Old Testament (Hebrew Bible)

In Exodus 17:14, God said to Moses, “write this on a **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** as something to be remembered…”

Moses is said to have written the Book of the **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**\_, which was then given to priests to keep inside the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ were carved on stone tablets and stored in the most sacred inner room of the tabernacle, called the Holy of Holies.

The words and writings of the **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** were recorded and kept for future generations. The collections of poems and songs in the book of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, probably begun by David for use in temple \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, had others recorded and added along the way.

Last week, we talked about the Apocrypha, those twelve books in the **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Bible – not included in our Protestant Bibles. While we do not consider the books to be “holy” we do appreciate them for their **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** value.

In the Apocrypha - a word that means **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** - it is said that the Jewish governor, Nehemiah, founded a library - gathering together books about the kings and prophets.” (2 Maccabees 2:13) This would have been around the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ century BC.

At this time, the Pentateuch or the first **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** books of the Old Testament had also been fully recorded and its authority as \_\_\_\_\_\_\_-\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ was accepted.

Silent Year – Intertestamental Period

**\_\_\_\_\_\_** Years between the Old and New Testaments

In the Apocryphal book called **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,** a Jewish leader by the name of **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Maccabaeus is recorded as collecting all the books that been lost on account of the war. (2 Maccabees 2:14)

By the first century, all of the Old Testament books, recorded on large scrolls, were well known, accepted, and studied by the Jewish \_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_. We remember that the Hebrew scriptures were \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ yet in the hands of everyday ordinary people – only the religious elite read from the **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** and interpreted them in the temple. So, the stories recorded on the scrolls were circulated by word of mouth or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ tradition among the locals.

In the Gospels we hear of Jesus doing this - quoting the Old Testament scriptures and interpreting and re-interpreting them for the crowds. Eyewitnesses to Jesus’ ministry were asked to pass along stories of his **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** and to **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** them, whereby making new **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**. (Matthew 28:19-20).

After Jesus’ death and resurrection, when the first Christians met together for worship, they continued to read the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, just like Jesus had done for them! As time passed and eyewitnesses gradually died, the Christians realized that it was necessary for clear accounts of Jesus’ life and work to be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ down. This led \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to write down their Gospel or “**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_”** accounts. Combined these were written between **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** AD and **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** AD.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** was the first to write his gospel.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ were written next.

Last, came \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ account.

List a few names of the MANY *other* recorded accounts of Jesus’ life circulated in the 1st and 2nd centuries, not included in the Bible:

By the end of the **\_\_\_\_\_\_** century AD the church leaders agreed that only THESE gospels were genuinely inspired accounts:

AFTER MUCH DEBATE, church leaders accepted John’s apocalyptic visions – predictions recorded in the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. The list of books - as we now have it – were agreed upon by most of Jesus’ followers and were in use long before the **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** of Laodicea (363 AD) and the Council of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (397 AD) formally accepted them. In making their final decisions, the Church Fathers asked themselves two questions:

1. Does this book teach what the **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,** particularly the disciples of Jesus taught?
2. Does it **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** and strengthen Christians in their **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**?

BEFORE the final texts of the Old and New Testaments had been agreed upon by religious scholars – there were movements to translate them into languages other than \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_. Over the centuries since, this desire to see the scriptures in multiple languages has been given high priority by Christians!

Look at the attached chart. It shows a variety of important versions from the very first translations onward. What surprises you? Is there anything you’d like more information about? (If so, message me) What is encouraging? Discouraging?

Jesus was born at a REMARKABLE time in world history. The **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** spread over a vast area around the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. After years of war, the Roman Empire took over the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Empire, established by **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** the **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**.

Caesar Augustus brought peace and harsh, but “fair” government to the whole region. Roman soldiers were stationed throughout the empire, to keep the “peace.” Early in his reign there was \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ stability. However, the time of **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** rule would change in accordance with the rulers who became increasingly more violent.

The Romans were hard-working, well-organized people. They built a **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ throughout their conquered territories. Many of the \_\_\_\_\_\_ which were built using layers of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and stone, still exist.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (or Hellenistic) culture had brought a common language to the entire region. The **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** loved art and music and architecture. They were especially fond of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_. They built the Parthenon at **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,** and the **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_** began as a festival in honor of the god, **\_\_\_\_\_\_**.

Most of the big cities in the New Testament times had a large **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**, one of Greek culture’s greatest legacies.

Pagan religions had grown hollow and with the harsh and oppressive rule of the Romans, it left the people yearning for something life-giving, especially under rulers such as Tiberius, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ when Jesus was crucified and **\_\_\_\_\_\_** who was especially cruel and had many of Jesus’ earliest followers killed.

It is understandable how people would be inspired and find great hope in the message of a **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** who would bring liberation or freedom from the cruel and oppressive **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** now in power.

After Jesus lived, died, and was resurrected, Christians began to preach and **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** churches.

The New Testament stories were originally written in Greek and were soon translated into **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**, the official language of the Roman Empire.

Jesus was crucified, buried, and resurrected around **\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_** AD. The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John were written down and floating around by the year **\_\_\_\_\_** AD.

By 366 AD, a man by the name of **\_\_\_\_\_\_** Damascus the I became the \_**\_\_\_\_\_** of Rome. It was **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Damascus who hired a brilliant linguist by the name of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (along with the help of a Jewish \_\_\_\_\_\_\_) to GO BACK to the ORIGINAL **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** and **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** scriptures and translate them into a brand-new version! It took \_\_\_\_\_\_ years to complete – around \_\_\_\_\_\_ AD. It was called the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, which is a word that means “**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**” or “popular.”

Many disliked the new version at first, but it became the standard bible of the **\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** Church, and it is from the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that many other translations have been made.

Into what kind of world did Jesus commission his disciples?

What promise did Jesus give to his disciples to encourage them – to encourage us – should we be afraid of evangelizing or sharing the good news?

How will you “commit” (note that word shames the same root as commission) to sharing the gospel this week or inviting someone to follow Jesus too?