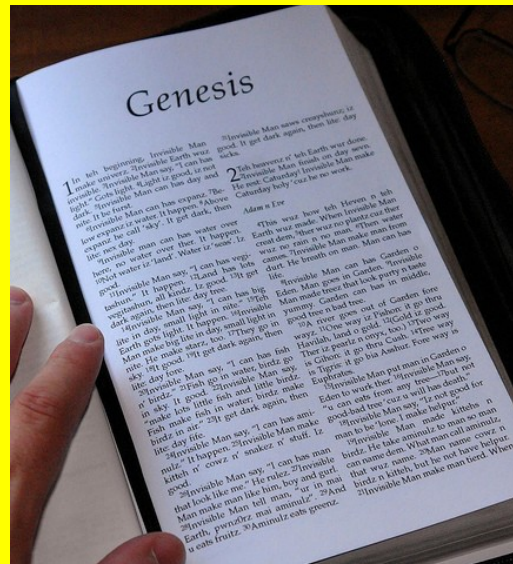
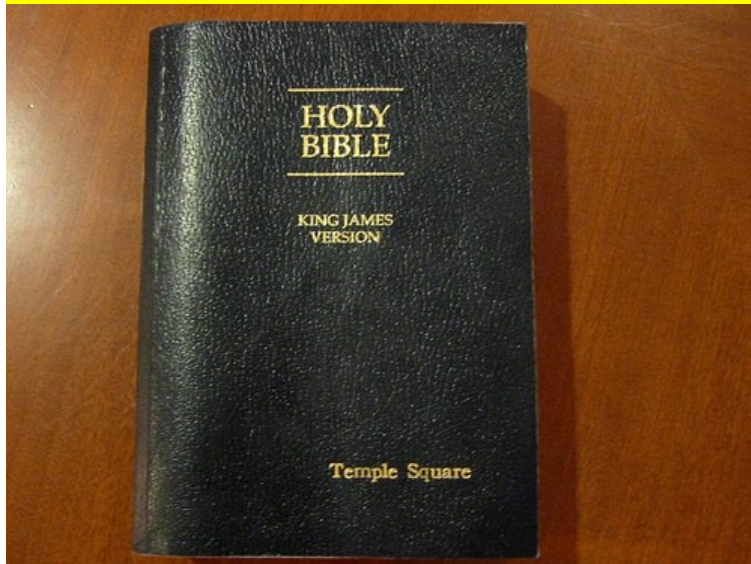


# WHO WROTE THE BIBLE?

By Oleg Dei



This is a very complicated question and Biblical scholars do not agree amongst themselves. It is ridiculous to state that the Bible is the word of God since we do not even know who authored these writings. As of now the majority of Biblical scholars believe the Bible was written by many authors whose works of literature that has appear in the various canons of Judaism and of Christianity. The list that follows is perpetually subject to debate, and the declaration of canonicity of each work is dependent upon the religious group to which one refers. Authorship is always debatable, and consensus can only be reached to a certain degree. What follows is based on various sources, giving strongest credit to tradition and areas of large consensus. Authors of the Bible are listed by [book of the Bible](#), comparing the writer according to Christian tradition with what current scholars believe.

## Old Testament/Hebrew Bible

### Pentateuch

### Traditional religious views

Moses is regarded by Jewish and Christian tradition as the author of the Pentateuch, or the first five books of the Bible. However, the dating of these works has caused debate of Mosaic authorship. Mosaic authorship of Exodus is more plausible than of Genesis, because this is the first text in which the story of Moses himself is chronicled. Deuteronomy is the most debated of the books of the Pentateuch in terms of authorship. As much of it is a restating of the laws (hence the name, meaning "second law") it may have been written at a much later period. Many believe that the same author is

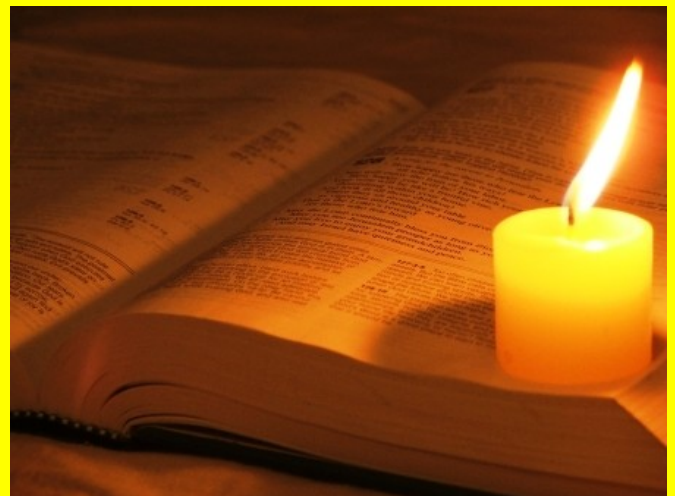
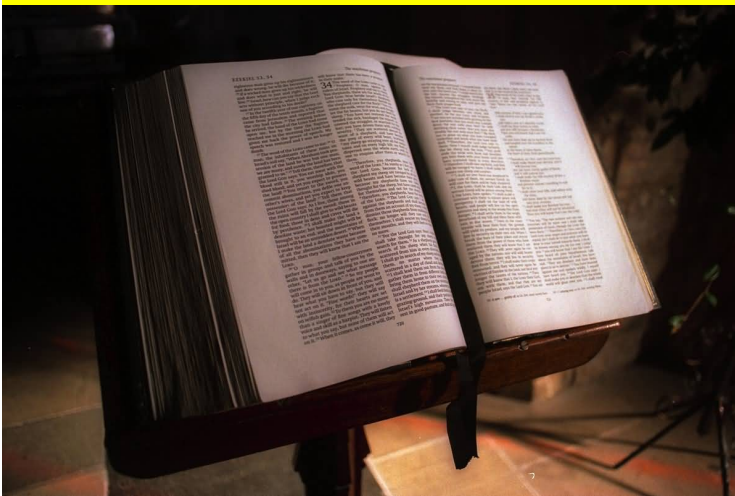
responsible for Deuteronomy who wrote Joshua and Judges. The ending of Deuteronomy accounts the death of Moses, so at least this section is usually attributed to Joshua himself or some other author. However, some traditions do hold to Mosaic authorship of the whole text, including the account of his death.

## Modern historical views -- the Documentary Hypothesis

The **documentary hypothesis (DH)** proposes that the five books of the Pentateuch, represent a combination of documents from four originally independent texts dating from various periods between the early 8th and late 5th centuries BCE. The hypothetical texts are:

- the J, or Yahwist, text (so named because it uses YHVH to refer to the Deity)
- the E, or Elohist, text (edited with J to form a combined JE text; so named as it uses "Elohim" rather than YHVH)
- the P, or Priestly, text
- the D, or Deuteronomist, text (which had a further major edit, resulting in sub-texts known as Dtr1 and Dtr2).

The texts were combined into their current form in the post-Exilic period (late 5th century BC) by an editor known as R (for Redactor), who also made small additions to harmonize discrepancies between his sources.



## Early History

Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles

## Writings

**Ruth, 1 & 2 Esdras, Ezra, Nehemiah, Tobit, Judith, Esther, 1-4 Maccabees**

## Poetry

**Psalms, Odes, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus**

Psalms is impossible to attribute to one author, as each psalm must be treated individually. David certainly composed most of them, with several of his friends composing many of the rest.

The narrator of Ecclesiastes goes only by the name Ecclesiastes (Greek) or Qohelet(h) (Hebrew). Roughly translated this could mean "Teacher," "Pastor," or "Teacher." He claims to have been King of Israel in Jerusalem, but this could have easily been an appeal to credibility which was a very common practice in this era. Authorship is most commonly attributed to Solomon, but it could very well be any Jewish man, likely later in life, who wished to advise future generations.

The opening line "The Song of Songs of Solomon" seems to verify the authorship of this work easily, but like Ecclesiastes, this could merely have been an appeal to credibility. Likewise, the author could have been referring to Solomon as a recognizable figure: one who was known for his appeal to women. The book is very emphatic on the feminine point of view, which has led many to suggest female authorship at least in part. Affirming one author of the Song is nearly impossible as its appeal to various cultures and the vocabularies of various time periods leads one to believe that it evolved over time and cultures. It has strong similarities to Egyptian love poetry and may have first been inspired by that form of literature.

## Major Prophets

**Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel**

The works of the "major" prophets (Isaiah-Daniel), so named for their length in comparison to the "minor" prophets, are traditionally often attributed to their namesakes.

## Minor Prophets

**Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi**

The works of the "minor" prophets (Hosea-Malachi), so named for their brevity, are traditionally often attributed to their namesakes.

# New Testament

## Gospels

Matthew was most likely written by the apostle Matthew, also known as Levi. Source critics believe that the author drew much of his material from the gospel of Mark and a hypothetical source that contained many sayings of Jesus, often termed "Q." Mark is widely accepted as the first gospel written about Jesus. It was probably written by John Mark, a close friend of the apostle Peter, and a missionary associate of Paul and Barnabas. Luke is the first of a two-volume work, the second being Acts. Luke was the most likely author; he was a close associate of Paul. Like Matthew, he likely drew heavily from Mark and "Q." The Gospel of John is the last gospel written, and was quite certainly composed by the Apostle John near the end of the first century. The lack of parallels to many of the stories in the other Gospels demonstrates that he was not likely relying on the same sources of the authors. John himself is also unique in that he would have had more personal contact with Jesus himself than the other authors, and he wrote after Christianity had developed further; thus, his focus was very different. The differences between the Gospel of John and the other Gospels ([Synoptic Gospels](#)) has led to some major doubts of Johannine authorship or that it was written in the first century.

## Acts

Acts is the second book of the two volume work, preceded by the Gospel of Luke, sometimes known as *Luke-Acts*. Luke is not difficult to place as the author, as the detail of the book matches his claim of traveling with Paul.

## Early Pauline Epistles

**Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians**

## Pastoral/Late Pauline Epistles

**1 & 2 Timothy, Titus**

These three works are distinguished from the rest of Pauline literature because of their accompanying theological removal from the rest of his writings. Of primary interest is the new emphasis on vocational roles in a church body, a concept never mentioned in any of his earlier writings. Thus, scholars that hold to Pauline authorship date these books much later in his life. However, some (see James Dunn in *Unity and Diversity*) believe that the theological differences are too great to reconcile these works to other Pauline writings. They demonstrate a level of development of organization in the assembly of believers that only significant time could allow.



## Philemon

## Hebrews

In terms of authorship, Hebrews is usually the most debated work in the New Testament, see also [Antilegomena](#). It is placed canonically after Philemon to place it close to the writings of Paul, but separated in such a way as to cast doubt. Paul is traditionally assumed as the author, though there is no strong consensus on this point whatsoever. Other proposed authors of this work are Barnabas, a close associate of Paul, and Priscilla, a woman who often worked with Paul (mentioned in Acts 18:2). Whoever the author was, he or she demonstrates a powerful knowledge and application of Jewish traditions and stories (e.g. a comparison of Melchizedek to Christ and the "Hall of Faith" in Hebrews 11).

## James

## Petrine Epistles and Jude

### 1 & 2 Peter, Jude

#### 1 Peter

2 Peter Notably 2 Peter 3:15-16 refers to the writings of Paul on a common level with the rest of Scripture. So, whoever wrote this passage affirms Pauline authorship of several significant works (though he does not venture to name any).

Jude, also known as Judas, claims to be the brother of James, which, according to Matthew 13:55, Mark 6:3, and Galatians 1:19, makes them both the brothers of Jesus himself. Similarities between the focuses of 2 Peter and Jude have led to some belief in their common authorship.

## Johannine Epistles

1, 2, & 3 John

## Revelation

## Old Testament

Book	Author according to tradition	Author according to scholarship
<a href="#">Book of Genesis</a>	<a href="#">Moses</a>	<a href="#">Various authors</a> from 9th century BC to last fifth century BC, including the <a href="#">Yahwist</a> , <a href="#">Elohist</a> , <a href="#">Deuteronomist</a> and the <a href="#">Priestly sources</a> <sup>[1]</sup>
<a href="#">Exodus</a>		
<a href="#">Leviticus</a>		
<a href="#">Numbers</a>		
<a href="#">Deuteronomy</a>		
<a href="#">Joshua</a>	<a href="#">Joshua</a> with a portion by <a href="#">Phinehas</a> or <a href="#">Eleazar</a>	<a href="#">Deuteronomist</a> using material from the <a href="#">Yahwist</a> and <a href="#">Elohist</a>
<a href="#">Judges</a>	<a href="#">Samuel</a>	<a href="#">Deuteronomist</a>
<a href="#">Ruth</a>	<a href="#">Samuel</a>	A later author, writing after the time of <a href="#">David</a>
<a href="#">1 Samuel</a>	<a href="#">Samuel</a> , <a href="#">Gad</a> , and <a href="#">Nathan</a>	<a href="#">Deuteronomist</a> or a combination of a Jerusalem source, republican source, the <a href="#">court history of David</a> , the sanctuaries source, the monarchial source, and the material of various editors who combined these sources
<a href="#">2 Samuel</a>		
<a href="#">1 Kings</a>	Perhaps <a href="#">Ezra</a>	<a href="#">Deuteronomist</a>
<a href="#">2 Kings</a>		
<a href="#">1 Chronicles</a>	<a href="#">Ezra</a>	The Chronicler, writing between 450 and 435 BC, after the <a href="#">Babylonian captivity</a>
<a href="#">2 Chronicles</a>		
<a href="#">Ezra</a>	<a href="#">Ezra</a>	The Chronicler, writing between 450 and 435 BC, after the <a href="#">Babylonian captivity</a>
<a href="#">Nehemiah</a>	<a href="#">Nehemiah</a> using some material by <a href="#">Ezra</a>	The Chronicler, writing between 450 and 435 BC, after the <a href="#">Babylonian captivity</a>
<a href="#">Tobit</a>		A writer in the second century BC
		<b>PAGE 6</b>
<a href="#">Judith</a>	Eliakim (Joakim), the	

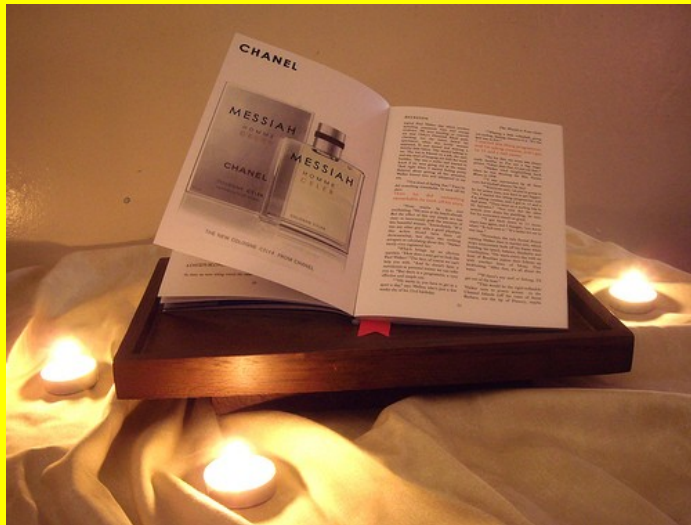
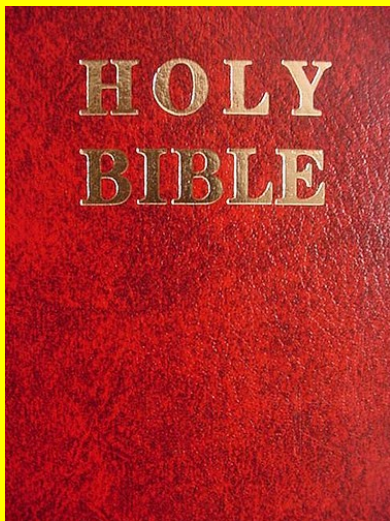
	high priest of the story	
<a href="#">Esther</a>	The <a href="#">Great Assembly</a> using material from <a href="#">Mordecai</a>	An unknown author writing between 460 and 331 BC
<a href="#">1 Maccabees</a>	A devout Jew from the Holy Land.	An unknown Jewish author, writing around 100 BC
<a href="#">2 Maccabees</a>	Based on the writing of <a href="#">Jason of Cyrene</a>	An unknown author, writing in the second or first century BC
<a href="#">3 Maccabees</a>		An <a href="#">Alexandrian</a> Jew writing in Greek in the first century BC or first century AD
<a href="#">4 Maccabees</a>	<a href="#">Josephus</a>	An <a href="#">Alexandrian</a> Jew writing in the first century BC or first century AD
<a href="#">Job</a>	<a href="#">Moses</a>	A writer in the 4th century BC.
<a href="#">Psalms</a>	Mainly <a href="#">David</a> and also Asaph, <a href="#">sons of Korah</a> , <a href="#">Moses</a> , <a href="#">Heman the Ezrahite</a> , <a href="#">Ethan the Ezrahite</a> and <a href="#">Solomon</a>	Various authors recording oral tradition. Portions from 1000BC to 200BC.
<a href="#">Proverbs</a>	<a href="#">Solomon</a> , <a href="#">Agur son of Jakeh</a> , Lemuel and other wise men	An editor compiling from various sources well after the time of Solomon
<a href="#">Ecclesiastes</a>	<a href="#">Solomon</a>	A Hebrew poet of the third or second centuries BC using the life of Solomon as a vista for the Hebrews' pursuit of Wisdom. An unknown author in Hellenistic period from two older oral sources (Eccl1:1-6:9 which claims to be Solomon, Eccl6:10-12:8 with the theme of non-knowing)
<a href="#">Song of Solomon</a>	<a href="#">Solomon</a>	
<a href="#">Wisdom</a>	<a href="#">Solomon</a>	An Alexandrian Jew writing during the Jewish Hellenistic period
<a href="#">Sirach</a>	Jesus the son of Sirach of Jerusalem	
<a href="#">Isaiah</a>	<a href="#">Isaiah</a>	Three main authors and an extensive editing process. Is1-39 "Historical Isaiah" with multiple layers of editing. Is40-55 Exilic & Is56-66 post-exilic.
<a href="#">Jeremiah</a>	<a href="#">Jeremiah</a>	<a href="#">Baruch ben Neriah</a>
		<b>PAGE 7</b>

<a href="#">Lamentations</a>	<a href="#">Jeremiah</a>	Disputed and perhaps based on the older Mesopotamian genre of the "city lament", of which the <a href="#">Lament for Ur</a> is among the oldest and best-known
<a href="#">Letter of Jeremiah</a>	<a href="#">Jeremiah</a>	A <a href="#">Hellenistic Jew</a> living in <a href="#">Alexandria</a>
<a href="#">Baruch</a>	<a href="#">Baruch ben Neriah</a>	An author writing during or shortly after the period of the <a href="#">Maccabees</a>
<a href="#">Ezekiel</a>	<a href="#">Ezekiel</a>	Disputed, with varying degrees of attribution to Ezekiel
<a href="#">Daniel</a>	<a href="#">Daniel</a>	An editor in the fourth century to mid-second century BC
<a href="#">Hosea</a>	<a href="#">Hosea</a>	
<a href="#">Joel</a>	<a href="#">Joel</a>	
<a href="#">Amos</a>	<a href="#">Amos</a>	
<a href="#">Obadiah</a>	<a href="#">Obadiah</a>	
<a href="#">Jonah</a>	<a href="#">Jonah</a>	Possibly a post-exilic (after 530 BC) editor recording oral traditions passed down from the eighth century BC
<a href="#">Micah</a>	<a href="#">Micah</a>	The first three chapters by Micah and the remainder by a later writer
<a href="#">Nahum</a>	<a href="#">Nahum</a>	
<a href="#">Habakkuk</a>	<a href="#">Habakkuk</a>	
<a href="#">Zephaniah</a>	<a href="#">Zephaniah</a>	Disputed; possibly a writer after the time period indicated by the text
<a href="#">Haggai</a>	<a href="#">Haggai</a>	
<a href="#">Zechariah</a>	<a href="#">Zechariah</a>	Zechariah (chapters 1-8); the later remaining designated Deutero-Zechariah, were possibly written by disciples of Zechariah
<a href="#">Malachi</a>	<a href="#">Malachi</a> or <a href="#">Ezra</a>	Possibly the author of Deutero-Zechariah

# New Testament

Book	Author according to tradition	Author according to alternative
<a href="#">Matthew</a>	<a href="#">Matthew the Evangelist</a>	An author who borrowed from both <a href="#">Mark</a> and a source called <a href="#">Q</a>
<a href="#">Mark</a>	<a href="#">Mark the Evangelist</a>	Perhaps Mark (John Mark), follower of Peter.
<a href="#">Luke</a>	<a href="#">Luke the Evangelist</a>	Luke, or an unknown author who borrowed from both <a href="#">Mark</a> and a source called <a href="#">Q</a>
<a href="#">John</a>	<a href="#">John the Apostle</a> or <a href="#">John the Evangelist</a>	An unknown author with no direct connection to the <a href="#">historical Jesus</a> Jn 21 finished after death of primary author by follower(s)
<a href="#">Acts</a>	<a href="#">Luke the Evangelist</a>	The author of <a href="#">Luke</a> , possibly named Luke
<a href="#">Romans</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a>
<a href="#">1 Corinthians</a>		
<a href="#">2 Corinthians</a>		
<a href="#">Galatians</a>		
<a href="#">Ephesians</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a> or edited dictations from Paul
<a href="#">Philippians</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a>
<a href="#">Colossians</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a>	Disputed; perhaps Paul coauthoring with <a href="#">Timothy</a>
<a href="#">1 Thessalonians</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a>
<a href="#">2 Thessalonians</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a>	An associate or disciple after his death, representing what they believed was his message <sup>[3]</sup>
<a href="#">1 Timothy</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a>	Perhaps someone associated with Paul, writing at a later date
<a href="#">2 Timothy</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a>	Perhaps someone associated with Paul, writing after his death
<a href="#">Titus</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a>	Perhaps someone associated with Paul, writing after his death
<a href="#">Philemon</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a>
		<b>PAGE 9</b>
<a href="#">Hebrews</a>	<a href="#">Paul the Apostle</a> or possibly	An unknown author, but almost certainly

	<a href="#">Luke the Evangelist</a> , <a href="#">Clement of Rome</a> or <a href="#">Barnabas</a>	not Paul
<a href="#">James</a>	<a href="#">James the Just</a>	A writer in the late first or early second centuries, after the death of James the Just
<a href="#">1 Peter</a>	<a href="#">Peter</a>	An author, perhaps <a href="#">Silas</a> , proficient with Greek writing
<a href="#">2 Peter</a>	<a href="#">Peter</a>	Certainly not Peter
<a href="#">1 John</a>	<a href="#">John the Evangelist</a>	An unknown author with no direct connection to the <a href="#">historical Jesus</a> Same as Gospel of John.
<a href="#">2 John</a>	<a href="#">John the Evangelist</a>	An unknown author with no direct connection to the <a href="#">historical Jesus</a> Final Editor of Jn 21
<a href="#">3 John</a>	<a href="#">John the Evangelist</a>	An unknown author with no direct connection to the <a href="#">historical Jesus</a> Final Editor of Jn 21
<a href="#">Jude</a>	<a href="#">Jude the Apostle</a> or <a href="#">Jude, brother of Jesus</a>	A pseudonymous work written between the end of the first century and the first quarter of the 2nd century
<a href="#">Revelation of Christ to John</a>	<a href="#">John the Apostle</a>	Perhaps <a href="#">John of Patmos</a>



As one can clearly see, we will never know the original authors of the Bible. Originally the writings came from oral tradition where it was passed on from generation to generation, each changing the storyline. The Bible remains a collection of many writings authored by many individuals whose original message will forever remain a mystery!