

Books of the New Testament

Gospels

Matthew
Mark
Luke
John

Acts of the Apostles

Letters of Paul

Romans
1 & 2 Corinthians
Galatians
Ephesians
Philippians
Colossians
1 & 2 Thessalonians
1 & 2 Timothy
Titus
Philemon

Catholic Letters

Hebrews
James
1 & 2 Peter
1, 2 & 3 John
Jude

The Book of Revelation

The determination of which writings should be included in the Christian canon was a process extending from the 2nd to the 4th century. The criteria for the selection were as follows:

- a. Apostolic: Was it written by an apostle, or by someone close to an apostle?
- b. Catholic: Is the writing widely accepted throughout the church, or does it have only narrow acceptance?
- c. Orthodox: Does the writing agree with the central tenets of the Christian faith that have been passed on throughout the churches from generation to generation?
- d. Traditional usage: Has the writing been used by Christians over a long period of time?

History of the New Testament

| Roman Emperors | Palestinian Rulers | | | Events |
|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| | Kings/High Priests overseen by Roman rulers in Syria: Hyrcanus II (63–40 BC) Antigonus (40–37 BC) | | | Pompey conquers Jerusalem (63 BC) Assassination of Julius Caesar (44 BC) |
| Augustus (27 BC–AD 14) | Herod the Great, King of Israel (37–4 BC) | | | Battle of Actium (31 BC) Temple construction begins (19 BC) Jesus is born (ca. 6–4 BC) |
| | Judea | Galilee | Iturea & Trachonitis | |
| | Archelaus (4 BC–AD 6) | Herod Antipas (4 BC–AD 39) | Herod Philip (4 BC–AD 34) | Herod's kingdom divided among 3 sons |
| Roman Prefects | Judea is made a Roman province (AD 6) | | | |
| Tiberius (AD 14–37) | ... | | | |
| | ... | | | <i>(Most dates below are approximate.)</i> |
| | Pontius Pilate (26–36) | | | Jesus begins his ministry (ca. 28) Jesus is crucified (ca. 30 or 33) Conversion of Saul/Paul (ca. 36) |
| Gaius Caligula (37–41) | ... | Herod Agrippa I (39–44) | Herod Agrippa I (37–44) | Paul's 1 st visit to Jerusalem (ca. 39) Execution of James, brother of John Arrest and escape of Peter |
| | Herod Agrippa I (41–44) | | | |
| Claudius (41–54) | Roman Prefects | | ... | Paul's 1 st missionary journey to southern Asia Minor (48–49) |
| | ... | | ... | Paul's 2 nd visit to Jerusalem (49) Paul's 2 nd missionary journey to Asia Minor, Macedonia, and Achaia (50–52) |
| Nero (54–68) | Felix (52–60) | | Herod Agrippa II (53–100) | Paul's 3 rd missionary journey with a lengthy stay in Ephesus (54–58) |
| | Festus (60–62) | | | Paul imprisoned in Caesarea (58–60) |
| | ... | | | Paul is sent to Rome (60) |
| | Florus (64–66) | | | Execution of James the Just, bro. of Jesus (62) Temple construction completed (63) Fire of Rome (64) & persecution of Christians Peter and Paul executed in Rome |
| Galba, Otho, Vitellius (68–69) | ... | | | Jewish War (66–70) |
| Vespasian (69–79) | ... | | | Jerusalem Temple is destroyed (70) Jews die at Masada (74) |
| Titus (79–81) | ... | | | Apart from Paul's letters, most of the New Testament written during this time. |
| Domitian (81–96) | ... | | | |
| Nerva (96–98) | ... | | | |
| Trajan (98–117) | ... | | | |
| Hadrian (117–138) | ... | | | Ignatius martyred in Rome (110) Bar Kochba Revolt (132–135) Jews driven out of Jerusalem (135) |

Life for Jews in Palestine

1. What is God doing?
2. What should we be doing?
 - 2.1 Emphasis on the law
 - 2.2 Focus on the temple
 - 2.3 “Boundary markers”
 - 2.4 Challenge of foreign culture
 - 2.5 Theological Options

Jewish Monotheism and Other Theological Options from the First Century

Jewish Monotheism

Jews believed in one God, but their monotheism could be defined as having three dimensions to it.

(i) Creational: Jews believed in one God, Yahweh, who is the Creator of all that is. Therefore, the physical world itself is not bad; nor is it something to escape from.

(ii) Providential: Jews believed that their God was active in so-called ‘natural’ events. He may also act through ‘supernatural’ events, but in contrast to other theological options, Jews understood God to be at work in historical events; he is not removed from the world.

(iii) Covenantal: With regard to evil, Jews believed that Yahweh was committed to eliminating it from his creation and restoring peace and justice, and that he was doing this through Israel. The answer to the problem of evil is to be found within the history of Israel: “I will make Adam first, and if he goes astray I will send Abraham to sort it all out” (Genesis Rabbah 14.6).

Theological Options

Henotheism: Although there are other gods—e.g., gods of the other nations—we worship only one god. Evil is caused by the actions of the other gods.

Pantheism: God is understood to be that which permeates everything that exists: God is in everything. Evil, therefore, is only apparent; we must rise above it by denying its existence (e.g., Stoicism).

Deism: God or the gods exist but they have nothing to do with the affairs of this world; essentially it is practical atheism. The evils present in this world are caused by people and therefore must be solved by people (Epicureanism).

Gnosticism: This physical world, where we experience so much pain and suffering, was created by a lesser god; the sovereign God is a god of the spiritual realm, who does not involve himself in the physical world. Our experience of evil is due to the limitations of the physical world; what we need is for our spirits to be set free from this material world.

Paganism: The universe is populated by many divine beings—some oversee the affairs of the nations, others govern different aspects of the material world (the sea, the storm, fire, etc.), and still others are involved in different human activities (war, sex, travel, etc.). Evil comes when the gods are not pleased for some reason or other; and thus, they need to be appeased.

