





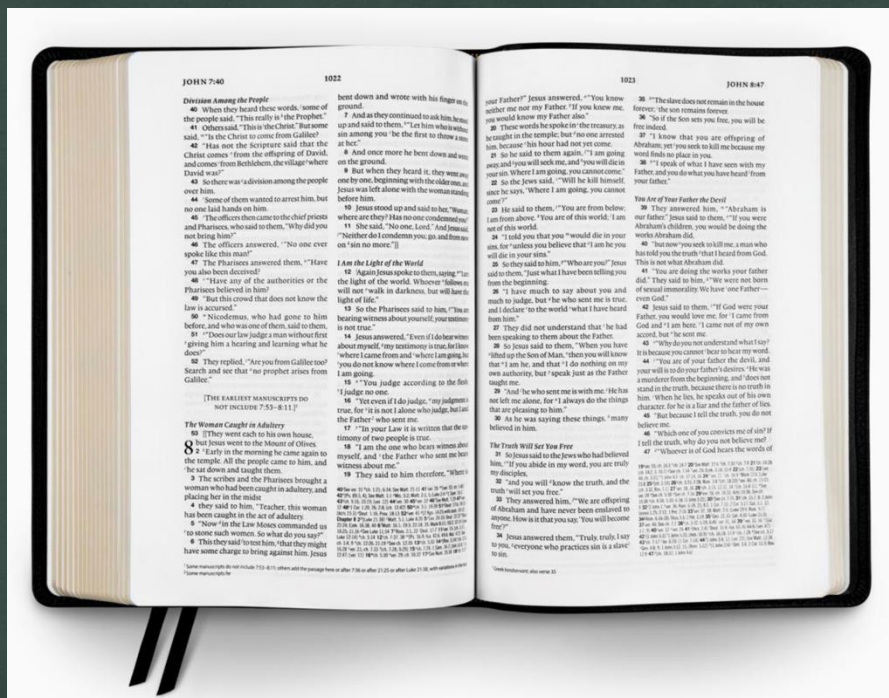
The Canonization of the Old and New Testaments

How We Got the Bible

Winter Sessions 2025–26



Canon vs. Cannon





The Old Testament Apocrypha/Deuterocanon



The Dead Sea Scrolls



Earliest Greek Old Testament Manuscripts after Qumran



Contents

20 verses from Deut 23–34

fragments from Gen 7 and 38

parts of Deut 11 and 31–33

parts of Deut 17–33

Deut 11:4

Lev 26:2–16

Exod 28:4–7

Lev 2–5 with lacunae

Num 3:30–4:14 with lacunae

Minor prophets fragments

Date

early 2d cent. BC

late 1st cent. BC

early 1st cent. BC

late 1st cent. BC

2d cent. BC

late 2d cent. BC/early 1st cent AD

ca. 100 BC

1st cent. BC

1st cent. BC

early 1st cent. AD



...among us there are not thousands of books in disagreement and conflict with each other, but only twenty-two books, containing the record of all time, which are rightly trusted. Five of these are the books of Moses, which contain both the laws and the tradition from the birth of humanity up to his death; this is a period of a little less than three thousand years. From the death of Moses until Aretaxerxes, king of the Persians after Xerxes, the prophets after Moses wrote the history of what took place in their own times in thirteen books; the remaining four books contain hymns to God and instructions for people on life.

Josephus, *Against Apion* 1:39–40



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 given practical proof of our reverence for our own Scriptures. For, although such long ages have now passed, no one has ventured either to add, or to remove, or to alter a syllable; and it is an instinct with every Jew, from the day of his birth, to regard them as the decrees of God, to abide by them, and, if need be, cheerfully to die for them.

Josephus, *Against Apion* 1:41–42



“Make public the twenty-four books that you wrote first, and let the worthy and the unworthy read them, but keep the seventy that were written last, in order to give them to the wise among your people.”

2 Esdras 14:45–46



The New Testament Authors' View of the Authority of the Old Testament Books

- Expected to be “fulfilled.”
- Authors’ words = Holy Spirit speaking
- Authors’ words = God is speaking
- Authority beyond the authority of the human authors
- “It is written”



Greek Canon Lists to 400 AD

The Bryennios List (100–150): No DC works.

Melito of Sardis (170): No DC works, but Wis of Sol (prob. not)?

Origen (ca. 220): No DC works, ex. 1 Esdras & Ep. of Jer.

Cyril of Jerusalem (ca. 350): No DC works, ex. Baruch & Ep. of Jer.

Athanasius (367): No DC works, ex. Baruch and Ep. of Jer & prob. Dan. adds.

The Synod of Laodicea (380): No DC works, ex. Ps 151, Baruch & Ep. of Jer.

Apostolic Canon 85 (375–80): All RC DC works, 3 to 4 books of Macc, & Ps 151.

Gregory of Nazianzus (381–90): No DC works, ex. Baruch and Ep. of Jer.

Amphilochius of Iconium (380): No DC works.

Epiphanius of Salamis (315–402/3): No DC works.



Latin Canon Lists to 400

The Muratorian Fragment (late 2d cent): No OT list, but Wis of Sol in the NT.

Codex Claramontanus (Ms 6th cent., list 3rd?): All RC DC works, plus 4 Macc.

The Mommsen Catalogue/Cheltenham List (365): All RC DC works.

Hilary of Poitiers (364–67): No DC works, but Baruch & Ep. of Jer, “Words of the Days of Esdras.”

Jerome (three works dating 390–403): No DC works. Calls them “Apocrypha” and says, “They are not in the canon.”

Rufinus of Aquileia (ca. 404): No DC works = “ecclesiastical,” but outside the canon.

The Brevarium Hipponense (summary of the Council of Hippo, 393): All RC DC works, plus 1 Esdras.

Augustine (397): All RC DC works, and 1 Esdras.

Pope Innocent I (405): All RC DC works.



Questions



Canonization of the New Testament



For the Scripture says, “You shall not muzzle an ox when it treads out the grain,” and, “The laborer deserves his wages.”

1 Timothy 5:18 (cf. Deut 25:4; Luke 10:7)



¹⁵ And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, ¹⁶ as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

2 Peter 3:15–16



Criteria for New Testament Canonicity

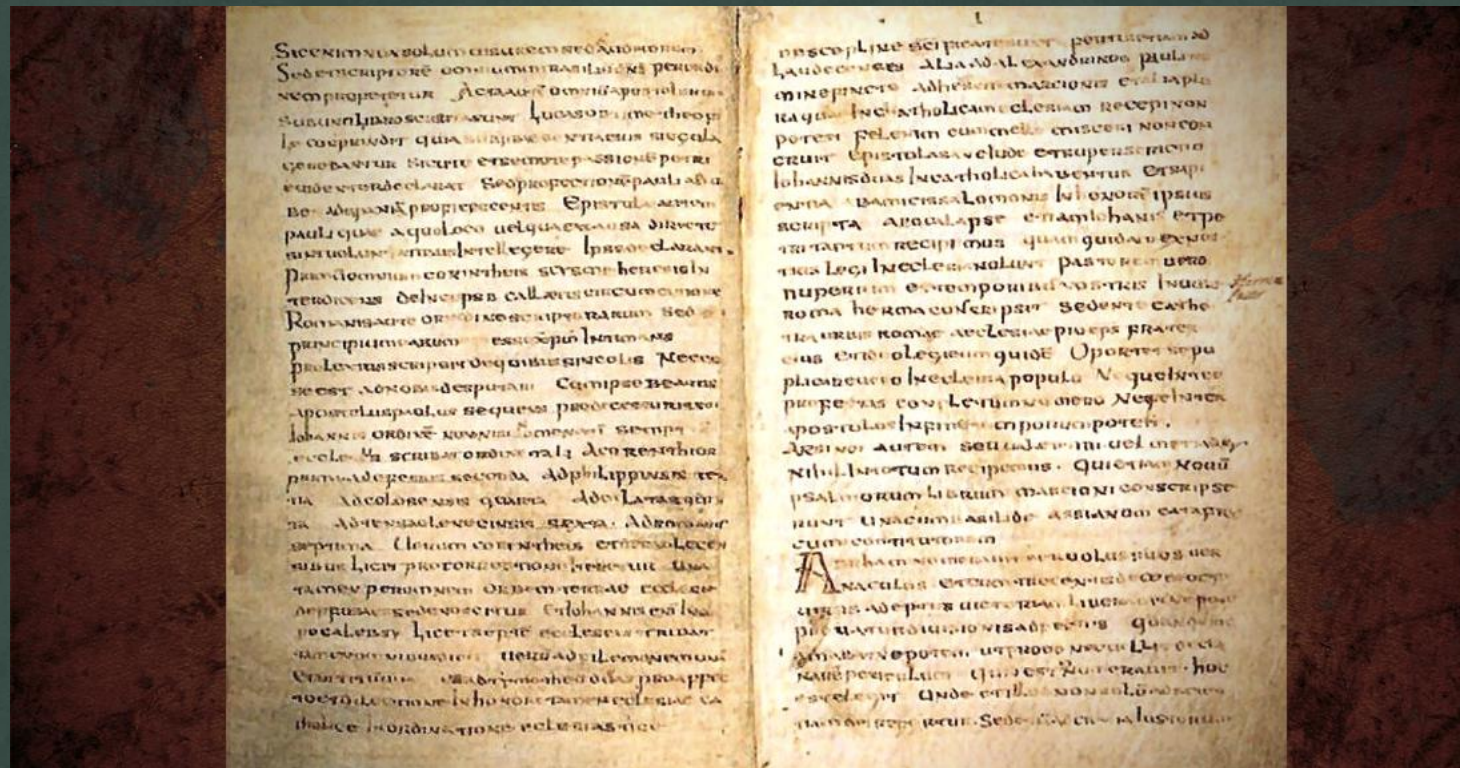
- Apostolicity
- Orthodoxy
- Widespread Acceptance



Canon vs. Scripture?



The Muratorian Canon



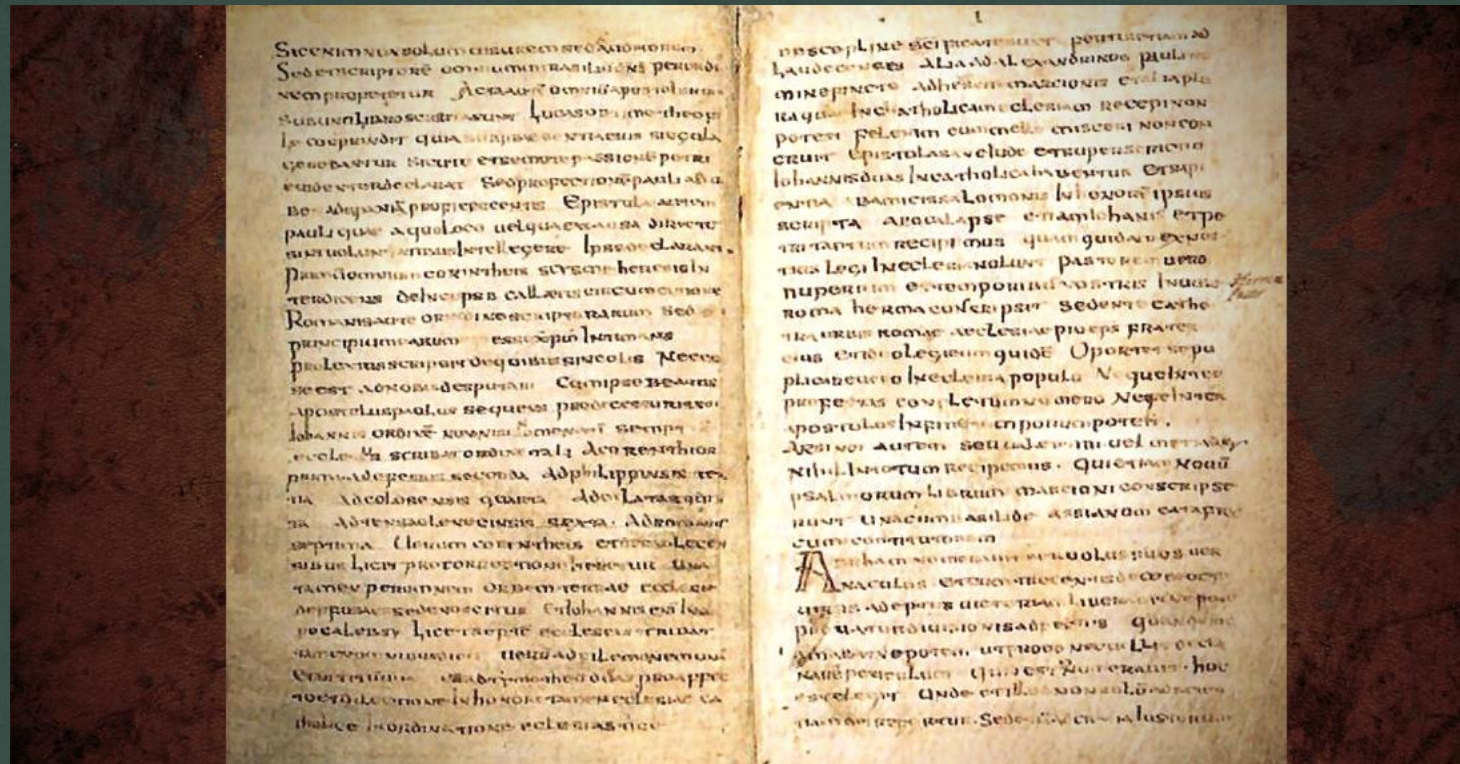


It is not possible that the Gospels can be either more or fewer in number than they are. For, since there are four zones of the world in which we live, and four principal winds, while the Church is scattered throughout all the world, and the pillar and ground of the Church is the Gospel and the spirit of life; it is fitting that she should have four pillars, breathing out immortality on every side, and vivifying men afresh. From which fact, it is evident that the Word, the Artificer of all, He that sitteth upon the cherubim, and contains all things, He who was manifested to men, has given us the Gospel under four aspects, but bound together by one Spirit.

Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3.11.8



The Muratorian Canon



Gospels, Acts, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Galatians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Romans, Philemon, Titus, 1 & 2 Timothy, Jude, 1 & 2 John, Revelation, Wisdom of Solomon, Shepherd of Hermas

Early Gospel Codices

- P4, P64, and P67 (Matthew and Luke, 2nd century)
- P 75 (Luke, 14 chapters of John, ca. 200)
- P45 (Gospels and Acts, 3rd century)







Questions