

their MSS they would sometimes figure out the dates from the Seleucid Era. That is the first system of dating that carried on with a long line of numbers. In ancient times they often dated years from the reign of a king and according to the successor. When Seleucus, one of Alexander's generals, was Ptolemy over Egypt over a while, but then he went over to Asia and seized the city # 59 of Babylon and the Jews used this form of dates a great deal during the middle ages and so often they will give their dates according to that reckoning though there are other systems they sometimes used. They do abbreviate. You might write 1/11/50 for your date and that is enough--why write 1950. Everybody knows that it is 1950. But if someone read your letter 800 years from now they wouldn't know if it was 1950 or 1550 and the Jews frequently didn't write the number of the century but just the number of the year. So often we know that a certain MSS was made in 1379, or 1279 but we don't know which century. We are therefore in considerable difficulty in knowing the age of some of our MSS but here is something that may be shocking to you. Up until two years ago the earliest Heb. MSS we had in any length, was a MSS that came of the Prophets which was written about 960 A.D., but most of them are from around the 13, 14 and 15th centuries and we have no earlier Heb. MSS than that until about a year a half ago there was discovered in a cave a treasure of MSS which many scholars think have come from either the first or second century B.C. and they include about half the book of Dan. and the whole book of Isaiah which is about complete with very little missing. Those are the oldest MSS which we have today almost certainly. Most scholars think these come from the first or second century B.C. Some student suggests that by noting how much the ink has evaporated through the years would show at what time they were written but we go by the way the letters are formed and what was found around about them. So we have these MSS and you might wonder just how much good they are being so late. We have them from the 10th, 11th and 12th century AD. a thousand years later and when we take the inscriptions of the ancient kings of Egypt and Babylonia which were written by their own secretaries in their own time and we take the way they spelt their names and other evidences like that, and compare them with our Heb. MSS and compare them with these, we find that they are remarkably accurate, and when we compare them with our Greek MSS which were around the third and fourth centuries A.D. they are so full of errors that it is difficult to find any similarity at all with them. Does that mean that mean that \_\_\_\_--no, it means that the Greek translation was just a popular ~~popular~~ translation that never was considered authoritative and were never considered as sacred.

c. There have MSS been made since printing began which are of considerable value since they