Is the Bible as God’s Word Trustworthy: How We Got the Bible?

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**Foundational Scripture:** 1 Thess. 2:13

**Intro**:

* The book that we have in our possession today is the result of years of God’s providence and care for His word. It is the result of years of tireless work and concerted efforts of faithful men who have ensured that what we have to today is the untainted and unbiased objective truth. As faithful disciples, we ought to ensure that what we have today is not the just the work of man but the work and word of God that has been preserved and protected over the course of centuries. **How did we get the Bible?**

1. **The Composition of the Bible**
   1. **Writing Surfaces**
      1. *Papyrus:* A plant which grew in the rivers and lakes of Egypt and Syria. The reeds were stripped and cut into thin, narrow slices and then pressed together into two layers. This formed a whitish surface which was smooth and it was usually polished with a stone of some kind.
      2. *Parchment:* This material was made from sheep, goat or calf skins. It is much more durable than papyrus and became the second most popular material to write on.
      3. *Vellum:* This is a high-quality form of parchment. Usually stained or dyed.
      4. *Clay, Stones, Tablets etc.* These were ancient forms of writing material which the Semitic peoples usually utilized to engrave messages and/or treaties etc.
   2. **Writing Materials**
      1. *Chisel*: Iron instrument used to engrave messages or writing on stones.
      2. *Pen and Ink*: This was the go-to instrument to write on parchment, papyrus and vellum. It was typically 6-16 inches long and made similar to that of a chisel. The ink was a compound of water, charcoal and gum or from a variety of different trees.
      3. *Metal Stylus:* This tool was used particular for engraving in clay tablets and stones. It had a beveled head with3 sides.
   3. **Ancient Books**
      1. *Scroll:* Scrolls were usually made my gluing sheets of papyrus together or parchments sewed together by sinews from the muscles of animals. It would then be place on a stick.
      2. *Codex:* This is the closest form to what we call a book. The papyri or parchment would be written on in leaf from and sewed or glued in that manner so that pages would go from left to right.
   4. **Form of Writings**
      1. *Uncials:* This form of writing was in all capital letters and two of the most important codices are written in this form.
      2. *Miniscule:* This form of writing was exquisite cursive of smaller letters.
      3. *Spaces and Vowels:* The original Hebrew manuscripts were written without the presence of vowels. The original Greek manuscripts were written without spacing between words.
   5. **Division of the Bible**
      1. Chapters
         1. *Old Testament:* The Pentateuch was first divided shortly before the Babylonian captivity for the purposes of reading cycles and easier references. Around 165 B.C. the rest of OT was sectioned off similarly. It was not until the reformation era that the OT was divided in the way that it is today.
         2. *New Testament:* Greeks first made paragraph divisions of the NT shortly before 325 A.D. Chapter division appear in the Codex Vaticanus and they are much smaller than what we have today. It was not until after the 13th century that sections were made bigger until eventually division were made as we have today.
      2. Verses
         1. *Old Testament:* Spaces between verses and such markings began to develop for the purpose of public reading and interpretation of those scriptures. This was normalized sometime after 900 A.D.
         2. *New Testament:* Like the OT, verse markings and spaces developed for the purpose of public reading and interpretation. Verses as we have today, were normalized around the 16th century A.D.