

Series "Fixed On 66"
"Why 66?"
Part – 2

- 1. How Did We Get The Sixty-Six?**
- 2. Can We Really Trust The Sixty-Six?**

1. How Did We Get The Sixty-Six?

From God to Man:

Revelation: From God to man (man hears that which God wants written).

Inspiration: From man to paper (man writes that which God wants written).

Illumination: From paper to heart (man receives the light of that which God has written).

The advantages of the written method are many:

- 1. Precision**
- 2. Propagation**
- 3. Preservation**

The Writing Materials of the Bible:

- 1. Clay** (Jer. 17:13; Ezek. 4:1).
- 2. Stone** (Ex. 24:12; 13:18; 32:15, 16; 34:1, 28; Deut. 5:22; 27:2, 3; Josh. 8:31, 32).
- 3. Papyrus** (made by pressing and gluing two layers of split papyrus reeds together in order to form a sheet) (2 John 12; Rev. 5:1).
- 4. Vellum** (calf skin), parchment (lamb skin), leather (cowhide) (2 Tim. 4:13).
- 5. Metal** (Ex. 28:36; Job 19:23-24).

The Determination of the Canon:

Canon – means "*rule or measuring rod*" It has a 2-point meaning:

1. A list of collection of books which passed a test of authenticity and authority.
2. The collection of books that becomes our rule of life.

Masoretic - (Hebrew) text of the Old Testament divided the OT into three categories.

1. Law – (Pentateuch)

2. Prophets - (Joshua, Judges, 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, and major and minor prophets.

3. Writings – (sometimes called “The Psalms,” including the poetry and wisdom books- Psalms, Proverbs, and Job; the Rolls-Song of Solomon, Ruth, Nehemiah, 1, 2 Chronicles)

The Tests given to the biblical books:

- 1. Authorship**
- 2. Local Church Acceptance**
- 3. Church Fathers’ Recognition**
- 4. Book Subject Matter (Content)**
- 5. Personal Edification**

The Writings that were Unacceptable: After the Old Testament canon was recognized by the Jews as officially closed, and prior to the New Testament period, there arose a body of literature called the **Apocrypha**. This word literally means “*that which is hidden*” and consists of **fourteen books**.

The contents of the Old Testament Apocrypha:

- 1. 1 Esdras**
- 2. 2 Esdras**
- 3. Tobit**
- 4. Judith**
- 5. The remainder of Esther**
- 6. The Wisdom of Solomon**
- 7. Ecclesiasticus**
- 8. 1 Maccabees**
- 9. 2 Maccabees**
- 10. Baruch**
- 11. The Song of the Three Children**
- 12. The story of Susanna**
- 13. Bel and the Dragon**
- 14. The Prayer of Manasses**

Reasons for rejecting the Apocrypha:

1. The Apocrypha was never included in the Old Testament canon by such recognized authorities as the Pharisees, Ezra the prophet, etc.
2. It was never quoted by the Jews, by Jesus, or by any other New Testament writers.

3. The great Jewish historian Josephus excluded it.
4. The well-known Jewish philosopher Philo did not recognize it.
5. The early church fathers excluded it.
6. The Bible translator Jerome did not accept the books as inspired, although he was forced by the Pope to include them in the Latin Vulgate Bible.
7. None of the fourteen books claim divine inspiration; in fact, some actually disclaim it.
8. Some books contain historical and geographical errors.
9. Some books teach false doctrine, such as praying for the dead.
10. No Apocryphal book can be found in any catalogue list of canonical books composed during the first four centuries A.D. In fact, it was not until 1596 at the Council of Trent that the Roman Catholic Church officially recognized these books; basically in an attempt to strengthen their position, which had been grievously weakened by the great reformer Martin Luther.

The Finalization of the Canon:

The Old Testament Scriptures:

The Old Testament. By the year 300 B.C. (at the latest) all Old Testament books had been written, collected, revered, and recognized as official, canonical books. Many believe Ezra the prophet led the first recognition council.

The Council of Jamnia (90 A.D.) is generally considered the occasion whereby the Old Testament canon was publicly recognized.

The New Testament Scriptures:

Ignatius of Antioch (115 A.D.) also spoke of 7 books.

Polycarp a disciple of John (108 A.D.) acknowledged 15 letters.

Council of Hippo (393 A.D.) recognized 27 books

The New Testament. During the Third Council of Carthage, held in 397 A.D. the twenty-seven New Testament books were declared to be canonical.

2. Can We Really Trust The Sixty-Six?

Reliability of The Old Testament:

Until the discovery of the **Dead Sea Scrolls** in **1947 in Qumran**, we did not up to that time have copies of the Old Testament earlier than **895 A.D.**

Septuagint
Samaritan Pentateuch
The Aramaic Targums

Reliability of The New Testament:

More than **5,000 manuscripts** - not only do we have many copies, but many are early.

Papyrus manuscripts – Chester Beatty 3rd century.

Uncial (capital letters) **manuscripts** – 240 manuscripts

Codex (book) **Sinaiticus** – contains all the NT and dated 331 A.D.

Codex Vaticanus - 4th century, considered one of the most important.

Minuscule manuscripts – 2800, written in small letters. Flowing hand.

75 papyri fragments date from **135 A.D.** to the eighth century and covers parts of twenty-five of the 27 books and about 40% of the text.

Inerrancy - The dictionary defines Inerrancy as "*being without error.*"

What does the Bible Claim? The Bible claims to **Inerrancy:**

The Bible claims that all Scripture is God breathed.
This is a non corrupted book.

How do we know it is God's Word?:

- 1. Its amazing unity**
- 2. Its amazing indestructibility**
- 3. The fact of the accurate transmission** – Manuscripts over 1000 years apart are identical.
- 4. The fact of its historical precision**
- 5. The scientific accuracy**
- 6. The fact of its fulfilled prophecy**