



Old Testament manuscripts

Storms cause ship to lose control and wander sea for two weeks.

Created by THE Bible Study Web Site at BibleStudy.org

Which of these manuscripts do we trust?

- 1. Hebrew Oral Tradition and scribes**
- 2. Masoretic text**
- 3. Septuagint**
- 4. Dead Sea Scrolls**

The Oral Tradition:

- Even after some of the earliest portions of Scripture were committed to writing (8th & 7th centuries B.C.), orality was still the primary means of transmitting the material that would eventually become the Hebrew Bible.
- The oral tradition continued to be the dominant means by which most people encountered “Scripture” throughout the biblical period and beyond.
- Most people did not read the texts that would become parts of the Bible, but rather heard them. Literacy rates in the ancient Near East, including Israel, were extremely low—between 5 and 15 percent of the total population...

The Oral Tradition:

According to Jewish tradition, the Oral Torah was passed down orally in an unbroken chain from generation to generation until its contents were finally committed to writing. (Wikipedia)

Prophets used scribes before 600 B.C.

Jeremiah used a scribe called Baruch to write for him.

*Jer 36:1 And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, that this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, {36:2} Take thee a roll of a book, **and write therein** all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel,..... Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah: **and Baruch wrote** from the mouth of Jeremiah...*

The burning of the scroll happened in winter of the fifth year in the ninth month of Judah's 18th king, King Jehoiakim 609-598BC, i.e. 604BC or 603BC.

<https://bibleview.org/en/bible/prophets/scribe/>

The Masoretic (traditional) Hebrew text:

- The Masoretic text (from Hebrew masoreth, “tradition”), is the traditional Hebrew text of the Jewish Bible, meticulously assembled from the 6th century AD and completed in the 10th by scholars at Talmudic academies in Babylonia and Palestine.
- The aim was to reproduce the original text of the Hebrew O.T.
- Their intention was to transmit to future generations the authentic Word of God.
- Their intention did not include interpreting the meaning of the Scriptures.

The Masoretic (traditional) Hebrew text:

- They gathered manuscripts and whatever oral traditions were available to them. The text that resulted from their work shows that **every word and every letter** was checked with care.
- They counted and noted down the total number of verses, words, and letters in the text and further indicated which verse, which word, and which letter marked the centre of the text
- The fact that it was only completed in the 9th century AD does not diminish from its validity at all. 100% of OT scrolls discovered at Wadi Murabbaat and 100% of OT scrolls at Masada and 65%* of Dead Sea OT scrolls containing Biblical texts, "**agree extensively with the traditional (Masoretic) Biblical texts**".

* Ref later slide

The Septuagint

Some history: Jews spread all over the world by the Assyrians and Babylonians

Babylon falls to the Persians and Cyrus conquers Babylon in 536 BC



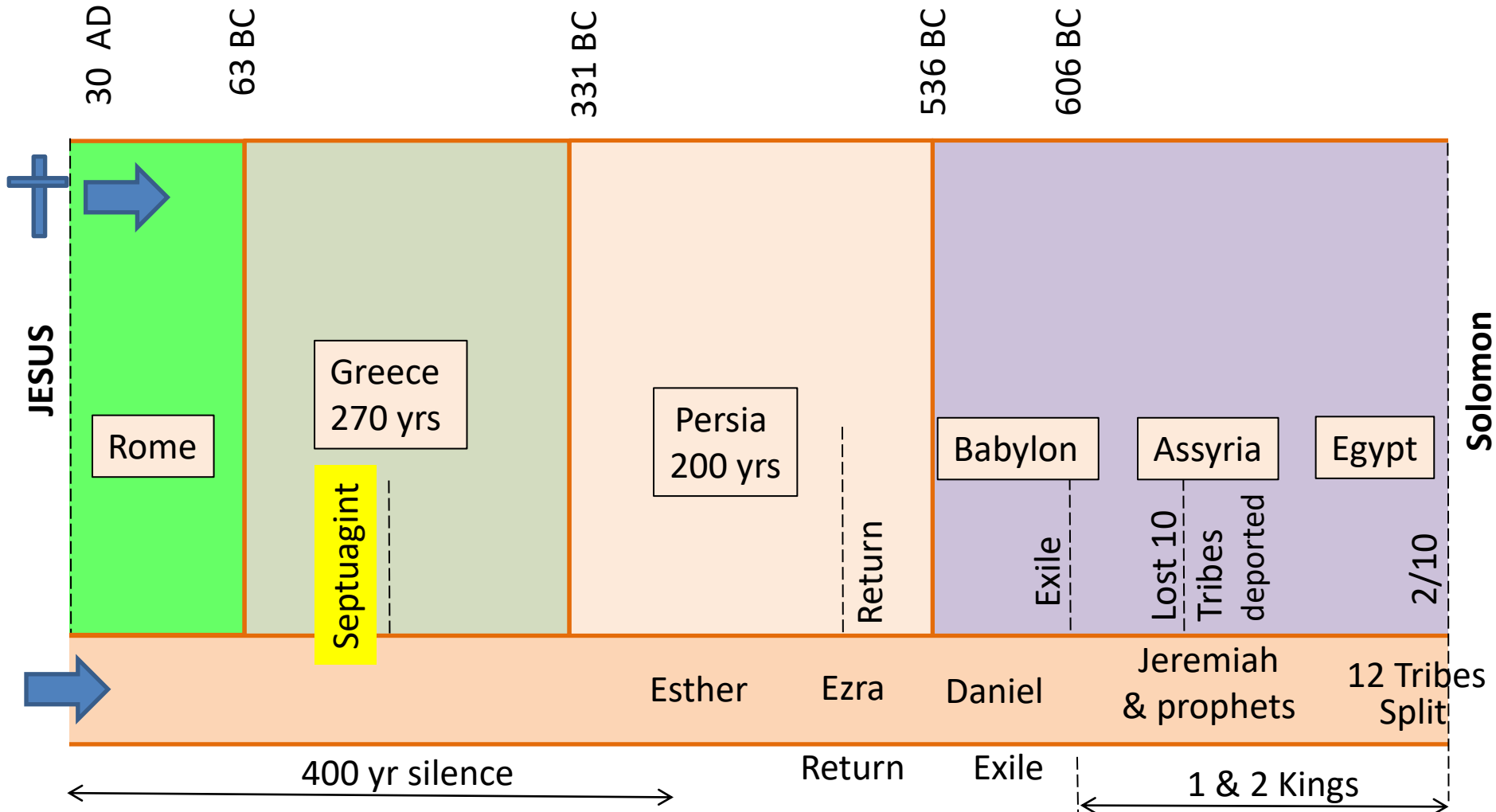
The Greek Empire

Greek Empire at the death of Alexander the Great in 323 BC.



BC History Wall: The 6 Empires dominating the middle east

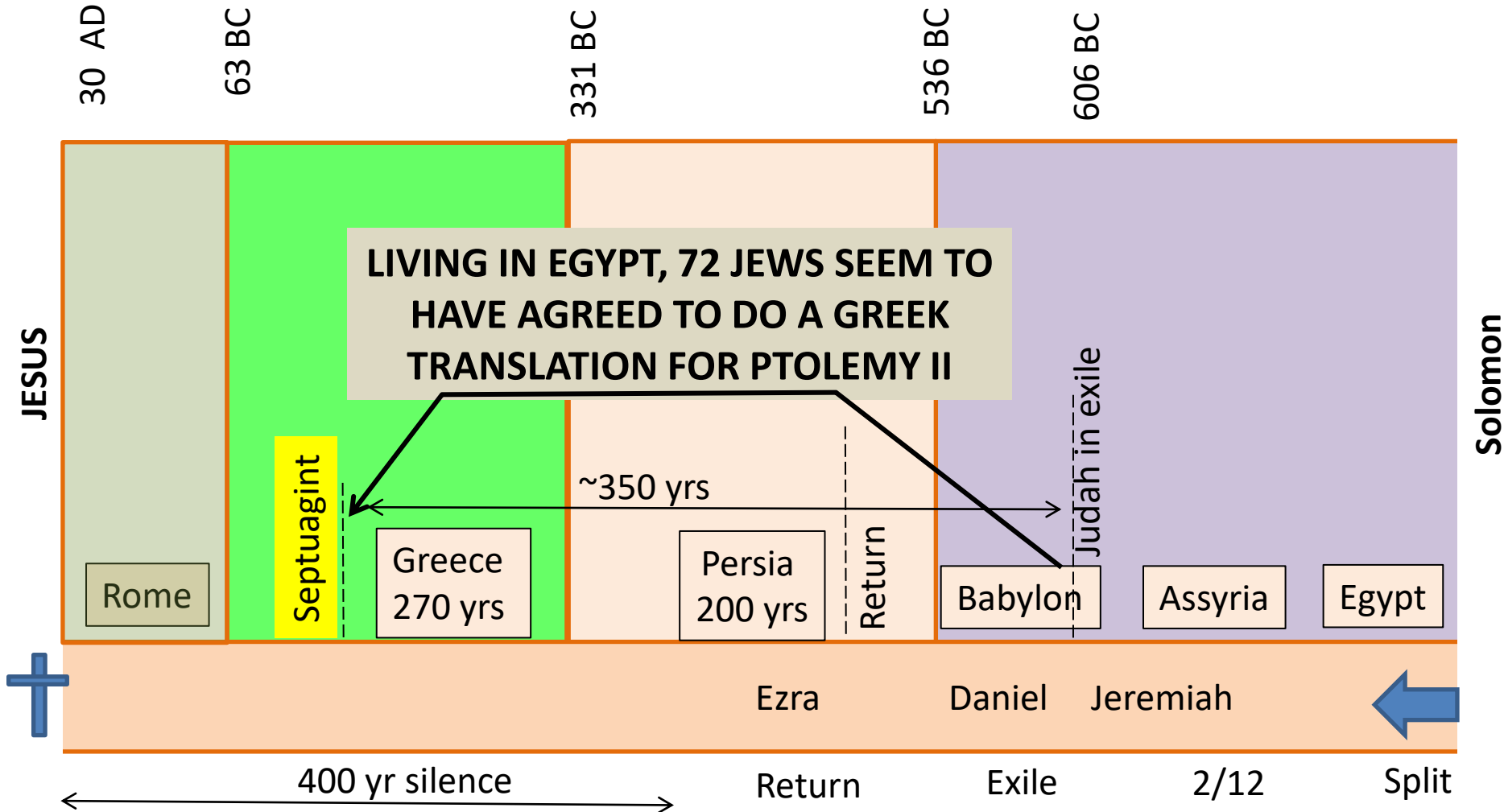
Empires from Kings of Judah/Israel to Esther



Jeremiah warns Jews not to go to Egypt, but they do.

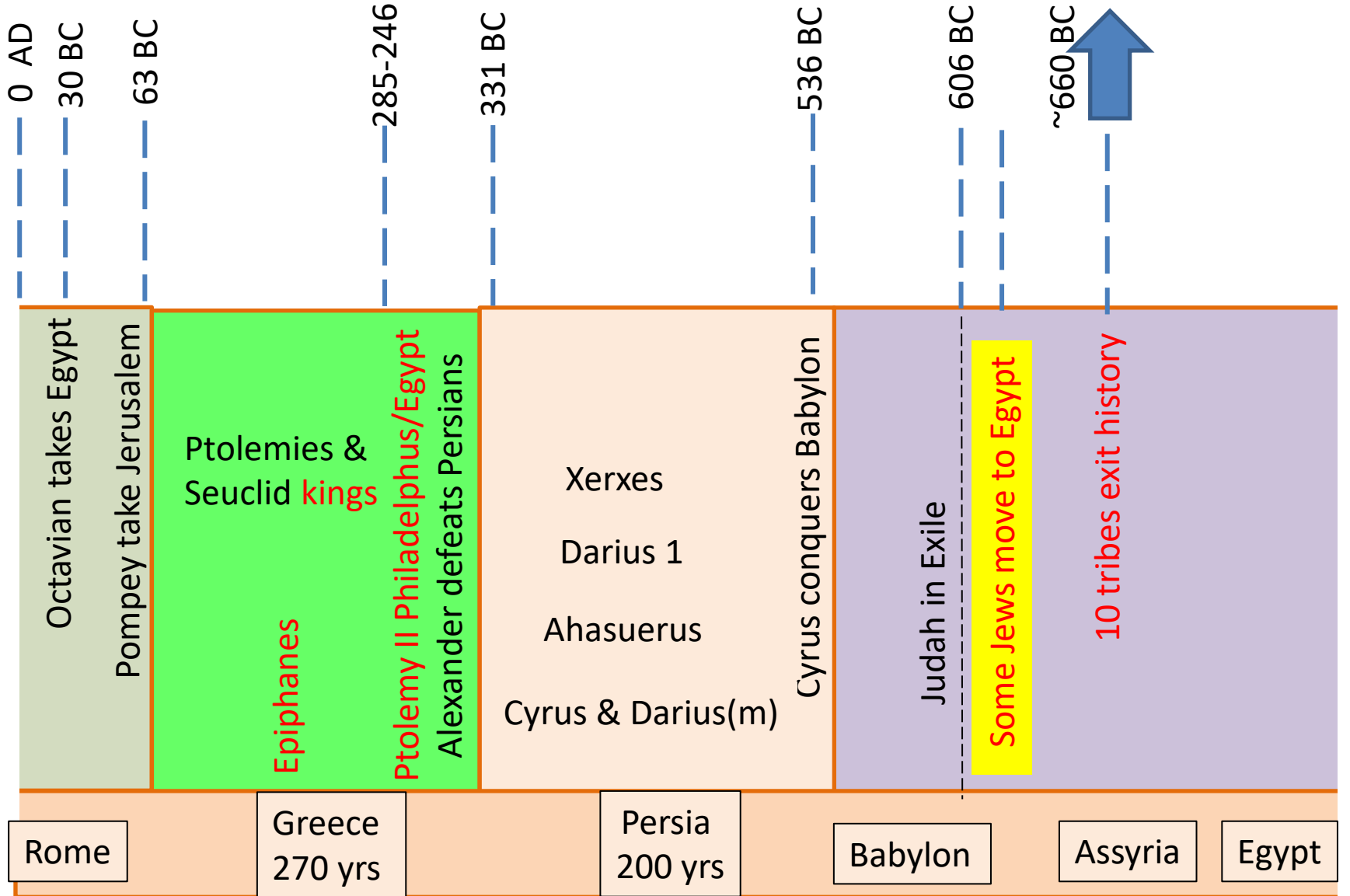
Jer. 42:15-43:11

Ptolemy II Philadelphus of Egypt requests an OT.



Emperors of the BC Empires.

Cyrus conquers Babylon in 536 BC



72 JEWS, LIVING IN EGYPT, SEEM TO HAVE AGREED TO DO A GREEK TRANSLATION FOR PTOLEMY II

- The name Septuagint (Sept-is seven in Latin) derives from the 72 Jewish scholars in Alexandria, Egypt, who attempted a Greek O.T. translation of some books in 200BC.
- All that exists are scraps of evidence that the first five books of the Old Testament were translated into Greek at around 200 BC. There's no shred of evidence that the remainder of the Old Testament was translated into Greek.
- All historical evidence shows that the 72 only translated the first five books, Genesis through Deuteronomy. That is all the BC evidence there is, that's all there is to show.
- (Extracted from the Guardian"<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2010/jun/10/orig>^{V2 Jul 2018})

Origen finds these scraps and in 250AD produces the Septuagint in his compilation: 'the Hexapla'

- "The Hexapla", is a parallel Bible showing different versions. One of the columns Origen labelled, "Septuagint"
- All historical evidence shows that the 72 only translated the first five books, Genesis through Deuteronomy.
- Origen somehow extrapolates a version from these incomplete little scraps and produces a complete Old Testament Greek translation.
- Using the Septuagint, one finds that Methuselah dies 14 years after the flood...he survived outside the ark! It seems that the 72 Jews, or Origen, padded the numbers to make it 600 more years to the flood, but forgot to change the flood date!

The Greek Septuagint adds 400 years to some patriarchs. (averaging 100 years added to each)

Why trust a Greek document over the Hebrew?

The Septuagint of Job is about a sixth shorter than the traditional Hebrew text of the Bible known as the Masoretic Text. The missing portions were supplied from the Greek version of Theodotion. The Septuagint of Jeremiah is about an eighth shorter than the Masoretic Text, repeated passages are cut out and the order is changed. Furthermore, the Septuagint often preserves different numbers, e.g. the ages of some of the patriarchs in Genesis are given variously, thus:

Reference	Person's age	Masoretic Text	Septuagint
5:3	Adam's age at birth of Seth	130	230
5:6	Seth's age at birth of Enosh	105	205
5:28	Lamech's age at birth of Noah	182	188
5:31	Age of Lamech	777	753

Why trust a Greek O.T document over the Hebrew?

NIV footnotes have Greek Septuagint references.

- The OT is about the Hebrew people. They spoke & wrote Hebrew.
- The NIV **O.T.** footnotes mention:
“In the Hebrew...” a word means such-and such.
- **If the OT was translated from the Hebrew, why state the obvious?**
- It is because they used the Greek and not the original Hebrew.
- Sometimes the footnotes also say “In the septuagint”... and then they quote the septuagint or vulgate if they don't want to change the text.

EXAMPLE: Why trust a Greek O.T document over the Hebrew?

- 2 SAM 15:7... 40 years in the Hebrew changed to 4 years in NIV, etc.
That is a big change

*15:7} And it came to pass after **forty years**, that Absalom said unto the king, I pray thee, let me go and pay my vow, which I have vowed unto the LORD, in Hebron.*

- The NIV, etc. assume this is wrong and change it to **4 years**.
- But Absalom was simply 40 years old at that time, it does not mean that verse 7 is 40 years after v 6, that doesn't make sense.
- Also chapters 21-24 do not follow the Absalom event, they are clearly extra stories added to the narrative as extra information.

Beliefs of Origen:

("https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/belief/2010/jun/10/origen -christianity-philosophy")

- He promoted the doctrine of pre-existent soul. God's first creation, before time, was a collectivity of souls. Of these, all but one, the human soul of Christ, fell away. In the end, however, all humans and **every spirit, even the devil, would be saved**, returning to a state of "pure mind".
- "What intelligent person", Origen asked, "can imagine that there was a first "day", then a second and a third "day" – evening and morning – without the sun, the moon, and the stars ... Who is foolish enough to believe that, like a human gardener, **God planted a garden** in Eden “.

Was that his level of faith?

Beliefs of Origen:

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/issues/issue51/origen-model-or-heretic.html>

- Origen sought to merge Christianity with Greek philosophy. Philosophers seem to love him.
- Neo-Platonism taught that physical objects acted as symbols of spiritual reality and so contained a double meaning.
- Origen so endorses the heresy of religious artefacts. True, often Scriptures have a double meaning, a spiritual significance, like in the parables, but extending this to objects? Easy to spot the opportunity for deception as endorsed by Origen.

The Dead Sea Scrolls:

- The findings at Qumran show overwhelming support the Masoretic Text.
- Consider that the Essenes, living in the desert at Qumran, were a sect which didn't reflect mainstream Jewish belief.
- Note that not all dead sea scrolls have biblical content; the majority of 5000 plus manuscripts are non-biblical in content.
- About 40% of the Dead Sea Scrolls are in complete agreement with the Masoretic text, and a further 25% reflect the Masoretic. That leaves 35% of the Biblical texts as being of some other origin. Note 100% of OT scrolls discovered at Wadi Murabbaat and 100% of OT scrolls at Masada agree with the Masoretic.

The Dead Sea Scrolls:

- The modern academics and scholars prefer to laud the Dead Sea scrolls. It is not difficult to see that academics and scholars would focus virtually all their attention on the 35% which differ from the masoretic, as this provides ample opportunity for speculation and for the spreading of deceptive ideas.
- It is common for modern scholars to state: “The Dead Sea Scrolls have validated the Septuagint” and “This proves that the apostles quoted the Septuagint”. Then they try show you that the apostles quoted from **Jeremiah and Psalms**.
- However, what exactly did they find at the Dead Sea matching the Septuagint? Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. Just scraps, little scraps of Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. What does that prove about Jeremiah?

Hence the only corruption of the OT text comes from the Septuagint

The Septuagint is easy to disprove:

Summary:

Why trust a Greek document from Egypt over the Hebrew?

1. Origin of Alexandria, later a declared a heretic, compiles the Septuagint, ~250AD.
2. There is only proof that Numbers and Leviticus were translated by the LXX
3. There is no proof that Origen had the full OT text.
4. There are signs that Origen made the LXX fit the NT to give it credibility.
5. Metuselah's age doesn't fit the flood.
6. Were the Genesis lifespans extended to suit Egyptian chronology?
7. Once again, why trust a questionable Greek document over the trusted Hebrew?