

# Origin and Organization of the Bible

Who wrote what? When? Why? How?

Session 2: New Testament – April 21, 2024

## Modern Chronology of Biblical Events

(Order of Pauline letters based on Michael J. Gorman, *Apostle of the Crucified Lord*)

- 332 – 63 BCE: Hellenistic rule (Maccabean revolt in 167 BCE)
- 63 BCE: beginning of Roman rule (Pompey conquered Jerusalem)
- 37 BCE: King Herod restructures the 2<sup>nd</sup> Temple
  - 1 Thessalonians (50 CE)
  - 2 Thessalonians
  - Galatians (mid 50's CE)
  - 1 Corinthians (54-55 CE)
  - 2 Corinthians (55-56 CE)
  - Romans (57 CE)
  - James (sometime after Romans)
  - Hebrews (between 60 & 90, likely prior to 70 CE)
  - Philippians (60-62 CE)
  - Philemon
  - Colossians (mid 60's CE)
  - 1 Peter (mid 60's CE; earliest possible, may be later)
  - Jude (?)
- 66 CE: Jewish revolt against the Romans
  - Mark
- 70 CE: Roman forces destroy Jerusalem and demolish the temple
  - Ephesians
  - 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus
- 73 CE: last stand of Jews at Masada
  - Matthew (75-80 CE)
  - Luke/Acts (mid 80's CE)
  - John (90-95 CE)
  - Revelation (95-96 CE)
  - 1-3 John (95-100 CE)
  - 2 Peter (early 100's CE)
- 135 CE: Jerusalem is rebuilt as a Roman city (Aelia Capitolina, named for the emperor Hadrian)

## The Gospels

- **Include:** Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
- **Overview:** Tell the story of Jesus' ministry, death, and resurrection
- **Development:**
  - Matthew, Mark, and Luke are known as the synoptic gospels
  - Mark - considered the oldest gospel; provides source material for Matthew and Luke
  - Matthew and Luke - share material not found in Mark (this is called the "Q" source); each have material not found in other gospels
  - John – Includes many of the same situations as the synoptic gospels, but told differently; theologically advanced

## The Letters / Epistles

- **Include**
  - Letters from Paul to churches: (underlined letters written in prison)
    - Undisputed: Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, 1 Thessalonians
    - Disputed: Ephesians, Colossians, 2 Thessalonians
  - Letters from Paul to individuals: Philemon (undisputed) and 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus (disputed)
  - Anonymous letter: Hebrews
  - Letters claiming authorship someone other than Paul as the author: James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1-3 John, Jude
- **Overview:** Proclaim salvation through Christ. Meant to strengthen Christian faith, teach best practices / provide instruction, correct errors, heal discord within the emerging Church, and encourage Christians who often find themselves facing struggle and persecution.
- **Development:** Almost all the epistles predate the gospels. The works span over 50 years.

## Other

- **Includes:** The Acts of the Apostles and The Revelation to John
  - **Acts**
    - **Overview:** Offers a continuation of the gospel of Luke to provide a narrative account of the growth of the Church.
    - **Development:** Written by the same author as Luke within a few years of the gospel being written
  - **Revelation**
    - **Overview:** Apocalyptic literature. Reinforces the concept that God is, was, and will always be in charge of the world.
    - **Development:** Attributed to John of Patmos (not the same John that wrote the gospel and/or the letters of John). Likely all three were written by different authors within a circle of communities that shared a common Johannine tradition.