

# How We Got Our Bible

## Part Two: The Text of the Hebrew Bible

- I. The Text of the Hebrew Bible
  - A. Disposal of Worn-out Manuscripts
    1. Worn-out manuscripts were stored in genizahs.
    2. Worn-out manuscripts were eventually destroyed.
  - B. Talmudic Rules for Copying the Scriptures
    1. Only Parchment from Clean Animals Could Be Used
    2. Each Written Column of the Scroll Was to Have No Fewer Than 48 and No More Than 60 lines.
    3. Each Page Had to Be Lined First and the Letters Had to Be Written on the Lines.
    4. The Ink Must Be Black and Made From a Specific Recipe.
    5. The Scribe Could Write Nothing from Memory. He Must Pronounce the Word Before He Wrote It down.
    6. The Scribe Must Wipe His Pen Before Writing the Name Yahweh (YHWH).
    7. Every New Copy Had to Be Revised Within 30 Days of Completion. If the Manuscript Had More Than Three Errors in Any Single Sheet the Scroll Was Disposed of.
    8. There Were Strict Rules Concerning the Shape of the Letters and the Space Between Them.
  - C. The Masoretes and the Masoretic Text
    1. During the Intertestamental Period a Class of Scribes Emerged Whose Sole Responsibility Was to Copy and Preserve the Hebrew Bible.
    2. This Group Became Known as the Masoretes about the Fifth Century AD.
    3. These Men Standardized the Hebrew Text and Added Vowel Marks.
  - D. Hebrew Manuscripts
    1. Key Masoretic Texts
      - a. The Cairo Codex (895) (Codex=Book)
      - b. Aleppo Codex (930)
      - c. Leningrad Codex (1008)
    2. Nash Papyrus (The Decalogue and the Shema) (2d Century BC).
    3. Fragments from the Cairo Genizah (5th Century AD)
    4. Dead Sea Scrolls (1<sup>st</sup> Century BC to 1<sup>st</sup> Century AD). The Dead Sea Scrolls Contain a Fragment of Every Old Testament Book Except Esther.

E. Printed Hebrew Bibles

1. The First Rabbinic Bible Was Published by Daniel Bomberg in 1416–17.
2. The Second Rabbinic Bible Was Published by Jacob Ben Chayyim in 1524–25. This Edition Was the Standard Hebrew Text Until 1929.

II. Ancient Versions of the Old Testament

- A. The Samaritan Pentateuch
- B. The Aramaic Targums (Aramaic Paraphrases, Used in the Synagogue, of the Hebrew Bible).
- C. The Septuagint (LXX, 3d Century BC to 132 BC) (Also Contained the Apocrypha).