

Can I Trust the Bible? Part 2

- The Bible is the most amazing book in the world... as if it were originally written in English... relevant today for 1400 BC.
- Last session: Revelation, God revealing His message to man (Scriptures)... Inspiration. God speaking through a human instrument to reveal His written Word to man. Inerrancy, God's written Word is true and trustworthy.
- Tonight: 2nd session ... Canonization (which books are inspired) and Transmission (how the Bible was written and copied... spread across the world)
- Revelation - Inspiration - Transmission - Canonicity - Translation - Application
- Revelation - God's revealing His message to man
- Inspiration - God speaking through a writer/prophet to record His message
- Transmission - How the Bible got from the original writers to us. When they were originally written. The process of accurately copying Hebrew and Greek scriptures for successive generations.
- Canonicity - The recognition that this message is truly from God.
- Translation - Translating the Greek and Hebrew original languages into the various languages of the world. This includes "Textual Criticism" - Evaluating the existing manuscripts to discover the original words.
- Application - Understanding and applying the Bible to our lives today.

1. Transmission

- Transmission is the writing process from the originals to present day
- Canonization is the recognition that the writing is from God.
 - Canonization and transmission can happen at the same time
- When the books were written. Beginning of the transmission is the first writing.

HAND-OUT: When were the books written

1 Chronicles 29:29 Now the acts of King David, first and last, indeed they are written in the book of Samuel the seer, in the book of Nathan the prophet, and in the book of Gad the seer, 30 with all his reign and his might, and the events that happened to him, to Israel, and to all the kingdoms of the lands.

Old Testament (1500-400 BC)

Genesis (1425)
Exodus (1425)
Leviticus (1425)
Numbers (1405)
Deuteronomy (1405)

Joshua (1405-1390)
Judges (1380-1045)
Ruth (1000)
1 Samuel (1105-1005)
2 Samuel (1005-975)
1 Kings (975-850)
2 Kings (850-560)
1 Chronicles (1005-970)
2 Chronicles (970-538)
Ezra (538-457)
Nehemiah (444-425)
Esther (483-473)

Job (c. 2000)
Psalms (1500-500, 1030-930)
Proverbs (c. 950)
Ecclesiastes (c. 935)
Song of Solomon (c. 960)

Isaiah (740-680)
Jeremiah (627-580)
Lamentations (586)
Ezekiel (592-570)
Daniel (605-536)

Hosea (755-710)
Joel (c. 835)
Amos (760-753)
Obadiah (c. 840)
Jonah (c. 760)
Micah (735-710)
Nahum (661-612)
Habakkuk (c.607)
Zephaniah (c. 630)
Haggai (520)
Zechariah (520)
Malachi (432-425)

Obadiah (c. 840)
Joel (c. 835)
Jonah (c. 760)
Amos (753)
Hosea (710)
Micah (710)
Isaiah (680)
Zephaniah (c. 630)
Nahum (612)
Habakkuk (c. 607)
Lamentations (586)
Jeremiah (580)
Ezekiel (570)
Daniel (536)
Haggai (520)
Zechariah (520)
Malachi (425)

New Testament (AD 50-100)

Matthew (50-68)
Mark (50-68)
Luke (55-61)
John (80-90)

Acts (62-63)

Romans (56-57)
1 Corinthians (54-55)
2 Corinthians (55-56)
Galatians (48)
Ephesians (61-62)
Philippians (62)
Colossians (61-62)
1 Thessalonians (51)
2 Thessalonians (51)
1 Timothy (62)
2 Timothy (67)
Titus (64-66)
Philemon (61-62)

Hebrews (64-65)
James (44-45)
1 Peter (64-65)
2 Peter (66-67)
1 John (85-90)
2 John (85-90)
3 John (85-90)
Jude (70-75)

Revelation (95-96)

James (44-45)
Galatians (48)
1 Thessalonians (51)
2 Thessalonians (51)
1 Corinthians (54-55)
2 Corinthians (55-56)
Romans (56-57)
Ephesians (61-62)
Philemon (61-62)
Colossians (61-62)
Philippians (62)
1 Timothy (62)
Acts (62-63)
Titus (64-66)
Hebrews (64-65)
1 Peter (64-65)
2 Peter (66-67)
2 Timothy (67)
Jude (70-75)
1 John (85-90)
2 John (85-90)
3 John (85-90)
Revelation (95-96)

Languages

- Hebrew
 - Evidence of language prior to Moses
 - Semitic language... descended from Shem, Noah's son.
 - Written right to left
 - Old Hebrew... no vowel points... Modern Hebrew added vowel points
 - Vowel points added to help retain the language
 - No spaces or vowel points originally
 - Hebrew was the language of the Jewish people... this helped keep the language alive... their heritage was connected to the Hebrew language
- Aramaic
 - Same Hebrew characters... Spanish and English have nearly the same characters but different languages
 - Became the language of the common people in Palestine after the Assyrian and Babylonian exiles. (c.500 BC)
 - Commonly spoken by Jews in the time of Christ
 - Aramaic in the Bible
 - Jeremiah 10:11, Daniel 2:4-7:28, Ezra 4:8-6:18; 7:12-26
 - Several words and expressions in the New Testament.
 - Matthew 27:33, 27:46; Mark 3:17, 5:41, 7:11, 7:34, 10:46, 14:36, 15:22, 15:34; John 19:17; Romans 8:15; Galatians 4:6
- Greek
 - Greek was the language the New Testament was written in... copied and reproduced in... initially
 - Greek was spread throughout the world by Alexander the Great conquering the world... the great Greek philosophers and rise of knowledge made it an "intellectual" language
 - Greek was/is a very precise language... technical and precise in expression
 - Greek, unlike Hebrew was not tied to the Christian faith... common language became more important than learning Greek

Writing Materials

- Stone
 - The ten commandments (Exodus 31:18; 34:1, 28)
 - Rosetta Stone - Demotic (Egyptian writing), Greek, Egyptian Hieroglyphics
 - The Rosetta Stone, a symbol for different things to different people, is a dark-colored granodiorite stela inscribed with the same text in three scripts - Demotic, hieroglyphic and Greek. In July 1799, the stone was found in the city of Rosetta (modern el Rashid) by French soldiers during Napoleon's invasion of Egypt. Rosetta was located on a tributary of the Nile near the Mediterranean coast east of Alexandria.
- Clay
 - Tablet, Ezekiel 4:1
 - Clay cylinders
 - Broken pottery - potsherds - called "ostraca"
- Leather, vellum, parchment
 - Animal skin
 - Scrolls or parchment sheets
- Papyrus

- Papyrus roll. Scrolls 30 feet long 10 inches tall.
- Scrolls rolled up and often sealed with a wax seal.
- Papyrus codex. Sheets of papyrus made into a book.

Preservation. The Copying Process of Old Testament

- The Jews always held the Scriptures in very high regard. It was initially placed in the Ark of the Covenant to be in the presence of God in the Holy of Holies.
- The Scriptures were later placed in the synagogues in a box called an Ark.
- The Jewish scribes were meticulous in their copying of the Scriptures.
 - The copyist was required to perform bathing rites before, during and after writing especially when writing the name of God.
 - Only a certain kind of ink could be used.
 - Rules governed the spacing of words.
 - No word or letter could be written from memory.
 - Lines and letters were methodically counted.
 - If a manuscript was found to have even one error it was destroyed. (This helps explain why only a few manuscripts survived.)
 - Oldest Old Testament Hebrew manuscript was from AD 1000 until the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The Dead Sea Scrolls dated back to 300-100 BC. The writings were found to be nearly exact.
 - How hard would it be to add to the Old Testament Scriptures when the Jewish scribes took each word so serious.
- Adding to the Scriptures at later dates to explain fulfilled prophecy seems to be impossible.
 - The Jewish priests and scribes would not tolerate such additions, subtractions or corruptions to the Word of God. Like adding to our Constitution.... Impossible.
 - When would they be able to insert add or change the Word of God without it raising a huge concern among religious leaders?
 - The 5 books of Moses were nearly equivalent to the US constitution. It would be hard to add to that.

Preservation. The Copying Process of New Testament

- The New Testament writings were copied by churches and sent to other churches.
- There was fierce persecution to the Christians until AD 315. Copying was done "underground".
- The Christians regarded the letters as the Word of God and took the copying very serious.
- How difficult would it be for Christians to intentionally add to the Scriptures...
- In addition to the manuscript copies, we have discovered other witnesses.
 - Greek was not a sacred language like Hebrew so translations began fairly soon with the Latin translation.
 - Old Latin translation AD 150
 - Old Syriac translation AD 400
 - The Latin Vulgate translation by Jerome in AD 384
 - Lectionaries. (2,200) Scriptures arranged in specific order to be read during a church service.
 - Early Church Father's writings.

2. Canonization

- The books were written over a period of 1600 years... 1500 BC to AD 100

- There are over 40 authors who wrote books in our Bible
- Most of them never knew the other writer... Same God spoke to them
 - Several authors of the Bible shows God is behind it and not a man or woman
 - Many “religions” have a single person that started the religion or movement
 - Jesus Christ the greatest movement originator did not write a single book of the Bible
 - The Bible is not a mysterious product of a man who had an experience with an angel or received divine revelation in some way...
 - The Bible is a book that was recorded openly and by several men as God spoke to them

Canon: ruler, measuring rod... a standard of measurement

- Canonization: The standard by which a writing was measured to be inspired.
- Canon in regards to Scripture... which books are authoritative... which books are inspired of God and which are not...
- The Canon of Scripture is therefore the books that are recognized as inspired and are kept as a collection called the Holy Bible
- **Mistake:** The Church determines the Canon
- **Mistake:** Christians “authorized” the 66 books of the Canon.
- **Correct:** We don’t determine we discover the Canon.
- **Correct:** We don’t authorize we recognize the Canon.
- Inspiration is the means by which the Bible received its authority.
- Canonization is the means by which the Bible received its final acceptance.

Reasonable Standards of Determining Canonicity

- **Authority**
 - Does it convey divine authority?
 - Is this a writing from God?
 - Isaiah 1:24 Therefore the LORD says,...
 - Jeremiah 1:15 Then the LORD said to me...
- **Authorship**
 - Is there Prophetic or Apostolic authority?
 - 2 Corinthians 12:12 “Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.”
- **Accuracy**
 - Is there factual and doctrinal truthfulness?
- **Spiritual Authenticity**
 - Does it teach spiritual lessons to the reader?
- **Acceptance**
 - Was it initially received by God’s people?

When were the books recognized as inspired... therefore part of the Canon of Scripture?

- The writings were recognized as from God immediately upon completion of the writing or even while the writings were being compiled (1 & 2 Samuel, Kings, Chronicles)
- Moses’s writings were accepted immediately
- The prophet’s writings that were established as true were accepted to be from God
- The writings of the Apostles were accepted as from God.

Recognition of the Old Testament Canon

- Jesus refers to the Law of Moses, the Writings, and the Prophets as the three-fold division of Scripture. **Luke 24:44**
- Jesus and the Apostles quote the Old Testament as authoritative.
- The Septuagint (LXX), the Greek translation of the Old Testament accepts all the books as canonical.
- The Apocrypha, which is literature written between the testaments, refers to the Law, Writings, and Prophets.
- The Old Testament canon is mentioned in AD 90 at the Synod of Jamnia as being from God. Though some questioned Esther, Ecclesiastes and Song of Solomon.
- 32 of the 39 Old Testament books are quoted in the New Testament as having authority.
- Josephus, a Jewish historian (AD 100) acknowledges the Hebrew (Old Testament) canon.
- AD 200's, Origen lists the 39 books of the Old Testament as Scripture and canonical.
- AD 300's, several church fathers accept the Old Testament books as canonical.

Old Testament Pseudepigrapha

- Pseudo = false. Grapha = writings. False writings. Frauds.

HAND-OUT

- **The Book of Jubilee** (Legendary) A midrashic expansion of biblical history from Creation to the First Passover.
- **The Letter of Aristeas** (Legendary) Supposedly an eyewitness account of the translation of the Old Testament into Greek by seventy-two elders at the instruction of Eleazar the high priest. Scholars say this book was written between 200 BC and AD 33.
- **The Book of Adam and Eve** (Legendary)
- **The Martyrdom of Isaiah** (Legendary)
- **1 Enoch** (Apocalyptic) This book is cited in Jude 1:14-15 and is the longest of the surviving Jewish pseudepigraphic writings. It is a composite work, written by various authors in Aramaic during the last two centuries BC "Professing to embody a series of revelations granted to Enoch, the seventh from Adam, the anonymous authors discuss such matters as the origin of evil, the angels and their destinies, the nature of Gehenna and Paradise, and various astronomical and cosmological fancies" (Metzger, p. 171).
- **The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs** (Apocalyptic) A work based on Jacob's words to his sons in Genesis 49.
- **The Sibylline Oracle** (Apocalyptic)
- **The Assumption of Moses** (Apocalyptic)
- **2 Enoch, or The Book of the Secrets of Enoch** (Apocalyptic) "The book relates Enoch's travels through the seven heavens and the divine revelations that he received concerning creation, the history of the world, hell, and paradise. Its composition is dated by most scholars in the first half of the first Christian century" (Metzger, p. 173).
- **2 Baruch, or The Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch** (Apocalyptic)
- **3 Baruch, or The Greek Apocalypse of Baruch** (Apocalyptic)
- **3 Maccabees** (Didactical) This book has nothing to do with the Maccabees but probably received its name since it claims to describe events during the Maccabean period. The book contains impossibilities and exaggerations and was written shortly before or during the beginning of the Christian era.
- **4 Maccabees** (Didactical) This work is a Greek philosophical treatise addressed to Jews on the supremacy of reason over the passions (Metzger, p. 172). It was written between 150 BC and AD 70.

- **Pirke Aboth** (Didactical)
- **The Story of Ahikar** (Didactical)
- **The Psalms of Solomon** (Poetical) Eighteen in number, these psalms were composed in the middle of the first century BC. These psalms speak of the coming age when God will send His Messiah, of the house of David, to purge Jerusalem, subdue Gentile nations and rule in righteousness.
- **Psalm 151** (Poetical)
- **The Fragment of a Zadokite Work** (Historical)

Old Testament Apocrypha

- Hidden or concealed books. Books not on the front shelf, but not thrown away as frauds.
- Never accepted as from God.
- Not part of the Hebrew canon. Most beneficial books are 1 & 2 Maccabees for filling in some historical gaps in the intertestamental period.
- The writer of first Maccabees does not consider to be a prophet from God... he does claim that the Jews were without a prophet and looking for a prophet
- When John the Baptist comes along... he is seen as the first prophet for 400 years.

HAND-OUT:

- **The First Book of Esdras** (150—100 BC) (Not in Catholic Bible) This work begins with a description of the Passover celebration under King Josiah and relates Jewish history down to the reading of the Law in the time of Ezra. It reproduces with little change 2 Chronicles 35:1—36:21, the book of Ezra and Nehemiah 7:73—8:13a. It also includes the story of three young men, in the court of Darius, who held a contest to determine the strongest thing in the world. 1 Esdras has legendary accounts which cannot be supported by Ezra, Nehemiah or 2 Chronicles.
- **The Second Book of Esdras** (c. AD 100) (Not in Catholic Bible) Differs from the other fifteen books in that it is an apocalypse. It has seven revelations (3:1—14:48) in which the prophet is instructed by the angel Uriel concerning the great mysteries of the moral world. It reflects the Jewish despair following the destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70.
- **Tobit** (c. 200—150 BC) (included in Catholic Bible) The Book of Tobit describes the doings of Tobit, a man from the tribe of Naphtali, who was exiled to Ninevah where he zealously continued to observe the Mosaic Law. This book is known for its sound moral teaching and promotion of Jewish piety. It is also known for its mysticism and promotion of astrology and the teaching of Zoroastrianism (The Bible Almanac, eds. Packer, Tenney and White, p. 501).
- **Judith** (c. 150 BC) (included in Catholic Bible) Judith is a fictitious story of a Jewish woman who delivers her people. It reflects the patriotic mood and religious devotion of the Jews after the Maccabean rebellion.
- **The Additions to the Book of Esther** (140-130 BC) (included in Catholic Bible) 107 verses added to the book of Esther that were lacking in the original Hebrew form of the book.
- **The Wisdom of Solomon** (c. 30 BC) (included in Catholic Bible) This work was composed in Greek by an Alexandrian Jew who impersonated King Solomon.
- **Ecclesiasticus, or the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach** (c. 180 BC) (included in Catholic Bible) This book is the longest and one of the most highly esteemed of the apocryphal books. The author was a Jewish sage named Joshua (Jesus, in Greek) who taught young men at an academy in Jerusalem. Around 180 BC he turned his classroom lectures into two books. This work contains numerous maxims formulated in about 1,600 couplets and grouped according to topic (marriage, wealth, the law, etc. . .).

- **Baruch** (c. 150-50 BC) (included in Catholic Bible) This book claims to have been written in Babylon by a companion and recorder of Jeremiah (Jer. 32:12; 36:4). It is mostly a collection of sentences from Jeremiah, Daniel, Isaiah and Job. Most scholars are agreed that it is a composite work put together by two or more authors around the first century BC.
- **The Letter of Jeremiah** (c. 300-100 BC) (Not in Catholic Bible) This letter claims to be written by the prophet Jeremiah at the time of the deportation to Babylon. In it he warns the people about idolatry.
- **The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Children** (2nd— 1st century BC) (included in Catholic Bible) This section is introduced to Daniel in the Catholic Bible after Daniel 3:23 and supposedly gives more details of the fiery furnace incident.
- **Susanna** (Daniel 13, 2nd — 1st century BC) (included in Catholic Bible) In this account, Daniel comes to the rescue of the virtuous Susanna who was wrongly accused of adultery.
- **Bel and the Dragon** (Daniel 14, c. 100 BC) (included in Catholic Bible) Bel and the Dragon is made up of two stories. The first (vv. 1-22) tells of a great statue of Bel (the Babylonian god Marduk). Supposedly this statue of Bel would eat large quantities of food showing that he was a living god who deserved worship. Daniel, though, proved it was the priests of Bel who were eating the food. As a result, the king put the priests to death and allowed Daniel to destroy Bel and its temple. In the second story (vv. 23-42), Daniel, in defiance of the king, refuses to worship a great dragon. Daniel, instead, asks permission to slay the dragon without “sword or club” (v. 26). Given permission, Daniel feeds the dragon lumps of indigestible pitch, fat and hair so that the dragon bursts open (v. 27).
- **The Prayer of Manasseh** (2nd or 1st century BC) (Not in Catholic Bible) This work is a short penitential psalm written by someone who read in 2 Chronicles 33:11-19 that Manasseh, the wicked king of Judah, composed a prayer asking God’s forgiveness for his many sins.
- **The First Book of the Maccabees** (c. 110 BC) (included in Catholic Bible) “The First Book of Maccabees is a generally reliable historical account of the fortunes of Jewish people between 175 and 134 B.C., relating particularly to their struggle with Antiochus IV Epiphanes and his successors. . . . The name of the author, a patriotic Jew at Jerusalem is unknown” (Metzger, p. 169). The book derives its name from Maccabeus, the surname of a Jew who led the Jews in revolt against Syrian oppression.
- **The Second Book of the Maccabees** (c. 110-70 BC) (included in Catholic Bible) This book is not a continuation of 1 Maccabees but an independent work partially covering the period of 175-161 BC. This book is not as historically reliable as 1 Maccabees.

Recognition of the New Testament Canon

- **Mistake:** Letters were written to churches and the story of Jesus was written by different men... the ones that survived are in the Bible... the ones that did not survive or were lost were just not meant to be.
- **Mistake:** The new Testament writers were just writing letters to churches not thinking it was Scripture.
- The writers knew they were recording the New Covenant Scriptures
 - **1 Thessalonians 2:13** For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.
- **Confirming authentic books**
 - Paul and Peter warn of false letters and false teachers

- **2 Thessalonians 2:2** not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.
- **2 Peter 2:1** But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying the Lord who bought them, and bring on themselves swift destruction.
- **Public reading of Apostolic books**
 - The reading of the letters was encouraged as it was God's Word to the church
 - **1 Thessalonians 5:27** I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren.
- **The circulation and collection of books**
 - The Apostolic letters were copied, circulated and collected as the Word of God
 - **Colossians 4:16** Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.
 - **2 Peter 3:15-16** and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation—as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, 16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.
- **Persecution**
 - The persecution of Christians and the confiscation of writings made it important to know which were to be guarded with life and which did not... Word of God and not the Word of God
 - Diocletian's persecution of Christians from A.D. 303-306 included the confiscating and destroying of New Testament books. This persecution motivated the church to sort through and settle on which books were really Scripture and which books were worth suffering for.
- **Early church fathers**
 - The writings of the early church leaders, pastors and preachers show what they believed to be inspired and what they did not believe to be inspired

HAND-OUT

- **Clement** (AD 35-99), **Polycarp** (AD 69-155) and **Ignatius** (AD 130-202) These three church fathers of this era used the majority of the New Testament in a free manner thus showing that most of the New Testament was accepted without argument. In the writing of these three men only Mark, 2 and 3 John, Jude and 2 Peter are not clearly referred to (Fisher, p. 70). These men also made a clear distinction between their own writings and the inspired apostolic writings.
 - **Polycarp** (AD 69-155) Polycarp, a disciple of the apostle John, quotes from Matthew, John, the first ten letters of Paul, 1 Peter and 1 and 2 John.
 - **The Epistle of Ignatius** (c. AD 115) This work corresponds in several places to the Gospels and incorporates language from some of Paul's letters.
- **Papias** (c. AD 70-163) Papias's work, Interpretation of the Oracles of the Lord (c. 120) includes material from the four Gospels.

- **Justin Martyr** (c. AD 140) Justin Martyr, around the end of this period, stated that the apostolic writings were on a par with those of the Old Testament prophets. He referred to all four Gospels, most of Paul's letters, 1 Peter and Revelation.
- **3rd phase**—Compiling of the canon (AD 150-190) During this era, the formal idea of a canon takes shape. Most books of the New Testament are clearly recognized as canon —only a few need further scrutiny.
- **Irenaeus** (c. AD 170) This disciple of Polycarp (who was discipled by John) is the first early church father to quote almost every book of the New Testament. He quoted or considered authentic twenty-three of the twenty-seven books—omitting only Philemon, James, 2 Peter and 3 John.
- **Tatian** (c. AD 170) A pupil of Justin Martyr, Tatian made a harmony of the four Gospels known as the Diatessaron. Other gospels had surfaced by this time but he recognized only the four traditional ones.
- **4th phase**—Formation of the canon continues (Third century AD)
- **Origen** (AD 185-254) Origen wrote commentaries and homilies on most of the New Testament books, emphasizing their inspiration.
- **Dionysius of Alexandria** (pupil of Origen) Notes that the Western church accepted Revelation but had doubts about Hebrews. The opposite was true in the Eastern church where Hebrews was accepted and Revelation was questioned. Dionysius supported James and 2 and 3 John but not 2 Peter or Jude.
- **5th phase**—Canon firmly recognized (fourth century)
- **Eusebius** (AD 270-340) This Bishop of Caesarea and church historian, early in the fourth century, set forth his estimate of the canon in his work Church History. He classified the status of the canon during this time.
 - Universally accepted The four Gospels, Acts, the Letters of Paul, Hebrews, 1 Peter, 1 John and Revelation.
 - Accepted by most (including Eusebius) but disputed by some James, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John and Jude.
 - Rejected The Acts of Paul, the Didache and the Shepherd of Hermas.
- **Athanasius** (AD 296-373) With his Festal Letter for Easter in 367, Athanasius gave the first full and final declaration on the extent of both Old and New Testament canons. The twenty-seven books he listed as New Testament Canon are the same twenty-seven books in our Bibles today. He also said, “Let no one add to these; let nothing be taken away.”
- **Augustine** (AD 354-430) Augustine's large contribution of writings covered diverse fields including theology, philosophy and sociology. Along with John Chrysostom, Augustine was among the most prolific scholars of the early church by quantity.
- **Jerome** (AD 342-420) In a letter dated 414, Jerome appears to accept the New Testament books as fixed. “Jerome confirms that by the beginning of the fifth century, the canon of the New Testament had achieved a kind of solemn, unshakable status; it could not be altered, even if one had different opinions” (Carsten Peter Thiede, “A Testament is Born, in Christian History, issue 43, p. 29).

New Testament

- Books disputed by some). Seven books of the New Testament were disputed in regard to their canonicity.

- **Hebrews** This book was questioned because of its anonymity. In the East, where it was believed to be written by Paul, it was readily accepted. The church in the West was more slow to accept it because of questions about its authorship. Through the influence of Jerome and Augustine in the fourth century, the West finally accepted Hebrews as canonical.
- **James** James was slow to be accepted by the church because of its statements on the relationship of faith and works which seemed to differ from Paul's epistles. Luther questioned its canonicity on this basis. Eusebius, Jerome and Augustine and the rest of the church, however, finally recognized its complementary nature to Paul's letters and hence its canonical status.
- **2 Peter** 2 Peter was the most disputed book in the New Testament. Its dissimilarity with 1 Peter and the claim that it was a second century work have caused many to doubt its authenticity. These objections, though, were overcome and the testimony of Origin, Eusebius, Jerome and Augustine on its authenticity won out.
- **2 and 3 John** These books were questioned because of their limited circulation and private nature. They simply did not enjoy the wider circulation of the other books of the New Testament. The strong similarities with 1 John, though, gave strong testimony that these letters were written by John the apostle.
- **Jude** Jude's authority was questioned mainly because of its references to the pseudepigraphic work, Enoch. Quotation, however, of a secular source does not make a book noncanonical.
- **Revelation** This book was clearly accepted in the early church but became questioned later because of its teaching of a millennium. This, however, was an interpretation matter, not an inspiration matter.

New Testament Pseudepigrapha

- **The Pseudepigrapha** (books rejected by all) The first few centuries of the Christian era saw the production of numerous fanciful and heretical works that were neither genuine or valuable. "These books indicate the heretical teaching of gnostic groups, as well as the exaggerated fancy of religious lore in the early church" (Geisler and Nix, p. 301).
- Written after the Apostles
- Falsely ascribed to those who didn't write them.
- They are inconsistent with the OT and the NT.
- Very few copies in existence
- Confuse the humanity and divinity of Christ

HAND-OUT

- **The Gospel of Thomas** (early second century) This gnostic gospel is a mixture of authentic sayings of Jesus and Gnostic teachings which only the enlightened few are supposed to be able understand.
- **The Gospel of Phillip**
- **The Gospel of Mary Magdalene**
- **The Gospel of the Ebionites** (second century) Made by a Jewish sect of Christians who stressed the law of Moses, the Gospel of the Ebionites teaches that Jesus was a mere man who God adopted at His baptism.
- **The Gospel of Peter** (second century) This docetic work denied the humanity of Christ.

- **The Apocrypha** (books accepted by some) None of these works are in modern versions of the Bible but they were sometimes quoted by the Fathers and appeared in some Bible translations.
 - Many of these would be good books contained in libraries, much like we have books in our libraries but not inspired by God
 - **Epistle of Pseudo-Barnabas** (c. AD 70-130) Quoted by Origen and Clement of Alexandria, this work parallels Hebrews in style but is allegorical and mystical in nature.
 - **Shepherd of Hermas** (c. AD 115-140) This work was the most popular of all the non-canonical books. It is a picturesque allegory about a shepherd (Jesus) who gives moral guidance through visions and mandates to a man named Hermas.
 - **Didache** (c. AD 100-120) This work was held in high regard by the early church and gives the opinion of the early church of the second century on the essential truths of Christianity.
 - **Apocalypse of Peter** (c. AD 150) This apocalypse gives picturesque descriptions of heaven and hell.
 - **The Acts of Paul** (AD 170) This is the story of the conversion and testimony of an Iconian lady, Thelca, based on Acts 14:1-7.
 - **The Gospel According to the Hebrews** (AD 65-100)
 - **The Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians** (c. AD 108)

Was the Apocrypha accepted?

- The Catholic Church officially gave the books canonical status at the Council of Trent in 1546
 - Most Catholics will refer to the Council of Rome (AD 382) or the Councils of Carthage (AD 397) to the accepting of the Apocrypha, but the use of the accepted 66 books and the Apocryphal books by the Church in the subsequent years shows that the Apocrypha was not considered Scripture and always kept separate.
- This was in answer to the reformation claims that the Catholic Church was selling indulgences and it was not in the Bible.
- The Catholic Church needed to find purgatory in the apocrypha books
- The Reformers did not hold to the Apocrypha as God Breathed, they saw them as “useful and good for reading.” Luther
- “These books are not reckoned to be of like authority with the other books of the Bible, neither are they found in the Canon of the Hebrew.” Coverdale 1535
- We don't have Hebrew manuscripts for the Apocrypha, they only appear in the Greek Septuagint. Scholars believe that at least some were originally written in either Hebrew or Aramaic, but unlike the rest of the Old Testament, we don't have copies in the original language. Jews did not deem the books important enough to preserve them in Hebrew.
- Josephus, a Jew who lived about the time of Jesus and apostles stated that the Apocrypha were not accepted by the Jews.
 - "From Artaxerxes to our own time the complete history has been written but has not been deemed worthy of equal credit with the earlier records because of the failure of the exact succession of the prophets. ... We have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another, but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine ..." [Flavius Josephus, Against Apion, I.8]
- The Manual of Discipline in the Dead Sea Scrolls, dating two hundred years before Christ, also rejected the apocrypha as inspired [Dennis McCallum, The Canonicity Question].

- The Muratorian Canon, one of the oldest list of the books of the Bible, does not include the Apocrypha.
- Epiphanius (AD 360), rejected all the apocrypha. After listing the 22 books of the Hebrew Bible, he mentions the Wisdom of Solomon and Sirach by name and says of them, "These indeed are useful books and profitable, but they are not placed in the number of the canonical." [Bibliotheca Sacra, p. 300].
- Jerome (AD 400), translator of the Latin Vulgate, rejected the Apocrypha, refusing to include them in his translation until he was overruled. It was Jerome who gave these books the name "Apocrypha."

Are there any “missing” books?

- Dan Brown, *The DaVinci Code*
- A conspiracy on behalf of the Church and Christianity to keep the “real” gospels out of the canon.
- **Book:** The original followers of Jesus were Gnostics.
 - Gnostics were spiritualists
 - Physical was bad... immaterial was good
 - Claimed special knowledge
 - Did not matter what you did with the body... immaterial was important
- **Book:** claimed everything was true in the book... though it was a fictional novel
 - Confusion
 - Conspiracy theory
 - Jesus was just a man not God
 - Distrust for the Bible
- **Book:** Emperor Constantine collated, commissioned and financed a new Bible that would eliminate Jesus’ humanity and hide that he was married with children.
- **Book:** Constantine wanted to create the Christian “Son of God” myth
- **Book:** The Council of Nicea was arranged by Constantine to stamp out the story of a married, goddess-worshipping, 100% human Jewish rabbi named Jesus.
- **Book:** The Council of Nicea was Constantine’s attempt to create a new Bible that agreed with his teachings
- **Council of Nicea AD 325**
 - Nothing to do with the books of the Bible
 - Discussion over the divinity of Christ
 - Arius was a heretical teacher claiming Jesus was not fully divine... He was not eternal
 - Vote was 300 to 2 against the teaching of Arius
- **Book:** Sophie, “Hold on, you’re saying that Jesus’ divinity was the result of a vote?”
 - Teabing, “A relatively close vote at that. Nonetheless, establishing Christ’s divinity was critical to the further unification of the roman Empire.”
- Reading all of the Gnostic Gospels shows us the reason they were rejected... strange and twisted writings
- The Early Church Fathers never accepted, quoted and even refute the teachings of the Gnostic Gospels
- The pre-nicene writings are the same as the post-nicene writings. The council did not change anything, it simply confirmed the fundamental beliefs of the churches.
- The claim Jesus was married with children is not made in any Gnostic Gospel.
- Not even in any of the 3 Gnostic Gospels that bear the name of Mary Magdalene

- The closest is from the Gospel of Phillip

Gospel of Phillip: As for the Wisdom who is called the barren she is the mother of the angels. And the companion of the Saviour is Mary Magdalene. But Christ loved her more than all the disciples and used to kiss her often on the mouth. The rest of the disciples were offended by it and expressed disapproval. They said to him, Why do you love her more than all of us? The Saviour answered and said to them, Why do I not love you like her?

But _____ her more than _____ the disciples and used to kiss her often on the _____.

- No complete manuscript. Many words missing that are filled in.
- The rest of the book is mostly nonsense and borders on a psychedelic spiritual experience

What do the Gnostic Gospels actually teach?

- **Gospel of Thomas**

These are the secret sayings that the living Jesus spoke and Didymos Judas Thomas recorded.

1 And he said, "Whoever discovers the interpretation of these sayings will not taste death."

2 Jesus said, "Those who seek should not stop seeking until they find. When they find, they will be disturbed. When they are disturbed, they will marvel, and will reign over all. [And after they have reigned they will rest.]"

3 Jesus said, "If your leaders say to you, 'Look, the (Father's) kingdom is in the sky,' then the birds of the sky will precede you. If they say to you, 'It is in the sea,' then the fish will precede you. Rather, the kingdom is within you and it is outside you.

When you know yourselves, then you will be known, and you will understand that you are children of the living Father. But if you do not know yourselves, then you live in poverty, and you are the poverty."

4 Jesus said, "The person old in days won't hesitate to ask a little child seven days old about the place of life, and that person will live.

114 Simon Peter said to them, "Make Mary leave us, for females don't deserve life." Jesus said, "Look, I will guide her to make her male, so that she too may become a living spirit resembling you males. For every female who makes herself male will enter the kingdom of Heaven."

- **The Gospel of Phillip**

Light and Darkness, life and death, right and left, are brothers of one another. They are inseparable. Because of this neither are the good good, nor evil evil, nor is life life, nor death death. For this reason each one will dissolve into its original nature. But those who are exalted above the world are indissoluble, eternal.

Some said, Mary conceived by the Holy Spirit, they are in error. They do not know what they are saying. When did a woman ever conceive by a woman? Mary is the virgin whom no power defiled. She is a great anathema to the Hebrews, who are the apostles and apostolic men. This virgin whom no power defiled; the powers defiled themselves. And the Lord would not have said My Father who is in Heaven unless he had had another father, but he would have said simply My father.

Adam came into being from two virgins, from the Spirit and from the virgin of earth. Christ therefore, was born from a virgin to rectify the Fall which occurred in the beginning.

The Father and the Son is both single names, the Holy Spirit is a double name. For they are everywhere: they are in the concealed, they are in the revealed. The Holy Spirit is the revealed: it is below. It is in the concealed: it is above.

Why Trust the Old and New Testament Scriptures as Authentic and True?

Authority: Convey divine authority from God.

Authorship: Written by reliable sources, Apostles and eye witnesses.

Accuracy: We are able to trace the writings and copies with certainty.

Spiritual Authenticity: Blends and builds on the rest of Scripture. Grows the believer.

Acceptance: The early church accepted, studied and taught these as God's Word.

When the books of the Bible were written

Old Testament (1500-400 BC)

Genesis (1425)
Exodus (1425)
Leviticus (1425)
Numbers (1405)
Deuteronomy (1405)

Joshua (1405-1390)
Judges (1380-1045)
Ruth (1000)
1 Samuel (1105-1005)
2 Samuel (1005-975)
1 Kings (975-850)
2 Kings (850-560)
1 Chronicles (1005-970)
2 Chronicles (970-538)
Ezra (538-457)
Nehemiah (444-425)
Esther (483-473)

Job (c. 2000)
Psalms (1500-500, 1030-930)
Proverbs (c. 950)
Ecclesiastes (c. 935)
Song of Solomon (c. 960)

Isaiah (740-680)
Jeremiah (627-580)
Lamentations (586)
Ezekiel (592-570)
Daniel (605-536)

Hosea (755-710)
Joel (c. 835)
Amos (760-753)
Obadiah (c. 840)
Jonah (c. 760)
Micah (735-710)
Nahum (661-612)
Habakkuk (c.607)
Zephaniah (c. 630)
Haggai (520)
Zechariah (520)
Malachi (432-425)

Obadiah (c. 840)
Joel (c. 835)
Jonah (c. 760)
Amos (753)
Hosea (710)
Micah (710)
Isaiah (680)
Zephaniah (c. 630)
Nahum (612)
Habakkuk (c. 607)
Lamentations (586)
Jeremiah (580)
Ezekiel (570)
Daniel (536)
Haggai (520)
Zechariah (520)
Malachi (425)

New Testament (AD 50-100)

Matthew (50-68)
Mark (50-68)
Luke (55-61)
John (80-90)

Acts (62-63)

Romans (56-57)
1 Corinthians (54-55)
2 Corinthians (55-56)
Galatians (48)
Ephesians (61-62)
Philippians (62)
Colossians (61-62)
1 Thessalonians (51)
2 Thessalonians (51)
1 Timothy (62)
2 Timothy (67)
Titus (64-66)
Philemon (61-62)

Hebrews (64-65)
James (44-45)
1 Peter (64-65)
2 Peter (66-67)
1 John (85-90)
2 John (85-90)
3 John (85-90)
Jude (70-75)

Revelation (95-96)

James (44-45)
Galatians (48)
1 Thessalonians (51)
2 Thessalonians (51)
1 Corinthians (54-55)
2 Corinthians (55-56)
Romans (56-57)
Ephesians (61-62)
Philemon (61-62)
Colossians (61-62)
Philippians (62)
1 Timothy (62)
Acts (62-63)
Titus (64-66)
Hebrews (64-65)
1 Peter (64-65)
2 Peter (66-67)
2 Timothy (67)
Jude (70-75)
1 John (85-90)
2 John (85-90)
3 John (85-90)
Revelation (95-96)

O.T. Pseudepigrapha

- The Book of Jubilee
- The Letter of Aristeas
- The Book of Adam and Eve
- The Martyrdom of Isaiah
- 1 Enoch
- The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs
- The Sibylline Oracle
- The Assumption of Moses
- 2 Enoch
- 2 Baruch
- 3 Baruch
- 3 Maccabees
- 4 Maccabees
- Pirke Aboth
- The Story of Ahikar
- The Psalms of Solomon
- Psalm 151
- Historical
- The Fragment of Zadokite

O.T. Apocrypha - *included in Catholic Bible

- 1 Esdras (150-100 BC)
- 2 Esdras (AD 100)
- *Tobit (200-150 BC)
- *Judith (150 BC)
- *Additions to Esther (140-130 BC)
- *Wisdom of Solomon (30 BC)
- *Ecclesiasticus (180 BC)
- *Baruch (150-50 BC)
- Letter of Jeremiah (300-150 BC)
- *Prayer of Azariah or Song of the Three Children (200-50 BC)
- *Susanna (200-50 BC) - Daniel 13
- *Bel and the Dragon (100 BC) - Daniel 14
- The Prayer of Manasseh (200-50 BC)
- *1 Maccabees (110 BC)
- *2 Maccabees (110-70 BC)

N.T. Pseudepigrapha - Gnostic Gospels

(Written AD 150 and after)

- The Gospel of Thomas
- The Gospel of Phillip
- The Gospel of Mary Magdalene
- The Gospel of the Ebionites
- The Gospel of Peter

N.T. Apocrypha - accepted by some

(none were considered part of the NT canon)

- Many of these would be books contained in libraries, much like we have books in our libraries but not inspired by God
- Epistle of Pseudo-Barnabas (AD 70-130)
- Shepherd of Hermas (AD 115-140)
- Didache (AD 100-120)
- Apocalypse of Peter (AD 150)

- The Acts of Paul (AD 170)
- The Gospel According to the Hebrews (AD 65-100)
- The Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians (AD 108)

Early Church Fathers

- Clement (AD 35-99)
- Polycarp (AD 69-155)
- Ignatius (AD 130-202)
- Papias (c. AD 70-163)
- Justin Martyr (c. AD 140)
- Irenaeus (c. AD 170)
- Tatian (c. AD 170)
- Origen (AD 185-254)
- Dionysius of Alexandria (c. AD 200-264)
- Eusebius (AD 270-340)
- Athanasius (AD 296-373)
- Augustine (AD 354-430)
- Jerome (AD 342-420)

Timeline of English Bible History

1227 AD: Stephen Langton adds chapter divisions

1384 AD: John Wycliffe is the first person to produce a (Hand-Written) manuscript copy of the complete Bible in English

1448 AD: OT divided into numbered verses

1455 AD: Gutenberg Invents the Printing Press

1516 AD: Erasmus Produces a Greek/Latin Parallel New Testament

1522 AD: Martin Luther's German New Testament

1526 AD: William Tyndale's New Testament

1535 AD: Myles Coverdale's Bible

1537 AD: Tyndale-Matthews Bible

1539 AD: The Great Bible

1555 AD: NT divided into numbered verses

1560 AD: The Geneva Bible

1568 AD: The Bishops Bible

1609 AD: The Douay Old Testament is added to the Rheims New Testament (of 1582)

1611 AD: The King James Bible (AV) (KJV)

1782 AD: Robert Aitken's Bible

1885 AD: The English Revised Version Bible

1898 AD: Nestle-Aland Greek New Testament

1901 AD: The American Standard Version

1952 AD: The "Revised Standard Version" (RSV)

1971 AD: The New American Standard Bible (NASB)

1973 AD: The New International Version (NIV)

1982 AD: The New King James Version (NKJV)

1990 AD: The New Revised Standard Version (NRSV)

1996 AD: The New Living Translation (NLT)

2002 AD: The English Standard Version (ESV)