

Final Authority: Locating God's Word in English

The People of Preservation

The Viewpoint of Faith

- **Point 1: What is Inspiration?**
- II Timothy 3:16—the Bible’s claim for itself is that every word of scripture was given by inspiration of God.
- God’s design in Inspiration was to make the living and the written word equal.
- **Point 2: What is Preservation?**
- Psalm 12:6-7—the doctrine of Preservation teaches that the very words God inspired are the same words he is going to preserve. The doctrines of Inspiration and Preservation go hand in hand; you can’t have one without the other.
- It is always to be remembered that the Bible is a spiritual book which God exerted supernatural force to conceive, and it is reasonable to assume that he could exert that same supernatural force to preserve.

The Viewpoint of Faith

- **Point 3: Why is Preservation Necessary?**
- Genesis 3 outlines Satan's policy of evil against the word of God.
- It is Satan's policy of evil to destroy the final authority of the Word of God. He does so by creating a competing authority to the truth of God. Thus forcing you to decide and become your own authority.
- Satan desires to be worshipped. He has the ability to counterfeit God's actions, and definitely will be involved actively in attempting to destroy God's Word and/or our confidence in that Word, while seeking to replace it with his own version.

The Viewpoint of Faith

- **Point 3: The Process of Preservation**
- The originals no longer exist and are not the issue with God.
- **God's design is to Preserve his Word through a multiplicity of accurate reliable copies that carry as much weight and authority as the originals.**

People of Preservation in the O.T.

- God always over saw the copying process of the word of God. He did so by establishing a group of men whose job it was to guard the word of God.
- Romans 3:1-2
- Deuteronomy 31:24-28
- Deuteronomy 10:2-8
- Deuteronomy 31:9-13
- Malachi 2:4-7
- Ezra 7:6-7—Ezra was a member of the tribe of Levi. He was a ready scribe and an expert in the Law of Moses. He was part of the group of People who God had established for the handling of the Word of God.

People of Preservation in the O.T.

- Ezra 7:10-11—Ezra made copies of the Word of God.
- Ezra 7:27-28—God’s hand was on Ezra to ensure that the copying was done right.
- Proverbs 25:1
- Isaiah 36:22-37:2
- Jeremiah 8:8-9—the scribes were responsible for copying the Word of God.
- My point is that God did not simply allow his word to be handled and copied by anyone. In the Old Testament he established a specific group of men whose job it was to take care of the Word of God.

People of Preservation in the O.T.

- Scribes knew they were duplicating God's word, so they went to incredible lengths to prevent error from creeping into their work. The whole process of copying the Bible was controlled by strict religious rituals, and the scribes carefully counted every line, word, syllable, and letter to ensure accuracy.

Dead Sea Scrolls



When compared with the Massoratic text the Dead Sea Scrolls were word for word identical in over 95% of the text. The 5% variation consisted of obvious slips of the pen and variations in spelling.

Massoratic Text



150
B.C.

900
A.D.

1,000 Year Time Span

People of Preservation in the D.O.G.

- When God set the nation of Israel aside the people who were responsible for the protection and preservation of the God's Word changed. When Israel fell the job of Preservation passed from the scribes of the tribe of Levi into the hands of the New Testament prophets.
- Ephesians 4:11—we know that during the infancy stage of the Body of Christ, before the Word of God was complete the gift of prophecy functioned in the Body of Christ.

People of Preservation in the D.O.G.

- II Thessalonians 2:1-2
- I Corinthians 14:27-33
- Exodus 7:1—one of the functions of a prophet in the Word of God is to be God's spokes person. A prophet also communicated God's Word to his audience. "thus saith the Lord."
 - Foretelling—means to predict the future.
 - Forthelling—means to deliver a message.
- II Thessalonians 2:1-2
- II Peter 3:15-16
- Colossians 4:15-16

The Finalization of the Canon

- It was under the ministry of the New Testament prophets that the New Testament canon was finalized.
- This is not what modern scholarship and textual criticism teaches. They teach that between 150-400 A.D. the church fathers gather together the New Testament books.
- 170-200 A.D. theological discussion and between 220-400 the canon was settled by the church fathers. 393 A.D. Synod of Hippo
- The Gothic Translation of the New Testament was made in 360 A.D. and included all 27 books that are in your New Testament.
- How could Timothy rightly divide the word of truth unless he possessed a copy of the Word of Truth to divide?