

THEO202 Introduction to Biblical Studies ©

Lesson 1 Transcript: The Bible: an Overview

1. The Content of the New Testament

To conclude this section, a few words on the New Testament or Christian Testament.

Now, the Christian Testament or New Testament is essentially a Greek work.

Unlike the Hebrew Bible, it was written in one language only.

Why Greek?

Jesus was not speaking Greek.

But, the first Christians were.

All his sayings were translated except for his last words: "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"

That's in Aramaic. It's a quote from a Psalm.

The New Testament can be divided in four parts.

The first part contains the Gospels: The Gospel according to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

They represent a primary witness to the life of Jesus.

Meaning the good news; the Gospels deal with the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth.

Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called the Synoptic Gospels because their content have several similarities. John is a very different gospel, so that's why it's not included in the Synoptic.

We'll talk about this later during this semester.

The second part, the Acts of the Apostles, tells the story of the birth of the Church after the death of Jesus.

It's pretty obvious that the Acts of the Apostles were written by the author of Luke.

The third part comprises the Epistles.

These are letters written to communities or individuals, and they are attributed to different apostles, like Paul, James, and John.

Some of them were written by actual apostles, like Paul, but others were not.

The Epistles contain the Pauline letters.

These are letters attributed to Paul, but the authorship of some of them is disputed.

So, you have Romans, I and II Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Colossians, I and II Thessalonians, I and II Timothy, Titus, and Philemon.

And then there are non-Pauline letters like Hebrews, James, I and II Peters, I, II, III John, and the Book of Jude.

And finally, there's a fourth division that includes the Book of Revelation.

It's an apocalyptic book (Apocalyptic Literature) that deals with the end of the world.

Now that you know about the content of the Old and New Testaments, we will focus on the process of formation and transmission of the Bible.