The History of the Bible

1000BC

The Old Testament Books are Written

100 BC

200 BC – The Old Testament is Written in Greek

The Jewish people have scattered across many lands and many have started to use Greek as their fist language rather than Hebrew (Greek was the universal language of that time)

Rabbis translate the OT from Hebrew to Greek and call it the Septuagint (abbreviated to LXX)

The LXX ultimately includes 46 books of the old testament

The Septuagint (46 books) is the book used by Jesus and the Apostles as well as the Jews during the period

30 AD

Christians use the 46 books of the LXX as their scripture

AD100

90 AD

AD 90 – Jews Remove 7 Books

Rabbis meet at the Council of Javneh and decide to include in their canon only 39 book since only these can be found in Hebrew.

Peter 30-67
Linus 67-79
Cletus 79-88
Clement 88 -97
Evaristus 97 - 105

AD 50

The NT books are written.

AD 125

Papal Authority

By the time the last book of the New Testament is written there had been at least 5 Popes

Council of Hippo AD393

The 46 books of the Old Testament are confirmed as part of the canon.

AD 393

Council of Bishops

The Catholic Church has commenced a system of Councils who convene whenever there is a need to confirm what Christian doctrine e.g. Council of Hippo 393, Carthage 397, Trent 1546

Doubts exist over which books are in the canon. According to one list compiled at AD 200 (the Muratorian Canon) suggest that the NT consist of 4 Gospel

AD 200's

AD 367

Catholic Bishops Canonise the New Testament

During the period leading up to the canonisation of the Bible there were 3 classes of books that had to be reviewed:

1. Books acknowledged as canonical by all scholars
2. Disputed books
3. Books declared spurious or false

The first category included all the books that everyone agreed were written by the apostles

The second category consisted of books that were disputed and included some books that were eventually included in the bible e.g. the Epistles of James, Jude, 2nd Epistle of Peter, 2nd and 3rd John, the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Apocalypse of St John

In the third category the books that were stated NOT to be canonical included Gospel of St James, Gospel of John. These and other books were considered to be apocrypha (false, spurious, uncanonical)

The Catholic Bishops had to sift and sort and make decisions about all the books (guided by the Holy Spirit) before arriving at the final bible

AD 400
Jerome translates the bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin (called the Vulgate)

AD 400

AD382 Council of Rome

Pope Damascus started the ball rolling for the defining of a universal canon

AD 382

AD 393 Council of Hippo

Catholic Bishops hold a debate about which books are inspired and therefore should be in the bible

393

AD 397 Council of Carthage

Catholic Bishops refine the list of books in the bible

AD 397

Luther Removes Books from the Bible

- Luther translates the bible into German and puts 7 Old Testament books into the appendix.
- He also removed 4 NT books (Hebrews, James , Jude and revelation) placing them in the appendix

AD 1536

AD 397

AD419 Council of Carthage

Catholic Bishops renewed the decrees of the earlier Councils and declare that its act should be sent to Pope Boniface for the purposes of confirming it.

AD 1536

Council of Trent AD1546

The Council of Trent dogmatised all 73 books of the bible i.e. making it more than canon and impossible to add or subtract from the number of books.

AD 1546

AD 1546

FGCK