

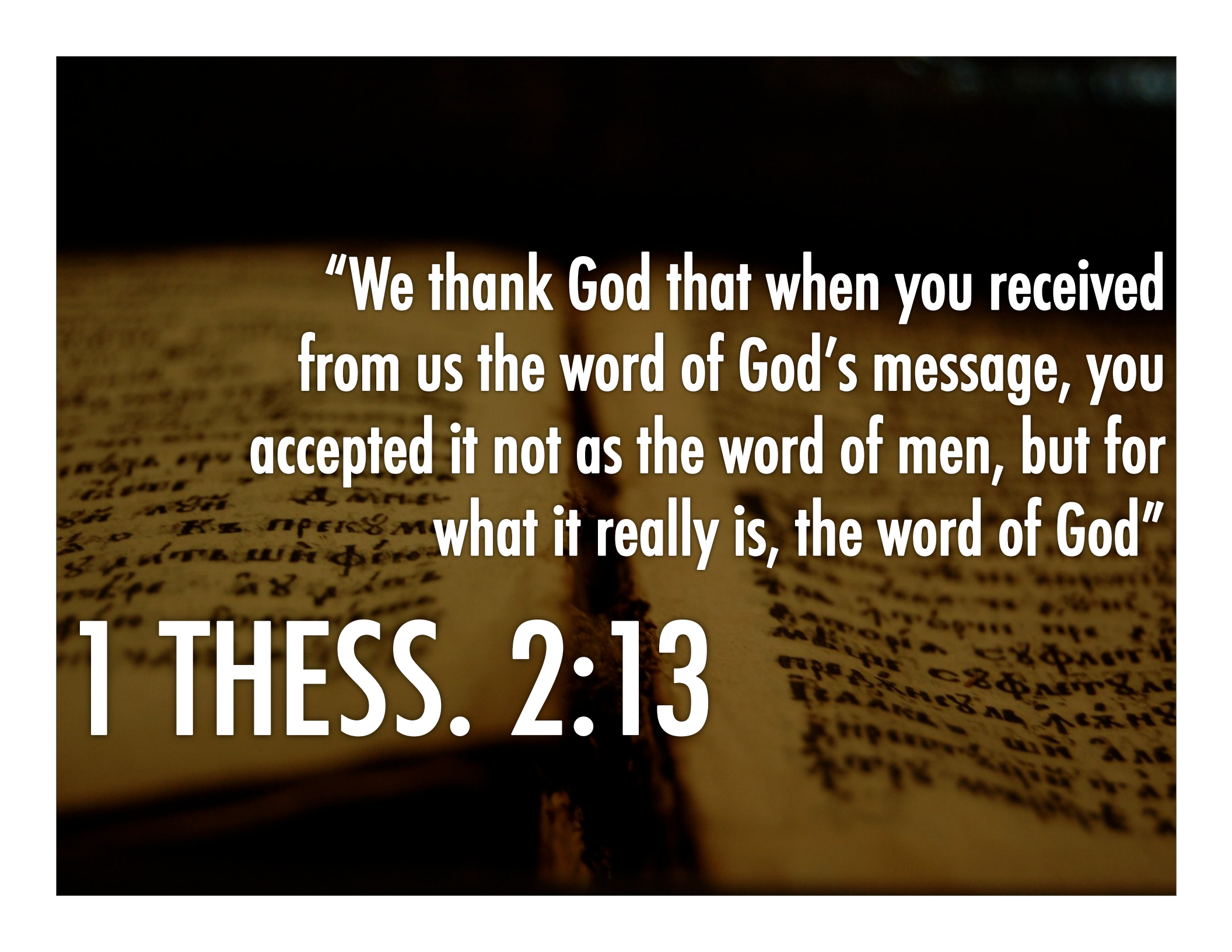


THE BOOK

PART THREE: THE NEW TESTAMENT

**“For I would have you know, brethren,
that the gospel which was preached by me
is not according to man. For I neither
received it from man, nor was I taught it,
but I received it through a revelation of
Jesus Christ”**

GALATIANS 1:11-12



“We thank God that when you received from us the word of God’s message, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God”

1 THESS. 2:13



THE NEW TESTAMENT:

If we don't have the originals,
then what do we have?



A page from the Bodmer Papyri, a collection of Greek manuscripts. Copied around the end of the second century, they are not the oldest manuscripts but do give a good idea of the appearance and condition of early New Testaments.

This page is John 1:1-13.



FRONT

BACK



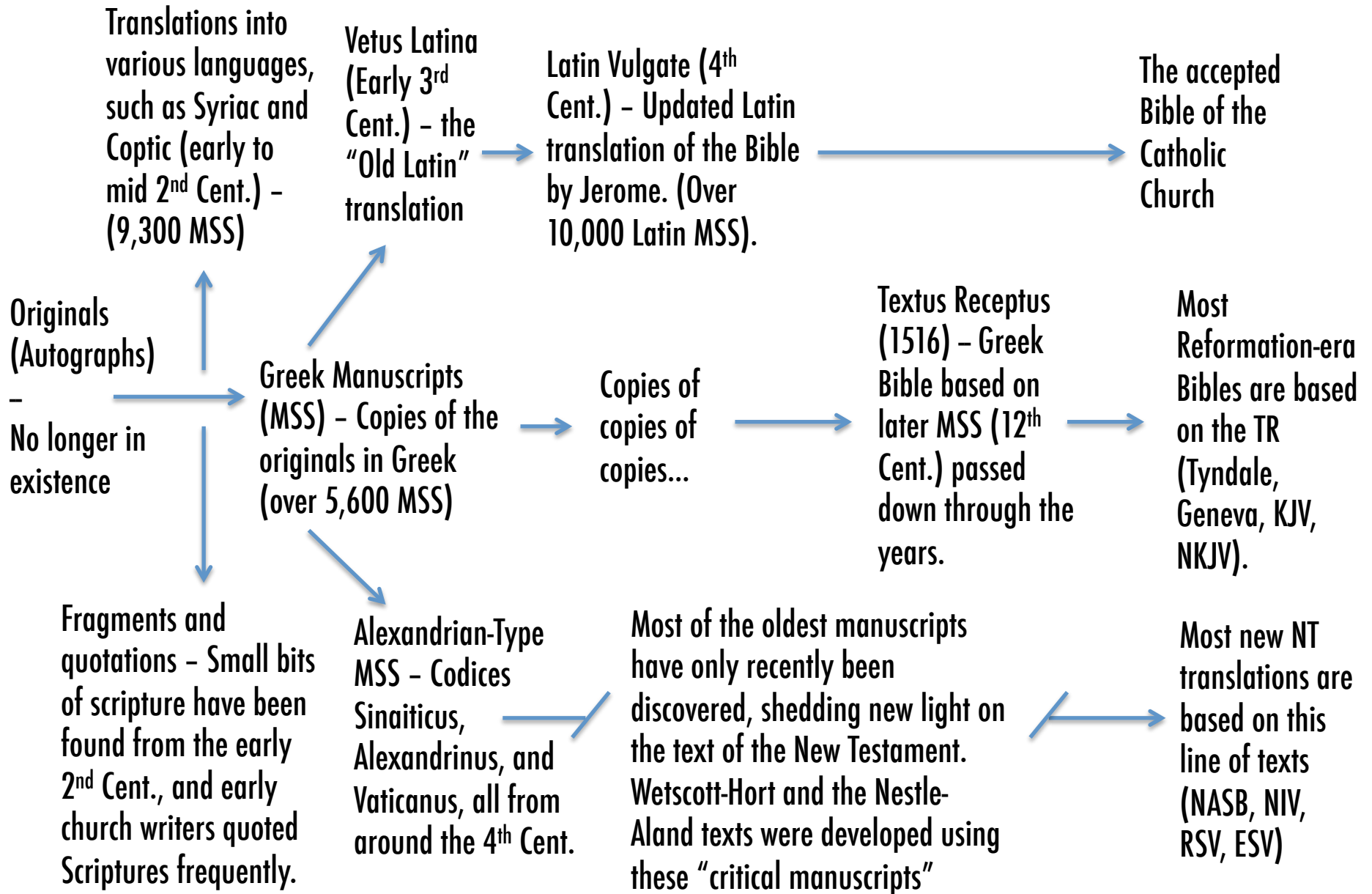
The John Rylands Library Papyrus (P52) is the oldest known fragment from a New Testament manuscript, dating from as early as AD 118.

Though small (and obviously incomplete) it is conclusive evidence of the New Testament's antiquity.

COMPARED TO OTHER ANCIENT WORKS

AUTHOR	DATE WRITTEN	EARLIEST COPY	TIME SPAN	# OF COPIES
PLINY	AD 61-113	AD 850	750 YEARS	7
PLATO	427-347 BC	AD 900	1200 YEARS	7
HERODOTUS	480-425 BC	AD 900	1300 YEARS	8
SUETONIUS	AD 75-160	AD 950	800 YEARS	8
THUCYDIDES	460-400 BC	AD 900	1300 YEARS	8
CAESAR	100-44 BC	AD 900	1000 YEARS	10
TACITUS	AD 100	AD 1100	1000 YEARS	20
ARISTOTLE	384-322 BC	AD 1100	1400 YEARS	49
SOPHOCLES	496-406 BC	AD 1000	1400 YEARS	193
HOMER (ILIAD)	900 BC	400 BC	500 YEARS	643
NT	AD 50-96	AD 130	LESS THAN 50	5600

THE NEW TESTAMENT

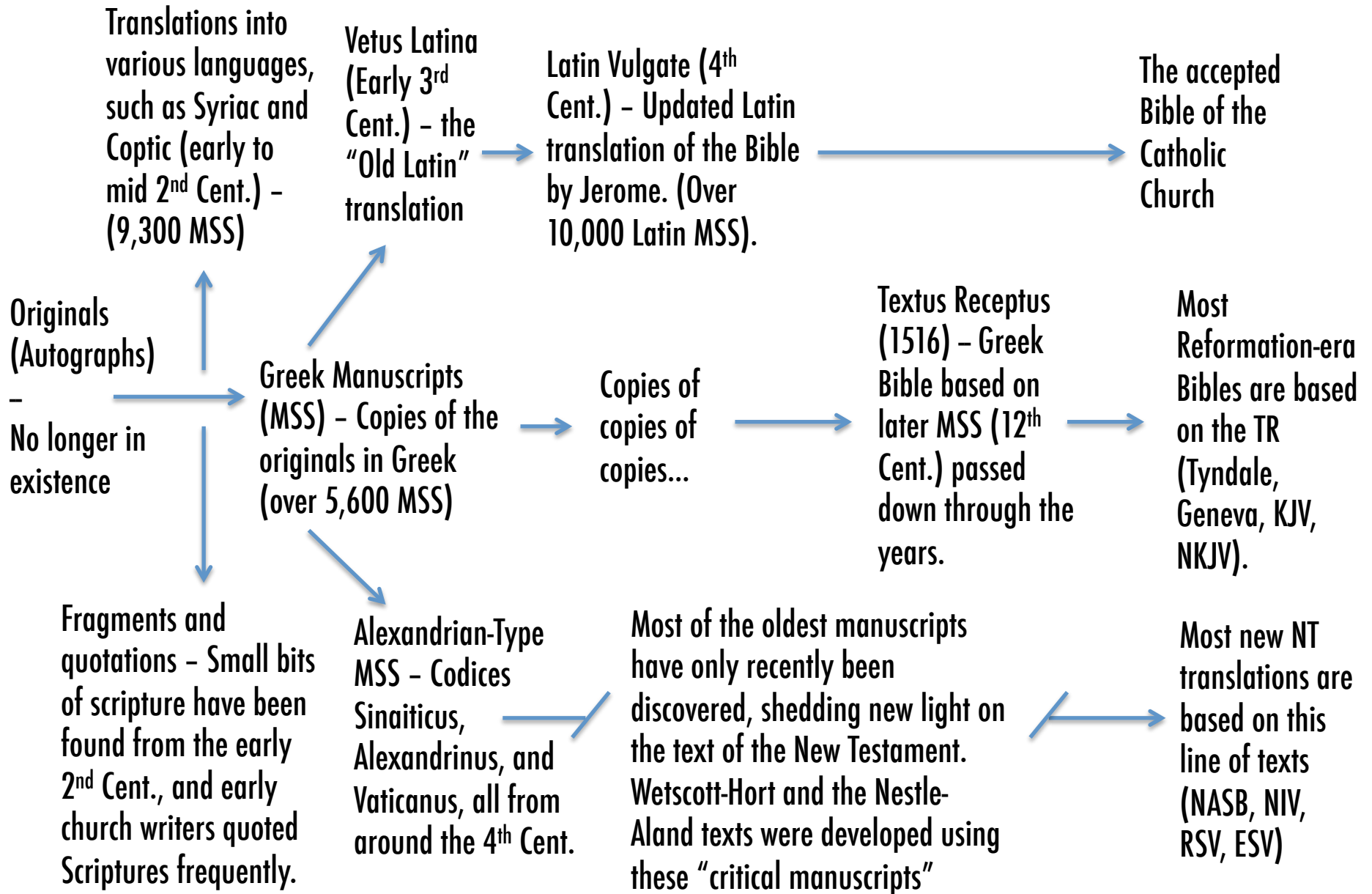


CODEX SINAITICUS



A page from the Gospel of Luke (Early 4th Cent.)

THE NEW TESTAMENT

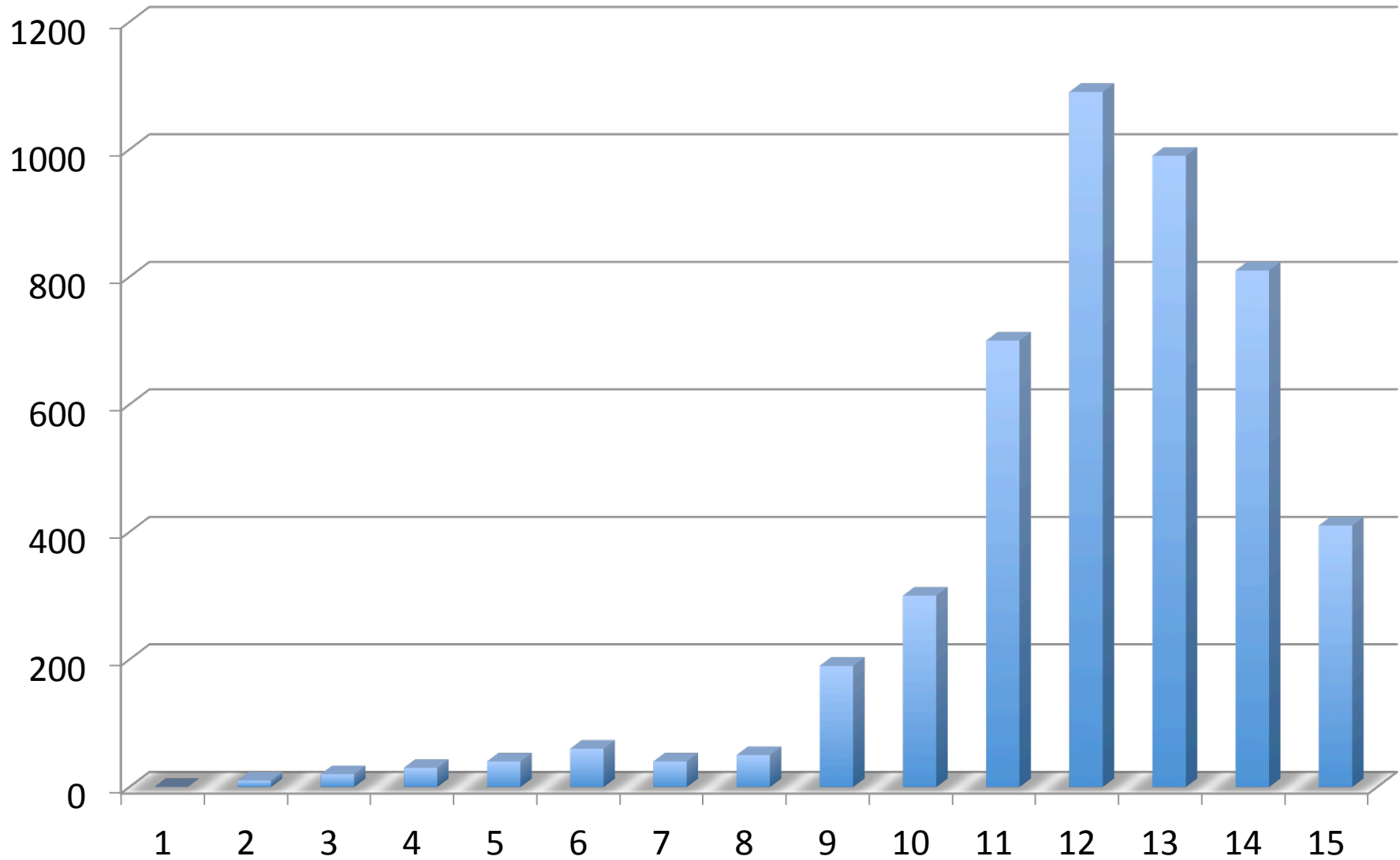




THE NEW TESTAMENT:

But aren't most of the manuscripts pretty far removed from the originals?

NUMBER OF GREEK MSS BY CENTURY



STARLINGS AND BIBLE MANUSCRIPTS

A close-up photograph of a European Starling perched on a tree branch. The bird is facing left, showing its iridescent blue and green feathers with yellow and black streaks. It has a bright yellow beak and red legs. The background is a soft, out-of-focus grey.

In 1890, a man released 60 European Starlings into New York's Central Park. 40 more were released the next year. From those original 100 specimens came 200 million descendants in North America. When it comes to manuscript evidence, it makes sense that there would be fewer examples from earlier dates. And, like the starlings, I do not need to see the originals to be confident in them.



THE NEW TESTAMENT:

But what about all the variations between the manuscripts? Doesn't this make the New Testament suspect?

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows...”

MATTHEW 1:18

Some manuscripts say “Jesus”, “Christ”, or “Christ Jesus”, but most say “Jesus Christ.” This is obviously not damaging to the text, since it is the same person. The problem is that all of these are counted as “variations” in the text. Skeptics are quick to latch on to the “millions of variations”, but the counting method is dubious and most of the differences are matters of spelling, grammar, or changes in the use of words or idioms over time.