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Dates of Books in the B’rit Chadashah

James written between **45** and **48**

First Missionary Journey:
Galatians written in **48** from Antioch

Second Missionary Journey:
First Thessalonians written in **50** from Corinth

Second Thessalonians written in **50** from Corinth

Third Missionary Journey:
First Corinthians written in **55** from Ephesus

Second Corinthians written in **56** from Macedonia

Romans written in **57** from Corinth

Mark was written around **58-59** from Rome

Paul’s Journey to Rome: Prison Letters
Ephesians written in **60** from Rome

Colossians written in **60** from Rome

Philemon written in **60** from Rome

Luke written in the early 60s either **60** or **61**

First John written between **60** and **65**

Second John written between **60** and **65**

Third John written between **60** and **65**

Philippians written in **61** from Rome

Acts written around **62** from Rome

Fourth Missionary Journey: Pastoral Letters
First Timothy written in **64** from Macedonia

Titus written in **64** from Macedonia

First Peter written late **64** or early **65**

Hebrews written **64-65**

Matthew written around **65** from Palestine or Syrian Antioch

Jude written around **66**

Second Timothy written in **67** from Rome

Second Peter written around **67-68**

John written around **80**

Revelation was written around **95-96**

As long as **the apostles** were alive, all the gifts of **the Spirit** were used. But eventually all **the apostles** were martyred except for **John** who wrote **Revelation**, and **the canon of Scripture was closed, and the necessity for the gifts authenticating the apostles also ended. John** would write in the last chapter of the last book in the Bible: **I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this scroll: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to that person the plagues described in this scroll. And if anyone takes words away from this scroll of prophecy, God will take away from that person any share in the tree of life and in the Holy City, which are described in this scroll (Revelation 22:18-19). At that time, the Church was established and *some* of the spiritual gifts ceased to be needed or used.**

Determining when the Bible was written poses challenges because it isn't a single book. It's a collection of 66 books written by more than 40 authors over more than 2,000 years. Therefore, there are two ways to answer the question, "When was the

Bible written?" The first is to identify the original dates for each of the Bible's 66 books. The second, the focus here is to describe how and when all 66 books were collected in a single volume.

We can say with some certainty that the first widespread edition of the Bible was assembled by Jerome around **400 AD**. This manuscript included all 39 books of the Old Testament and the 27 books of the New Testament in the same language: Latin. This edition of the Bible is commonly referred to as the Latin Vulgate. Jerome wasn't the first to select all 66 books we know today as the Bible. He was the first to translate and compile everything into a single volume.

The first step in assembling the Bible involves the 39 books of the Old Testament, also referred to as the TaNaKh. Beginning with Moses, who wrote the first five books of the Bible, these books were written over the centuries by prophets and leaders. By the time of **Jesus** and his disciples, the Hebrew Bible had already been established as 39 books. This was what **Jesus** meant when he referred to "the Scriptures."

After the early church was established, people such as **Matthew** started writing historical records of **Jesus'** life and ministry, which became known as the gospels. Church leaders such as **Paul** and **Peter** wanted to provide direction for the churches they established, so **they** wrote letters that were circulated throughout congregations in different regions. We call these the epistles.

A century after the launch of the Church, hundreds of letters and books explained who **Jesus** was and what he did and how to live as his follower. It became clear that some of these writings weren't authentic. Church members began to ask which books should be followed and which should be ignored.

Eventually, Christian church leaders worldwide gathered to answer major questions, including which books should be regarded as "Scripture." These gatherings included the Council of Nicea in **325 AD** and the First Council of Constantinople in **381 AD**, which decided a book should be included in the Bible if it was:

- Written by one of **Jesus' apostles**, someone who was a witness to **Jesus'** ministry, such as **Peter**, or someone who interviewed an **apostle**, like **Luke**.
- Written in the first century AD, meaning that books written long after the events of **Jesus'** life and the first decades of the church weren't included.
- Consistent with other portions of the Bible known to be valid, meaning the

book couldn’t contradict a trusted element of Scripture.

After a few decades of debate, these councils largely settled which books should be included in the Bible. A few years later, all were published by Jerome in a single volume. By the time the first century AD ended, most of the church had agreed on which books should be considered Scripture. The earliest church members took guidance from the writings of **Peter**, **Paul**, **Matthew**, **John**, and others. The later councils and debates were largely useful in weeding out inferior books that claimed the same authority.