





A traditional wooden loom is shown, with a fabric featuring vertical stripes of red, white, and black being woven. The loom is constructed from light-colored wood, and the fabric is held taut between two horizontal beams. The background is dark and out of focus.

# ***The Canon of Scripture***

*When and how the authoritative list of  
Bible books came about and was  
accepted.*



# ***What is a canon?***

- *Greek: kanon = a norm, a rule a standard*
  - *Perhaps from Hebrew: qaneh = a measuring rod or reed*
- *English: canon = a rule of faith, a catalogue or list and hence, the divinely inspired and authoritative collection of sacred writings; the scriptures; the Bible*
  - *The term came into use in the 4th century to describe the standard accepted list of sacred writings used by the churches.*

# ***The Hebrew Canon***

- *The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) was written over a long period of time, more than 1000 years.*
  - *Joshua received “The Book of The Law” (Joshua 1:8, 8:31)*
  - *Joshua himself added to “The Book of The Law of God” (Joshua 24:26)*
  - *Other books that covered the time of Moses and Joshua included “The Book of The Wars of The LORD” (Numbers 21:14) and “The Book of Jashar” (Joshua 10:13). Both were probably collections of historical songs or poems (see also 2 Samuel 1:18).*

# ***The Hebrew Canon***

- *The common term used in the New Testament for the Hebrew “canon” is simply “scriptures” or writings.*
  - *Matt 21:42 Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: ... (followed by a quote from Psalm 118:22-23)*
  - *John 5:39 You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me...*
  - *Acts 18:24 Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. (NIV)*

# ***The Hebrew Bible***

- *The Hebrew Bible consists of 3 sections, described by Jesus as the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms (Luke 24:44).*
- *The same 3 fold division of Hebrew scripture was previously attested by Jesus ben Sirach in about 132 B.C. in the prologue to Ecclesiasticus -- the Law, the Prophets, and the rest of the writings.*
- *Today the Jewish Bible is still organized in 3 sections, the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings.*



# ***The Hebrew Bible***

- *Every book of the Hebrew Bible is quoted in the New Testament except Esther, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Ezra, Nehemiah, Obadiah, Nahum, and Zephaniah.*
  - *However, Obadiah, Nahum and Zephaniah are included in the book of the twelve, and quotations from 9 of the 12 are included.*
  - *No quotation of any Apocryphal book is found in the New Testament.*

# *The Apocrypha*

- 1. 1 Esdras.
- 2. 2 Esdras.
- 3. Tobit.
- 4. Judith.
- 5. The rest of the chapters of the Book of Esther, which are found neither in the Hebrew nor in the Chaldee.
- 6. The Wisdom of Solomon.
- 7. The Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach, or Ecclesiasticus.
- 8. Baruch.
- 9. The Song of the Three Holy Children.
- 10. The History of Susanna.
- 11. The History of the Destruction of Bel and the Dragon.
- 12. The Prayer of Manasseh, King of Judah.
- 13. 1 Maccabees.
- 14. 2 Maccabees.



# ***The Hebrew Canon phase 1***

- *Deut 31:9*
  - *So Moses wrote down this law and gave it to the priests, the sons of Levi, who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD, and to all the elders of Israel.*
- *Deut 31:24-26*
  - *After Moses finished writing in a book the words of this law from beginning to end, 25 he gave this command to the Levites who carried the ark of the covenant of the LORD: 26 "Take this Book of the Law and place it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God. There it will remain as a witness against you.*
    - *(from New International Version)*

# *The Hebrew Canon phase 1*

- *Josh 24:25-26 On that day Joshua made a covenant for the people, and there at Shechem he drew up for them decrees and laws. 26 And Joshua recorded these things in the Book of the Law of God. Then he took a large stone and set it up there under the oak near the holy place of the LORD.*
- *1 Sam 10:25 Samuel explained to the people the regulations of the kingship. He wrote them down on a scroll and deposited it before the LORD. Then Samuel dismissed the people, each to his own home.*
  - *(from New International Version)*



# ***The Hebrew Canon phase 2***

- *1 Chron 29:29-30 As for the events of King David's reign, from beginning to end, they are **written in the records of Samuel the seer, the records of Nathan the prophet and the records of Gad the seer**, 30 together with the details of his reign and power, and the circumstances that surrounded him and Israel and the kingdoms of all the other lands.*

# ***The Hebrew Canon phase 2***

- *1 Chron 28:11-12 Then David gave his son Solomon the plans for the portico of the temple, its buildings, its storerooms, its upper parts, its inner rooms and the place of atonement. 12 He gave him the plans of all that the Spirit had put in his mind ...*
- *1 Chron 28:19 "All this," David said, "I have in writing from the hand of the LORD upon me, and he gave me understanding in all the details of the plan."*
- *1 Kings 4:30-32 Solomon's wisdom was greater than the wisdom of all the men of the East ... 32 He spoke three thousand proverbs and his songs numbered a thousand and five. (NIV)*
- *The great Psalmic tradition begins with David and his restructuring of the Levites*



# ***The Hebrew Canon phase 3***

- *Prov 25:1 These are more proverbs of Solomon, copied by the men of Hezekiah king of Judah: (NIV)*
  - *In the days of Isaiah, Micah and Hosea*
- *2 Chron 29:25 Hezekiah stationed the Levites in the temple of the LORD with cymbals, harps and lyres in the way prescribed by David and Gad the king's seer and Nathan the prophet; this was commanded by the LORD through his prophets.*
- *2 Chron 29:30 King Hezekiah and his officials ordered the Levites to praise the LORD with the words of David and of Asaph the seer. So they sang praises with gladness and bowed their heads and worshiped. (NIV)*

# ***The Hebrew Canon phase 4***

- *2 Chron 35:4 Prepare yourselves by families in your divisions, according to the directions written by David king of Israel and by his son Solomon. (King Josiah's instructions to the Levites, NIV)*
- *Compare 2 Kings 25, Jeremiah 52:4ff*
  - *Jeremiah and the sons of Neriah, Baruch and Saraiah.*
    - *Jeremiah 36, 43:1-7, 45, 51:59-64*
  - *Jeremiah was a young man when the priests rediscovered the book of the Law during Josiah's restoration of the temple, 2 Kings 22:8ff*



# ***The Hebrew Canon phase 5***

- *See 2 Chronicles 36:22ff, Ezra 1:1ff*
- *Nehemiah 8, reading and explaining the book of the Law*
  - *Ezra the priest and teacher of the Law, Ezra 7:1-10*
  - *Nehemiah the governor, Nehemiah 8:9*
  - *and the Levites*
  - *Contemporary with Malachi the prophet*

# ***Are they not written?***

- ***2 Chron 9:29 As for the other events of Solomon's reign, from beginning to end, are they not written in the records of Nathan the prophet, in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite and in the visions of Iddo the seer concerning Jeroboam son of Nebat?***  
– *(from New International Version)*



# ***Are they not written?***

- *1 Kings 11:41 As for the other events of Solomon's reign-all he did and the wisdom he displayed-**are they not written in the book of the annals of Solomon?***
- *1 Kings 14:19 The other events of Jeroboam's reign, his wars and how he ruled, **are written in the book of the annals of the kings of Israel.***
- *1 Kings 14:29 As for the other events of Rehoboam's reign, and all he did, **are they not written in the book of the annals of the kings of Judah?** (NIV)*

# ***Are they not written?***

- *2 Chron 12:15 As for the events of Rehoboam's reign, from beginning to end, **are they not written in the records of Shemaiah the prophet and of Iddo the seer that deal with genealogies?***
- *2 Chron 13:22 The other events of Abijah's reign, what he did and what he said, **are written in the annotations of the prophet Iddo.***
- *2 Chron 16:11 The events of Asa's reign, from beginning to end, **are written in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.***
- *2 Chron 20:34 The other events of Jehoshaphat's reign, from beginning to end, **are written in the annals of Jehu son of Hanani, which are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel.***



# ***Are they not written?***

- *2 Chron 24:27 The account of his [Joash] sons, the many prophecies about him, and the record of the restoration of the temple of God **are written in the annotations on the book of the kings.** And Amaziah his son succeeded him as king.*
- *2 Chron 32:32 The other events of Hezekiah's reign and his acts of devotion **are written in the vision of the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz in the book of the kings of Judah and Israel.***

# ***Are they not written?***

- *2 Chron 33:18-19 The other events of Manasseh's reign, including his prayer to his God and the words the seers spoke to him in the name of the LORD, the God of Israel, are written in the annals of the kings of Israel. 19 His prayer and how God was moved by his entreaty, as well as all his sins and unfaithfulness, and the sites where he built high places and set up Asherah poles and idols before he humbled himself-all **are written in the records of the seers.***
  - (from New International Version)



# ***Are they not written?***

- *2 Chron 35:25-27 Jeremiah composed laments for Josiah, and to this day all the men and women singers commemorate Josiah in the laments. These became a tradition in Israel and are **written in the Laments**.*
- *26 The other events of Josiah's reign and his acts of devotion, according to what is written in the Law of the LORD- 27 all the events, from beginning to end, **are written in the book of the kings of Israel and Judah**.*
  - *(from New International Version)*



# *The authority of the writers*

- *The writings of the prophets did not become authoritative over time, they were presented and received as authoritative at the time of their writing, by a known prophet of God (though they might not have been liked).*
  - *See Jeremiah 36, Jeremiah's scroll*
  - *See Daniel 9:2, Daniel and Jeremiah were contemporaries*
    - *Note: Daniel refers to "the Bible" ie "the books"*
  - *See Jeremiah 26:18, Micah of Moresheth 100 years earlier*
  - *See 2 Chronicles 36:22, Ezra 1:1, Jeremiah*
  - *See Ezra 5:1-2, 6:14, Haggai and Zechariah*



# *The Sources*

- *The sources cited in Kings and Chronicles are consistently described as the writings of seers and prophets.*
- *The books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings are regarded as “the former prophets” in the Hebrew canon.*
- *Judges-Samuel-Kings seem to have been compiled from those prophetic sources in the days of Josiah-Jeremiah.*
- *Chronicles seems to have been compiled from those prophetic sources in the days of Ezra-Nehemiah-Malachi*
- *Ancient Jewish tradition credits Ezra and Nehemiah with the final stamp of approval on the canon of Hebrew scripture in the mid 5th century B.C.*



# *The Hebrew Canon*

- *... in all 24 books, exactly the same as those of the Protestant canon. This was the original count of the Jews as far as we can trace it back. (International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia)*
- *24 Hebrew books (sometimes counted as 22 by combining Ruth with Judges and Lamentations with Jeremiah) = 39 Greek (and English) books*
- *Attested by Josephus (late 1st century A.D.) and 4th Esdras (late 1st century).*



# Testimony of Josephus

- Ca. 100 A.D. *"For it is not the case with us to have vast numbers of books disagreeing and conflicting with one another. We have but twenty-two, containing the history of all time, books that are justly believed in. And of these, five are the books of Moses, which comprise the laws and the earliest traditions from the creation of mankind down to the time of his (Moses') death. This period falls short but by a little of three thousand years. From the death of Moses to the reign of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, the successor of Xerxes, the prophets who succeeded Moses wrote the history of the events that occurred in their own time; in thirteen books. The remaining four documents comprise hymns to God and practical precepts to men.*
  - **5 of Moses = Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy,**
  - **the prophets in 13 books = Joshua, Judges (Ruth), Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Ezra-Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Isaiah, Jeremiah (Lamentations), Ezekiel, Daniel, the Twelve**
  - **4 documents of hymns = Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs**
    - **"Against Apion"**

# Testimony of Josephus

- Continued from “Against Apion”
- *Ca. 100 A.D.. From the days of Artaxerxes\* to our own time every event has indeed been recorded. But these recent records have not been deemed worthy of equal credit with those which preceded them, because the exact succession of the prophets ceased. But what faith we have placed in our own writings is evident by our conduct; for though so great an interval of time (i.e. since they were written) has now passed, not a soul has ventured either to add, or to remove, or to alter a syllable. But it is instinctive in all Jews at once from their very birth to regard them as commands of God, and to abide by them, and, if need be, willingly to die for them.”*
- *Artaxerxes: 465-425 B.C., the time period of Ezra, Nehemiah and Malachi*

# *Testimony of Josephus*

**... how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation is evident by what we do; for during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold as either to add any thing to them, to take any thing from them, or to make any change in them; but it is become natural to all Jews immediately, and from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain Divine doctrines, and to persist in them, and, if occasion be willingly to die for them. (Against Apion 1:8:42)**



# *Testimony of Josephus*

**For it is no new thing for our captives, many of them in number, and frequently in time, to be seen to endure racks and deaths of all kinds upon the theatres, that they may not be obliged to say one word against our laws and the records that contain them; whereas there are none at all among the Greeks who would undergo the least harm on that account, no, nor in case all the writings that are among them were to be destroyed; (Against Apion 1:8:43-44)**

## *Ancient testimony to the Hebrew canon*

- *Dead Sea Scrolls*
  - *Scrolls and fragments of more than 800 documents*
  - *First found in 1947*
  - *11 caves*
  - *Major finds in caves 1 and 4*
  - *Hundreds of thousands of pieces*



Ecclesiastes fragments from  
cave 4

***O.T. Bible Books clearly represented at  
Qumran, among the Dead Sea Scrolls***

<b>Gen</b>	<b>Ex</b>	<b>Lev</b>	<b>Num</b>	<b>Deut</b>	<b>Josh</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>±7</b>	<b>±6</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>±3</b>
<b>Judg</b>	<b>Sam</b>	<b>Kngs</b>	<b>Isa</b>	<b>Jere</b>	<b>Eze</b>
<b>±3</b>	<b>±3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>±4</b>	<b>±3</b>
<b>Twlv</b>	<b>Chro</b>	<b>Psa</b>	<b>Prov</b>	<b>Job</b>	<b>SoS</b>
<b>±9</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>±2</b>	<b>±3</b>
<b>Ruth</b>	<b>Lam</b>	<b>Ecc</b>	<b>Esth</b>	<b>Dan</b>	<b>EzNe</b>
<b>±4</b>	<b>±2</b>	<b>±2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>



# ***The New Testament affirms the authority, uniformity, and finality of the Hebrew canon***

- *Luke 24:27 And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself. (NIV)*
- *Acts 17:2 As his custom was, Paul went into the synagogue, and on three Sabbath days he reasoned with them from the Scriptures, (NIV)*
  - *The scriptures were the same in Judea and Macedonia*
- *Acts 18:24 Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. (NIV)*
  - *And in Alexandria and Asia*



# *The authority of the writers*

- *The writings of the prophets did not become authoritative over time, they were presented and received as authoritative at the time of their writing, by a known prophet of God (though they might not have been liked).*
  - *See Jeremiah 36, Jeremiah's scroll*
  - *See Daniel 9:2, Daniel and Jeremiah were contemporaries*
    - *Note: Daniel refers to "the Bible" ie "the books"*
  - *See Jeremiah 26:18, Micah of Moresheth 100 years earlier*
  - *See 2 Chronicles 36:22, Ezra 1:1, Jeremiah*
  - *See Ezra 5:1-2, 6:14, Haggai and Zechariah*



# *And the authority of the writers*

- *The writings of the apostles and prophets did not become authoritative over time, they were presented and received as authoritative at the time of their writing, by an apostle or prophet known to the churches. (1 Thess. 2:13)*
  - *Paul expected his letters to be read by the churches and circulated, Col 4:16*
  - *Peter affirmed that Paul's letters came from God's wisdom and stood with other Scriptures, 2 Pet 3:15-16*
  - *Jude quoted 2 Peter 3:3 as apostolic and authoritative, Jude 17-18*
  - *Paul seems to quote Luke 10:7 along with Deut 25:4 as Scripture, 1 Tim 5:18*



# ***One of Paul's final concerns***

- *2 Tim 4:13*
- *13 When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, and my scrolls, especially the parchments. (NIV)*



## *Ancient Testimony*

Other writers from the late first century onward affirm the existence, identity, authority, and eyewitness sources of New Testament scriptures by quotation and reference including:

Clement of Rome, about 96 A.D.

Ignatius, about 110 A.D.

Polycarp, about 110 A.D.

Marcion, about 140 A.D.

Justin Martyr, about 150 A.D.

And others in the 2nd century including:  
Valentinus,  
Irenaeus,  
Clement of Alexandria,  
Tertullian

## *Ancient Testimony*

### Clement of Rome, about 96 A.D. The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians chapter 5

But not to dwell upon ancient examples, let us come to the most recent spiritual heroes. Let us take the noble examples furnished **in our own generation**. Through envy and jealousy, the greatest and most righteous pillars [of the Church] have been persecuted and put to death. Let us set before our eyes the illustrious apostles. **Peter**, through unrighteous envy, endured not one or two, but numerous labours and when he had at length **suffered martyrdom**, departed to the place of glory due to him. Owing to envy, **Paul** also obtained the reward of patient endurance, after being seven times thrown into captivity, compelled to flee, and stoned. After preaching both in the east and west, he gained the illustrious reputation due to his faith, having taught righteousness to the whole world, and come to the extreme limit of the west, and **suffered martyrdom** under the prefects. Thus was he removed from the world, and went into the holy place, having proved himself a striking example of patience.



## *Ancient Testimony*

Clement of Rome, about 96 A.D. The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians chapter 47

Take up the epistle of the blessed Apostle Paul. What did he write to you at the time when the Gospel first began to be preached? Truly, under the inspiration of the Spirit, he wrote to you concerning himself, and Cephas, and Apollos, because even then parties had been formed among you.

## *Ancient Testimony*

Clement of Rome, about 96 A.D. The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians chapter 36

"who, being the brightness of His majesty, is by so much greater than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they." For it is thus written, "Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire." But concerning His Son the Lord spoke thus: "Thou art my Son, to-day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me, and I will give Thee the heathen for Thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for Thy possession." And again He saith to Him, "Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies Thy footstool."



## *Concern for the chain of authority*

Clement of Rome, about 96 A.D. The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians chapter 42

The apostles have preached the Gospel to us from the Lord Jesus Christ; Jesus Christ from God. Christ therefore was sent forth by God, and the apostles by Christ. Both these appointments, then, were made in an orderly way, according to the will of God. Having therefore received their orders, and being fully assured by the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, and established in the word of God, with full assurance of the Holy Ghost, they went forth proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand. And thus preaching through countries and cities, they appointed the first-fruits, having first proved them by the Spirit, to be bishops and deacons of those who should afterwards believe.

## *Ancient Testimony*

The Epistle of "Mathetes" to Diognetus -- ca. 130 a.d. chapter 11

...having been a disciple of the Apostles...

... He sent the Word, that He might be manifested to the world; and He, being despised by the people, was, when preached by the Apostles, believed on by the Gentiles. This is He who was from the beginning...

... Then the fear of **the law** is chanted, and the grace of **the prophets** is known, and the faith of **the gospels** is established, and **the tradition of the Apostles** is preserved, and the grace of the Church exults; which grace if you grieve not, you shall know those things which the Word teaches, by whom He wills, and when He pleases.



## *Ancient Testimony*

The Epistle of Ignatius to The Ephesians – 107 a.d.; chapter 11

... may I be perfected through your prayers, and become a partaker of the sufferings of Christ, and have fellowship with Him in His death, His resurrection from the dead, and His everlasting life. May I attain to this, so that I may be found in the lot of the Christians of Ephesus, who have always had intercourse with the apostles by the power of Jesus Christ, with Paul, and John, and Timothy the most faithful.

(Phil. 3:10)

## *Ancient Testimony*

The Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians – 107 a.d.; chapter 10

Let us therefore prove ourselves worthy of that name which we have received. For whosoever is called by any other name besides this, he is not of God; for he has not received the prophecy which speaks thus concerning us: "The people shall be called by a new name, which the Lord shall name them, and shall be a holy people." This was first fulfilled in Syria; for "the disciples were called Christians at Antioch," when Paul and Peter were laying the foundations of the Church.

(Acts 11:26)



# *Ancient Testimony*

**Irenaeus: Against Heresies – abt. 187 a.d.; Book 3 Chapter 1**

For, after our Lord rose from the dead, [the apostles] were invested with power from on high when the Holy Spirit came down [upon them], were filled from all [His gifts], and had perfect knowledge: they departed to the ends of the earth, preaching the glad tidings of the good things [sent] from God to us, and proclaiming the peace of heaven to men, who indeed do all equally and individually possess the Gospel of God. **Matthew** also issued a written Gospel among the Hebrews in their own dialect, while Peter and Paul were preaching at Rome, and laying the foundations of the Church. After their departure, **Mark**, the disciple and interpreter of Peter, did also hand down to us in writing what had been preached by Peter. **Luke** also, the companion of Paul, recorded in a book the Gospel preached by him. Afterwards, **John**, the disciple of the Lord, who also had leaned upon His breast, did himself publish a Gospel during his residence at Ephesus in Asia.

# ***The Muratorian Fragment***

- About 170 A.D.
- ...the third book of the Gospel is that according to **Luke**. Luke, the well-known physician, after the ascension of Christ, whom Paul had taken with him as one zealous for the law, (3) composed it in his own name, according to the general belief. (4) Yet he himself had not seen the Lord in the flesh; and therefore, as he was able to ascertain events, so indeed he begins to tell the story from the birth of John. The fourth of the Gospels is that of **John**, one of the disciples....



# ***The Muratorian Fragment***

- (Cont.) ...by the one sovereign Spirit all things have been declared in all the Gospels: concerning the nativity, concerning the passion, concerning the resurrection, concerning life with his disciples, and concerning his twofold coming; the first in lowliness when he was despised, which has taken place, the second glorious in royal power, which is still in the future. What marvel is it then, if **John** so consistently mentions these particular points also in his epistles, saying about himself, **What we have seen with our eyes and heard with our ears and our hands have handled, these things we have written to you?** For in this way he professes himself to be not only an eye-witness and hearer, but also a writer of all the marvelous deeds of the Lord, in their order.

# ***The Muratorian Fragment***

- (Cont.) ... Moreover, the **acts** of all the apostles were written in one book. For "Most excellent Theophilus" Luke compiled the individual events that took place in his presence, as he plainly shows ... As for the epistles of Paul, they themselves make clear to those desiring to understand, which ones they are, from what place, or for what reason they were sent. First of all, to the Corinthians, prohibiting their heretical schisms; next, to the Galatians, against circumcision; then to the Romans he wrote at length, explaining the plan of the Scriptures, and also that Christ is their principle....



# ***The Muratorian Fragment***

- (Cont.) ... It is necessary for us to discuss these one by one, since the blessed apostle Paul himself, following the example of his predecessor John, writes by name to only seven churches in the following sequence: To the **Corinthians** first, to the **Ephesians** second, to the **Philippians** third, to the **Colossians** fourth, to the **Galatians** fifth, to the **Thessalonians** sixth, to the **Romans** seventh. It is true that he writes once more to the **Corinthians** and to the **Thessalonians** for the sake of admonition, yet it is clearly recognizable that there is one Church spread throughout the whole extent of the earth.

# ***The Muratorian Fragment***

- (Cont.) ... For **John also in the Apocalypse**, though he writes to seven churches, nevertheless speaks to all. Paul also wrote out of affection and love one to **Philemon**, one to **Titus**, and **two to Timothy**; and these are held sacred in the esteem of the Church catholic for the regulation of ecclesiastical discipline. There is current also an epistle to the Laodiceans, and another to the Alexandrians, both forged in Paul's name to further the heresy of Marcion, and several others which cannot be received into the catholic Church. For it is not fitting that gall be mixed with honey. Moreover, the epistle of **Jude** and **two bearing the name of John** are counted in the catholic Church; and the book of Wisdom, written by the friends of Solomon in his honour.



# *The Muratorian Fragment*

- (Cont.) ... We receive only the apocalypses of John and Peter, though some of us are not willing that the latter be read in church. But Hermas wrote "The Shepherd" very recently, (12) in our times, in the city of Rome, while bishop Pius, his brother, was occupying the chair of the church of the city of Rome. And therefore it ought indeed to be read; but it cannot be read publicly to the people in church either among the Prophets, whose number is complete, or among the Apostles, for it is after their time. But we accept nothing whatever of Arsinous or Valentinus or Miltiades, who also composed a new book of psalms for Marcion, together with Basilides, the Asian founder of the Cataphrygians...
  - about 170 A.D.

# ***The Muratorian Fragment***

- [two gospels], Luke, John
  - of John (besides the gospel)
- Acts (by Luke)
  - of Paul
- Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1-2 Thessalonians, 1-2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon
- 1-2-3 John, Revelation
- Jude
- Wisdom
- (Hebrews, James, 1-2 Peter are not mentioned)



# *The testimony of Origen*

– *About 240 A.D.*

- Among the four Gospels, which are the only indisputable ones in the Church of God under heaven, I have learned by tradition that the first written was that according to Matthew, who was once a tax collector but afterwards an apostle of Jesus Christ, who published it for those who from Judaism came to believe, composed as it was in the Hebrew language. Secondly, that according to Mark, who composed it in accordance with the instructions of Peter, who in the catholic epistle acknowledges him as a son, saying, 'She that is in Babylon, elect together with you, salutes you, and so does Mark, my son.' And thirdly, that according to Luke, for those who from the Gentiles came to believe. After them all, that according to John.

# ***The testimony of Origen***

*– About 240 A.D.*

- And Peter, on whom the Church of Christ is built, left one acknowledged epistle; possibly also a second, but this is disputed. Why need I speak of him who leaned back on Jesus' breast, John, who has left behind one Gospel, though he confessed that he could write so many that even the world itself could not contain them? And he wrote also the Apocalypse, being ordered to keep silence and not to write the voices of the seven thunders. He has left also an epistle of a very few lines; and, it may be, a second and a third; for not all say that these are genuine but the two of them are not a hundred lines long



# *The testimony of Origen*

– *About 240 A.D.*

- That the character of the diction of the epistle entitled 'To the Hebrews' has not the apostle's rudeness in speech, who acknowledged himself to be rude in speech, that is, in style, but that the epistle is better Greek in the framing of its diction, will be admitted by everyone who is able to discern differences of style. But again, on the other hand, that the thoughts of the epistle are admirable, and not inferior to the acknowledged writings of the apostle, this also everyone who carefully examines the apostolic text will admit....

# *The testimony of Origen*

– *About 240 A.D.*

- (regarding Hebrews) If I gave my opinion, I should say that the thoughts are those of the apostle, but the style and composition belong to someone who remembered the apostle's teachings and wrote down at his leisure what had been said by his teacher. Therefore, if any church holds that this epistle is by Paul, let it be commended for this also. For it is not without reason that the men of old time have handed it down as Paul's. But who wrote the epistle, in truth, God knows. Yet the account that has reached us is twofold, some saying that Clement, bishop of the Romans, wrote the epistle, and others, that it was Luke, the one who wrote the Gospel and the Acts." But let this suffice on these matters.



# ***The testimony of Origen***

– *About 240 A.D.*

- The epistle in circulation under the name of James . . . And if indeed one were to accept the epistle of Jude . . .

# *The testimony of Origen*

– *About 240 A.D.*

- So too our Lord, whose advent was typified by the son of Nun, when he came sent his apostles as priests bearing well-wrought trumpets. Matthew first sounded the priestly trumpet in his Gospel. Mark also, Luke and John, each gave forth a strain on their priestly trumpets. Peter moreover sounds loudly on the twofold trumpet of his epistles; and so also James and Jude. Still the number is incomplete, and John gives forth the trumpet sound in his epistles and Apocalypse; and Luke while describing the acts of the apostles. Lastly however came he who said, I think that God hath set forth us Apostles last of all, and thundering on the fourteen trumpets of his epistles threw down even to the ground the walls of Jericho, that is to say all the instruments of idolatry and the doctrines of philosophers.



# ***The testimony of Origen***

– *About 240 A.D.*

- ... now also in the New Testament have "many taken in hand" to write gospels, but not all have been accepted. That there have been written not only the four Gospels, but a whole series, from which those that we possess have been chosen and handed down to the churches, is, let it be noted, what we may learn from Luke's preface, which runs thus: "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to compose a narrative." The phrase "have taken in hand" implies a tacit accusation of those who rushed hastily to write Gospels without the grace of the Holy Spirit. Matthew and Mark and Luke and John did not "take in hand" to write their Gospels, but wrote them being full of the Holy Spirit . . .

# *The testimony of Origen*

– *About 240 A.D.*

- ...The Church has four Gospels, heresies very many, of which one is entitled "according to the Egyptians," another "according to the Twelve Apostles." Basilides also has presumed to write a Gospel and to call it by his own name. Many indeed have taken in hand to write, but four Gospels only are approved. From these the doctrines concerning the person of our Lord and Saviour are to be derived. There is I know a Gospel which is called "according to Thomas," and one "according to Matthias," and there are many others which we read, lest we should seem to be unacquainted with any point for the sake of those who think they possess some valuable knowledge if they are acquainted with them. But in all these we approve nothing else but that which the Church approves, that is, four Gospels only as proper to be received.



# *The record of Eusebius*

- *Eusebius wrote a church history in 324 A.D.*
- At this point it seems appropriate to summarize the writings of the New Testament which have already been mentioned. In the first place must be put the holy quaternion of the Gospels, which are followed by the book of the Acts of the Apostles. After this must be reckoned the epistles of Paul [of Paul the fourteen epistles commonly received are at once manifest and clear. It is not however right to ignore the fact that some have rejected the epistle to the Hebrews, asserting that it is controverted by the church of Rome as not being Paul's]; next in order the extant former epistle of John [acknowledged as undoubtedly genuine both by the writers of our own time and by those of antiquity], and likewise the epistle of Peter must be recognized. [Of Peter then one epistle, which is called his former epistle, is generally acknowledged; of this also the ancient presbyters have made frequent use in their writings as indisputably genuine.]

# *The record of Eusebius*

- *Eusebius wrote a church history in 324 A.D.*
- After these must be put, if it really seems right, the Apocalypse of John, concerning which we shall give the different opinions at the proper time [Concerning the Apocalypse men's opinions even now are generally divided]. These, then, are among the recognized books.
- Of the disputed books, which are nevertheless familiar to the majority, there are extant the epistle of James, as it is called; and that of Jude; and the second epistle of Peter [that which is circulated as his second epistle we have received to be uncanonical; still as it appeared useful to many it has been diligently read with the other scriptures . . . I recognize one epistle only as genuine and acknowledged by the ancient presbyters], and those that are called the Second and Third of John [these two remaining epistles are disputed], whether they belong to the evangelist or to another person of the same name.



# *Ancient Greek Texts*

- *Codex Sinaiticus*
  - 4th Century Greek Codex - about 330 a.d.
  - Complete New Testament, 27 books
  - Septuagint Old Testament Portions (some pages lost)



# ***List of Athanasius, 367 a.d.***

- Again, it is not tedious to speak of the books of the New Testament. These are: the four Gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. After these, The Acts of the Apostles, and the seven epistles called Catholic: of James, one; of Peter, two, of John, three; after these, one of Jude. In addition, there are fourteen epistles of Paul the apostle, written in this order: the first, to the Romans; then, two to the Corinthians; after these, to the Galatians; next, to the Ephesians, then, to the Philippians; then, to the Colossians; after these, two of the Thessalonians; and that to the Hebrews; and again, two to Timothy; one to Titus; and lastly, that to Philemon. And besides, the Revelation of John.



# ***Back to the 1st Century***

- *The first certain notice which we have of the existence of any of the New-Testament writings in a collected form occurs in 2 Peter 3:16, where the writer speaks of the epistles of Paul in such a way as to lead us to infer that at that time the whole or the greater part of these were collected together, were known among the churches generally (for Peter is not addressing any particular church), and were regarded as on a par with "the other Scriptures," by which latter expression Peter plainly means the sacred writings both of the Old and the New Testament, as far as then extant.*
- *(from McClintock and Strong Encyclopedia)*

# *And the 2nd Century*

- *In the anonymous Epistle to Diognetus, which is, on good grounds, supposed to be one of the earliest of the uninspired Christian writings, the writer speaks of the Law, the Prophets, the Gospels, and the Apostles*
- *Ignatius speaks of "betaking himself to the Gospel as the flesh of Jesus, and to the apostles as the presbytery of the Church," and adds, "the prophets also we love," thus showing that it was to the Scriptures he was referring*
  - *(from McClintock and Strong Encyclopedia)*



# ***And the 2nd Century***

- *Clement of Alexandria frequently refers to the books of the New Testament, and distinguishes them into "the Gospels and Apostolic Discourses"*
- *Tertullian distinctly intimates the existence of the New-Testament Canon in a complete form in his day by calling it "Evangelicum Instrumentum" (adv. Marc. 4:2), by describing the whole Bible as "totum instrumentum utriusque Testamenti" (adv. Prax. 100:20), and by distinguishing between the "Scriptura Vetus" and the "Novum Testamentum"*
- *Ireneus repeatedly calls the writings of the New Testament "the Holy Scriptures," "the oracles of God" (adv. Haer. 2:27; 1:8, etc.), and in one place he puts the evangelical and apostolic writings on a par with the Law and the Prophets*
- *(from McClintock and Strong Encyclopedia, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by Biblesoft)*

# ***And the 3rd and 4th***

- *From these allusions we may justly infer that before the middle of the third century the New-Testament Scriptures were generally known by the Christians in a collected form, and revered as the word of God. That the books they received were the same as those now possessed by us is evident from the quotations from them furnished by the early fathers, and which have been so carefully collected by the learned and laborious Lardner in his Credibility of the Gospel History. The same thing appears from the researches of origen and Eusebius, both of whom carefully inquired, and have accurately recorded what books were received as canonical by the tradition of the churches or the church writers ... and both of whom enumerate the same books as are in our present Canon, though some of them, such as the Epistles of James and Jude, the 2 d Ep. of Peter, the 2 d and 3 d of John, and the Apocalypse, they mention that though received by the majority, they were doubted by some (Euseb, H. E. 3:25; 6:24). (from McClintock and Strong)*



# ***And so on***

- *Besides these sources of information, we have no fewer than ten ancient catalogues of the New-Testament books still extant. of these, six accord exactly with our present Canon, while of the rest three omit only the Apocalypse, and one omits, with this, the Epistle to the Hebrews*
- *(from McClintock and Strong Encyclopedia, Electronic Database. Copyright (c) 2000 by Biblesoft)*



A traditional wooden loom is shown, with a fabric featuring vertical stripes of red, white, and blue being woven. The loom is made of light-colored wood and is set against a dark background. The text is overlaid on the upper part of the image.

# *And so on*

- *What the “church councils” affirmed about the canon of the New Testament (and the Old) in the 4th century, was what was already known and accepted by the majority of churches for nearly 300 years.*



# *The “Apostolic Fathers”*

- *Apostolic Fathers. In the writings of the apostolic Fathers, A.D. 70-120, with the exception of Jude, 2 Peter, and 2 and 3 John, with which no coincidences occur, and 1 and 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Titus, and Philemon, with which the coincidences are questionable, all the other epistles were clearly known, and used by them...*
  - *(from The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright (c) 1988.)*
  - *The “Apostolic Fathers” include “The Epistle of Barnabas”, Clement of Rome’s 2 letters to the Corinthians, the letters of Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp’s letter to the Smyrnans, “The Shepherd of Hermas”, and “The Epistle to Diognetes”*



# *The “Anti-Nicene Fathers”*

- *From A.D. 170 AD to 305. The testimony of Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian extends to the four gospels, Acts, 1 Peter 1:1-5:14, 1 John, thirteen epistles of Paul, and the Apocalypse; and, with the exception of the Apocalypse, no one of these books was ever afterward rejected or questioned until modern times.*
  - *(from The New Unger's Bible Dictionary. Originally published by Moody Press of Chicago, Illinois. Copyright (c) 1988.)*

# ***Chapters and Verses***

- *The Jews divided the Hebrew books into sections appropriate for oral reading, but they are not the same as our chapters and verses.*
- *The origin of the chapter divisions we use is about the mid 11th century A.D.*
- *The numbered verses we use were first used in printed Bibles in 1545.*



# *And the authority of the writers*

- *The writings of the apostles and prophets did not become authoritative over time, they were presented and received as authoritative at the time of their writing, by an apostle or prophet known to the churches. (1 Thess. 2:13)*
  - *Paul expected his letters to be read by the churches and circulated, Col 4:16*
  - *Peter affirmed that Paul's letters came from God's wisdom and stood with other Scriptures, 2 Pet 3:15-16*
  - *Jude quoted 2 Peter 3:3 as apostolic and authoritative, Jude 17-18*
  - *Paul seems to quote Luke 10:7 along with Deut 25:4 as Scripture, 1 Tim 5:18*