written.

Vulgate: The translation/revision of the Latin version of the Bible carried out by Jerome by the commission of Damasus I at the end of the 4th century, which became the standard text used throughout Western Christianity and the official version of the Roman Catholic Church.

Zealots: A party or sect (sometimes called the *Fourth Philosophy*) in 1st-century Palestinian Judaism who sought military victory over Rome and the reestablishment of a Jewish nation.

Biographical Notes

Anan ben David (fl. 8th c.). Babylonian Jewish theologian. Anan ben David and his followers, the Ananites, challenged the validity of the Talmudic (or rabbinic) tradition, asserting that theology should be based strictly on Scripture. This position came to be called *Karaism*.

Aquila (fl. 130). Jewish scholar and translator. Born in Pontus (now Turkey), Aquila is known for his translation of the Hebrew Old Testament into Greek. Aquila's literal translation was favored by many Jews who challenged the Christian understanding of the LXX, or Septuagint (translated in the 3rd century B.C.E.).

Athanasius (c. 296–373). Bishop of Alexandria and Doctor of the Church. In 325, Athanasius attended the Council of Nicea, where he was a major force in the rejection of Arianism, which challenged the divinity of Jesus. The council produced the Nicene Creed, which teaches that Jesus was fully man and fully God.

Augustine of Hippo (354–430). Bishop and Doctor of the Church. Augustine fought the heresies of Manichaeism (the idea that the physical world was completely evil and the spiritual world was the only good); Donatism (a North African separatist movement); and Pelagianism (which overemphasized natural human goodness).

Bar Hebraeus (1226–1286). Jacobite Syrian bishop who, among his many other achievements, gathered together and standardized versions of the Bible from the Peshitta and other Syriac translations, in addition to versions from Hebrew, Greek, and Asian sources. Bar Hebraeus was widely respected for his encyclopedic knowledge of theology, philosophy, history, grammar, medicine, and poetry.

Benedict of Nursia (c. 480– c. 550). Patriarch of monasticism in the West. He founded the Order of Saint Benedict at Monte Cassino (Italy). The *Rule* of Saint Benedict emphasized the centrality of work, prayer, and communal life. Benedictine monasteries were often repositories of learning and had a major impact on European culture.

Theodore Beza (1519–1605). French Calvinist theologian. When John Calvin died in 1564, Beza became leader of the Geneva Church and head of Calvin's academy in Geneva, Switzerland. He assisted in developing editions of the New Testament in Greek and Latin, intended to supersede Erasmus's editions.

John Calvin (1509–1564). A French theologian whose ideas, along with those of Martin Luther, guided the Protestant Reformation. Central to Calvin's thought were the ideas of total depravity (man is completely dependent on God's grace) and predestination (God's sovereign will has determined in advance who will achieve salvation). He wrote commentaries on 23 Old Testament books and virtually the whole New Testament. The Geneva Bible, which appeared in 1560, has an introduction by John Calvin, and its many notes reflect Calvin's pro-reform and anti-Catholic bias.

Constantine the Great (274?–337). The Roman emperor whose Edict of Milan in 313 completely legalized Christianity in the empire. Previously, the empire's official religion had been Greco-Roman polytheism. After the 4th century, Christianity was the privileged and powerful religion of the Roman Empire. Constantine's concern for unity led him to call the Council of Nicea in 325 to settle the doctrinal disagreements caused by Arianism.

Thomas Cranmer (1489–1556). Archbishop of Canterbury and a major figure in the English Reformation. Cranmer was influential in efforts to have the Bible translated into English and to secure a royal proclamation (1538) to have Bibles distributed to all parishes in England. During the reign of Edward VI, Cranmer wrote and compiled much of the Book of Common Prayer (published in 1549; revised in 1552). Cranmer's Forty-Two Articles (1553) was the basis for the Thirty-Nine Articles, a document that officially defines Anglican belief.

Saint Cyril (827–869). Monk, missionary, and linguist. Born into a prominent Greek family in Macedonia, Cyril and his brother, Methodius, were sent as missionaries among the Slavic peoples in Moravia, where they taught in the vernacular. Before his death, Cyril invented a Slavic alphabet called Glagolitic and began to write liturgical works in Slavonic.

Erasmus of Rotterdam (1469?–1536). One of the greatest of Christian Humanists, Erasmus produced an edition of the Greek New Testament with his own translation into classical Latin in 1516. This translation, along with contributions by a number of other scholars, formed the basis for the "received text" underlying the King James Bible.

Thomas Erastus (1524–1583). Swiss Protestant theologian. In his *Explicatio* (written in 1568; published in 1589), Erastus argued that the sins of Christians should be addressed through civil law rather than through the Church's practice of excommunication. His argument was later expanded into what is known as *Erastianism*, which asserts the state's absolute supremacy over the Church—a more sweeping declaration than that originally made by Erastus.

Eusebius (c. 260–c. 340). A bishop of Caesarea (in Palestine); commonly called the father of Church history, Eusebius wrote the *Life of Constantine*, which glorified the accomplishments of the emperor who legalized Christianity.

Gregory the Illuminator (240–332). National saint and patron of Armenia. Gregory baptized King Tiridates III around 300, and Christianity was made the Armenian state religion. The ancient realm of Armenia was the first kingdom to officially welcome Christianity.

Johannes Gutenberg (c. 1398–1468). Credited with fundamental contributions to printing in the West. Beginning in 1436, he developed movable metal type, oil-based inks, a mold for casting type accurately, and a new kind of printing press based on those used in wine-making. By 1450, Gutenberg began work on printing the Bible and, in 1455, published a two-volume version of the Vulgate, known as the Gutenberg Bible.

Judah ha Nasi, Judah the Prince (135–c. 220). Revered Jewish scholar and patriarch in Palestine. For five decades, he studied the Jewish Oral Law, codifying it into the Mishnah, the oldest (after the Bible itself) compilation of the Jewish Oral Law. Judah ha Nasi's work was the basis of the Babylonian Talmud and the Talmud of the Land of Israel.

Henry VIII (1491–1547). English monarch. Henry challenged the theology of the Reformation, and as a result, the pope bestowed upon him the title "Defender of the Faith." However, Henry's desire to divorce Catherine of Aragon led to a break with Rome in 1533. Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries in England in 1536 and 1539.

Theodor Herzl (1860–1904). The "father" of modern Zionism. Born in Vienna, Herzl was a journalist whose experiences covering the Dreyfus affair in Paris during the 1890s convinced him of the critical necessity of a Jewish homeland. In 1896, the English translation of his *Der Judenstaat* (*The Jewish State*) appeared, and a year later, Herzl organized the First Zionist World Congress in Basel, Switzerland. Herzl's ideas anticipated the creation of a Jewish state 50 years later.

Irenaeus of Lyons (c. 130–c. 202). Bishop, pastor, teacher, and missionary. Irenaeus worked to establish a defined collection of writings by which to measure Christian teaching and is said to have been the first Christian writer to list the four Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—as authoritative. He devised a threefold strategy for Christian self-definition: rule of faith, canon of Scripture, and apostolic succession. Most important was his affirmation of the "Old Testament" as an authoritative witness to the work of God continuous with God's revelation in Jesus.

King James I (1566–1625). English monarch. During his reign, scholars developed one "authorized" English translation of the Bible, known as the King James Version. Published in 1611, it was, for many years, the official Bible for English-speaking Protestants throughout the world and went through five editions.

Saint Jerome (c. 342–420). Doctor of the Church and translator of the Bible into the standard Latin version called the Vulgate. His personal translations and his oversight of other revisions resulted in a single, seamless Scripture that captured the "imaginative world of the Bible" from beginning to end. Together with Saint Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine*, Jerome's Vulgate became the source and shaper of liturgy, literature, and learning during the Middle Ages in the West.

Martin Luther (1483–1546). German leader of the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, which explicitly challenged medieval Catholicism on the basis of the Bible. Luther's principle of *sola fide* asserted that man's salvation lay in faith alone, with good works secondary to faith. His principle of *sola scriptura* set forth the supreme authority of the Bible—rather than Church officials—as the criterion for judgments in the area of faith and morals. Luther translated the Bible into German—the New Testament in 1522 and the Old Testament in 1534.

Mesrob (d. 440). Armenian missionary and translator. Bishop Mesrob is credited with developing the Armenian alphabet; overseeing the translation of the Bible (based on the Syriac version) into Armenian; and later, supervising the revision of the Armenian Bible on the basis of Greek manuscripts. The translation of the Bible into Armenian marked the birth of that nation's literature.

Saint Methodius (c. 826–885). Monk, scholar, and archbishop of Great Moravia. Along with his brother, Saint Cyril, Methodius served as a missionary among the Slavs of Moravia. Methodius's greatest achievement was the translation of the Bible into Old Church Slavonic, using the Glagolitic alphabet developed by his brother.

Moses ben Maimon (Maimonides) (1135–1204). Jewish philosopher, theologian, and physician. At a time of persecution, Moses ben Maimon wrote his *Guide for the Perplexed*, which sought to demonstrate the continuities between the philosophy of Aristotle and Scripture. He also seriously engaged Islamic scholars. Many consider his most important achievement to have been the first full systemization of Mosaic and rabbinical laws, called the Mishneh Torah.

Eberhard Nestle (1851–1913). A biblical scholar who played a key role in the effort to establish a fully "critical text" of the Bible in the original languages of Hebrew and Greek. The Nestle-Aland is now in its 27th edition and forms the basis of the United Bible Societies' edition for translators, the most widely used critical edition.

Philo of Alexandria (c. 20 B.C.E.–c. 50 C.E.). Jewish philosopher. His writings, which sought to synthesize Judaism and Greek philosophy, influenced later Christian theologians, including Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Origen. At a time when Jews in the Mediterranean world were sometimes divided about what constituted "Torah" (the definitive texts for Jewish identity, culture, and worship), Philo appears to have focused on the Law of Moses, although he was also aware of the Prophets and other writings.

Pompey (106–48 B.C.E.). Roman general. A rival of Julius Caesar, Pompey conquered Palestine, asserting Roman dominance in 63 B.C.E.

Saadia (ben Joseph) Gaon (c. 880–942). Babylonian rabbi, grammarian, and religious philosopher. He was an ardent opponent of Karaism, a set of ideas challenging the rabbinic tradition of Judaism. In an attempt to preserve religious and cultural identity among Babylonia's Jewish elite, who were drawn to the Arabic language and Muslim culture, he translated virtually all of the Bible into Arabic, wrote the first book of Hebrew grammar and a Hebrew dictionary, and attempted to reconcile Judaism with the thought of Plato and Aristotle, who were highly esteemed in the Arab world.

Cyrus Scofield (1843–1921). American Protestant pastor and author of the *Scofield Reference Bible* (1909). Scofield was a popularizer of dispensationalism, a set of theological ideas asserting that a restored nation-state of Israel would be important in the "end days," during which the Church on Earth would be destroyed and caught up in "rapture" to heaven, and a Jewish kingdom, consisting of Jews who had accepted Jesus as the Messiah, would then become God's kingdom on Earth. Dispensationalism was a precursor of Christian Zionism, whose proponents see the modern state of Israel as one aspect of this prophecy's fulfillment.

Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac (1040–1105). Jewish biblical interpreter, grammarian, and legal authority. Known by the acronym Rashi, Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac is regarded as the greatest medieval commentator both on the entire Bible and on the Babylonian Talmud. His insistence on *peshat*—which affirms the literal sense of biblical interpretation—was especially important as a way of countering Christian messianic claims.

Symmachus (fl. late 2nd century). Scholar and translator. Also called Symmachus the Ebionite, he translated the Old Testament into Greek. His excellent mastery of the Greek language was recognized by Saint Jerome, who used Symmachus's Greek text of the Bible in the writing of the Vulgate.

Tatian (c. 110–c. 180). Second-century Christian apologist. Thought to have been born in Syria, Tatian received a Greek education, converted to Christianity in Rome, and became a student of Justin Martyr. Two works for which he is noted are his *Oratorio ad Graecos*, which denounced paganism and sought to prove the superiority of Christianity, and his Diatessaron, which attempted to show the continuity of Jesus' life among the varied accounts of the four Gospels. The Diatessaron was the primary, if not the only, Gospel text in Syria during the 3rd and 4th centuries.

Tertullian (c. 155–c. 225). Christian apologist. He is important as an early witness to Latin translations of Scripture and for the development of a distinctive Latin theology. He was a pivotal figure in the acceptance of Latin (rather than Greek) as a language for the Church's life and teaching. Among his most famous works were the *Apologeticus* (*Apology*), which defended monotheism and countered pagan accusations that the Church was immoral and aimed to overthrow the power of the state, and *De praescriptione haereticorum* (*On the Claims of Heretics*), which asserted that the Church was the sole authority in the matter of Christian orthodoxy.

Theodotion (mid-2nd century). A Hellenistic Jewish scholar who wrote a Greek translation of the Old Testament. This translation was included along with those of Aquila of Pontus, Symmachus, and others in Origen's famous *Hexapla*, a comprehensive work that attempted to compare and contrast the LXX (Septuagint) with the Hebrew text and other Greek translations. Origen relied on Theodotion's translation for information not contained in the LXX and other translations. Much of the ordinary Greek translation of Jeremiah and Job comes from Theodotion.

William Tyndale (c. 1494–1536). English scholar and religious reformer. Tyndale translated into English the first printed version of the Bible in 1525, and much of his work is apparent in the King James Version, published in 1611. A follower of Martin Luther, Tyndale was burned at the stake for heresy.

Ulfilas (c. 311–383). Translator and missionary, often called the "Apostle to the Goths." Trained in Constantinople, Ulfilas invented a Gothic alphabet out of Greek and Latin characters, as well as Gothic runes, which enabled him to translate the Bible into the vernacular language of the Goths. This translation of the Bible was a key element in the success of Ulfilas's missionary activity.

Valentinus (c. 100–c. 153). A Gnostic scholar whose ideas were the most widely disseminated of the Gnostic heresies. Gnosticism asserted that all matter, including the body, was evil and that a special "spiritual" knowledge was given only to a select few. Educated in Alexandria (Egypt), Valentinus established schools in that city and Rome. He was condemned by Irenaeus, Clement, and other fathers of the Church. In 1945, Coptic Gnostic papyri were found at Nag Hammadi, one of which—the *Gospel of Truth*—is believed to be linked to Valentinus.

Constantin von Tischendorf (1815–1874). A German biblical scholar who recovered the Codex Sinaiticus, a 4th-century manuscript containing a portion of the Old Testament, the entire New Testament, and two other early Christian works known before this only by title. He discovered the Codex Sinaiticus at Saint Catherine's Monastery on Mt. Sinai.

John Wycliffe (c. 1330–1384). English philosopher and theologian; Wycliffe translated the first complete version of the Bible into English (1382). Increasingly discouraged by religious institutions, he developed a theory of the Church that separated the earthly, "material" Church from the divine, "ideal" Church. He argued for the supremacy of civil over ecclesiastical authority and opposed the authority of the pope and religious orders because he believed they were not supported by Scripture.

Bibliography

Essential Reading:

For a modern translation of the Christian Bible that is readable and reasonably accurate, I recommend the *Revised Standard Version*, which is also available in a variety of study versions; for the Jewish Bible, see the *JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1999).

In a course that covers much of the recorded history of the West in 24 lectures, "essential readings" often take the form of surveys rather than of specific primary texts. Many of the topics in this course are treated magisterially in *The Cambridge History of the Bible*, three volumes: 1. *From Beginnings to Jerome*, eds. P. R. Ackroyd and C. F. Evans; 2. *The West from the Fathers to the Reformation*, ed. G. W. H. Lampe; 3. *The West from the Reformation to the Present Day*, ed. S. L. Greenslade (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1963, 1969, 1970). Other essential readings include the following.

Augustine, St. *Letters.* Translated by Sister Wilfrid Parsons. The Fathers of the Church. Washington, DC: Catholic University Press, 1964.

Beckerlegge, G. *Religion Today: Tradition, Modernity and Change: From Sacred Text to Internet*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001. One of a number of recent studies beginning to take into account the impact of modern media on the understanding of religion.

Bobrick, B. *Wide as the Waters: The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution It Inspired*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001. As its title suggests, a more popular than academic treatment of the Englishing of the Bible (see Westcott).

Carpenter, J. A. *The Fundamentalist-Modernist Conflict: Opposing Views on Three Major Issues*. New York: Garland Publishers, 1988. A collection of essays written by the actual participants in the conflict, providing a sense of the perspectives and passions of those engaged in the battle over the Bible.

Cross, F. L., ed. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. 3rd edition edited by E. A. Livingstone. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. A reliable quick-reference source.

deHamel, C. *The Book: A History of the Bible* (London: Phaidon, 2001). A one-volume treatment of many of the technical dimensions of the Bible in its production and transmission.

Fackenheim, E. *The Jewish Bible after the Holocaust: A Re-Reading*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984. A passionate and provocative essay by a contemporary Jewish philosopher who is also a Holocaust survivor.

Freedman, D. N., ed. *The Anchor Bible Dictionary*. Six volumes. New York: Doubleday, 1992. The standard reference work for biblical scholarship.

Gabel, J. B., and C. B. Wheeler. *The Bible as Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1986. Designed for undergraduates, this text invites readers into the literary forms of the Bible, with equal attention to the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament.

Griffiths, R., ed. *The Bible in the Renaissance: Essays on Biblical Commentary and Translation in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries.* Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001. Essays from a scholarly conference that touch on a number of interpretive issues in the Renaissance period.

Hayes, J. H., ed. *Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999. A helpful reference work.

LeClercq, J. *The Love of Learning and the Desire for God: A Study of Monastic Culture*. Translated by C. Misrahi. Second revised edition. New York: Fordham University Press, 1974. A classic study of the monasteries of the medieval period and the way in which "the work of God" expressed itself in prayer and scholarship.

Marcus, J. R. *The Jew in the Medieval World: A Source-Book.* Cincinnati: The Union of Hebrew Congregations, 1938. A fine archival collection of primary texts illustrating the life of ordinary Jews in Europe during the Middle Ages.

Metzger, B. M. *The Early Versions of the New Testament*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977. A thorough and authoritative review of what is known concerning all the early translations of the New Testament from Greek into vernacular languages and dialects.

———. *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1968. An authoritative and accessible introduction to the entire spectrum of issues involved in the text of the New Testament.

Pelikan, J. R. *The Excellent Empire: The Fall of Rome and the Triumph of the Church*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1987. A readable examination of this critical transition by the greatest historian of Christianity in the 20th century.

Philo of Alexandria. *Allegorical Laws*. Translated by F. H. Colson and G. H. Whitaker. Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981 [1929]).

Shuger, D. K. *The Renaissance Bible: Scholarship, Sacrifice, and Subjectivity*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994. A stimulating (and demanding) examination of the way in which the biblical stories and symbols engaged the imagination of great scholars in the rebirth of European learning.

Steinmetz, D. C., ed. *The Bible in the Sixteenth Century*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1990. A collection of essays drawn from an international scholarly conference, with papers on both Jewish and Christian interpretation.

Tyndale's New Testament. Translated from the Greek by William Tyndale in 1534, in a modern-spelling edition and with an introduction by David Daniell. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.

Vaganay, L., and C. B. Amphoux. *An Introduction to New Testament Textual Criticism*. Translated by J. Heimerdinger. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991. Another approach than that taken by Metzger but with a similar body of information concerning the establishment and study of the critical text.

Yarchin, W. *History of Biblical Interpretation: A Reader.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2004. A convenient compilation of primary texts.

Young, F. M. *Biblical Exegesis and the Transformation of Christian Culture*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. An influential study that shows the role of biblical interpretation in staking Christian claims against both Jews and Gentiles and forming a distinctive Christian culture in antiquity.

Supplementary Reading:

Abegg, M., Jr., P. Flint, and E. Ulrich. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible: The Oldest Known Bible Translated for the First Time into English*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999. Despite the slightly breathless title, a significant scholarly accomplishment, pulling together thousands of Hebrew fragments into a coherent text.

Aland, K., and B. Aland. *The Text of the New Testament*. Revised and enlarged edition, translated by E. F. Rhodes. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987. Two of the editors of the Nestle-Aland critical edition of the New Testament present a rich array of the evidence that must be taken into account.

Alter, R. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. New York: Basic Books, 1981. An early example of an approach to the Hebrew Bible that uses contemporary literary-critical sensibilities in order to engage some of the complexities and richness of the Hebrew text.

Barr, J. *Fundamentalism*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1978. A scholar writing from the perspective of the historical-critical method challenges the premises and practices of Fundamentalist interpreters, calling them intellectually incoherent.

Beattie, D. R. G., and M. J. McNamara, eds. *The Aramaic Bible: Targums in Their Historical Context*. Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 166. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994. The essays in this volume come from an international conference devoted to the Targums and cover a variety of aspects of these important early vernacular translations of the Hebrew Bible.

Campenhausen, H. von. *The Fathers of the Church*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998. This volume pulls together two works published first in 1960 by the great historian of early Christianity and provides short and sharp studies of important teachers from the East and West.

Coogan, M. D. *The Old Testament: A Historical and Literary Introduction to the Hebrew Scriptures*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006. A thoroughly up-to-date and comprehensive examination of the Hebrew Bible from the perspective of the historical-critical method. The latest word on scholarly debates and decisions.

Couch, M., ed. *The Fundamentals for the Twenty-First Century: Examining the Crucial Issues of the Christian Faith*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2000. A series of essays from the inside of Fundamentalism, beginning with "Can Truth Be Known?" and ending with "Eternity: The New Heavens and New Earth."

Daniell, D. *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003. Written by an expert in William Tyndale, this recent study is particularly valuable for the way it traces the influence of the English Bible in literature and art.

de Lubac, H. *Medieval Exegesis: The Four Senses of Scripture*. Two volumes, translated by M. Sebanc and E. M. Macieroski. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998, 2000 (originally published in 1958). A deeply scholarly and influential study that helped revivify the study of biblical interpretation in the Middle Ages by examination of some of its fundamental premises.

Ehrman, B. D. *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture: The Effect of Early Christological Controversies on the Text of the New Testament*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993. A scholarly examination of one element in manuscript transmission, providing an awareness of major Christological controversies and many specific textual examples.

———, and M. W. Holmes. *The Text of the New Testament in Contemporary Research*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995. A set of essays offered in honor of B. M. Metzger that provides up-to-date information on a wide range of issues concerning Greek manuscripts and ancient versions.

Frei, H. W. *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974. A difficult but important study that shows the impact of the Enlightenment on the interpretation of biblical narratives.

Frye, N. *The Great Code: The Bible and Literature*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Jovanovich, 1982. The great literary critic turns his always stimulating imagination to the world of the Bible, arguing for a narrative (mythic) logic to the book as a whole.

Grant, R. M., and D. Tracy. *A Short History of the Interpretation of the Bible.* Second edition, revised and enlarged. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984. A useful starting point, identifying the major periods and figures.

Greetham, D. C. *Textual Scholarship: An Introduction*. New York: Garland Publishing Company, 1994. A wonderful survey of everything pertaining to texts, from manuscripts through printing to critical texts, not just with respect to the Bible but to other compositions, as well.

Hartman, G. H., and S. Budick. *Midrash and Literature*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986. Of interest especially for the essays in the first section, which are written by outstanding Jewish scholars, and cover everything from earliest *midrash* to *kabbalah*.

Hauser, A. J., and D. F. Watson, eds. *A History of Biblical Interpretation*. Volume 1: *The Ancient Period*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003. A fine collection of essays touching on aspects both of Jewish and Christian interpretation up to Jerome.

Holtz, B., ed. *Back to the Sources: Reading the Classic Jewish Texts*. New York: Summit Books, 1984. Essays by leading Jewish scholars on the texts that shaped Jewish identity through the ages, from Torah through Talmud, Zohar, and the Tales of the Hasidim.

Jenkins, P. *Hidden Gospels: How the Search for Jesus Lost Its Way*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001. A well-written account of the contemporary battle over the canon of Scripture, played out both in the academy and the Church.

Jobes, K. H., and M. Silva. *Invitation to the Septuagint*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Books, 2000. A readable introduction to the LXX, the important Jewish translation of the Bible into Greek and the Christian "Old Testament" for many centuries.

Johnson, L. T. *The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation*. Second enlarged edition with Todd Penner. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999. A readable introduction to the earliest Christian compositions, with extensive bibliographies for further reading. Contains a helpful chapter on canonization.

———. "Imagining the World That Scripture Imagines," in *The Future of Catholic Biblical Scholarship: A Constructive Conversation*, with William S. Kurz. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002. An essay proposing that the best way to engage the Bible is through the use of creative imagination, rather than through a rigid literalism.

Knight, D. A., and G. M. Tucker, eds. *The Hebrew Bible and Its Modern Interpreters*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1985. A publication of the Society of Biblical Literature at its centennial, this collection of essays surveys the scholarly field, including attention given to the impact of archaeology on the field.

Kugel, J. L., and R. A. Greer. *Early Biblical Interpretation*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986. Two leading historians provide authoritative introductions to Jewish and Christian interpretation before the Constantinian era.

Kugel, J. L. *The Bible As It Was*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997. A wonderful evocation of traditional interpretation within both Judaism and early Christianity, showing how the strangeness of the Hebrew Bible gave rise to diverse interpretations.

Levenson, J. D. *The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993. An example of contemporary Jewish academic study that appropriates the richness of both Jewish and Christian traditions in the examination of the Akedah (the sacrifice of Isaac).

———. *Sinai and Zion: An Entry into the Jewish Bible*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1985. One of the outstanding contemporary Jewish readers of Scripture invites readers into a distinctively Jewish appreciation of TaNaK.

Marty, M. E., ed. *Modern American Protestantism and Its World: Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*. Munich: K. G. Saur, 1993. A number of historians write essays on various aspects of the two distinct yet interrelated phenomena.

McAuliffe, J. D., B. D. Walfish, and J. W. Goering, eds. *With Reverence for the Word: Medieval Scriptural Exegesis in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2003. A collection of essays that combines surveys of all three traditions, as well as detailed studies of individual figures and topics.

McDonald, L. M. *The Formation of the Christian Biblical Canon*. Revised and expanded version. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1995. A solid, non-speculative review of the process by which the diverse compositions of the first Christians eventually formed the collection by which all subsequent Christian life would be measured.

Metzger, B. M. *The Bible in Translation: Ancient and English Versions*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic Books, 2001. A more accessible treatment of the ancient translations than his *Early Versions*, with attention as well to the King James Version and more recent translations.

Muller, R. A., and J. L. Thompson, eds. *Biblical Interpretation in the Era of the Reformation*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996. Scholarly essays devoted to virtually every important Reformation interpreter, including Erasmus, Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, and many less well-known figures.

Pagels, E. *The Gnostic Gospels*. New York: Vintage Books, 1989 (1979). An influential examination of the Nag Hammadi codices that helped open the contemporary debate concerning the canon of the Bible.

Reventlow, H. G. *The Authority of the Bible and the Rise of the Modern World*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984. A study of the impact that the Enlightenment, especially in the form of English Deists, had on the Bible's assumed authority, together with some elements of anti-Deist apologetics.

Smalley, B. *The Study of the Bible in the Middle Ages*. Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 1964. A groundbreaking study of the social contexts and literary endeavors of important medieval interpreters of the Christian Bible, with special attention to the School of St. Victor.

Sternberg, M. *The Poetics of Biblical Narrative: Ideological Literature and the Drama of Reading*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985. An Israeli scholar engages the ancient Hebrew narratives with an eye to both their literary elements and their ideological import.

Trible, P. *Texts of Terror: Literary Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984. An early and influential example of an examination of the biblical stories from the perspective of female oppression, showing how such stories can misshape, as well as shape, human character.

Warfield, B. B. *The Inspiration and Authority of the Bible*. Philadelphia: The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1948. One of the heroes of biblical Fundamentalism—and one of its most coherent representatives—makes the case for its understanding of inspiration and authority.

Westcott, B. F. *A General View of the History of the English Bible*. Third edition, revised by W. A. Wright. New York: MacMillan Company, 1927. An older study but valuable for its many fine excerpts from the various versions.

Wycliffe, John. *On the Truth of the Holy Scripture*. Translated with an introduction and notes by Christopher Levy. Kalamazoo: Western Michigan University, 2001. This is one of the major works in which Wycliffe anticipated the Protestant Reformation, by putting Scripture's authority over that of the church.

Internet Resources:

I am still a text- more than an Internet-person, but I have found http://em.wikipedia.org to be a reliable and free resource.

