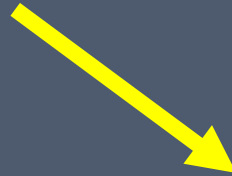


# HISTORY OF THE BIBLE

## *LESSON 2 – CANONIZATION OF THE BIBLE*

# FROM GOD TO US

INSPIRATION



CANONIZATION



TRANSMISSION



TRANSLATION

# After Supernatural Inspiration...

**“The moment [the miracle] enters [Nature’s] realm, it obeys her laws. Miraculous wine will intoxicate, miraculous conception will lead to pregnancy, inspired books will suffer all the ordinary processes of textual corruption, miraculous bread will be digested.”**

# Canonization of the Bible

# Canon of the Bible

**Definition** – the list of all the Books that belong in the Bible

**Derivation** – from the Greek word *kanon* referring to a “rule” or “measuring instrument”

**Meaning** – a list of books that met certain rules, and that these books become our rule of life

# Who Determines Canonicity?

**“Canonicity is determined by God.  
A book is not inspired because  
men made it canonical, it is  
canonical because God inspired it.”**

*Geisler & Nix, A General Introduction to  
the Bible (Revised and Expanded), p.220*

# Old Testament Canon

“For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another [as the Greeks have], but only twenty-two books\*, which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine;”

*-Josephus (AD 37-100) (Against Apion, 8:38)*

\* These 22 books likely are the 39 books in our modern Bibles

# Old Testament Canon

“It is true, our history hath been written since Artaxerxes\* very particularly, but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers, because there hath not been an exact succession of prophets since that time;”

*-Josephus (AD 37-100) (Against Apion, 8:41)*

\* Artaxerxes of Persia reigned 464-423 BC (roughly the time of Malachi)



# Old Testament Canon

<sup>46</sup> And laid up the stones in the mountain of the temple in a convenient place, until there should come a prophet\* to shew what should be done with them.

*-1 Maccabees 4:46 (late 2<sup>nd</sup> century BC)*

\* There was no prophet during this period of Jewish history proving there was no inspired Scripture

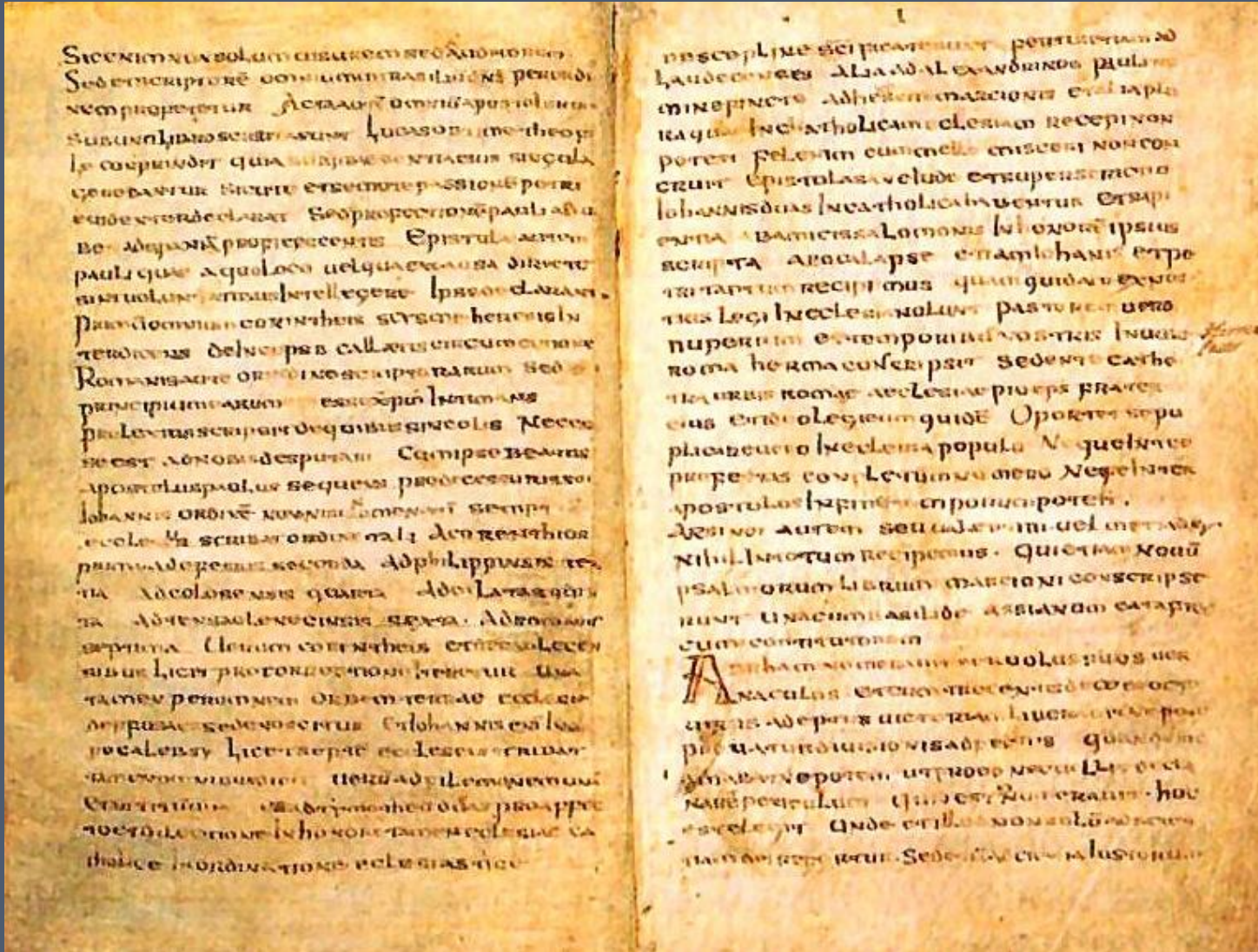
# Marcion *(c. 85-160 AD)*

- Born in Pontus in Northern Turkey, he was a Gnostic heretic denounced by the church but had a widespread following lasting until the 5<sup>th</sup> century
- Rejected the God of the OT, who he thought was not the Father of Jesus
- Formed the first known list of NT Books
  - Compiled sometime between 130-140 AD
  - Accepted an edited Gospel of Luke, without the parts that linked Jesus with the OT
  - Accepted also 10 Pauline epistles (no pastorals)
  - This essentially forced the early church to seriously begin defining a list of true canonical Books

# Montanus *(c. 156 AD)*

- Montanism originated in Phrygia in Asia Minor and spread to the whole church
- Claimed to be a religion of the Holy Spirit, marked by ecstatic outbursts and new revelations
- The pronouncements of the Montanists were written down and compiled much like true Scripture
- Believed God was literally speaking through them, and theirs was the final revelation
- Montanism and its insistence on the continuing revelation caused the church to emphasize the final authority of the Apostle's writings & the close of the canon

# The Muratorian Canon



Date: ~170-200 AD

- This fragment is the oldest surviving list of Bible Books
- A 7<sup>th</sup> century Latin translation of a Greek text around 170 AD
- Lists 23 NT Books as canonical (all but Hebrews, James and 1 & 2 Peter)



# The Formation of the NT Canon

The Early Church Father's References to the Books of the New Testament																						
	Clement of Rome	Justin Martyr	Polycarp	Didache	Papias	Barnabas	Hermas	Aristides	Muratorian Fragment	Athenagoras	Lyons	Clement of Alexandria	Hippolytus	Irenaeus	Tatian	Theophilus	Origen	Tertullian	Cyprian	Ignatius	Eusebius	
Date A. D.	95	100	110	125	130	140	150	175	175	177	177	180	200	200	200	200	230	240	250	250	275	Date A. D.
Matthew																						Matthew
Mark																						Mark
Luke																						Luke
John																						John
Acts																						Acts
Romans																						Romans
1 Corinthians																						1 Corinthians
2 Corinthians																						2 Corinthians
Galatians																						Galatians
Ephesians																						Ephesians
Philippians																						Philippians
Colossians																						Colossians
1 Thessalonians																						1 Thessalonians
2 Thessalonians																						2 Thessalonians
1 Timothy																						1 Timothy
2 Timothy																						2 Timothy
Titus																						Titus
Philemon																						Philemon
Hebrews																						Hebrews
James																						James
1 Peter																						1 Peter
2 Peter																						2 Peter
1 John																						1 John
2 John																						2 John
3 John																						3 John
Jude																						Jude
Revelation																						Revelation

# Geography of the Early Church



# Athanasius on OT Canon

“There are, then, of the Old Testament, twenty-two books in number; for, as I have heard, it is handed down that this is the number of the letters among the Hebrews; their respective order and names being as follows. The first is Genesis, then Exodus, next Leviticus, after that Numbers, and then Deuteronomy. Following these there is Joshua, the son of Nun, then Judges, then Ruth. And again, after these four books of Kings, the first and second being reckoned as one book, and so likewise the third and fourth as one book. And again, the first and second of the Chronicles are reckoned as one book. Again

Ezra, the first and second are similarly one book. After these there is the book of Psalms, then the Proverbs, next Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs. Job follows, then the Prophets, the twelve being reckoned as one book. Then Isaiah, one book, then Jeremiah with Baruch, Lamentations, and the epistle, one book; afterwards, Ezekiel and Daniel, each one book. Thus far constitutes the Old Testament.” **Esther ??**

***-Athanasius of Alexandria (367 AD) (Festal Letter XXXIX:4)***

# Athanasius on NT Canon

“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. Afterwards, the Acts of the Apostles and Epistles (called Catholic), seven, viz. of James, one; of Peter, two; of John, three; after these, one of Jude. In addition, there are fourteen Epistles of Paul, 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 to 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.”

*-Athanasius of Alexandria (367 AD) (Festal Letter XXXIX:5)*





# Athanasius on OT & NT Canon

“These\* are fountains of salvation, that they who thirst may be satisfied with the living words they contain. In these alone is proclaimed the doctrine of godliness. Let no man add to these, neither let him take ought from these.”

*-Athanasius of Alexandria (367 AD) (Festal Letter XXXIX:6)*

\* “These” refers to the OT and NT canonical Books in the last two verses

# Council of Rome

382 AD

“The order of the Old Testament begins here: Genesis, one book; Exodus, one book; Leviticus, one book; Numbers, one book; Deuteronomy, one book; Joshua Nave, one book; Judges, one book; Ruth, one book; Kings, four books (Samuel I & II, Kings I & II); Paralipomenon (Chronicles), two books; Psalms, one book; Solomon, three books: Proverbs, one book; Ecclesiastes, one book; Canticle of Canticles, one book; likewise Wisdom, one book; Ecclesiasticus, one book. Likewise the order of the prophets: ... [16 books of the prophets listed]. Likewise the order of the histories: Job, one book; Tobit, one book; Esdras, two books; Esther, one book; Judith, one book; Maccabees, two books.”

-*Decretum Gelasianum* (~519-553 AD)

This Council was commissioned by Pope Damasus I (305-384 AD), and the list of books deemed canonical here was used by Jerome in his translation (the Vulgate)


# Council of Hippo

393 AD

“Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua the son of Nun, The Judges, Ruth, Kings iv books, The Chronicles ii books, Job, the Psalter, five books of Solomon\*, the Twelve Books of the Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezechiel, Daniel, Tobit, Judith, Esther, Ezra ii books, Maccabees ii books.

The Gospels iv books, Acts of the Apostles i book, Epistles of Paul xiv, Epistles of Peter, the Apostle ii, Epistles of John the Apostle iii, Epistles of James the Apostle i, one of Epistle of Jude the Apostle, Revelation of John, i.”

-*Canon xxxvi*



\* According to Augustine of Hippo, these are Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, Wisdom of Solomon & Ecclesiasticus although the last two he recognizes were not written by Solomon (*On Christian Doctrine, Book 2:viii 2*)

# Council of Carthage

*August 28, 397 AD*

“16 It was also determined that besides the Canonical Scriptures nothing be read in the Church under the title of divine Scriptures. The Canonical Scriptures are these: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua the son of Nun, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, two books of Paraleipomena, Job, the Psalter, five books of Solomon, the books of the twelve prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezechiel, Daniel, Tobit, Judith, Esther, two books of Esdras, two Books of the Maccabees.

17 Of the New Testament: four books of the Gospels, one book of the Acts of the Apostles, thirteen Epistles of the Apostle Paul, one epistle of the same [writer] to the Hebrews, two Epistles of the Apostle Peter, three of John, one of James, one of Jude, one book of the Apocalypse of John.”



# The Protestant Reformation

1517 AD

- One of the tenets of the Reformation is the importance of getting back to the original languages of the Bible
- The Reformers agreed with Jerome's view of *hebraica veritas* (truth in the original Hebrew over the translation of the Septuagint [LXX])
- Consequently, Martin Luther broke with the OT canon of the Vulgate, relegated the deuterocanonical works to the "Apocrypha", and reverted to the canon of the Hebrew Bible

# Council of Trent

*April 4, 1546 AD*

“Of the Old Testament: the five books of Moses, to wit, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Josue, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, two of Paralipomenon, the first book of Esdras, and the second which is entitled Nehemias; Tobias, Judith, Esther, Job, the Davidical Psalter, consisting of a hundred and fifty psalms; the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Canticle of Canticles, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Isaias, Jeremias, with Baruch; Ezechiel, Daniel; the twelve minor prophets, to wit, Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggaeus, Zacharias, Malachias; two books of the Machabees, the first and the second.”

*-De Canonicis Scripturis*

# Council of Trent

*April 4, 1546 AD*

“Of the New Testament: the four Gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; the Acts of the Apostles written by Luke the Evangelist; fourteen epistles of Paul the apostle, (one) to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, (one) to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, to the Colossians, two to the Thessalonians, two to Timothy, (one) to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews; two of Peter the apostle, three of John the apostle [ 1, 2, 3 ], one of the apostle James, one of Jude the apostle, and the Apocalypse of John the apostle.”

*-De Canonicis Scripturis*



# Council of Trent

*April 4, 1546 AD*

“But if any one receive not, as sacred and canonical, the said books entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church, and as they are contained in the old Latin vulgate edition; and knowingly and deliberately contemn the traditions aforesaid; **let him be anathema.**”



# Categories of Books

1. **Homologoumena** – Books Accepted by All
2. **Antilegomena** – Books Disputed by Some
3. **Apocrypha** – Books Accepted by Some
4. **Pseudepigrapha** – Books Rejected by All

# The Books Accepted by All

## *The OT Homologoumena*

These are the books of the OT that were accepted as canonical from the beginning

<u>Pentateuch</u>	<u>Historical</u>	<u>Poetry</u>	<u>Maj. Prophets</u>	<u>Min. Proph.</u>
Genesis	Joshua	Psalms	Isaiah	Hosea
Exodus	Judges		Jeremiah	Joel
Leviticus	Ruth		Lamentations	Amos
Numbers	1Kings		Daniel	Obadiah
Deuteronomy	2Kings	34 out of 39		Jonah
	1Chronicles			Micah
	2Chronicles			Nahum
	Ezra			Habakkuk
	Nehemiah			Zephaniah
				Haggai
				Zechariah
				Malachi

What's missing? ...

# The Books Accepted by All

## *The NT Homologoumena*

These are the books of the NT that were accepted as canonical from the beginning

<u>Gospels</u>	<u>Historical</u>	<u>Paul Ep.</u>	<u>Cath. Epistles</u>	<u>Revelation</u>
Matthew	Acts	Romans	1Peter	<b>20</b> <b>out of</b> <b>27</b>
Mark		1Corinthians	1John	
Luke		2Corinthians		
John		Galatians		
		Ephesians		
		Philippians		
		Colossians		
		1Thessalonians		
		2Thessalonians		
		1Timothy		
		2Timothy		
		Titus		
		Philemon		

**What's missing? ...**

# The Books Disputed by Some

## *The Antilegomena*

These are books of the OT & NT that some Jews (OT) or some in the early church (NT) felt were not canonical

Esther  
Proverbs  
Ecclesiastes  
Song of Solomon  
Ezekiel

Hebrews  
James  
2Peter  
2John  
3John  
Jude  
Revelation

# The Books Disputed by Some

## *The Antilegomena*

### Proverbs

- Questioned because it is apparently illogical
- The Talmud claims they sought to hide Proverbs because it allegedly contradicted itself (cf. Prov. 26:4-5) – but this is precisely the point of wisdom!
- The Book appears to be edited later than Solomon and by unknown sources (cf Prov. 25:1; 30:1; 31:1)
- Proverbs was deemed canonical by Philo, Josephus, Paul (Romans), James, Clement, Aquila

# The Books Disputed by Some

## *The Antilegomena*

### Song of Solomon

- Questioned because of its sensuality
- But viewed as canonical by Rabbi Akiba ben Joseph (c. 50-132 AD), Melito, Tertullian, Josephus, etc...

### Ecclesiastes

- Questioned because of its skepticism, more so than Song of Solomon
- But in the canon of Josephus (37-100 AD) who declared it fixed for a long time

# The Books Disputed by Some

## *The Antilegomena*

### Esther

- Questioned because it lacks any mention of God
- Questioned because it seemed unspiritual
- But God's presence is seen even if He is not specifically mentioned (cf. Esther 4:14)
- Esther is mentioned as canonical by Josephus

### Ezekiel

- Questioned because of its apparent anti-Mosaic teaching (1<sup>st</sup> 10 chapters thought to be Gnostic)
- But the book was claimed to be canonical by Josephus and God claims to speak throughout

# The Books Disputed by Some

## *The Antilegomena*

### Hebrews

- Questioned because of its anonymity
- Hebrews was considered of Pauline authority in the East and was readily received – it was included in the old Syriac translations (but not the Old Latin)
- In the 4<sup>th</sup> century, the West recognized its canonicity through the influence of Augustine and Jerome



# The Books Disputed by Some

## *The Antilegomena*

### James

- Questioned because of its supposed conflict with Paul's justification by faith alone
- It was included in the Old Syriac of the East, but not the Old Latin in the West
- Accepted as canonical in the West through influence of Origen, Eusebius, Jerome & Augustine
- Martin Luther on James:
  - "I consider that it is not the writing of any apostle... [it is] flatly against Paul and all the rest of Scripture, it ascribes righteousness to works."
  - "Saint James' epistle is really an epistle of straw, compared to the others, for it has nothing of the nature of the gospel about it."
  - *Luther's Works*, vol. 35, *Word and Sacrament I*, pp. 362, 395-397
  - Luther placed James at the end of his German translation

# The Books Disputed by Some

## *The Antilegomena*

### 2 Peter

- No other Book in the NT questioned as much as 2 Peter
- Questioned because of its genuineness – it is markedly different in style than 1 Peter, but Silvanus was Peter's secretary in that letter (1 Pet. 5:12)

### 2 & 3 John

- Questioned because of their genuineness – the author introduces himself as the “elder”, not an apostle
- But the style is similar to 1 John, and it was included in the Muratorian Canon (~170-200 AD), and acknowledged by some early church fathers

# The Books Disputed by Some

## *The Antilegomena*

### Jude

- Questioned because of its authenticity – it quotes from the pseudepigraphical books of Enoch (vv. 14-15 [Enoch 1:9]) and possibly the Assumption of Moses (v. 9)
- But quoting a non-biblical book does not attribute canonicity to that book (cf. Ac. 17:28; 1Cor. 15:33; Titus 1:12)

### Revelation

- Questioned because of its authenticity, specifically because of its promotion of *chiliasm* or the Millennial Kingdom of Christ
- Accepted early by Papias, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus & the Muratorian Canon, but also adopted by heretics to promote strange beliefs which delayed widespread acknowledgement

# The Books Accepted by Some

## *The OT Apocrypha*

Didactic

The Wisdom of Solomon (c. 30 b.c.)

Ecclesiasticus (132 b.c.)

Book of Wisdom

Sirach

Religious/Romance

Tobit (c. 200 b.c.)

Judith (c. 150 b.c.)

Historic

1 Esdras (c. 150–100 b.c.)

1 Maccabees (c. 110 b.c.)

2 Maccabees (c. 110–70 b.c.)

Prophetic

Baruch (c. 150–50 b.c.)

Letter of Jeremiah (c. 300–100 b.c.)

2 Esdras (c. a.d. 100)

Legendary

Additions to Esther (140–130 b.c.)

Prayer of Azariah (second or first century b.c.)

Susanna (second or first century b.c.)

Bel and the Dragon (c. 100 b.c.)

Prayer of Manasseh (second or first century b.c.)

Geisler & Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible (Revised and Expanded)*, p.266

# The Books Accepted by Some

## *The NT Apocrypha (Apostolic Fathers)*

Epistle of Barnabas (70-79 AD) – included in Codex Sinaiticus

1Clement (~96 AD) – by Clement of Rome to Corinthians

2Clement (120-140 AD) – by Clement of Rome to Corinthians

Shepherd of Hermas (115-140 AD) – most widespread of AF

Didache (100-120 AD) – the Teaching of the Twelve

Epistles of Ignatius (110-117 AD) – 6 to churches, 1 to Polycarp

Polycarp Epistle to the Philippians (110-113 AD)

Martyrdom of Polycarp (155-160 AD)

Epistle to Diognetus (117-310 AD) – apologetic in nature

# The Shepherd of Hermas

**“But Hermas wrote The Shepherd ‘most recently in our time’, in the city of Rome, while bishop Pius [140-155 AD], 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.”**

***Muratorian Canon (c. 170 AD)***

# The Books Rejected by All

## *OT Pseudepigrapha*

### Legendary

1. The Book of Jubilee
2. The Letter of Aristeas
3. The Book of Adam and Eve
4. The Martyrdom of Isaiah

### Apocalyptic

1. 1 Enoch
2. The Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs
3. The Sibylline Oracle
4. The Assumption of Moses
5. 2 Enoch, or the Book of the Secrets of Enoch
6. 2 Baruch, or The Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch
7. 3 Baruch, or The Greek Apocalypse of Baruch

### Didactical

1. 3 Maccabees
2. 4 Maccabees
3. Pirke Aboth
4. The Story of Ahikar

### Poetical

1. The Psalms of Solomon
2. Psalm 151

### Historical

1. The Fragment of a Zadokite Work

Geisler & Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible (Revised and Expanded)*, p.263

# The Books Rejected by All

## *NT Pseudepigrapha*

### Gospels

Thomas  
Peter  
Gospel of the Hebrews  
Gospel of the Nazaraeans  
The Book of Thomas the Athlete  
Judas  
Apocryphon of John

Ebionites  
Protoevangelium of James  
Gospel of the Egyptians  
Philip  
Mathias  
Epistle of an Apostle  
Gospel of Truth

### Acts

of Peter  
of Paul

of John  
of Andrew

### Epistles

The Kerygma Petrou  
to the Laodiceans

The Kerygmata Petrou  
Pseudo Titus

### Apocalypses

Ascension of Isaiah  
Ezra 5&6  
Book of Elchasai  
Apocalypse of Peter

Apocalypse of Peter  
Christian Sibyllines  
Apocalypse of Paul



# The Epistle to the Laodiceans?

<sup>16</sup> And when this letter has been read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and see that you also read the letter from Laodicea.

*Colossians 4:16 (ESV)*

“Some read one also to the Laodiceans but it is rejected by everyone.”

- Jerome, *De Viris Illustribus*, Book II, Chapter V (c. 393 AD)

# The Epistle to the Laodiceans?

There is current also (an epistle) to the Laodiceans, another to the Alexandrians, forged in Paul's name for the sect of Marcion, and several others, which cannot be received in the catholic Church; for it will not do to mix gall with honey.

*Muratorian Canon (c. 170 AD)*

# Wycliffe on Laodiceans

“But this pistil is not in comyn Latyn bookis, and therfor it was but late translatid into Englisch tunge...”

*“Here bigynneth the epistle to the Laodicens, which is not in the canon...”*

“Poul, apostle, not of men, ne by man, but bi Jhesu Crist, ‘to the britheren that ben at Laodice, grace to 3ou, and pees of God the fadir, and of the Lord Jhesu Crist...”

- Wycliffe Bible, early version (1384), beginning of the *Epistle to the Laodiceans*

# The Epistle to the Laodiceans?

- Possibly mentioned in Colossians 4:16
- A letter was attributed to Paul, but obviously a later forgery
- No Greek manuscript has ever been found
- Not included in Jerome's Vulgate, but included in the later Vulgate manuscript Codex Fuldensis (c. 546 AD)
- Also found in early manuscripts of Czech, English & Flemish
- Included in all 18 German Bibles before Luther
- 10<sup>th</sup> century Anglo-Saxon monk Aelfric mentions it in his commentaries
- Included in Wycliffe's English translation from the Latin Vulgate
- **For nine centuries, a forgery hovered around the NT canon**

# Summary of the Canon

“The canon by which the Church has lived over the centuries emerged in history, the result of a slow and gradual process. To be sure, in this canon there are documents less firmly attested by external criteria than others. But the several parts have all been cemented together by usage and by general acceptance in the Church, which has recognized, and recognizes, that God has spoken and is speaking to her in and through this body of early Christian literature.”

- Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, p. 275

# Is the Canon Open or Closed?

“It may be concluded, therefore, that, while the New Testament canon should, from a theoretical point of view, be regarded as open in principle for either the addition or the deletion of one or more books, from a practical point of view such a modification can scarcely be contemplated as either possible or desirable.”

- Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, p. 275

# Is the Canon Open or Closed?

“On the whole, there is no significant body of opinion within the churches that wishes to see the New Testament canon altered, either by enlargement or by reduction. One may predict that individual views and proposals will die a natural death.”

- Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament*, p. 274-5