

***Introducing the World of the
New Testament:
Canonization, Sources and Major Players***



***The New Testament World – Week 1
Adult Education***

Dating and Canonization of the New Testament

<u>By Date</u>	<i>Authorship</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Place of Origin</i>
1 Thessalonians	Paul	50-51	Corinth
2 Thessalonians	Paul	50-51	Corinth
James	James, the brother of Jesus	50-60?	Unknown
1 Corinthians	Paul	54-55	Ephesus
2 Corinthians	Paul	55	Macedonia
Galatians	Paul	55	Ephesus?
Romans	Apostle Paul	55-56	Corinth
Colossians	Paul	60-62	Rome
Ephesians	Paul	60-62	Rome
Philemon	Paul	60-62	Rome
Philippians	Paul	60-62	Rome
1 Timothy	Paul	62-64	Macedonia
Titus	Paul	62-64	Macedonia
Hebrews	Anonymous	62-66	Asia Minor?
1 Peter	Apostle Peter	63-64	Rome
2 Timothy	Paul	64-68	Rome
Mark	John Mark	67-72/70-75	Rome
2 Peter	[Apostle Peter]	68/80-90?	Unknown
Jude	Jude, the brother of Jesus	70-90?	Unknown
Matthew	Apostle Matthew	75-85	Antioch
Acts	Luke	75-90	Greece?
Luke	Luke	75-90/80-95	Greece?
1 John	Apostle John	90-100	Asia Minor
2 John	Apostle John	90-100	Asia Minor
3 John	Apostle John	90-100	Asia Minor
John	Apostle John	90-100	Asia Minor
Revelation	Apostle John	96/98	Asia Minor

<http://www.bible-researcher.com/barker1.html>

Historic Canon

Athanasius (b. 296)	Origen (b. 185)	Irenaeus (b. 130)	Marcion* (b. 85)
Matthew	Matthew	Matthew	
Mark	Mark	Mark	
Luke	Luke	Luke	Luke
John	John	John	
Acts	Acts	Acts	
Romans	Romans	Romans	Romans
1 Corinthians	1 Corinthians	1 Corinthians	1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians	2 Corinthians	2 Corinthians	2 Corinthians
Galatians	Galatians	Galatians	Galatians
Ephesians	Ephesians	Ephesians	Ephesians
Philippians	Philippians	Philippians	Philippians
Colossians	Colossians	Colossians	Colossians
1 Thessalonians	1 Thessalonians	1 Thessalonians	1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians	2 Thessalonians	2 Thessalonians	2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy	1 Timothy	1 Timothy	
2 Timothy	2 Timothy	2 Timothy	
Titus	Titus	Titus	
Philemon	Philemon	Philemon	Philemon
Hebrews	Hebrews	<i>Hebrews</i>	
James	<i>James</i>	<i>James</i>	
1 Peter	1 Peter	1 Peter	
2 Peter	<i>2 Peter</i>	<i>2 Peter</i>	
1 John	1 John	1 John	
2 John	<i>2 John</i>	<i>2 John</i>	
3 John	<i>3 John</i>	<i>3 John</i>	
Jude	<i>Jude</i>	<i>Jude</i>	
Revelation**	Revelation	Revelation	

Italic type indicates that the writer either does not mention the book or expressed some doubt about the status of the book.

*Marcion's views were peculiar to his sect. He was aware of the fact that many of the other books were read as scripture in most churches.

**The Revelation of John was first received and then rejected by many churches in Asia Minor.

<http://www.bible-researcher.com/canon3.html>

During the third century, James, Jude, Second and Third John, Second Peter, and Hebrews were frankly disputed in different sectors of the church, so that Origen and Eusebius classified them among the *antilogomena* (or disputed books, accepted by some churches but challenged by others).

Disputations by the Church Fathers

Y=yes N=disputed M=maybe Holy X=expressly rejected S=no mention, rejection

1. Greek & Latin	Date	Heb.	Jas.	Jn.	Pet.	Jude	Rev.
Muratorian Fragment	170	S	S	M	S	Y	Y
Origen	225	Y	N	N	N	N	Y
Eusebius of Caesarea	324	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Cyril of Jerusalem	348	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S
Cheltenham list	360	S	S	Y	Y	S	Y
Council of Laodicea	363	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S
Athanasius	367	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Gregory of Nazianzus	380	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S
Amphilocius of Iconium	380	Y	N	N	N	N	N
Rufinus	380	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Epiphanius	385	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Jerome	390	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Augustine	397	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
3rd Council of Carthage	397	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Codex Claromontanus	400	M	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Letter of Innocent I	405	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Decree of Gelasius	550	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Isadore of Seville	625	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
John of Damascus	730	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
2. Syrian	Date	Heb.	Jas.	Jn.	Pet.	Jude	Rev.
Apostolic Canons	380	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	S
Peshitta Version	400	Y	Y	S	S	S	S
Report of Junilius	550	Y	N	N	N	N	N

KEY TO BOOKS

Heb. - Epistle to the Hebrews

Jas. - Epistle of James

Jn. - Second and Third Epistle of John

Pet. - Second Epistle of Peter

Jude - Epistle of Jude

Rev. - Revelation of John

New Testament & Second Temple Period Sources

Three Types of Sources:

1. Primary – eye witness
2. Secondary – writing what is heard (Luke, Hebrews)
3. Ancient – written close to the time of the events
(Primary or Secondary – Josephus is an ancient source and is both primary and secondary)

Reliability of Sources:

1. Who wrote it?
2. Why did he write what he did?
3. To whom was it written?
4. What were the author's sources?
5. Cross-references
6. Author's association with the events – how close to the actual time of events?
7. How are the documents transmitted? (Josephus, Apocrypha, etc was preserved by the Church and may have been redacted or interpolated).

Second Temple Period sources:

1. Archeology
 - A. Numismatics – study of coinage, reflect titles and claims of rulers, ideas being promoted and religious and political symbolism. They also help determine chronology.
 - B. Inscriptions – most are either epitaphs or donations. The majority are in Greek, but some are in Latin, Hebrew, or Aramaic.
 - C. Necropolises – excavations of Jewish burial sites. The necropolis of Hellenistic-Roman Jericho provides many tombs from the period before 70 CE. Significant finds include wooden coffins and evidence of primary and secondary burials in the same context.
 - D. Herodian Palestine – many of the building activities of Herod the great are manifest in many urban structures at Caesarea, Samaria, Jericho, and Jerusalem.
 - E. Papyri – Egypt is the major source of papyri clarifying in particular the legal status of Jews in the Hellenistic cities and valuable data on the occupations and economic activities of Jews.
 - F. Synagogues – Most date from the post-NT era. Synagogues of possibly pre-70 date have been found at Masada, Herodion, Magdala, and Gamala. Among the most impressive excavated in Palestine are those at Capernaum, Chorazin, Hammath, Tiberias, Bar'am, Beth Alpha (Zodiac), and Ma'aon. Of those outside Palestine are Ostia, Stobi, Delos, Sardis, and Dura Europus. Common features shared are:
 - i. Commonly oriented toward Jerusalem (to the east)
 - ii. Diaspora synagogues built frequently near a source of water
 - iii. Essential part of the furniture was an ark (chest) for keeping the biblical scrolls (originally a portable chest)

- iv. Torah scrolls placed in an ark that was framed in terms of temple architecture.
- v. Most synagogues had a platform where there would have been a reading stand
- vi. Benches lining the walls
- vii. A chief seat (Moses' seat – Mt. 23:2) for the person presiding
- viii. Many had guest rooms adjoining the assembly room
- ix. Pictorial evidence indicates the use of a menorah (lampstand)

G. Jewish Symbols and Art – art found in many of the synagogues. Not all Jews applied the prohibitions in the Decalogue (Ex. 20:4; De. 5:8) as strictly or extensively as rabbinic interpretation attempted. Architectural elements like column capitals found among mosaic floors with scenes from the Bible and nature from the 5th and 6th centuries. Wall paintings also found such as what was found at Dura Europus on the Euphrates. The menorah is found sculptured on the column capitals in synagogues and on sarcophagi, on mosaic pavements of synagogues, painted on walls of catacombs, on gold glasses, on lamps, and on bone and ivory carvings. Other symbols are the lion (of Judah), lulab (palm branch) Torah shrine containing scrolls of the Scriptures and ethrog (a citron) representing the Feast of Tabernacles, the incense shovel for the Day of Atonement and the shofar for New Year's Day.

H. Pagan references to Jews – important for how Jews and Judaism were perceived and thus are significant for various purposes. Some Gentile writers were favorable to Judaism and found it attractive, looking on the Jews as philosophers and as an ancient source of wisdom with pure concepts of the divine and how it is to be worshiped. Other men had very negative impressions of the Jews because of the struggles over citizen rights and the special privileges of the Jews in the empire. The pagan sources do permit some conclusions about the impact of Jews in the Greco-Roman world and what features of the Jewish religion and way of life were prominent to outsiders: Sabbath, circumcision, abstention from pork, and the worship of the one God. Anti-Semitism surfaced mainly where Jews appeared most alien—in race and particularly in customs—and would not conform to pagan society. Hostility from pagan traditionalists increased in proportion to the numbers of Gentiles attracted to Judaism.

- 2. Documents/Writings – NT, Apocrypha, Josephus, etc.
- 3. Epigraphy – inscriptions, etchings, etc.
- 4. Traditions
- 5. Jewish sources – Hebrew and Aramaic
 - A. The Dead Sea Scrolls
 - B. Rabbinic Writings –
 - i. *Mishnah* –
 - a. From “repeat”
 - b. Earliest writings, halakha, legal material
 - c. Arranged by tractates (subject)

- d. Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi codified around 220 (Rav is Babylonian, Rabbi is Palestinian)
 - e. Compiled collection of pre-destruction writings
 - f. Rabbi Akiva started collecting (105-135)
 - ii. *Tosefta* –
 - a. Means “enlargement” – codified in 3rd century
 - b. Boraita means external – around in school but not in the Mishnah
 - c. Saying from the Tannaitic period
 - d. Not as authoritative as the Mishnah
 - iii. *Talmud*
 - a. Babylonian and Jerusalem
 - b. Jerusalem compiled first – smaller, unorganized, finished in late 300’s
 - c. Babylonian – finished in Sura in the early 500’s
 - Commentary on Mishnah
 - Written by the community
 - Midrash – commentary on scripture, hagadda, not literal or historical
 - d. History is alluded to – it does not exist to detail scripture
 - e. Attribution exists for authority
 - iv. *Midrash* – commentary, arguments, hagaddot, anecdotes, traditions, non-legal, legends
 - a. Transmitted oral, with or without connection to scripture
- C. Jewish Historians
- i. Josephus –
 - a. Born in Jerusalem to a Hasmonean family, but not High Priest family.
 - b. Writing to Romans about Jews to make the Jews look good, but not to offend the Romans
 - c. Sent to Rome at 26 as part of a delegation
 - d. Galilean commander of Jewish forces against Rome (66AD)
 - e. Brought before Vaspasian (Roman general) and Josephus prophesied that he would be Emperor. When it came true he was let out of prison.
 - f. Mostly Secondary source – relies on Nicholas of Damascus, the lawyer of Antipator and Herod, tutor to Cleopatra’s children
 - g. Preserved also in Syriac with some differences
 - h. Jewish Wars was first work, written in classical Greek (75-79)
 - Either had a scribe or was very well educated
 - Accounts of the Jewish War against the Romans until after the Destruction
 - Survey of Jewish History from Antiochus Epiphanies
 - i. Antiquities of the Jews (93-94)

- 20 books
 - Continuous History of the Jewish history from
 - Less Roman sentiments, glorifies Jewish people
 - j. Against Apion
 - polemic written to Greeks on behalf of the Jews
 - k. Hero's Biography
 - His own biography
 - ii. Philo
 - a. From Alexandria
 - b. Lived 20BCE-45CE
 - c. Comes from a very prominent Alexandrian family (his brother was the community treasurer)
 - d. Came to Judea at one point
 - e. Most writings focus on Hellenistic Jewry in Alexandria
 - f. Both historical writings give account of Jewish persecution
 - In Flaccum
 - Legatio as Gaium
6. Greco-Roman sources
- A. Nicolas of Damascus (64BCE-1st century CE)
 - i. Historian, rhetorician, author
 - ii. Tutor of Cleopatra and Marc Antony's children
 - iii. Part of Herod's advisory
 - iv. Wrote Universal History
 - a. 144 books originally, only excerpts have survived
 - B. Strabo (64BCE-20's CE)
 - i. Born in Pontus (Asia Minor) to a distinguished family
 - ii. Traveled extensively but never to Palestine
 - iii. Historian and geographer
 - iv. Historical work was 43 books
 - a. Begins where Polibius stopped
 - b. History of Hasmonean dynasty and Herod's rise
 - v. Geography book is preserved entirely
 - a. Historical sketch of the emergence of Jewish state and religion
 - b. Geography and description of Palestine
 - C. Ptolemy (not a king) end of 1st century BCE
 - i. Grammaticus – history of Herod the Great, attributed to "Ptolemy"
 - D. Pliny the Elder, uncle of Pliny the Younger (1st century-d.79CE at the eruption of Vesuvius)
 - i. Born in Asia Minor
 - ii. Military man in western Roman empire (wealthy)
 - iii. Attached to Flavian dynasty
 - iv. Wrote many books, only one survived
 - a. Natural History – encyclopedia about Palestine, geography, plants, trade, Essenes, etc.

- Associates Essenes with the NW corner of the Dead Sea
- E. Pliny the Younger (mid 1st c – to early 2nd c)
- i. Literary figure – wrote many letters
 - ii. 10 books of correspondence
 - a. 10th book has correspondence with Emperor Trajan
 - iii. Appointed Legate over Bithynian
 - iv. Did not like to make decision
 - v. Three areas of interest
 - a. Increase of Christianity in Bithynian and Pontus (Asia Minor)
 - b. Corroborates with other writings about Christian worship and evidence of female deacons
 - c. Refusal of Christians to have images of pagan deities and pay divine honors to the Emperor
- F. Tacitus (55-120CE)
- i. Two works survived
 - a. Histories – Roman civil war after Nero's death and Flavian Dynasty, written during Flavian's dynasty.
 - First four books and part of fifth preserved
 - Atonius Julianus and Pliny the Elder were sources
 - b. Roman Annals
 - Books 115 to 117 survive
 - Julian to Claudius
 - Fire of Rome and Nero's blame of Christians
 - Written 98-117
- G. Suetonius
- i. Biographies of the first 12 Roman Emperors
 - ii. Vaspasian and Titus are of interest here
 - iii. Details of Wars in Galilee in and Judea
 - iv. Acts 18:2 – banishing of Jews from Rome in 49, Suetonius writes the same thing in biography of Claudius
 - v. Says Chrestus is the instigator of the riots (Chrestus was a common slave name and a popular misspelling of Christos). Probably Christianity being introduced in the Jewish community in Rome.
 - vi. 54CE death of Claudius and expulsion edict stopped
- H. Dio Cassius (2nd – 3rd centuries)
- i. Born in Bithynia
 - ii. Prominent figure in Roman administration
 - iii. Extensive work in Roman history
 - a. Jewish revolt under Trajan and Hadrian
7. Early Christian
- A. New Testament
- i. Gospels contain biographical detail, life and death in human figures – not written to convey historical events. Written to strengthen the community.

- B. Eusebius – secondary source (later)
- C. Tertullian (160-240) (during the breakaway from Judaism)
 - i. Did not like women or Jews
 - ii. Defended Christianity against charges of atheism and black magic
 - iii. First Latin writer
 - iv. Opposed the Church in Rome
- D. Justin Martyr (100-165)
 - i. Church philosopher
 - ii. Born in Samaria to pagan parents
 - iii. Wrote Defense of Christianity (150) addressed to Emperor Pius
 - iv. Public life and death of Jesus could be attested in Rome Annals called “The Acts of Pilate”
- E. Papyri
 - i. Private letters, legal proceedings, tax receipts, etc
- F. Inscriptions
 - i. Vesuvius preserved a lot - Interior design swapped between Pompeii and Jerusalem

Major Players in the New Testament

1. Major Jewish Players
 - a. Sanhedrin
 - b. Pharisees
 - c. Sadducees
 - d. Priests
 - e. Levites
 - f. Scribes/Sages
2. Romans
 - a. Politicians
 - b. Military
 - c. Jewish workers (tax collectors, etc)
3. Minorities & Outsiders
 - a. Samaritans
 - b. Essenes