

(See the data in F.F. Bruce: THE BOOKS AND THE PARCHMENTS, chapters IX and XIV) But it is still true that varying texts suggest the problem of transmission. No two independent texts known to the writer have proved to be 100% identical in form or content. This is likely the result of transmission methods. With neither automated means of transmitting nor correcting, transmission suffers from:

--sight copy problems...where the copiest is reproducing a manuscript line by line as he reads it and writes what he reads.

--ear copy problems...in which case a scribe or, as is more likely, a group of scribes, is copying a manuscript that is dictated by a reader. This seems to have been one of the most efficient and fastest methods of reproduction in the old world since one reader could read from a master codex and a number of copiests could write. It apparently was the method used at Qumran but it is filled with the possibilities of oral error...the mouth and the ear not making the exact connection in communication. Then, with the orthographical peculiarities of the individual scribes, the problem was easily compounded.

--oral copy problems...in which a passage was memorized (as in the home setting) and then later reduced to writing. Great stress was placed on this sort of memorization at Qumran and it would have been remarkable had no one tried to transcribe later the writings of the mind.

(2) Understanding

This is the problem in transmission when one does not understand another and either alters his copy through addition or deletion with or without notation, or tries to alter the mss from which the copy is being made--and then alter his own copy. Small text matters, such as those involving *matres lectionis*, etc., are often found in this area and while the total number is small in comparison to "what could have been" it is still a factor to be considered, especially in problem passages or notably difficult texts. Caution is the rule in identifying such passages but the suggestion of such should not be regarded as major error!