

APOLOGETICS

IN ONE LESSON

↑
almost

Ai1L.net

Lesson 22

“The copies of the New Testament have been corrupted beyond recovery”

12 ¶ * Honour thy father and thy mother,
thy dayes may bee long vpon the land which
LORD thy God giueth thee.

13 * Thou shalt not kill.

14 Thou shalt commit adultery.

15 Thou shalt not steale.

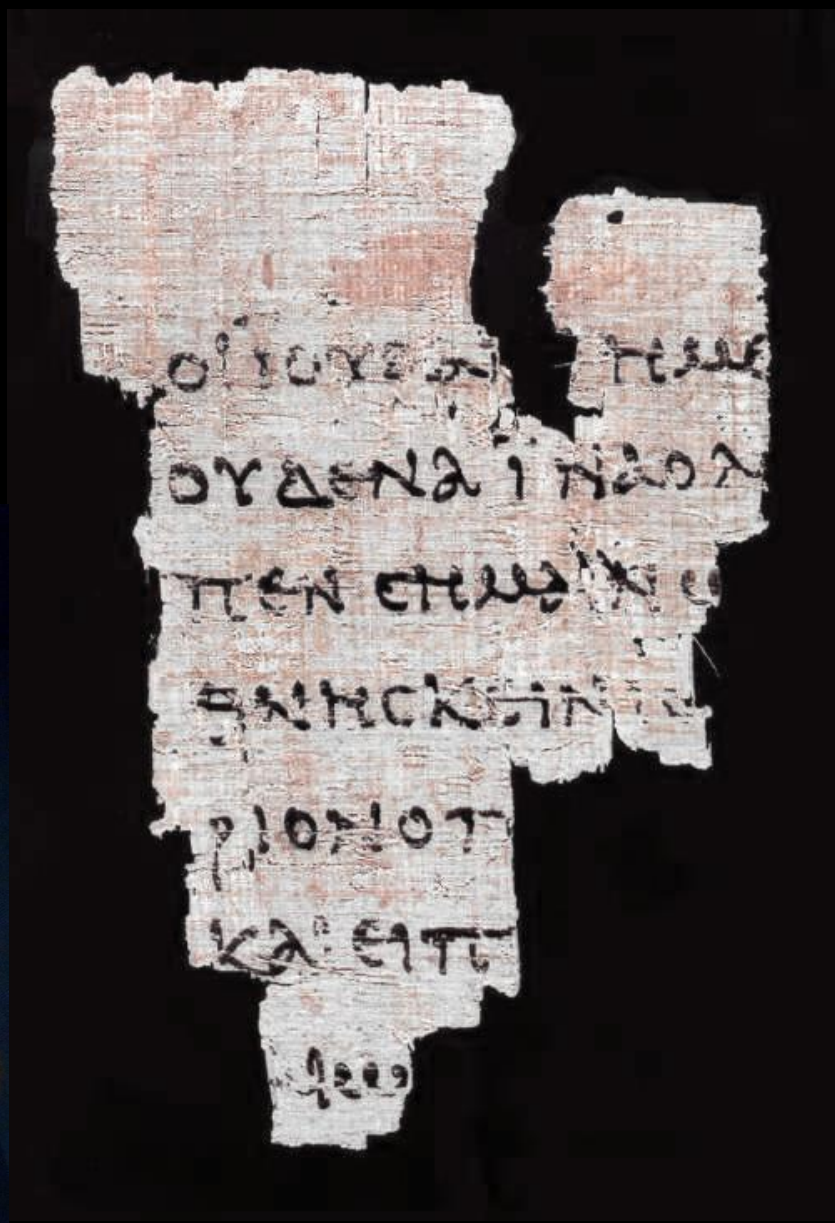
16 Thou shalt not beare false witnesse ag
thy neighbour.

17 * Thou shalt not couet thy nighbours h
thou shalt not couet thy neighbours wife, no
man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox

What is a manuscript?



Complete New Testament



Fragment

New York Times Bestseller

MISQUOTING JESUS

The Story Behind Who
Changed the Bible and Why



BART D. EHRMAN

Plus:
Insights,
Interviews,
and More



IDEA IN BRIEF

What?

Know how we can determine what the original accounts said despite not having the originals

Why?

To prevent people from being “blinded by science” regarding scribal errors

How?

By showing that:

1. Variations in the text aren't critical
2. Ehrman overstates his claim (by quoting Ehrman)

I won a million dollars 0

I won **one** million dollars 1

I won **\$1** million 2

I won **\$1,000,000** 3

I **got** \$1,000,000 4

I ~~was~~ won a million dollars 5

Can we trust the manuscripts?

1

Variant **counts rarely count** for anything (and most don't matter)

2

Scribal changes are hard to pass off without getting **detected**

3

New Testament documents are **better attested than other ancient documents**

4

Critical **doctrines are not affected** by variants (even Ehrman agrees)

Can we trust the manuscripts?

1

Variant **counts rarely count** for anything (and most don't matter)

Most variants are unimportant (spelling changes, ordering differences, movable nu)

“John loves Mary” in Greek

1 Μαρίαν Ἰωάννης ἀγαπᾷ

2 Μαρίαν ἀγαπᾷ Ἰωάννης

3 Ἰωάννης Μαρίαν ἀγαπᾷ

4 Ἰωάννης ἀγαπᾷ Μαρίαν

5 Ἰωάννης Μαρίαν ἀγαπᾷ

6 ἀγαπᾷ Ἰωάννης Μαρίαν

Let's add the article (i.e. “the”)

Combinations:

24

Μαρίαν ό Ίωάννης αγαπά

Ίωάννης Μαρίαν αγαπά

αγαπά ό Ίωάννης τήν Μαρίαν

Μαρίαν Ίωάννης αγαπά

Ίωάννης τήν Μαρίαν αγαπά

αγαπά Ίωάννης Μαρίαν

Μαρίαν αγαπά ό Ίωάννης

Ίωάννης αγαπά Μαρίαν

αγαπά Ίωάννης τήν Μαρίαν

Μαρίαν αγαπά Ίωάννης

Ίωάννης αγαπά τήν Μαρίαν

ό Ίωάννης τήν Μαρίαν αγαπά

τήν Μαρίαν ό Ίωάννης αγαπά

αγαπά Μαρίαν ό Ίωάννης

ό Ίωάννης αγαπά Μαρίαν

τήν Μαρίαν Ίωάννης αγαπά

αγαπά Μαρίαν Ίωάννης

ό Ίωάννης αγαπά τήν Μαρίαν

τήν Μαρίαν αγαπά ό Ίωάννης

αγαπά τήν Μαρίαν ό Ίωάννης

αγαπά ό Ίωάννης Μαρίαν

τήν Μαρίαν αγαπά Ίωάννης

αγαπά τήν Μαρίαν Ίωάννης

ό Ίωάννης Μαρίαν αγαπά

96

Μαριάμμην αγαπᾷ Ἰωάννης
αγαπᾷ Ἰωάννης τὴν Μαριάμμην
αγαπᾷ ὁ Ἰωάννης Μαριάμμην
τὴν Μαριάμμην αγαπᾷ Ἰωάννης
ὁ Ἰωάννης αγαπᾷ Μαριάμμην
Ἰωάννης Μαριάμμην αγαπᾷ
ὁ Ἰωάννης τὴν Μαριάμμην αγαπᾷ
τὴν Μαριάμμην αγαπᾷ ὁ Ἰωάννης
αγαπᾷ ὁ Ἰωάννης Μαριάμμην
αγαπᾷ τὴν Μαριάμμην ὁ Ἰωάννης
Μαριάμμην ὁ Ἰωάννης αγαπᾷ
αγαπᾷ τὴν Μαριάμμην Ἰωάννης
αγαπᾷ Ἰωάννης Μαριάμμην
αγαπᾷ Ἰωάννης τὴν Μαριάμμην
αγαπᾷ Μαριάμμην Ἰωάννης
αγαπᾷ ὁ Ἰωάννης τὴν Μαριάμμην
τὴν Μαριάμμην ὁ Ἰωάννης αγαπᾷ

Variations of “John loves Mary”

That would be translated the same way in English



Can we trust the manuscripts?

1

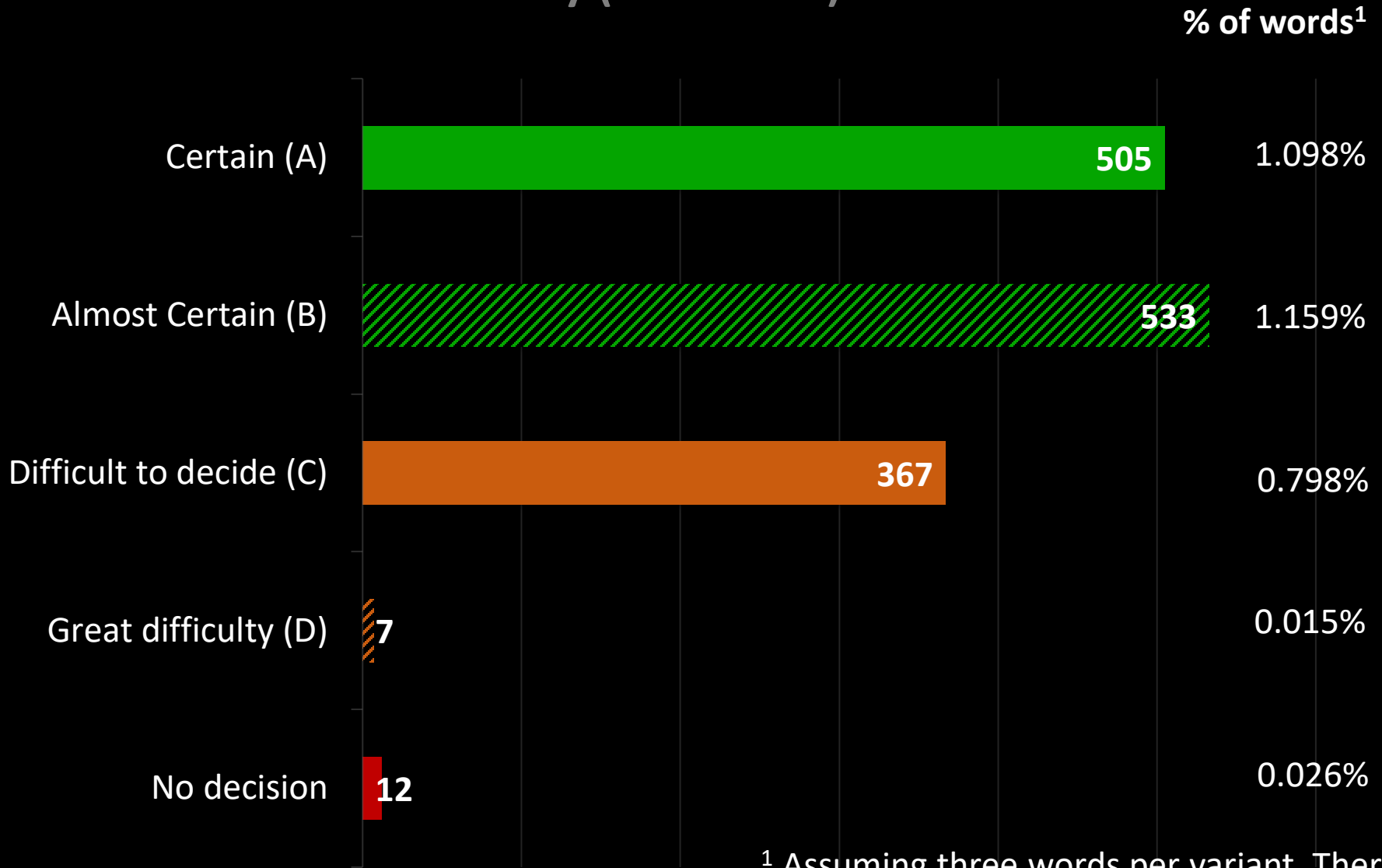
Variant **counts rarely count** for anything (and most don't matter)

Most variants are unimportant (spelling changes, ordering differences, movable nu)

The only variants that matter are those are viable (could be original)

Number of variants (by certainty)

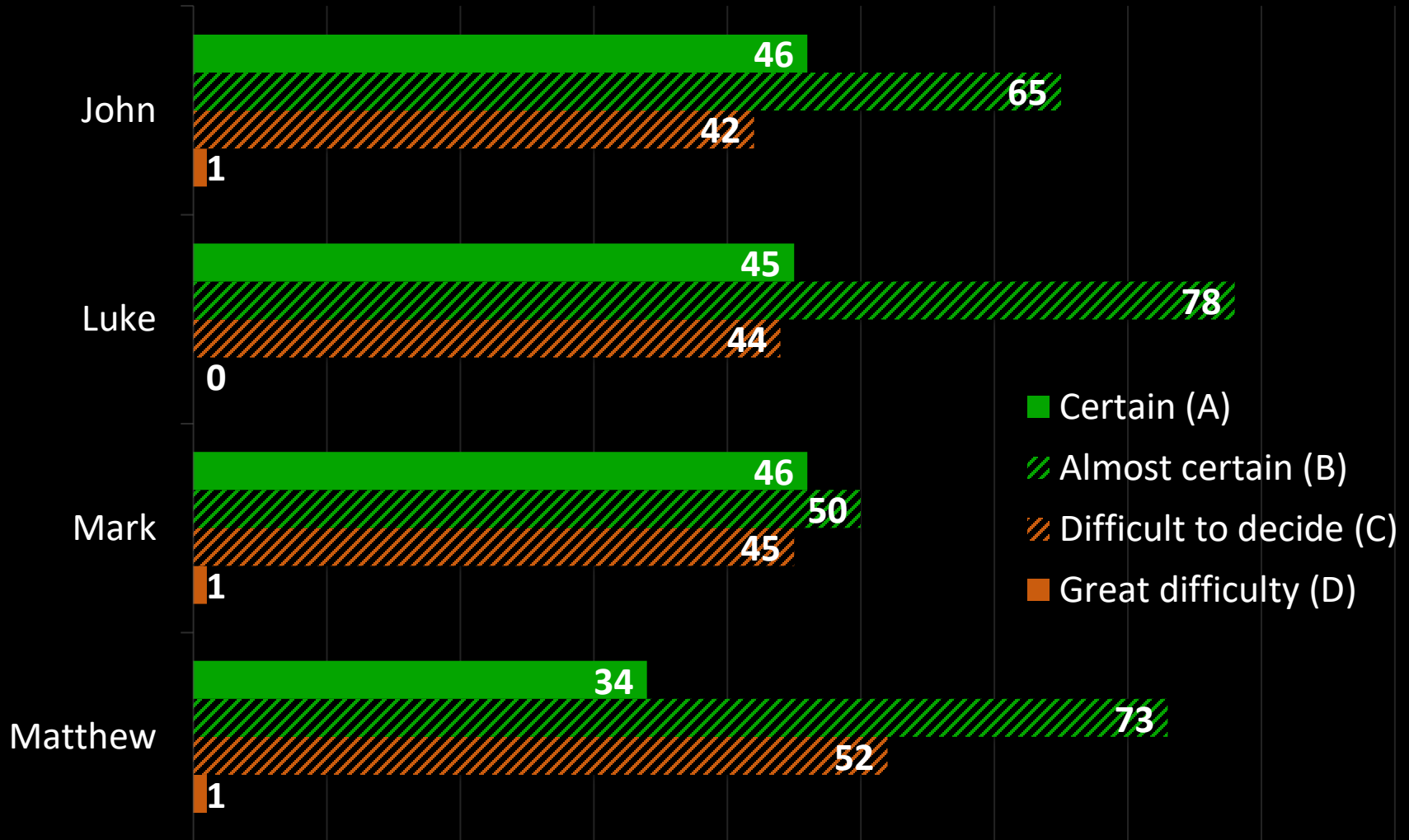
From the United Bible Society (5th edition)



¹ Assuming three words per variant. There are 138,020 words in the New Testament.

Number of variants (by certainty)

From the United Bible Society (5th edition)



Can we trust the manuscripts?

2

Scribal changes are hard to pass off without getting **detected**

- Manuscripts were sent to many locations

- Manuscripts were likely released within social networks

- Early believers took modifications seriously

Can we trust the manuscripts?

3

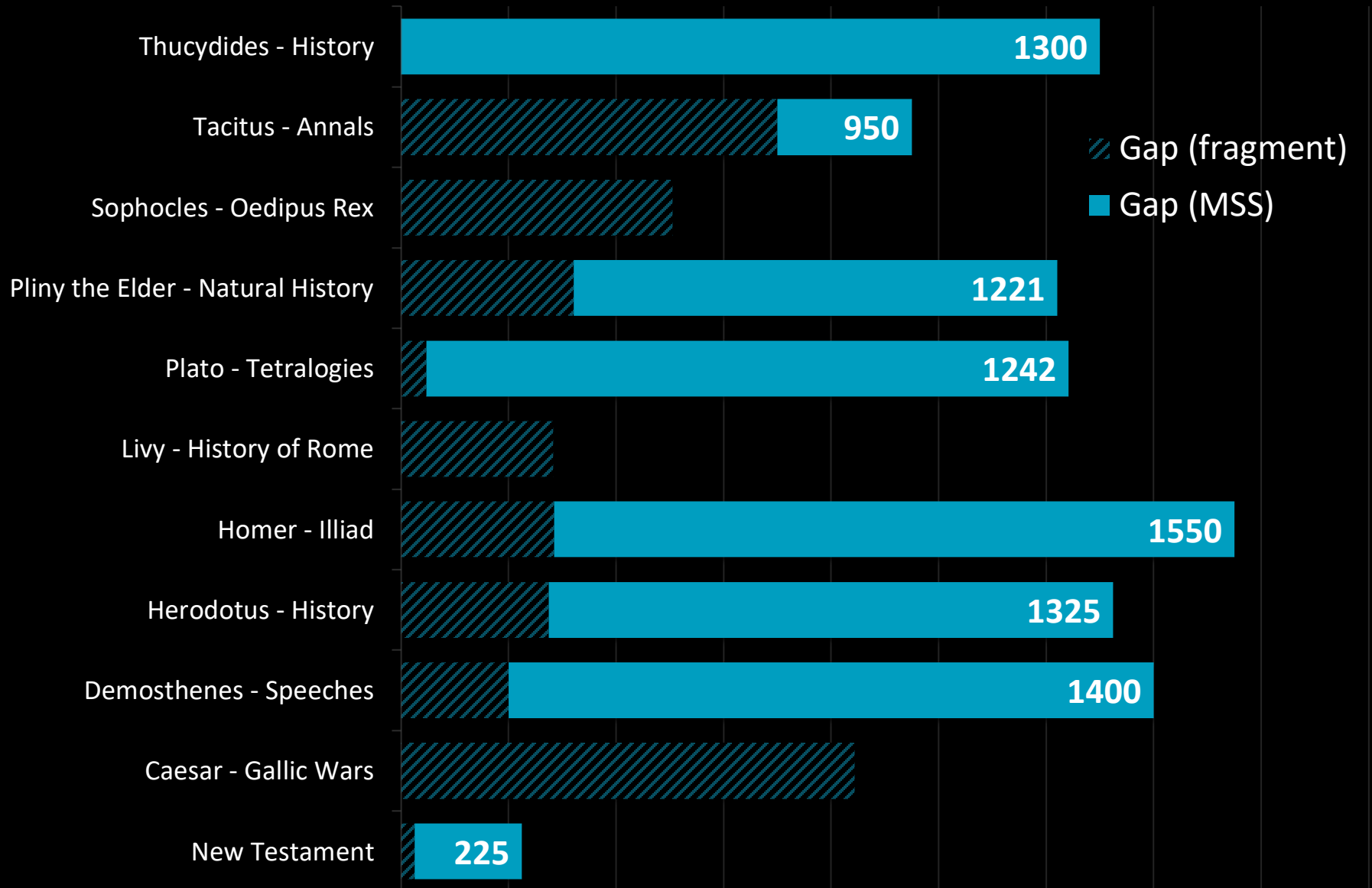
New Testament documents are **better attested than other ancient documents**

New Testament manuscripts are:

1. Earlier
2. More numerous

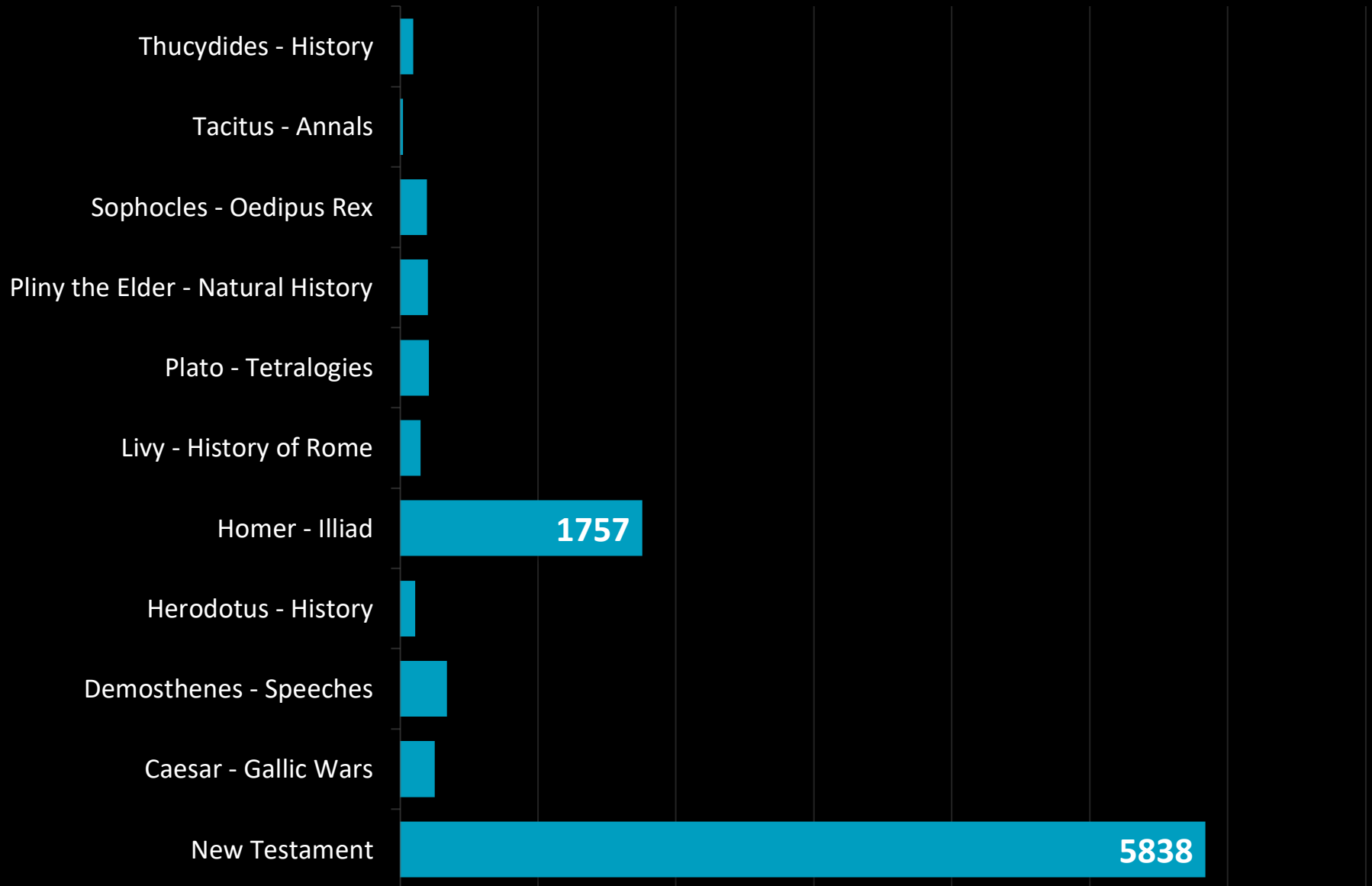
Gap between date written and first available copies

(smaller is better)



Number of manuscripts

(larger is better)



Can we trust the manuscripts?

4

Critical **doctrines are not affected** by variants (even Ehrman agrees)

“Bruce Metzger, your mentor in textual criticism to whom this book is dedicated, has said that there is nothing in these variants of Scripture that challenges any essential Christian beliefs.

Why do you believe these core tenets of Christian orthodoxy to be in jeopardy based on the scribal errors you discovered in the biblical manuscripts?”

QUESTION TO BART EHRMAN
Misquoting Jesus

“there would be **very few points of disagreement**—maybe one or two dozen places out of many thousands.”

BART EHRMAN
Misquoting Jesus

“The position I argue for in *Misquoting Jesus* **does not actually stand at odds** with Prof. Metzger’s position that the **essential** **Christian beliefs are not affected by textual variants** in the manuscript tradition of the New Testament. ”

BART EHRLMAN
Misquoting Jesus

“none of your cherished doctrines appears to be in real danger because of variations in our surviving manuscripts (at least the variations that we know about). But that is not my claim and never has been my claim.”

BART EHRLMAN

1

Summarize the critics' viewpoint



Joe Avella

Video Producer

The source of this video:

Joe is a video producer based in Los Angeles. He primarily focuses on food, marijuana, and movie industry stories.

<https://www.businessinsider.com/author/joe-avella>

2 List out the claims

3

What questions would you ask this person?

5,500+

Greek NT Manuscripts

over-confidence can lead
to hyper-skepticism

Over-confidence

“there are no questions
about the what was in the
originals”

Realistic

“we can have confidence about
the what was in the originals
(despite some questions)”

Hyper-skepticism

“we have no clue what was in
the originals!!!!!!!!!!!!”

4 Consider the top “ten missing verses”

Top 10 “missing verses”

1

1 John 5:7: “For there are three that testify: the Spirit, the water, and the blood”

2

John 8:7: “...‘Let him who is without sin among you be the first to cast a stone at her.’”

3

John 8:11: “‘No one, Lord,’ she answered. ‘Then neither do I condemn you,’ Jesus declared. ‘Now go and sin no more.’”

4

Luke 22:44: “He prayed more earnestly, and His sweat became like drops of blood falling to the ground”

5

Luke 22:20: “This cup is the new covenant in My blood...
(uncontested in Matthew 26:28)

Top 10 “missing verses”

6

Mark 16:17: “In My name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues;”

7

Mark 16:18: “they will pick up snakes with their hands, and if they drink any deadly poison, it will not harm them”

8

John 5:4: “for an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons into the pool...”

9

Luke 24:12: Peter looks in the tomb and sees the cloths
(uncontested in Mark 14:24)

10

Luke 24:51: “While He was blessing them, He left them and was carried up into heaven”
(uncontested in John 20:3-7)

Key Takeaways

1

Variations **do not affect crucial doctrines** (even Ehrman agrees)

2

The details matter; but nuance is often lost leading to incorrect conclusions

3

The New Testament has an **“embarrassment of riches”** compared to other ancient works

4

The variations **do not show an organized attempt to corrupt** the New Testament