

# Canonization: how was the bible put together

Who put it together?

Who decided what would be put in it?

How did they decide?

What about The Apocrypha?



AD 200-300

# The Canon

- The Canon refers to the authoritative books that are officially accepted and approved as Holy Scripture.
  - Canonical: from a Greek word referring to the *rule* of faith and truth
  - These books are based on a standard or “rule of faith.”



1500 BC

500 BC

AD 1

AD 500

AD 1000

AD 1500

AD 1900

AD 2000



## History Summary

# God Writes the Ten Commandments

God writes the  
Ten Commandments  
with His finger  
on Stone Tablets



The First Printed English  
Bible  
AD 1535  
(Coverdale Bible)

## History Summary

# God Writes the Ten Commandments

The Tablets are placed in The Ark of The Covenant and entrusted to the Levites, one of the twelve tribes of Israel



The First Printed English Bible  
AD 1535  
(Coverdale Bible)

## History Summary

### Moses writes The Law & other books

## Moses writes books as instructed by God

- Genesis
- Exodus
- Leviticus
- Numbers
- Deuteronomy

Cared for by the Levites



The First Printed English Bible  
AD 1535  
(Coverdale Bible)

# History Summary

## Books of History, Poetry, and Prophets

Additional books written by leaders of Israel, judges, kings, and prophets

- God's Word to Israel is maintained by their leaders
- Common acceptance as God's Word



The First Printed English Bible  
AD 1535  
(Coverdale Bible)

250-100 BC  
Hebrew to Greek

# The Septuagint

- In 250-100 BC the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament) is translated by Jewish scholars in Alexandria, Egypt
- This translation is known as The Septuagint. It is the first Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible (the Old Testament). It includes the books generally accepted by the Jews as authoritative.
- The Septuagint becomes the source of many future translations.

The  
Septuagint  
Translation written  
by "The LXX"



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AMERICAN  
BUSINESS  
FELLOWSHIP

## History Summary

## Original writing to the New Testament

- Followers of Jesus write eye-witness reports (Gospels), history, letters to other believers, and the Revelation.
- The original writings are copied and circulated so that by approximately AD 150 there is wide enough use of them to speak of the "New Testament" ("New Covenant").
- The writers quote from all but eight of the Old Testament books.
- Church fathers accept the writings of the Gospels and Paul's letters as *canonical*.
- Origen lists 21 New Testament Books
- Eusebius lists 22 books

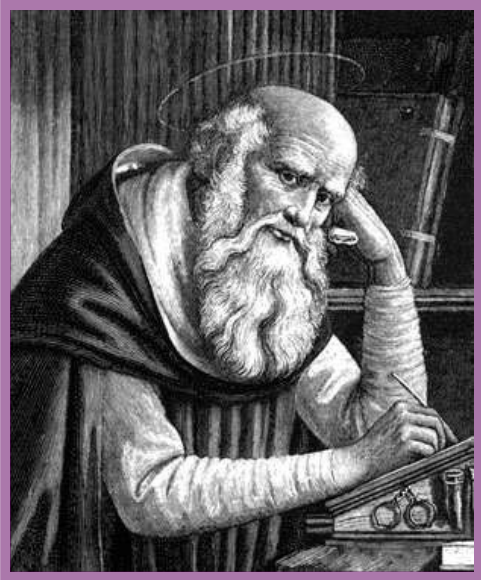
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The First Printed English  
Bible  
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(Coverdale Bible)

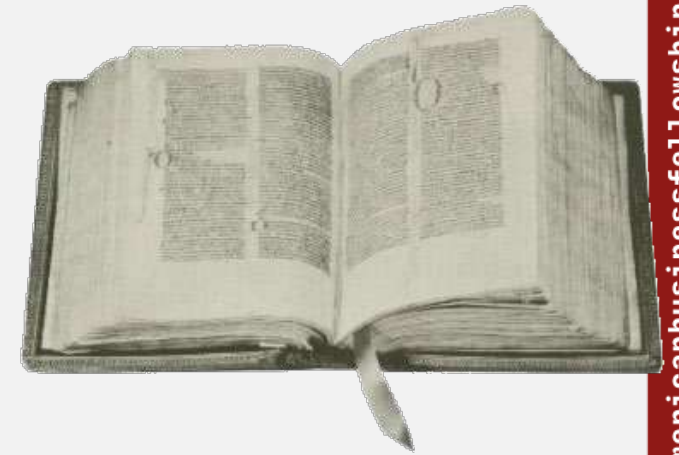
AD 400

# The Latin Vulgate



Jerome

Jerome starts translating the Scriptures into Latin in AD 382 and finishes 23 years later. This translation, called the Latin Vulgate, remains the basic Bible for many centuries.



The Latin Vulgate

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AD 397

# The Canon

The 27 books of the New Testament are formally confirmed as canonical by the Synod of Carthage in AD 397, thus recognizing three centuries of use by followers of Christ.



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AD 400

# The Canon

By AD 400, the standard of 27 New Testament books is accepted in the East and West as confirmed by:

- Athanasius
- Jerome
- Augustine
- Three church councils



Augustine

1500 BC

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AD 200-300

## Establishing The Canon

Church leaders determine Canon through prayer and through use of standards applied to each book.

These standards included

- Divine inspiration
- Authoritative (is there a "Thus says The Lord")
- Accuracy
- Doctrinal truth
- Consistency
- Power
- Acceptance by the people of God.

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# Apocrypha

What about the books not included in The Bible?

## Some Apocryphal Books and Additions

1 Esdras  
Jeremiah

2 Esdras  
Tobit

Judith

Additions to Esther

Wisdom of Solomon

Ecclesiasticus

Baruch, with Letter to

Song of Three Young Men  
Susanna

Bel and the Dragon

Prayer of Manasseh

1 Maccabees

2 Maccabees

1500 BC

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AD 500 ABF AD 1000

AD 1500

AD 1900

AD 2000



# The Apocrypha

- The Apocrypha refers to several books and additions that were included in the early Greek and Latin translations of the Old Testament.
- The Septuagint contained the Apocrypha in 100 BC.
- By the first century AD, writers Philo and Josephus indicate that the Hebrew canon did not include the Apocrypha.
- This evidence leads to its removal from the Geneva Bible in AD 1640.
- By AD 1827, the Apocrypha is omitted from most English versions of the Bible.

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AD 1500

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# Canonization of The Bible

- How was The Bible put together?
- Who decided what would be included?
- How did they decide?
- What about the Apocrypha?



# How was The Bible put together

- The Bible was put together over time as books of The Bible written by the inspiration of God (2 Timothy 3:16)
- As books were written they were included by Jewish leaders or leaders of the church



# It helps to consider the context of how The Bible and its writers

- The Old Testament
  - The Bible claims to be God's Word
  - The Bible claims that God, the Creator of man and the universe, made promises and covenants to specific men in history. He put this in writing. His Word has never been proven inaccurate. In fact, it has never been disproven.
  - If you received promises like that, wouldn't you hang on to them?



# It helps to consider the context of how The Bible and its writers

- The New Testament
  - Written by eyewitnesses
  - The New Testament claims that Jesus was crucified, buried, and risen
  - Eyewitnesses testify to this
  - Several of these eyewitnesses were imprisoned or killed for what they believed. Is it reasonable to believe they would have died for something that they knew was not true?



Jewish leaders, early church leaders, and the early church must be considered in the context of their time in history

- The church today compared to the church in Jesus time.
- Religious leaders today compared to the the apostles
- The United States of America compared to the nations of the Old Testament, the nations ruled by Alexander the Great, and Rome.



# Who the Bible together?

- Religious leaders of the Jews and leaders of the early church



# How did they decide?

- Books were included based on the passing of certain agreed upon standards supported by prayer



# What about The Apocrypha?

- The books of the Apocrypha were excluded because they did not stand up to the criteria applied to determine if a book was canonical

