

**FAITH UNDER FIRE**



## “How We Got Our Bible”

April 23, 2025

It wasn't until I was a Sophomore at LSU that I even knew what a Bible was! I was 19!

To know God and to serve others to know Him, we must know His Word and how it is His Word.

**Joshua 1:8; Psalm 119:9-112; Timothy 3:16; 2 Timothy 2:15; 1 Peter 3:15**

### The Bible Is NOT One Book.

The Bible is a collection of \_\_\_\_\_ books written over \_\_\_\_\_ years across \_\_\_\_\_ continents in \_\_\_\_\_ languages by \_\_\_\_\_ authors.

Languages: \_\_\_\_\_

Continents: \_\_\_\_\_

There are \_\_\_\_\_ books in the Old Testament and \_\_\_\_\_ books in the New Testament.

*From Genesis to Revelation there is one theme: God the Creator of the world, in spite of our rebellion against Him, is going to redeem those He saves to Himself and eventually create a new heaven and a new earth!*

### The Old Testament Canon

#### The What...

**Canon:** originates from the Ancient Greek word "kanōn", meaning "measuring rod, rule, or standard". It later became used for the purpose of recognizing particular sacred books.

*The Canon came together organically and granularly, with full attention to orthodoxy.*

**The Bible of the Jews is what we call the Old Testament. It is called by the Jews the Tanakh. The word “TaNaKh” is an acronym defining three types of writings of the Hebrew Scriptures:**

- **T(a) Torah: The Law, the Pentateuch. The first 5 books of the Old Testament**
- **N(a) Nevai'im The Prophets (8 books) (7 major prophets; 11 minor as 1 book)**
- **K(h) Ketuvim The Writings (11 books)**

**Luke 13:20-21** “To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? <sup>21</sup> It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened.”

**Luke 24:44** Then he(Jesus) said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”

## **How Was the Canon was Compiled?**

**Professional scribes; an understanding of preserving the writings.**

**Written on...**

**Papyrus, Parchment, and Paper: Scrolls and Codices (plural for Codex)**

**The Problem...**

**Wars, Relocations, Time and a good bit of perfectionism.**

**Monasteries and Discovered Manuscripts**

**Masoretic texts: 500AD -1000AD Jewish professional monastic scribes writing corporately as Scripture was narrated them.**

**Dead Sea Scrolls**

**Over 11,000 manuscripts written on various media, discovered 1946 & 1956. The entire TaNaKh intact (minus Esther) dating back to the third century BC. Prior to discovery, there were no existing OT manuscripts dated prior to the first century AD.**

**Christians and Jews have the same Old Testament (but “Don’t call what we call the Old Testament, the OT to Jews!” Call it the \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_)**

**The Jewish OT is arranged differently than how we arrange them. They have 24(22) books, we 39. But they are the same books.**

**Exception:** *The 7 Apocryphal (or ‘deuterocanonical’ books) were officially added into the Roman Catholic Old Testament in 1546 at the Council of Trent. Though included by some as early as 346AD, these books were not included in the OT Canon.*

- **Jewish scholars reject the Apocrypha as Scripture as do Protestant scholars.**

## **The New Testament Canon**

### **The Conundrum of Compiling the Canon**

***What and who determined what books went into the New Testament Canon and which did not? No NT fell out of the sky when John finished Revelation in around 94AD.***

The church councils did not determine the canon of the New Testament. No church council established what the Canon of the NT would be and would not be. The better word is that the books of the NT were RECOGNIZED, not established. Established brings the thought that Church councils determined, what is Canon and what is not as opposed to recognizing God giving and determining the Canon and the church recognizing what God did.

*"The canon is not an authorized collection of writings (in that the church (councils) conferred its authority or approval upon a list of books). Rather, the canon is a collection of authoritative writings... that have an inherent authority as works uniquely inspired by God. Canonization is the process of recognizing that inherent authority, not bestowing it from an outside source."*

– Robert Plummer, Chair of the Department of New Testament, Southern Baptist Theological Seminary

### **What were the factors that created the recognizing of books as Scripture? \***

**Apostolicity:** written by an apostle or a close colleague or associate. This also meant the manuscripts would have been circulating during the lifetime of the writer. First century writings.

**Orthodoxy:** books carrying on the story line of the Hebrew Scriptures, internally consistent and in keeping with the earliest known apostolic teaching.

**Catholicity:** widely accepted as authoritative and relevant, not just limited to one location or sect within emerging Christianity (to where some churches adhered to one set of books and others to another set)

**Inspired:** having the ring of truth and used by the Spirit for distinctively edifying and maturing purposes (this of the four, is more subjective, than objective.)

*\*The Gospel Coalition: The Reliability of the NT*

### **Recognition of the Canon of the New Testament**

*From the first century as the canon was being received and recognized, 21-22 of the 27 New Testament books were being distributed, preached and taught through the churches.*

**Three Different Definitions of the Receiving of the New Testament Canon** (with thanks to Dr. Michael Kruger, President of Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte, NC)

- **The Exclusive Definition** (Fixed, final and closed list of NT books) – **4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Century**
- **The Functional Definition** (Books were being circulated, preached from, and copied) **2<sup>nd</sup> Century**
- **The Existing Definition** (The Canonical Books were never NOT Canon) **First Century**

*"Early Christian writers from the second century onward quoted from the New Testament so profusely that even if there was not a single New Testament manuscript in existence today, the vast majority of it could be reconstructed from the manuscripts of the early Christian writings."*

James D. Agresti is the President and Cofounder of Just Facts an educational research institute

***These three definitions actually complement one another, build upon one another, and should be looked at as the STAGES of the recognition of the Canon, not the specific dates of their establishment.***

**Our Accepted, 27 book, New Testament** (Believed to be so by all Christian Traditions)

**Contents of the New Testament**

- The four Gospels (no other recognized Gospels in the 1st century)
- Historical Book (\_\_\_\_)
- Paul's Epistles/letters\_ (\_\_\_\_)
- General Epistles (\_\_\_\_)
- Apocryphal/Prophetic (\_\_\_\_\_)

**The General Literary Science of Textual Criticism and the Bibliographical Test support the truthfulness of the NT like no other ancient authors or writings.**

**3 Aspects of the Tests:**

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

**Number of New Testament Manuscripts = approximately 25,000 total manuscripts.**

**Greek: 5,800; Latin:10,000; Syriac, Coptic, Ethiopian and Armenian: 9,300**

***Up to 97.4 percent of all people in the world have access to at least some Scripture, with up to 80 percent having the full Bible and 91 percent having at least the New Testament.***

Wycliffe Bible Translators, 2023 Research Study

If we are going to study to show ourselves approved and have a defense for the hope that lies within us, it is really important to have not only a firm grasp of the contents of the Bible, but to be able to defend, when necessary, that the Bible we have is in fact the inspired Word of God with historical support. Our Christian faith rises and falls upon the truth of ALL SCRIPTURE being inspired by God, profitable to teach, reprove, correct and to train us so that we, men and women of God, are equipped, adequate for every good work (2 Timothy 3:17).

**Approximate Dates of the Writing of Old and New Testaments Chronologically**

**OLD TESTAMENT**

**Job--Unknown**

**Genesis--1445-1405 B.C.**

**Exodus --1445-1405 B.C.**

**Leviticus --1445-1405 B.C.**

**Numbers--1445-1405 B.C.**

**Deuteronomy--1445-1405  
B.C.**

**Psalms--1410-450 B.C.**

**Joshua--1405-1385 B.C.**

**Judges--ca. 1043 B.C.**

**Ruth--ca. 1030-1010 B.C.**

**Song of Solomon--971-  
965 B.C.**

**Proverbs--ca. 971-686 B.C.**

**Ecclesiastes--940-931 B.C.**

**1 Samuel--931-722 B.C.**

**2 Samuel--931-722 B.C.**

**Obadiah--850-840 B.C.**

**Joel--835-796 B.C.**

**Jonah--ca. 775 B.C.**

**Amos--ca. 750 B.C.**

**Hosea--750-710 B.C.**

**Micah--735-710 B.C.**

**Isaiah--700-681 B.C.**

**Nahum--ca. 650 B.C.**

**Zephaniah--635-625 B.C.**

**Habakkuk--615-605 B.C.**

**Ezekiel--590-570 B.C.**

**Lamentations--586 B.C.**

**Jeremiah--586-570 B.C.**

**1 Kings--561-538 B.C.**

**2 Kings--561-538 B.C.**

**Daniel 536-530 B.C.**

**Haggai--ca. 520 B.C.**

**Zechariah--480-470 B.C.**

**Ezra-457-444 B.C.**

**1 Chronicles--450-430  
B.C.**

**2 Chronicles--450-430  
B.C.**

**Esther--450-331 B.C.**

**Malachi--433-424 B.C.**

**Nehemiah--424-400  
B.C.**



**NEW TESTAMENT**

James--A.D. 44-49  
Galatians--A.D. 49-50  
Matthew--A.D. 50-60  
Mark--A.D. 50-60  
1 Thessalonians--A.D. 51  
2 Thessalonians--A.D. 51-  
52  
1 Corinthians--A.D. 55  
2 Corinthians--A.D. 55-56  
Romans-- A.D. 56  
Luke--A.D. 60-61  
Ephesians--A.D. 60-62  
Philippians--A.D. 60-62  
Philemon--A.D. 60-62

Colossians--A.D. 60-62  
Acts--A.D. 62  
1 Timothy--A.D. 62-64  
Titus--A.D. 62-64  
1 Peter--A.D. 64-65  
2 Timothy--A.D. 66-67  
2 Peter--A.D. 67-68  
Hebrews--A.D. 67-69  
Jude--A.D. 68-70  
John--A.D. 80-90  
1 John--A.D. 90-95  
2 John--A.D. 90-95  
3 John--A.D. 90-95  
Revelation--A.D. 94-96  
(Compiled by Grace to You  
Ministries)



**SCAN TO SERVE**