

An Outline of the History of the Canonization of the Books of the Holy Bible

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(The word “canon” comes from the Greek word *kanōn*, meaning either a “rule” or a “standard” of measurement. In Galatians 6:15-16, Paul refers to the “New Creation” in Christ Jesus as a *kanōn*, a “rule” or “standard” to live by. He defines his *kanōn* as being the Lord Himself in Second Corinthians 10:13-18, saying, “Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord, for it is not the one who commends himself that is approved, but rather the one whom the Lord commends.”)

1500-300 BC

The Holy Ghost dictates the words of Hebrew Scripture to the Old Testament Prophets, overriding the fallibility of their fallen, sin nature.

3rd Century BC

Ptolemy the Great of Egypt orders the first translation of the the Hebrew Scriptures into another language—Greek. This new translation comes to be called the “Septuagint.”

100 BC

Prior to this date, the Samaritans codify their own version of the Scriptures, consisting of only Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, and Numbers. Also the Letter of Aristeas is written describing the occurrence of an extraordinary miracle which confirmed the *Septuagint* as an inspired translation of the Hebrew Scriptures.

ca. AD 49

The first and only, truly Holy-Ghost-led Church council occurs in Jerusalem and is recorded in the New Testament in Acts 15.

AD 1st Century

As the Holy Ghost temporarily endows the New Testament writers with the gift of infallibility, It tends, when quoting the Old Testament, to cite the *Septuagint*, the Greek translation of the Old Testament. Also, the Holy Ghost cites oral tradition

when It causes Paul to refer to Jannes and Jambres, and It drives Jude to cite the *Book of Enoch* when referring to the tradition regarding the dispute between Satan and Michael the Archangel over the body of Moses. (The *Book of Enoch* is considered canonical by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church.) In the 1st century, translations of the Old and New Testaments into Aramaic are already being used by the Eastern Syrian Orthodox Church. (These translations come to be known as the *Peshitta* text.)

AD 2nd Century

Bishop Irenaeus of Lyons, who claims to be a disciple of Polycarp who claimed to be a disciple of John, quotes the deuterocanonical books as valid Scripture and refers to “the Four Gospels”—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. Irenaeus also quotes the early second-century Christian writing *The Shepherd of Hermas* as Scripture. Also during this century, the great Library of Alexandria is destroyed. The *Septuagint* and the New Testament are translated into differing Latin versions.

AD 200

By this time all four Gospels are universally accepted throughout the Church in Europe, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia

AD 300

Some time prior to this date, the *Apostolic Canons*, widely accepted throughout the Carnal Churches, are written in which various books of Scripture are named as canonical. *Apostolic Canon 85* includes many of the deuterocanonical books in the Canon of Scripture, omits the book of Revelations, and includes the two Epistles of Clement (1st-2nd-century bishop of Rome), and the Constitutions of Clement.

AD 363

The so-called “Church Council of Laodicea” (strangely, the apostate church mentioned in Revelations) officially affirmed a *kanōn*, or standard, regarding the use of Scripture in the Church, basing this *kanōn* on the precedent of already-existent Church practice. In its Fifty-ninth *Kanōn*, the council declares that only “canonical” books of Scripture should be read in public worship.

AD 4th

Lucian revises the Greek *Septuagint* by referring to Hebrew manuscripts available to him. Over time, the Lucianic recension of the Old Testament comes to be widely used in Churches of the East. Also during this century, Basil the Great,

the primary articulator of the questionable Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity, describes the long-standing, carnal belief inherited from the godless Jews that so-called “Holy” Tradition has the same force as Scripture. Jerome translates the entire Bible into the *Latin Vulgate*, basing his translation on both Greek and Hebrew manuscripts.

AD 367

Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria in Egypt, writes his *39th Paschal Letter* to the churches under his episcopacy, listing 27 books of the New Testament by name. This is the first historical document which lists the same 27 books of the New Testament which we have today.

AD 397

In the Latin West, the local Council of Carthage lists 27 books of the New Testament, while debate continues in the East, especially over the book of Revelations.

AD 5th

The *African Code, Canon 24*: includes all the deuterocanonical books, except Ben Sirach (Ecclesiasticus), Third and Fourth Maccabees, and the Prayer of Manasseh, while omitting the book of Revelation.

AD 691

At the Council of Trullo in Constantinople, the book of Revelation is finally recognized officially by the Eastern Churches as being canonical. This council reiterates and expands on the list given in *APOSTOLIC CANON 85*, yet also gives blanket approval to regional differences in the listing of the books of Scripture.

AD 700-1500

At least 4 differing lists of the canonical books of the Old Testament continue to exist in various regions throughout Christendom. Even so, these differing lists do NOT result in new doctrinal innovations resulting in schisms or new heresies. Christian churches in both east and west remain united by continuing to follow universal, carnal tradition up until the 11th century. Even when the Frankish war lord Charlemagne splits Christendom politically in the 8th century, declaring himself the true Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire and then inserting the *filioque* clause (meaning “and the Son,” words added by the decree of Charlemagne and then again by Papal decree to the universal Christian Creed, stating that the Holy Spirit also “proceeds from the Son.”) into the universal Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed as a way of accusing the Eastern Churches of

heresy, the Ecumenical Patriarchs of Rome (the popes) continue to reject the insertion of the *filioque* clause until the 11th century. In AD 809 Pope Leo III forbade the use of the *filioque* clause and ordered that the original version of the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (without the *filioque*) be engraved on silver plates still seen today at the doors of St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. In 1015 the *filioque* was inserted by Pope Benedict VIII. In altering the universally-accepted form of the Creed, the symbol of Christian unity for nearly six centuries, he cut himself off from the ecumenical unity of the carnal church and corrupted the most central doctrine of carnal Christianity—the doctrine of the Trinity. With the excommunication of the Patriarch of Constantinople and of all the other Patriarchs who rejected the *filioque* and Papal Supremacy, the Pope of Rome established himself as the highest authority in Christianity—his own form of Christianity subject only to him (as the sole “Vicar of Christ” on earth). Thus the individualism of head-knowledge has gained the upper hand in Western European religion, paving the way for the freedom of true, spiritual individualism in which the individual believer is led into all truth through the operation of the Holy Ghost.

AD 1500

By this date, more than 90 editions of the Latin Vulgate have been printed on the Gutenberg printing press, making Scripture more available to people in Western Europe, especially to the wealthy.

AD 1520

Luther restores the apostolic teaching of *sola Scriptura*—that the Bible alone, regardless of tradition, is the sole authority for Christian belief and practice. In rejecting many of the innovations in Christianity brought about by Roman pontiffs following the Great Schism in AD 1054, Luther follows the leading of the Spirit in his interpretation of Scripture and tosses out many of the carnal elements of the man-made traditions which have united the carnal churches for over 1400 years. Luther and Calvin serve as models for the individual leading of the Holy Ghost in interpreting and following the Word.

AD 1534

Martin Luther's German translation of the Bible is printed with the deuterocanonical books placed between the Old and New Testament, belonging to neither testament, but being considered by some folks as “good for reading,” but not Holy Scripture.

AD 1545-63

At the Council of Trent, the Roman Catholic Church demands uniformity, condemning ancient regional variations in the listing of the canonical books of Scripture, but allowing for the inclusion of Psalm 151 and Third and Fourth Maccabees. In addition, the Great Harlot declares that the whole Old Testament is authoritative for the establishment of dogma.

AD 1563

The *39 Articles of Religion* of the Church of England (the Anglican/Episcopal Church) says that the deuterocanonical books are not to be used to establish doctrine.

AD 1580

The first full text of the Slavic Ostrog Bible used in the Russian Orthodox Church is translated and published with reference to Greek, Hebrew, Latin, and Aramaic versions of Scripture.

AD 1599

The Bible is printed and bound without the unbiblical, deuterocanonical books for the first time in history and the Word of God is finally set free from the shackles of Catholic error and allowed free reign to rule as the Divine Recipe Book for individuals to re-invent the church based on the proper interpretation of the Word of God free from the opinions of man-made traditionalism.

AD 1611

The English translation of the Bible authorized by King James is printed with the deuterocanonical books placed between the Testaments due to the insidious Catholic elements present in the Church of England.

AD 1647

The Church of England's Westminster Confession rejects the deuterocanonical books as being only the uninspired writings of human beings rather than being Satanically-inspired in order to sow more division within the Body of Christ. The declarations of the Westminster Confession have become a "subordinate standard" of doctrine in the Church of Scotland and in Presbyterian churches around the world. In reality such "subordinate standards" are just a way of ascribing authority to man-made tradition rather than to the Bible alone. It's just a sneaky way of paying lip-service to the doctrine of *sola Scriptura* while maintaining church authority over the individual leading of the Holy Ghost.)

AD 17th Century

Quakerism begins, rejecting all sacraments, tradition, creeds, and hierarchy. Originally considered a Christian movement, many “Friends,” as they are called, now often consider themselves universalist, agnostic, atheist, or pagan. As the Holy Ghost leaks between the crevices of man-made tradition, many such “pietist” movements begin to arise, rightfully placing the primary emphasis of spirituality upon a personal, inward, emotional experience of God. But the Quakers and other pietists start taking things a little too far, going beyond the truth of the Word of God. While they recognize true spiritual authority as coming through an experience of the Holy Ghost regardless of tradition, church hierarchy, or membership in a spiritual community, they begin to disregard the dictates of the Holy Ghost in Scripture. While they recognize that the historical nature of Scripture is no where near as important as the personal illumination of the Holy Ghost in Scripture interpretation, they begin to disregard Scripture completely. History, community, and subordination to church authorities are all recognized as obstacles to spirituality, but they end up tossing out the Word also. Truth claims are becoming relativized.

AD 18th Century

John Wesley preaches and interprets Scripture under the constraints of tradition, head-knowledge, and experience, being unable to escape some of the shackles of Catholicism. The Age of Enlightenment is now in full swing and reason becomes the primary guide to interpreting Scripture over any leading of the Holy Ghost. Human reasoning even becomes more important than the traditions of the carnal churches. But the followers of Wesley escape the dungeon of Catholic tradition, leaving the Anglican tradition and forming a new denomination—the Methodist Church—which is to become the seed-bed of the Pentecostal move of God.

AD 19th Calvinist scholars teach that the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit ceased after the death of the apostles in the first century, despite almost two millenia of testimony by various believers. Lutheran scholars of the Tubingen school begin denying the reality of miracles because they do not accord with scientific knowledge. Historical revisionism based purely on speculation is now dominating the upper echelons of education. Spirituality becomes a romantic question of the relationship between reason and holy sentiment. Spiritual emotionalism and Holy Ghost enthusiasm begin to break out among Methodists and Protestant revivalists of the American frontier. Charles Finney is used by God to bring revival and Ralph Waldo Emerson begins teaching some of the truths of transcendentalism and universalism mixed with some error.

AD 1901

In reaction to the preferential place given to reason in the Age of Enlightenment, the Pentecostal movement is born in Topeka, Kansas, emphasizing a miraculous experience of speaking in tongues unknown to the speaker. The movement claims direct revelation from the Holy Spirit through prophecies, visions, dreams, etc., but demands that all such revelations be subject to being tested in light of the interpretation of Scripture commonly held within each particular Pentecostal sect. Even though personal revelations are considered to come from the same Holy Spirit, they choose to hold their commonly-held interpretations of Holy Scripture above the leading of the Holy Ghost, thus quenching the move of the Holy Ghost at times. Even tongues and interpretations and prophecies given by the Holy Ghost in the church setting are given very little weight among the believers. But they at least recognize that personal revelation has authority at least over the individual who discerns that particular revelation to be true. The authority of an apostle who is able to enforce such a revelation of the Holy Ghost on the communal level was not yet revealed to the Church.

AD 1947

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls begins to confirm the faithful transmission of Scripture over the centuries. The Qumran community appears to have been a Jewish monastic movement, perhaps a predecessor of the monasticism of carnal Christianity.

AD 1960's

The Charismatic Movement begins in the various mainline and sectarian denominations of the West. Although the movement gave hope to many for the ecumenical reunification of the Christian West, the doctrinal divisions and denominational sectarianism characteristic of Western Christianity remain largely unaffected by the movement even after 40 years of Charismatic influence and the hope of one, Big, Unified Body of Christ turns to disappointment for many.

AD 1970-the Present

Historical revision based on speculation continues to win the day in the field of biblical studies. Christianity continues to be relativized as “just another one of the many” forms of spirituality. The question of what exactly were the teachings of Jesus Christ is now considered an unanswered question. Now the Jehovah's Witnesses and other heretical groups have their own translation of the Holy Scriptures to help support their own heretical views. To many, it appears that nothing really matters anymore in the realm of worship and spirituality. The New

Age movement is becoming increasingly popular. Commitment to anything or anyone other than oneself is seen as old fashioned, and the majority don't recognize the promptings of the Spirit. The majority reject "organized religion," not knowing that God rejects it too. Protestants continue to follow their own particular, divisive tradition while claiming to follow only the Bible. The Protestant traditions are stuck in following the past revelations given to their founders, whether Martin Luther, John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingli, John Huss, John Wesley, Alexander Campbell, Ellen White, Charles Russell, Jim Jones, Charles Fox Parham, Chuck Smith, Kenneth Hagin, Kenneth Copeland, Benny Hinn, David Koresh, etc., refusing to recognize that God is attempting to completely shatter the Alabaster Vase of Carnal Christianity and release the anointing through the ministries of such anointed men of God as Brother Ezekiel T. Abernathy III, fulfilled Jewish Rabbi Mordecai Lemsley Goldberg, and our beloved Dr. Brother Bob W. Dinkins. It is at this time in history that Dr. Brother Bob received the revelation restoring the Mercy Seat to the Church. His anointed teachings may hopefully bring greater unity to that One, Big Body of Christ, so shredded and torn asunder by the dogs of man-made opinions and traditionalized dogmas. 🙏