

How We Got Our Bible

Part Six: Greek and Latin Bibles

- I. The Latin Bible
 - A. By 300 Latin became the common language of the Western Roman Empire.
 - B. By the fifth century there were many poorly done Old Latin versions of the Bible.
 - C. In response the Bishop of Rome (Damasus I) requested that Jerome standardize the Latin Translation of the Bible.
 - D. Today about 10,000 Manuscripts of Jerome's Vulgate Survive.
 - E. In the Middle Ages Pope Clement (1592) revised the Vulgate and that edition became the new standard translation for the Roman Catholic Church.
 - F. The Vulgate was the standard Bible of Western Christianity for around 1,000 years.
- II. Printed Greek Bibles
 - A. Around 1445 Johannes Gutenberg invented a moveable-type printing press. The first book published on a printing press was the Latin Vulgate in 1452.
 1. Gutenberg had to prepare around 46,000 woodblocks for the letters of his press.
 2. Today there are only 23 complete Gutenberg Bibles extant in the world. The last one to be sold went for \$2.2 million in the 1978. Valued today at over \$25 million.
 - B. Desiderius Erasmus Published The First Printed Greek Testament.
 1. Cardinal Ximenes was actually the first put the Greek NT in print in 1514. However, he was delayed in distributing the Complutensian Polyglot waiting for papal approval.
 2. Erasmus early on was a Roman Catholic monk who left the monastery and entered the university life.
 3. In 1516 with the help of the printer, Froben, he published his edition of the Greek New Testament.
 4. Erasmus's purpose was not to print a Greek Testament, but to justify his own edition of an updated Latin Translation.
 5. However, his edition sold well because students and scholars were interested in the Greek Text.
 6. Erasmus used 7 manuscripts to compile his edition of the Greek New Testament (manuscripts 1, 1^{rk}, 2^e, 2^{ap}, 4^{ap}, 7, and 817; for his second edition Erasmus also used 3).
 - a. Three copies of the Gospels
 - b. Four copies of the Pauline Epistles.
 - c. One Copy of Revelation
 - d. His earliest manuscript was from the 11th Century (minuscule 2).
 7. His first edition was rushed and had several errors. This caused him to published a second edition quickly.
 8. Later scholars updated and published Erasmus Greek Text. The Elzevir brothers published the 1565 edition and its preface boasted that the edition was the text received by all

(Textus Receptus). This was the basic Greek Text used by the King James Version translators.

9. The Textus Receptus and 1 John 5:7.
 - a. 1 John 5:7 was not included in Erasmus's first two editions of the Greek New Testament. This was a major criticism from Stunica, one of the editors of the Complutensian Polyglot.
 - b. Erasmus's reply was that the verse was not in any of the Greek manuscripts. He said that if he found it in any of the Greek manuscripts he would include it in his next edition.
 - c. A manuscript was shown to Erasmus that included the passage. It is Codex Montfortianus (61) that is currently in the Library of Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland. A scribe named Froy made this manuscript in 1520, probably in Oxford.
 - d. There are only 8 Greek manuscripts that include this verse. The oldest (15th Century), Codex Ottobonianus (629), contains the verse and is a diglot (two language Bible) that is in Greek and Latin. The Greek text is edited to match the Clementine Vulgate text.
 - e. Because he said he would include it, Erasmus put it in his third edition with a lengthy footnote explaining how he did not think it was original, but he was doing what he promised he would do. Erasmus believed Codex Montfortianus was copied just to force him to include the passage.