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The Muratorian Fragment

(about A.D. 170)

The **Muratorian Fragment** is the oldest known list of New Testament books. It was discovered by Ludovico Antonio Muratori in a manuscript in the Ambrosian Library in Milan, and published by him in 1740. * It is called a fragment because the beginning of it is missing. Although the manuscript in which it appears was copied during the seventh century, the list itself is dated to about 170 because its author refers to the episcopate of Pius I of Rome (died 157) as recent. He mentions only two epistles of John, without describing them. The Apocalypse of Peter is mentioned as a book which "some of us will not allow to be read in church." A very helpful and detailed discussion of this document is to be found in Bruce Metzger's [*The Canon of the New Testament*](#) (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), pp. 191-201. Below is Metzger's English translation of a critically amended text of the Fragment, from Appendix IV of the same book (pp. 305-7). I include Metzger's footnotes, with their original enumeration, and add some supplementary footnotes of my own. —M.D.M.

* Ludovico Antonio Muratori, ed., *Antiquitates Italicae Medii Aevi*, v. 3 (ex typographia Societatis palatinæ, Mediolani, 1740). Reprinted in Bologna, 1965.

THE MURATORIAN CANON

The following translation usually follows the amended text edited by Hans Lietzmann, *Das Muratorische Fragment und die Monarchianischen Prologue zu den Evangelien (Kleine Texte*, i; Bonn, 1902; 2nd ed., Berlin, 1933). Owing to the wretched state of the Latin text, it is sometimes difficult to know what the writer intended; several phrases, therefore, are provided with alternative renderings (enclosed within parentheses). Translational expansions are enclosed within square brackets. The numerals indicate the lines of the original text. For a discussion, see chap. VIII.1 above, where freer renderings are sometimes given in place of the following literalistic translation.

. . . at which nevertheless he was present, and so he placed [them in his narrative]. ^[1] (2) The third book of the Gospel is that according to Luke. (3) Luke, the well-known physician, after the ascension of Christ, (4-5) when Paul had taken with him as one zealous for the law, ^[2] (6) composed it in his own name, according to [the general] belief. ^[3] Yet he himself had not (7) seen the Lord in the flesh; and therefore, as he was able to ascertain events, (8) so indeed he begins to tell the story from the birth of John. (9) The fourth of the Gospels is that of John, [one] of the disciples. (10) To his fellow disciples and bishops, who had been urging him [to write], (11) he said, 'Fast with me from today to three days, and what (12) will be revealed to each one (13) let us tell it to one another.' In the same night it was revealed (14) to Andrew, [one] of the apostles, (15-16) that John should write down all things in his own name while all of them should review it. And so, though various (17) elements ^[3a] may be taught in the individual books of the Gospels, (18) nevertheless this makes no difference to the faith of believers, since by the one sovereign ^[3b] Spirit all things (20) have been declared in all [the Gospels]: concerning the (21) nativity, concerning the passion, concerning the resurrection, (22) concerning life with his disciples, (23) and concerning his twofold coming; (24) the first in

lowliness when he was despised, which has taken place, (25) the second glorious in royal power, (26) which is still in the future. What (27) marvel is it then, if John so consistently (28) mentions these particular points also in his Epistles, (29) saying about himself, 'What we have seen with our eyes (30) and heard with our ears and our hands (31) have handled, these things we have written to you?' ^[4] (32) For in this way he professes [himself] to be not only an eye-witness and hearer, (33) but also a writer of all the marvelous deeds of the Lord, in their order. (34) Moreover, the acts of all the apostles (35) were written in one book. For 'most excellent Theophilus' ^[5] Luke compiled (36) the individual events that took place in his presence — (37) as he plainly shows by omitting the martyrdom of Peter (38) as well as the departure of Paul from the city [of Rome] ^[5a] (39) when he journeyed to Spain. As for the Epistles of (40-1) Paul, they themselves make clear to those desiring to understand, which ones [they are], from what place, or for what reason they were sent. (42) First of all, to the Corinthians, prohibiting their heretical schisms; (43) next, ^[6] to the Galatians, against circumcision; (44-6) then to the Romans he wrote at length, explaining the order (or, plan) of the Scriptures, and also that Christ is their principle (or, main theme). ^[6a] It is necessary (47) for us to discuss these one by one, since the blessed (48) apostle Paul himself, following the example of his predecessor (49-50) John, writes by name to only seven churches in the following sequence: To the Corinthians (51) first, to the Ephesians second, to the Philippians third, (52) to the Colossians fourth, to the Galatians fifth, (53) to the Thessalonians sixth, to the Romans (54-5) seventh. It is true that he writes once more to the Corinthians and to the Thessalonians for the sake of admonition, (56-7) yet it is clearly recognizable that there is one Church spread throughout the whole extent of the earth. For John also in the (58) Apocalypse, though he writes to seven churches, (59-60) 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 (62-3) in the esteem of the Church catholic for the regulation of ecclesiastical discipline. There is current also [an epistle] to (64) the Laodiceans, [and] another to the Alexandrians, [both] forged in Paul's (65) name to [further] the heresy of Marcion, ^[6b] and several others (66) which cannot be received into the catholic Church (67)— for it is not fitting that gall be mixed with honey. (68) Moreover, the epistle of Jude and two of the above-mentioned (or, bearing the name of) John are counted (or, used) in the catholic [Church]; ^[7] and [the book of] Wisdom, (70) written by the friends ^[7a] of Solomon in his honour. (71) We receive only the apocalypses of John and Peter, (72) ^[7b] though some of us are not willing that the latter be read in church. (73) But Hermas wrote the *Shepherd* (74) very recently, ^[7c] in our times, in the city of Rome, (75) while bishop Pius, his brother, was occupying the [episcopal] chair (76) of the church of the city of Rome. ^[7d] (77) And therefore it ought indeed to be read; but (78) it cannot be read publicly to the people in church either among (79) the Prophets, whose number is complete, ^[8] or among (80) the Apostles, for it is after [their] time. (81) But we accept nothing whatever of Arsinous or Valentinus or Miltiades, (82) who also composed (83) a new book of psalms for Marcion, (84-5) together with Basilides, the Asian founder of the Cataphrygians ^[8a] . . .

¹ The meaning may be that Mark arranged the material of his Gospel in the order indicated by Peter, who was participant in the events narrated.

² The reading of the Fragment, *quasi ut iuris studiosum*, 'as so to speak, one zealous for (or, learned in) the law,' has been variously interpreted and/or emended. For example, Routh took *iuris* as translating του δικαιου, i.e. Luke was studios of righteousness; Buchanan replaced *ut iuris* with *adiutorem*, 'assistant'; Bartlet supposed that the translator read νοσου as νομου (Luke was 'a student of disease'); Zahn replaced *ut iuris* with *itineris*, thereby referring to Luke's readiness to accompany Paul on his journeys; Lietzmann conjectured *litteris*, i.e. Luke was well versed as an author. Harnack (*Sitzungsberichte der königlich Preussischen Akademie der Wissenschaften* [1903], p. 213) and Ehrhardt (op. cit.), who retain *iuris studiosus* of the Fragment, have pointed out that in technical language of Roman

law this could refer to an assessor or legal expert who served on the staff of a Roman official. Although this title was current prior to the time of Justinian's *Digest* (published in 533) and so was available to the translator of the Fragment, it is anybody's guess what Greek phrase it represented—assuming, of course, that the Canon was drawn up originally in Greek (unfortunately no help is provided in David Magie, *De Romanorum iuris publici sacrisque vocabulis sollemnibus in Graecum sermonem conversis* [Leipzig, 1905]).

It is significant that the Latin text of the Fragment appears to have been a source for Chromace of Aquileia, who in his commentary on Matthew (written between 398 and 407) refers to Luke as follows: *Dominum in carne non vidit, sed quia eruditissimus legis erat quippe qui comes Pauli apostoli ...* (See Joseph Lemarie, 'Saint Chromace d'Aquilee temoin du Canon de Muratori,' *Revue des etudes augustinienes*, xxiv [1978], pp. 101-2).

³ Here *ex opinione* is taken as the equivalent of ἐξ ἀκοῆς. Others conjecture *ex ordine*, representing καθεξῆς ('orderly sequence.' Luke i.3).

^{3a} Latin, *principia*. —M.D.M.

^{3b} Latin, *principalis*. —M.D.M.

⁴ I John i.1-3.

⁵ Luke i.3.

^{5a} That is, the city of Rome. This lack of specificity is one indication that the author was a Roman. —M.D.M.

⁶ The letter 'b' in the Latin text before 'Galatians' may belong to 'Corinthians' (πρὸς Κορινθίους B').

^{6a} Latin, *principium*. —M.D.M.

^{6b} Marcion revised Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians and called it the Epistle to the Laodiceans. Nothing is known of the Epistle to the Alexandrians mentioned here. —M.D.M.

⁷ It may be, as Zahn (*Geschichte*, ii, 66) and others have supposed, that a negative has fallen out of the text here.

^{7a} Tregelles suggests that the Latin translator of this document mistook the Greek *Philonos* "Philo" for *philon* "friends." Many in ancient times thought that the so-called "Wisdom of Solomon" was really written by Philo of Alexandria. —M.D.M.

^{7b} The Apocalypse of Peter describes with some imaginative detail the torments of hell and the blessings of heaven. It was read with respect and used for admonition throughout the churches in early times. —M.D.M.

^{7c} The Shepherd of Hermas is another work widely read in early times. It is a kind of moral allegory, like Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, but more impressive in that it purports to convey a series of divine revelations. —M.D.M.

^{7d} This would be Pius I, bishop of Rome from about 142 to 157. —M.D.M.

⁸ Perhaps the Fragmentist means that there are three major Prophets and twelve minor Prophets.

^{8a} The few words that follow this are unintelligible, and so the fragment practically ends here. —M.D.M.

Melito (about A.D. 170).

Melito was bishop of the church in Sardis, an inland city of Asia Minor. His list gives the Hebrew canon minus Esther, and makes no mention of any of the disputed books. This list was published abroad and recommended by Eusebius, bishop of Caesarea.

Old Testament list preserved in Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* iv. 26.

But in the Extracts made by him the same writer [i.e. Melito] gives at the beginning of the Introduction a catalog of the acknowledged books of the Old Testament, which it is necessary to quote at this point. He writes as follows: "Melito to his brother Onesimus, greeting! Since you have often, in your zeal for the Word, expressed a wish to have extracts made from the Law and the Prophets concerning the Saviour, and concerning our entire Faith, and have also desired to have an accurate statement of the ancient books, as regards their number and their order, I have endeavored to perform the task, knowing your zeal for the faith, and your desire to gain information in regard to the Word, and knowing that you, in your yearning after God, esteem these things above all else, struggling to attain eternal salvation. Accordingly when I went to the East and reached the place where these things were preached and done, I learned accurately the books of the Old Testament, and I send them to you as written below. These are their names: Of Moses five, Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, Deuteronomy; Joshua the son of Nun, Judges, Ruth, four of Kingdoms,^(a) two of Chronicles, the Psalms of David, Solomon's Proverbs or Wisdom,^(b) Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Job; of the Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah,^(c) the Twelve [minor prophets] in one book, Daniel, Ezekiel, Esdras.^(d) From which also I have made the extracts, dividing them into six books." Such are the words of Melito.

^(a)That is, 1 and 2 Samuel and 1 and 2 Kings. They are called as in the text in the Septuagint.

^(b)According to Eusebius, Proverbs was sometimes called "Wisdom" (*Ecclesiastical History* 4. 22. 9.)

^(c)Including Lamentations, presumably. It was not the custom of the times to mention it separately.

^(d)Ezra and Nehemiah, counted as one book, was sometimes called simply Esdras (Greek for Ezra).

Origen (about A.D. 240).

Origen was an influential teacher in Alexandria, the chief city of Egypt. His canon is known from the compilation made by [Eusebius](#) for his *Church History*. He accepted Hebrews as Scripture while entertaining doubts about its author. The English text below is from Metzger.

From the account of Eusebius in his *Ecclesiastical History*, vi. 25.

When expounding the first Psalm he gives a catalog of the Sacred Scriptures of the Old Testament as follows: "It should be stated that the canonical books, as the Hebrews have handed them down, are twenty-two, corresponding with the number of their letters." Farther on he says: "The twenty-two books of the Hebrews are the following: That which is called by us Genesis, but by the Hebrews, from the beginning of the book, *Breshith*, which means 'in the beginning'; Exodus, *Welesmoth*, that is, 'these are the names'; Leviticus, *Wikra*, 'and he called'; Numbers, *Ammesphekodeim*; Deuteronomy, *Eleaddebareim* 'these are the words'; Joshua the son of Nun, *Josoue ben Noun*; Judges and Ruth, among them in one book, *Saphateim*; the first and second of Kings, among them one, *Samoel*, that is, 'the called of God'; the third and fourth of Kings in one, *Wammelch David*, that is, 'the kingdom of David'; of the Chronicles, the first and second in one, *Dabreimein*, that is, 'records of days'; Esdras, first and second^(a) in one, *Ezra*, that is, 'an assistant'; the book of Psalms, *Spharthelleim*; the Proverbs of Solomon, *Meloth*; Ecclesiastes, *Koelth*; the Song of Songs (not, as some suppose, Songs of Songs), *Sir Hassirim*; Isaiah, *Jessia*; Jeremiah, with Lamentations and the Epistle^(b) in one, *Jeremia*; Daniel, *Daniel*; Ezekiel, *Jezekiel*; Job, *Job*; Esther, *Esther*; And outside of these there are the Maccabees, which are entitled *Sarbeth Sabanaiel*."^(c) He gives these in the above-mentioned work.

In the first book of his Commentary on the Gospel according to Matthew, defending the canon of the Church, he testifies that he knows only four Gospels, writing somewhat as follows: "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."

And in the fifth book of his Expositions on the Gospel according to John, the same person says this with reference to the epistles of the apostles: "But he who was made sufficient to become a minister of the new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit, that is, Paul, who 'fully preached the gospel from Jerusalem and round about even unto Illyricum,' did not write to all the churches which he had instructed; and even to those to which he wrote he sent but a few lines. 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."

In addition he makes the following statements concerning the epistle to the Hebrews, in his Homilies upon it: "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." Further on he adds: "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.

From Origen's Commentary on Matthew, xvii. 30.

... The epistle in circulation under the name of James . . .

From Origen's Commentary on John, xix. 6.

... And if indeed one were to accept the epistle of Jude . . .

From Origen's Homilies on Joshua, viii. 1. (about 240)^(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;^(e) 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,*^(f) 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.

From Origen's Homilies on Luke.

As once upon a time among the Jewish people many engaged in prophetic discourse, but some were lying prophets (one of them was Ananias the son of Azor) whereas others were truthful prophets, and as among the people there was the gift of grace to distinguish spirits, whereby a section of the prophets was received, but some were rejected as it were by the "expert bankers," so 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 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.

^(a) That is, Ezra and Nehemiah.

^(b) It is strange that the apocryphal *Epistle of Jeremiah* is listed without any mention of the book of *Baruch*, which it followed. The Epistle was often subsumed under Baruch as a sixth chapter. Some scholars surmise that "the Epistle" here may refer to Baruch and the Epistle together. Others suspect that this is a later addition to the list.

^(c) Whether this sentence closed Origen's discussion of the Old Testament canon, or whether he went on to mention the other apocryphal books, we cannot tell.

^(d) The work exists only in a Latin translation, probably by Rufinus (d. 410). Some scholars think that Rufinus has contributed to the passage.

^(e) The words *et Apocalypsin* are missing from some manuscripts.

^(f) 1 Corinthians 4:9.

Eusebius (about A.D. 324).

Eusebius of Caesarea was an early historian of the Church. His list was included in his *Church History*. He ascribed Hebrews to Paul. The English text below is from Metzger.

From his *Ecclesiastical History*, iii. 25.

Remarks from the preceding chapter (24) are inserted in brackets.

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.] 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,^(a) 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.

Among the spurious books must be reckoned also the Acts of Paul [the Acts that bear his name I have not received as indisputably genuine], and the Shepherd, as it is called [it must be known that this book has been spoken against by some, and therefore should not be considered an acknowledged book, though it has been judged by others as most necessary for those who particularly need elementary instruction in the faith. For that reason, as we know, it has been formerly read publicly in churches, and I have found that some of the most ancient writers have made use of it], and the Apocalypse of Peter [his so-called Apocalypse we know to have been in no wise included in the catholic scriptures by antiquity]; and, in addition to these, the extant epistle of Barnabas, and the Teachings of the Apostles, as it is called. And, in addition, as I said, the Apocalypse of John, if it seem right. This last, as I said, is rejected by some, but others count it among the recognized books. And among these some have counted also the Gospel of the Hebrews, with which those of the Hebrews who have accepted Christ take a special pleasure. All these then will belong to the class of controverted books, but nevertheless we have felt compelled to make this catalog of them, distinguishing between those writings which, according to the tradition of the Church, are true and genuine and recognized, from the others which differ from them in that they are not canonical,^(b) but disputed, yet nevertheless are known to most churchmen.

And this we have done in order that we might be able to know both these same writings and also those which the heretics put forward under the name of the apostles; including, for instance, such books as the Gospels of Peter [The book of the Acts of Peter and the Gospel which bears his name, and the book entitled his Preaching, and his so-called Apocalypse, we know to have been in no wise included in the catholic scriptures by antiquity, because no ecclesiastical writer in ancient times or in our own has made general use of the testimonies

to be drawn from them], of Thomas, of Matthias, or even of some others besides these, and the Acts of Andrew and John and the other apostles. To none of these has any who belonged to the succession of ecclesiastical writers ever thought it right to refer in his writings. Moreover, the character of the style also is far removed from apostolic usage, and the thought and purport of their contents are completely out of harmony with true orthodoxy and clearly show themselves that they are the forgeries of heretics. For this reason they ought not even to be reckoned among the spurious books, but are to be cast aside as altogether monstrous and impious. Let us now proceed with our history.

From his *Ecclesiastical History*, ii. 23.

... These things are recorded in regard to James, who is said to be the author of the first of the so-called Catholic epistles. But it is to be observed that it is disputed; at least, not many of the ancients have mentioned it, as is the case likewise with the epistle that bears the name of Jude, which is also one of the seven so-called Catholic epistles. Nevertheless we know that these also, with the rest, have been read publicly in very many churches.

^(a)For the opinion of Eusebius on James and Jude see the quotation following.

^(b)Literally, *intestamented*.

Cyril of Jerusalem (about A.D. 350).

Cyril of Jerusalem was a bishop of Jerusalem. The omission of Revelation from his list is due to a general reaction against this book in the east after excessive use was made of it by the Montanist cults. The English text below is from Metzger.

From his *Catechetical Lectures*, iv. 33.

Learn also diligently, and from the Church, what are the books of the Old Testament, and what those of the New. And read none of the apocryphal writings; for why do you, who know not those which are acknowledged among all, trouble yourself in vain about those which are disputed? Read the divine Scriptures, these twenty-two books of the Old Testament that were translated by the seventy-two translators^(a) . . . for the translation of the divine Scriptures that were spoken in the Holy Spirit was accomplished through the Holy Spirit. Read their twenty-two books but have nothing to do with the apocryphal writings. Study diligently only these that we also read with confident authority in the church. For much wiser and holier than you were the apostles and ancient bishops who led the church and handed down these books. Being therefore a child of the Church, do not transgress its statutes. And of the Old Testament, as we have said, study the two and twenty books, which, if you desire to have learning, strive to remember by name, as I recite them. For of the Law the books of Moses are the first five, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. And next, Joshua the son of Nun, and the book of Judges, including Ruth, counted as seventh. And of the other historical books, the first and second books of the Kings^(b) are among the Hebrews one book; also the third and fourth^(c) one book. And in like manner, the first and second of Chronicles are with them one book; and the first and second of Esdras^(d) are counted one. Esther is the twelfth book; and these are the historical writings. But those which are written in verse are five, Job, and the book of Psalms, and Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs, which is the seventeenth book. And after these come the five prophetic books; of the Twelve Prophets one book, of Isaiah one, of Jeremiah one, including Baruch and Lamentations and the Epistle; then Ezekiel, and the book of Daniel, the twenty-second of the Old Testament.

Then of the New Testament there are four Gospels only, for the rest have false titles and are harmful. The Manichaeans also wrote a Gospel according to Thomas, which being anointed with the fragrance of the name 'Gospel' destroys the souls of those who are rather simple-minded. Receive also the Acts of the twelve apostles; and in addition to these the seven catholic epistles of James, Peter, John, and Jude; and as a seal upon them all, and the latest work of disciples, the fourteen epistles of Paul. But let all the rest be put aside in a secondary rank. And whatever books are not read in the churches, do not read these even by yourself, as you have already heard me say. Thus much of these subjects.

^(a) Of the Septuagint.

^(b) That is, what we call First and Second Samuel.

^(c) That is, what we call First and Second Kings.

^(d) That is, Ezra and Nehemiah.

Hilary of Poitiers (about A.D. 360).

Hilary of Poitiers was a bishop of that city (in Gaul). He lists only the books of the Hebrew canon, but mentions that some add *Tobit* and *Judith*.

There are twenty-two books of the Old Testament because this corresponds with the number of their [Hebrew] letters. They are counted thus according to old tradition: the books of Moses are five, Joshua son of Nun the sixth, Judges and Ruth the seventh, first and second Kings^(a) the eighth, third and fourth [Kings]^(b) the ninth, the two of Chronicles make ten . . . Ezra the eleventh, the book of Psalms twelfth, of Solomon the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs are thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth, the Twelve Prophets sixteenth, then Isaiah and Jeremiah (with Lamentations and the Epistle^(c)) and Daniel and Ezekiel and Job and Esther complete the number of the books at twenty-two. To this some add Tobit and Judith to make twenty-four books, according to the number of the Greek letters, which is the language used among Hebrews and Greeks gathered in Rome . . .

^(a) That is, what we call First and Second Samuel.

^(b) That is, what we call First and Second Kings.

^(c) Like Origen, Hilary lists the Epistle without Baruch, and may have meant "the Epistle" to refer to both together.

The Cheltenham List (about A.D. 360).

The **Cheltenham list** is a list contained in a tenth-century Latin manuscript of miscellaneous content, probably from Africa. The English text below is from Metzger.^(a)

A catalog of the Old Testament is given as follows:

Genesis	Ruth	Maccabees (I, II)	Solomon ^(b)
Exodus	I Kingdoms	Job	Major Prophets:
Numbers	II Kingdoms	Tobit	Isaiah
Leviticus	III Kingdoms	Esther	Jeremiah
Deuteronomy	IV Kingdoms	Judith	Daniel
Joshua	Chronicles (I, II)	Psalms	Ezekiel
Judges			Twelve Prophets
And the catalog of the New Testament:		Epistles of Paul, 13 in number ^(c)	
Four Gospels:		The Acts of the Apostles, 3600 lines.	
Matthew, 2700 lines		The Apocalypse, 1800 lines	
Mark, 1700 lines		Three epistles of John, 350 lines	
John, 1800 lines		one only ^(d)	
Luke, 3300 lines		Two epistles of Peter, 300 lines	
All the lines make 10,000 lines ^(e)		one only	

Since the index of lines in the city of Rome is not clearly given, and elsewhere also through avarice for gain they do not preserve it in full, I have gone through the books singly, counting sixteen syllables to the line, and have appended to every book the number of the Virgilian hexameters.

^(a) See W. Sanday, "The Cheltenham List of the Canonical Books of the New Testament and of the Writings of Cyprian," *Studia Biblica et Ecclesiastica*, III (Oxford, 1891), pp. 217-325.

^(b) Probably to include the Wisdom of Solomon.

^(c) Excluding Hebrews.

^(d) "one only" under the line probably expresses the opinion of the copyist against the canonicity of 2 and 3 John. Likewise with 2 Peter below.

^(e) This total is incorrect. The sum of the above is 9500.

Council of Laodicea (about A.D. 363).

Council of Laodicea. The authenticity of this list of canonical books has been doubted by many scholars because it is absent from various manuscripts containing the decrees of the regional (Galatian) Council. The list may have been added later. On the omission of Revelation see [Cyril of Jerusalem](#). The English text below is from Metzger.

Canon 59. Let no private psalms nor any uncanonical books be read in church, but only the canonical ones of the New and Old Testament.

Canon 60.^(a) It is proper to recognize as many books as these: of the Old Testament, 1. the Genesis of the world; 2. the Exodus from Egypt; 3. Leviticus; 4. Numbers; 5. Deuteronomy; 6. Joshua the son of Nun; 7. Judges and Ruth; 8. Esther; 9. First and Second Kings;^(b) 10. Third and Fourth Kings;^(c) 11. First and Second Chronicles; 12. First and Second Ezra;^(d) 13. the book of one hundred and fifty Psalms; 14. the Proverbs of Solomon; 15. Ecclesiastes; 16. Song of Songs; 17. Job; 18. the Twelve [minor] Prophets; 19. Isaiah; 20. Jeremiah and Baruch, Lamentations and the Epistle [of Jeremiah]; 21. Ezekiel; 22. Daniel. And the books of the New Testament: 4 Gospels, according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; the Acts of the Apostles; seven catholic epistles, namely, 1 of James, 2 of Peter, 3 of John, 1 of Jude; fourteen epistles of Paul, 1 to the Romans, 2 to the Corinthians, 1 to the Galatians, 1 to the Ephesians, 1 to the Philippians, 1 to the Colossians, 2 to the Thessalonians, 1 to the Hebrews, 2 to Timothy, 1 to Titus, and 1 to Philemon.

^(a) The absence of Canon 60 from a variety of manuscripts makes it probable that it is a somewhat later addition, clarifying Canon 59.

^(b) That is, what we call First and Second Samuel.

^(c) That is, what we call First and Second Kings.

^(d) That is, Ezra and Nehemiah.

Athanasius (A.D. 367).

Athanasius was the bishop of Alexandria. His list was published as part of his *Easter Letter* in 367. After the list he declares, "these are the wells of salvation, so that he who thirsts may be satisfied with the sayings in these. Let no one add to these. Let nothing be taken away." The English text below is from Metzger.

From his Thirty-ninth Festal Epistle.

3. In proceeding to make mention of these things, I shall adopt, to commend my undertaking, the pattern of Luke the evangelist, saying on my own account, Forasmuch as some have taken in hand to reduce into order for themselves the books termed Apocryphal, and to mix them up with the divinely inspired Scripture, concerning which we have been fully persuaded, as they who from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word, delivered to the Fathers; it seemed good to me also, having been urged thereto by true brethren, and having learned from the beginning, to set before you the books included in the Canon, and handed down, and accredited as divine; to the end that anyone who has fallen into error may condemn those who have led them astray; and that he who has continued steadfast in purity may again rejoice, having these things brought to his remembrance.

4. 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^(a) being reckoned as one book, and so likewise the third and fourth^(b) as one book. And again, the first and second of the Chronicles are reckoned as one book. Again Ezra, the first and second^(c) 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 [minor prophets] 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.

5. 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.

6. These are the fountains of salvation, that he who thirsts may be satisfied with the living words they contain. In these alone the teaching of godliness is proclaimed. Let no one add to these; let nothing be taken away from them. For concerning these the Lord put to shame the Sadducees, and said, Ye do err, not knowing the Scriptures. And he reproved the Jews, saying, Search the Scriptures, for these are they that testify of me.

7. But for the sake of greater exactness I add this also, writing under obligation, as it were. There are other books besides these, indeed not received as canonical but having been appointed by our fathers to be read to those just approaching and wishing to be instructed in the word of godliness: Wisdom of Solomon, Wisdom of Sirach, Esther, Judith, Tobit, and that which is called the Teaching of the Apostles, and the Shepherd. But the former, my brethren, are included in the Canon, the latter being merely read; nor is there any place a mention of

secret writings. But such are the invention of heretics, who indeed write them whenever they wish, bestowing upon them their approval, and assigning to them a date, that so, using them as if they were ancient writings, they find a means by which to lead astray the simple-minded.

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- (a) That is, what we call First and Second Samuel.
 - (b) That is, what we call First and Second Kings.
 - (c) That is, Ezra and Nehemiah.

Gregory of Nazianzus (about A.D. 380).

Gregory of Nazianzus was bishop of Constantinople from 378 to 382. On the omission of Revelation see [Cyril of Jerusalem](#). The English text below is from Metzger.

From his Poems i. xii. 5 ff.^(a)

Let not other books seduce your mind: for many malignant writings have been disseminated. The historical books are twelve in number by the Hebrew count, [then follow the names of the Old Testament books arranged as in Cyril of Jerusalem, but omitting Esther and Baruch]. But now count also the books of the New Mystery: Matthew indeed wrote for the Hebrews the miracles of Christ, and Mark for Italy, Luke for Greece, John, the great preacher for all, walking in heaven. Then the Acts of the wise apostles, and fourteen epistles of Paul, and seven catholic epistles, of which James is one, two of Peter, three of John again. And Jude's is the seventh. You have all. If there is any besides these, it is not among the genuine books.

^(a)Written in iambic verse.

Amphilocius of Iconium (about A.D. 380).

Amphilocius of Iconium was bishop of Iconium in Galatia. The English text below is from Metzger.

From his lambics for Seleucus, sometimes found among the poems of Gregory of Nazianzus.

We should know that not every book which is called Scripture is to be received as a safe guide. For some are tolerably sound and others are more than doubtful. Therefore the books which the inspiration of God has given I will number. [Then follow the names of the Old Testament books as in Gregory of Nazianzus, but concluding with "some add Esther."] It is time for me to speak of the books of the New Testament. Receive only four evangelists: Matthew, then Mark, to whom, having added Luke as a third, count John as fourth in time, but first in height of his teachings, for I call this one rightly a son of thunder, sounding out most greatly with the word of God. And receive also the second book of Luke, that of the catholic Acts of the apostles. Add next the chosen vessel, the herald of the Gentiles, the apostle Paul, having written wisely to the churches twice seven epistles: to the Romans one, to which one must add two to the Corinthians, that to the Galatians, and that to the Ephesians, after which that in Philippi, then the one written to the Colossians, two to the Thessalonians, two to Timothy, and to Titus and to Philemon, one each, and one to the Hebrews. But some say the one to the Hebrews is spurious, not saying well, for the grace is genuine. Well, what remains? Of the catholic epistles some say we must receive seven, but others say only three should be received that of James, one, and one of Peter, and those of John, one. And some receive three of John, and besides these, two of Peter, and that of Jude a seventh. And again the Revelation of John, some approve, but the most say it is spurious. This is perhaps the most reliable canon of the divinely inspired Scriptures

The "Apostolic Canons" (about A.D. 380).

The **Apostolic Canons** was one of many additions made by the final editor of an ancient Syrian book of church order called *The Apostolic Constitutions*. The whole document purports to be from the apostles, but this imposture is not taken seriously by any scholar today. Nevertheless, the work is useful as evidence for the opinions of a part of the Syrian churches towards the end of the fourth century. The list of canonical books was probably added about the year 380. On the omission of Revelation see [Cyril of Jerusalem](#). The English text below is from Metzger.

Canon 85. Let the following books be esteemed venerable and holy by all of you, both clergy and laity. Of the Old Testament: the five books of Moses Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; one of Joshua the son of Nun; one of the Judges; one of Ruth; four of the Kings;^(a) two of the Chronicles; two of Ezra;^(b) one of Esther; one of Judith; three of the Maccabees; one of Job; the one hundred and fifty Psalms; three books of Solomon: Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs; the sixteen of the Prophets; and see that those newly come to discipleship become acquainted with the Wisdom of the learned Sirach.^(c) And ours, that is, of the New Testament, are the four Gospels, of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John; the fourteen epistles of Paul; two epistles of Peter; three of John; one of James; one of Jude; two epistles of Clement; and the Constitutions dedicated to you, the bishops, by me, Clement, in eight books, which it is not appropriate to make public before all, because of the mysteries contained in them; and the Acts of us, the Apostles.

^(a) That is, what we call First and Second Samuel and First and Second Kings.

^(b) Ezra and Nehemiah.

^(c) That is, Ecclesiasticus.

Rufinus of Aquileia (about A.D. 380).

Rufinus was an elder in the church in Aquileia (northeast Italy), and a friend of Jerome. See Latin text in Westcott, appendix D.

From his Exposition of the Creed.

36. ... This then is the Holy Ghost, who in the Old Testament inspired the Law and the Prophets, in the New the Gospels and the Epistles. For which reason the apostle also says, All scripture given by inspiration of God is profitable for instruction. And therefore it seems proper in this place to enumerate, as we have learnt from the tradition of our fathers, the books of the New and of the Old Testament, which, according to the tradition of our fathers, are believed to have been inspired by the Holy Ghost, and have been handed down to the churches of Christ.

37. Of the Old Testament, therefore, first of all there have been handed down five books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; then Joshua the son of Nun; the book of Judges together with Ruth; then four books of Kings,^(a) which the Hebrews reckon two; the book of Omissions,^(b) which is entitled the book of Days [Chronicles], and two books of Ezra,^(c) which the Hebrews reckon one, and Esther; of the Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; moreover of the Twelve [minor] Prophets, one book; Job also and the Psalms of David, each one book. Solomon gave three books to the churches, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Songs. These comprise the books of the Old Testament. Of the New Testament there are four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; the Acts of the Apostles, which was written by Luke; fourteen epistles of the apostle Paul, two of the apostle Peter, one of James, the brother of the Lord and an apostle, one of Jude, three of John, and the Revelation of John. These are the books which the fathers have enclosed within the canon; from these they would have us bring forth the proofs of our faith.

38. But it should also be known that there are other books which our fathers call not "canonical" but "ecclesiastical," that is, the Wisdom of Solomon, and another Wisdom of the son of Sirach, which the Latins called by the title Ecclesiasticus, designating not the author of the book but its character. To the same class belong the book of Tobit and the book of Judith, and the books of Maccabees. With the New Testament there is the little book which is called the Shepherd of Hermas, and that which is called The Two Ways^(d) and the Judgment of Peter.^(e) They were willing to have all these read in the churches but not brought forward for the confirmation of doctrine. The other writings they named "apocrypha,"^(f) which they would not have read in the churches. These are the traditions which the fathers have handed down to us, which, as I said, I have thought it opportune to set forth in this place, for the instruction of those who are being taught the first elements of the Church and of the Faith, that they may know from what fountains of the Word of God their draughts must be taken.

^(a) That is, what we call First and Second Samuel and First and Second Kings.

^(b) First and Second Chronicles, called "Omissions" in the Septuagint because the books supplied information which was omitted in First and Second Kings.

^(c) That is, Ezra and Nehemiah.

^(d) A section of the Epistle of Barnabas.

^(e) Probably referring to the Apocalypse of Peter.

^(f) Here "apocrypha" is used not in the modern Protestant sense but as a designation for heretical books.

Epiphanius (about A.D. 385).

Epiphanius was bishop of Salamis (isle of Cyprus) from 367 to 402. See Greek text in Westcott, appendix D.

From the *Panarion* viii. 6.

[He names the Old Testament books thus: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua son of Nun, Judges, Ruth, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, First Kings, Second Kings, Third Kings, Fourth Kings,^(a) First Chronicles, Second Chronicles, the Twelve Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah with his Lamentations and Epistle and Baruch, Ezekiel, Daniel, First Esdras, Second Esdras,^(b) Esther.] These are the twenty-seven books given by God to the Jews. But they are to be counted as twenty-two, the number of the Hebrew letters, since ten books are doubled and counted as five . . . There are also two other books near to them in substance, the Wisdom of Sirach and the Wisdom of Solomon, besides some other apocryphal books. All these holy books also taught Judaism the things kept by the law until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

From the *Panarion* lxxvi. 5.

If you^(c) had been begotten by the Holy Spirit and instructed in the prophets and apostles, you must have gone through from the beginning of the Genesis of the world until the times of Esther in twenty-seven books of the Old Testament, which are also numbered as twenty-two, also in the four holy Gospels, and in fourteen epistles of the holy apostle Paul, and in the writings which come before these, including the Acts of the Apostles in their times and the catholic epistles of James, Peter, John and Jude, and in the Revelation of John, and in the Wisdom books, I mean those of Solomon and of the son of Sirach^(d) in short, all the divine writings. . .

^(a) That is, what we call First and Second Samuel and First and Second Kings.

^(b) That is, what we call Nehemiah.

^(c) The rhetorical address is to the Arian writer Aetius.

^(d) That is, the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus

Jerome (about A.D. 390).

Jerome was born near Aquileia, lived in Rome for a time, and spent most of his later life as a monk in Syria and Palestine. He was the most learned churchman of his time, and was commissioned by the bishop of Rome to produce an authoritative Latin version (the *Vulgate*). See Latin text in Westcott, appendix D.

Preface to the Books of the Kings (391). ^(a)

. . . As, then, there are twenty-two elementary characters by means of which we write in Hebrew all we say, and the compass of the human voice is contained within their limits, so we reckon twenty-two books, by which, as by the alphabet of the doctrine of God, a righteous man is instructed in tender infancy, and, as it were, while still in the breast. The first of these books is called *Bresith*, to which we give the name Genesis. The second, *Elle Smoth*, which bears the name Exodus; the third, *Vaiecra*, that is Leviticus; the fourth, *Vaiedabber*, which we call Numbers; the fifth, *Elle Addabarim*, which is entitled Deuteronomy. These are the five books of Moses, which they properly call *Thorath*, that is, 'Law.' The second class is composed of the Prophets, and they begin with Jesus the son of Nun, who among them is called *Joshua* the son of Nun. Next in the series is *Sophtim*, that is, the book of Judges; and in the same book they include Ruth, because the events narrated occurred in the days of the Judges. Then comes *Samuel*, which we call first and second Kings. The fourth is *Malachim*, that is, Kings, which is contained in the third and fourth volumes of Kings. And it is far better to say *Malachim*, Kings, than *Malachoth*, Kingdoms. For the author does not describe the kingdoms of many nations, but that of one people, the people of Israel, which is comprised in the twelve tribes. The fifth is Isaiah, the sixth Jeremiah, the seventh, Ezekiel, the eighth is the book of the Twelve Prophets, which is called among the Jews *Thare Asra*. To the third class belong the Hagiographa, of which the first book begins with Job, the second with David, whose writings they divide into five parts and comprise in one volume of Psalms; the third is Solomon, in three books, Proverbs, which they call Parables, that is *Masaloth*, Ecclesiastes, that is *Coeleth*, the Song of Songs, which they denote by the title *Sir Assirim*; the sixth is Daniel; the seventh, *Dabre Aiamim*, that is, 'Words of Days,' which we may more expressively call a chronicle of the whole of the sacred history, the book that amongst us is called first and second Chronicles; the eighth, Ezra, which itself is likewise divided amongst Greeks and Latins into two books; the ninth is Esther. And so there are twenty-two books of the Old Testament; that is, five of Moses, eight of the Prophets, nine of the Hagiographa, though some include Ruth and *Kinoth* [Lamentations] amongst the Hagiographa, and think that these books ought to be reckoned separately; we should thus have twenty-four books of the old law. And these the Apocalypse of John represents by the twenty-four elders who adore the Lamb and with downcast looks offer their crowns, while in their presence stand the four living creatures with eyes before and behind, that is, looking to the past and the future, and with unwearied voice crying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, who wast, and art, and art to come. This preface to the Scriptures may serve as a "helmeted" introduction to all the books which we turn from Hebrew into Latin, so that we may be assured that what is not found in our list must be placed amongst the Apocryphal writings. Wisdom, therefore, which generally bears the name of Solomon, and the book of Jesus son of Sirach, and Judith, and Tobias, and the Shepherd, are not in the canon. The first book of Maccabees I have found to be Hebrew, the second is Greek, as can be proved from the very style.

Letter to Paulinus, bishop of Nola (394).

The New Testament I will deal briefly with. Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John are the Lord's team of four, the true cherubim (which means "abundance of knowledge"), endowed with eyes throughout their whole body; they glitter little sparks, they flash to and fro like lightning, their legs are straight and directed upward, their backs are winged, to fly in all directions. They are interlocked and hold on to one another, they roll along like wheels within wheels, they go to whatever point the breath of the Holy Spirit guides them.^(b) The apostle Paul writes to seven churches (for the eighth such letter, that to the Hebrews, is placed outside the number by most); he instructs Timothy and Titus; he intercedes with Philemon for his runaway slave. Regarding Paul I prefer to remain silent than to write only a few things. The Acts of the Apostles seem to relate a bare history and to describe the childhood of the infant church; but if we know that their writer was Luke the physician, "whose praise is in the gospel,"^(c) we shall observe likewise that all their words are medicine for the sick soul. The apostles James, Peter, John and Jude produced seven epistles both mystical and concise, both short and long that is, short in words but long in thought so that there are few who are not deeply impressed by reading them. The Apocalypse of John has as many mysteries as it has words. I have said too little in comparison with what the book deserves; all praise of it is inadequate, for in every one of its words manifold meanings lie hidden. I beg of you, dear brother, to live among these books, to meditate upon them, to know nothing else, to seek nothing else . . .

Letter to Dardanus, prefect of Gaul (414).

This must be said to our people, that the epistle which is entitled "To the Hebrews" is accepted as the apostle Paul's not only by the churches of the east but by all church writers in the Greek language of earlier times, although many judge it to be by Barnabas or by Clement. It is of no great moment who the author is, since it is the work of a churchman and receives recognition day by day in the public reading of the churches. If the custom of the Latins does not receive it among the canonical scriptures, neither, by the same liberty, do the churches of the Greeks accept John's Apocalypse. Yet we accept them both, not following the custom of the present time but the precedent of early writers, who generally make free use of testimonies from both works. And this they do, not as they are wont on occasion to quote from apocryphal writings, as indeed they use examples from pagan literature, but treating them as canonical and churchly works.

^(a) Also known as the *Prologus Galeatus*, "Helmeted Preface."

^(b) Ezekiel 1:7-21.

^(c) 2 Corinthians 8:18.

Augustine (about A.D. 397).

Augustine was bishop of Hippo (in the Roman colony on the northern coast of western Africa). He was the first major figure in the Church to set forth a list which included all of the disputed Old Testament books without making any distinction between the fully canonical Hebrew books and the lesser books derived from the Septuagint. See Latin text in Westcott, appendix D.

From his *On Christian Doctrine*. Book ii, chapter 8^(a)

. . . The most skillful interpreter of the sacred writings, then, will be he who in the first place has read them all and retained them in his knowledge, if not yet with full understanding, still with such knowledge as reading gives those of them, at least, that are called "canonical." For he will read the others with greater safety when built up in the belief of the truth, so that they will not take first possession of a weak mind, nor, cheating it with dangerous falsehoods and delusions, fill it with prejudices adverse to a sound understanding. Now, in regard to the canonical Scriptures, he must follow the judgment of the greater number of catholic churches; and among these, of course, a high place must be given to such as have been thought worthy to be the seat of an apostle and to receive epistles. Accordingly, among the canonical Scriptures he will judge according to the following standard: to prefer those that are received by all the catholic churches to those which some do not receive. Among those again, which are not received by all, he will prefer such as have the sanction of the greater number and those of greater authority, to such as are held by the smaller number and those of less authority. If, however, he shall find that some books are held by the greater number of churches, and others by the churches of greater authority (though this is not a very likely thing to happen), I think that in such a case the authority on the two sides is to be looked upon as equal.

Now the whole canon of Scripture on which we say this judgment is to be exercised, is contained in the following books: Five books of Moses, that is, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; one book of Joshua the son of Nun; one of Judges; one short book called Ruth, which seems rather to belong to the beginning of Kings; next, four books of Kings,^(b) and two of Chronicles, these last not following one another, but running parallel, so to speak, and going over the same ground. The books now mentioned are history, which contains a connected narrative of the times, and follows the order of the events. There are other books which seem to follow no regular order, and are connected neither with the order of the preceding books nor with one another, such as Job, and Tobias, and Esther, and Judith, and the two books of Maccabees, and the two of Ezra,^(c) which last look more like a sequel to the continuous regular history which terminates with the books of Kings and Chronicles. Next are the Prophets, in which there is one book of the Psalms of David; and three books of Solomon, viz., Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes. For two books, one called Wisdom, and the other Ecclesiasticus, are ascribed to Solomon from a certain resemblance of style, but the most likely opinion is that they were written by Jesus the son of Sirach. Still they are to be reckoned among the prophetic books, since they have attained recognition as being authoritative. The remainder are the books which are strictly called the Prophets: twelve separate books of the prophets which are connected with one another, and having never been disjoined, are reckoned as one book; the names of these prophets are as follows: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; then there are the four greater prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel. The authority of the Old Testament is contained within the limits of these forty-four books.

That of the New Testament, again, is contained within the following: Four books of the Gospel, according to Matthew, according to Mark, according to Luke, according to John;

fourteen epistles of the apostle Paul one to the Romans, two to the Corinthians, one to the Galatians, to the Ephesians, to the Philippians, two to the Thessalonians, one to the Colossians, two to Timothy, one to Titus, to Philemon, to the Hebrews; two of Peter; three of John; one of Jude; and one of James; one book of the Acts of the Apostles; and one of the Revelation of John.

^(a)Translated by J.F. Shaw in *Augustine* (Chicago: Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1952).

^(b)That is, First and Second Samuel and First and Second Kings.

^(c)That is, Ezra and Nehemiah.

Third Council of Carthage (A.D. 397).

The **Third Council of Carthage** was not a general council but a regional council of African bishops, much under the influence of Augustine. The English text below is from Metzger.

Canon 24. Besides the canonical Scriptures, nothing shall be read in church under the name of divine Scriptures. Moreover, the canonical Scriptures are these: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua the son of Nun, Judges, Ruth, the four books of the Kings,^(a) the two books of Chronicles, Job, the Psalms of David, five books of Solomon,^(b) the book of the Twelve [minor] Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Tobias, Judith, Esther, the two books of Ezra,^(c) and the two books of the Maccabees. The books of the New Testament: the Gospels, four books; the Acts of the Apostles, one book; the epistles of the apostle Paul, thirteen; of the same to the Hebrews, one epistle; of Peter, two; of John the apostle, three; of James, one; of Jude, one; the Revelation of John. Concerning the confirmation of this canon, the Church across the sea shall be consulted. On the anniversaries of martyrs, their acts shall also be read.^(d)

^(a) That is, First and Second Samuel and First and Second Kings.

^(b) The five books ascribed to Solomon in the Septuagint are Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom of Solomon, and the Psalms of Solomon.

^(c) That is, Ezra and Nehemiah.

^(d) Text according to Metzger. According to Zahn (*Geschichte*, ii, pp. 252-3), in 419 another council held at Carthage gave the concluding words in the following form: "the Revelation of John, one book. Let this be sent to our brother and fellow-bishop, Boniface [of Rome], and to the other bishops of those parts, that they may confirm this canon, for these are the things that we have received from our fathers to be read in church." And so in Westcott.

Innocent I (A.D. 405).

Innocent I was bishop of Rome. His canon list appears in a letter to the bishop of Toulouse. See Latin text in Westcott, appendix D.

Letter to Exsuperius, bishop of Toulouse.

... Five books of Moses, and Joshua the son of Nun, and Judges, and the four books of Kings^(a) together with Ruth, sixteen books of the Prophets, five books of Solomon,^(b) and the Psalms. Also of the historical books, one book of Job, one of Tobit, one of Esther, one of Judith, two of Maccabees, two of Ezra,^(c) two of Chronicles. And of the New Testament: of the Gospels four. Epistles of the apostle Paul thirteen.^(d) Epistles of John three. Epistles of Peter two. Epistle of Jude. Epistle of James. Acts of the Apostles. John's Apocalypse.

But the rest of the books, which appear under the name of Matthias or of James the Less, or under the name of Peter and John (which were written by a certain Leucius), or under the name of Andrew (which were written by the philosophers Xenocharides and Leonidas), or under the name of Thomas, and whatever others there may be, you should know they are not only to be rejected but also condemned.

^(a) That is, First and Second Samuel and First and Second Kings.

^(b) The five books ascribed to Solomon in the Septuagint are Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom of Solomon, and the Psalms of Solomon.

^(c) That is, Ezra and Nehemiah.

^(d) Excluding Hebrews.

Codex Claromontanus (about A.D. 400).

The **Codex Claromontanus**. A stichometric catalog from the third century is inserted between Philemon and Hebrews in this sixth century Greek-Latin manuscript of the epistles of Paul. The list does not have Hebrews, but neither does it have Philippians and 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and so many scholars have supposed that these four books dropped out by an error of transcription, the scribe's eye jumping from the end of the word *ephesious* (Ephesians) to the end of *ebraious* (Hebrews). Besides the books indicated on the table the list includes the apocryphal *Acts of Paul*. The English text below is from Metzger.

Stichometric list^(a) appearing between Philemon and Hebrews.

Genesis has lines 4500	first book 2300
Exodus 3700	second book 2300
Leviticus 2800	fourth book 1000
Numbers 3650	Judith 1300
Deuteronomy 3300	Esdras 1500 ^(d)
Joshua of Nun 2000	Esther 1000
Judges 2000	Job 1600
Ruth 250	Tobias 1000
Kings: ^(b)	Gospels:
first book 2500	Matthew 2600
second book 2000	John 2000
third book 2600	Mark 1600
fourth book 2400	Luke 2900
Psalms of David 500	Epistles of Paul:
Proverbs 1600	To Romans 1040
Ecclesiastes 600	To Corinthians 1 1060
Song of Songs 300	To Corinthians 2 70 ^(e)
Wisdom	To Galatians 350
Wisdom of Jesus 2500 ^(c)	To Ephesians 365 ^(f)
Twelve Prophets:	To Timothy 1 209
Hosea 800	To Timothy 2 289
Amos 410	To Titus 140
Micah 310	To Colossians 251
Joe 190	To Philemon 50
Obadiah 70	-To [sic] Peter 1 200 ^(g)
Jonah 150	To [sic] Peter 2 140
Nahum 140	Of James 220
Habakkuk 160	Of John 1220
Zephaniah 160	Of John 220
Haggai 110	Of John 320
Zechariah 660	Of Jude 60
Malachi 200	-Of Barnabas 850
Isaiah 3600	Revelation of John 1200
Jeremiah 4070	Acts of the Apostles 2600

Ezekiel 3600	-Shepherd 4000
Daniel 1600	-Acts of Paul 3560
Maccabees:	-Revelation of Peter 270

- ^(a) A "stichometry" is a table which gives the number of stichoi or lines of text (counting usually sixteen syllables as a line) for any series of books. This information was used by ancient scribes in quickly checking manuscripts for completeness.
- ^(b) First and Second Samuel and First and Second Kings.
- ^(c) Ecclesiasticus.
- ^(d) Ezra and Nehemiah.
- ^(e) The number of lines given here is far too low. Probably the first digit has been lost in transcription.
- ^(f) The omission of Philippians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and Hebrews is probably due to scribal error, the scribe's eye jumping from the end of the word *ephesious* (Ephesians) to the end of *ebraious* (Hebrews).
- ^(g) The dash before 1 Peter is probably the scribe's paragraph mark, to indicate a new section after Paul's epistles. The other four dashes further down may indicate the scribe's opinion against the canonicity of the works.

Decree of Gelasius (about A.D. 550).

The **Decree of Gelasius** is traditionally ascribed to Gelasius, bishop of Rome from 492 to 496, and thought to be promulgated by him as president of a council of 70 bishops in Rome, but now regarded by most scholars as spurious, and probably composed by an Italian churchman in the sixth century. See Latin text in Westcott, appendix D.

1.	2.	
Genesis one book	Isaiah one book	Zephaniah one book
Exodus one book	Jeremiah one book	Haggai one book
Leviticus one book	Ezekiel one book	Zechariah one book
Numbers one book	Daniel one book	Malachi one book
Deuteronomy one book	Hosea one book	
Joshua of Nun one book	Joel one book	3.
Judges one book	Amos one book	Job one book
Chronicles two books ^(a)	Obadiah one book	Tobias one book
150 Psalms one book	Jonah one book	Esther one book
Solomon three books	Micah one book	Judith one book
Wisdom one book	Nahum one book	Ezra two books ^(b)
Ecclesiasticus one book	Habakkuk one book	Maccabees two books

4. The order of the scriptures of the New Testament, which the holy and catholic Roman church accepts and venerates:

Gospels four books:	To the Colossians one epistle.
According to Matthew one book.	To Timothy two epistles.
According to Mark one book.	To Titus one epistle.
According to Luke one book.	To Philemon one epistle.
According to John one book.	To the Hebrews one epistle.
Also: of the Acts of the Apostles one book.	6. Also: John's Apocalypse one book.
5. Epistles of the apostle Paul fourteen:	Also: canonical [sic] epistles seven:
To the Romans one epistle.	Of the apostle Peter two epistles.
To the Corinthians two epistles.	Of the apostle James one epistle.
To the Ephesians one epistle.	Of the apostle John one epistle.
To the Thessalonians two epistles.	Of the other John, the elder, two epistles.
To the Galatians one epistle.	Of the apostle Jude the Zealot ^(c) -one epistle.
To the Philippians one epistle.	The Canon of the New Testament ends.

The remaining writings which have been compiled or been recognized by heretics or schismatics the catholic and apostolic Roman church does not in any way receive; of these we have thought it right to cite below some which have been handed down and which are to be avoided by catholics. [There follows a long list of works, including the Shepherd of Hermas, and all writings of Tertullian] . . . and whatever disciples of heresy and of the heretics or schismatics, whose names we have scarcely preserved, have taught or compiled,

we declare to be not merely rejected but excluded from the whole Roman catholic and apostolic church, and its authors and their adherents to be damned in the inextricable shackles of anathema for ever.

- (a) The books of Samuel and Kings have been carelessly omitted from the list.
- (b) Ezra and Nehemiah.
- (c) An apostle "Judas the Zealot" (not Judas Iscariot) is named in some Old Latin manuscripts in Mat. 10:3.

John of Damascus (about 730)

John of Damascus was an eminent theologian of the Eastern Church, born in Damascus, but a monk in Jerusalem for most of his adult life. His list is given in his *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, Book IV, Chapter XVII. The English translation below is from *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series Two, Volume IX. (reprint Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955). See the Greek text in Wescott, Appendix D.

Concerning Scripture

... Observe, further, that there are two and twenty books of the Old Testament, one for each letter of the Hebrew tongue. For there are twenty-two letters of which five are double, and so they come to be twenty-seven. For the letters Caph, Mere, Nun, Pe, Sade are double. And thus the number of the books in this way is twenty-two, but is found to be twenty-seven because of the double character of five. For Ruth is joined on to Judges, and the Hebrews count them one book: the first and second books of Kings are counted one: and so are the third and fourth books of Kings: and also the first and second of Paraleipomena: and the first and second of Esdra. In this way, then, the books are collected together in four Pentateuchs and two others remain over, to form thus the canonical books. Five of them are of the Law, viz. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. This which is the code of the Law, constitutes the first Pentateuch. Then comes another Pentateuch, the so-called Grapheia, or as they are called by some, the Hagiographa, which are the following: Jesus the Son of Nave, Judges along with Ruth, first and second Kings, which are one book, third and fourth Kings, which are one book, and the two books of the Paraleipomena which are one book. This is the second Pentateuch. The third Pentateuch is the books in verse, viz. Job, Psalms, Proverbs of Solomon, Ecclesiastes of Solomon and the Song of Songs of Solomon. The fourth Pentateuch is the Prophetical books, viz the twelve prophets constituting one book, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel. Then come the two books of Esdra made into one, and Esther. There are also the Panaretus, that is the Wisdom of Solomon, and the Wisdom of Jesus, which was published in Hebrew by the father of Sirach, and afterwards translated into Greek by his grandson, Jesus, the Son of Sirach. These are virtuous and noble, but are not counted nor were they placed in the ark.

The New Testament contains four gospels, that according to Matthew, that according to Mark, that according to Luke, that according to John: the Acts of the Holy Apostles by Luke the Evangelist: seven catholic epistles, viz. one of James, two of Peter, three of John, one of Jude: fourteen letters of the Apostle Paul: the Revelation of John the Evangelist: the Canons of the holy apostles, by Clement.

Others

Report of Junilius. (about A.D. 550) An African bishop of the sixth century. After visiting the Syrian churches he wrote a work describing their practices, in which his list is given. See Latin text in Westcott, appendix D.

The Stichometry of Nicephorus. (about A.D. 550) Given as an appendix to the *Chronography of Nicephorus of Constantinople*, to which it was probably attached about the middle of the ninth century. It is, however, considerably older than this and may date back to about the sixth century. It gives a list of canonical and apocryphal books of the Old and New Testaments together with the number of *stichoi* or lines which each book contained.

The Synopsis of Sacred Scripture. (about A.D. 550) Traditionally ascribed to Athanasius, but most scholars now agree that it cannot be earlier than the sixth century.

Cassiodorus. (about A.D. 560) The learned founder of two monasteries near Squillace (southern Italy). His list appears in the encyclopedia of sacred literature he compiled for his monks, in which he also respectfully gives the catalog of Jerome.

Leontius. (about A.D. 590) A writer against heresies. He resided first in Byzantium and later entered a monastery near Jerusalem. His list includes only the books of the Hebrew canon.

Isadore of Seville. (about A.D. 625) Archbishop of Seville (Spain), and founder of a school in that city. His list appears in an encyclopedia he compiled for his students. See Latin text in Westcott, appendix D.

List of the Sixty Books. (about A.D. 650) Found attached to certain manuscripts of the *Questions and Responses of Anastasius of Sinai* (c. 650) and is probably from about the same time.

Peshitta Version. (about A.D. 400) The old Syriac version did not include the Second and Third Epistles of John, the Second Epistle of Peter, the Epistle of Jude, and the Revelation of John. These were not generally received as Scripture in the Syrian churches until the ninth century.