

# **NTS-101**

# **New Testament Survey**

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# **Text of the New Testament**

# How did the early church preach the Gospel?

The first Christians did **NOT** have the New Testament for many years.

How then did they preach the Gospel?

The Septuagint (LXX)

Oral Tradition

The Enablement of the Holy Spirit

# How did the early church preach the Gospel?

## The Septuagint

- \* - the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures, completed c. 250 BC in Alexandria by 72 Rabbis.
- \* - Usually abbreviated 'LXX' - the Roman numeral for 70
- \* - The Old Testament is called the '**TaNaKh**' by the Jews - acronym for Torah, Neviim, Ketuvim (Law, Prophets, Writings)
- \* - We understand from this how important the Old Testament is! There is a whole lot of "New Testament" in the Old Testament
- \* - e.g. Philip proclaiming the Gospel (Good News) to the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8 from Isaiah 53.
- \* - After all Jesus Himself taught from, and expounded upon the TaNaKh

# How did the early church preach the Gospel?

## Oral Tradition

- \* - Jewish culture was predominantly oral, rather than written
- \* - Writing was a very labor-intensive process, and few could do it
- \* - Scriptures were usually memorized and recited, rather than read
- \* - In the first years of the church after Pentecost, the sayings of Jesus were passed on by word of mouth
- \* - These sayings were eventually compiled and written down in standard forms

Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as those, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word, handed them down to us... (Luke 1:1-2 LSB)

# How did the early church preach the Gospel?

## Enablement of the Holy Spirit

- \* - The Holy Spirit inspired and led the preachers of the Gospel, e.g.
  - \* - Peter on Pentecost in Acts 2
  - \* - Stephen before the Sanhedrin in Acts 7
- \* - New Testament prophets - this is normative

But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name,  
He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. (John 14:26 LSB)

# How did the early church preach the Gospel?

## Enablement of the Holy Spirit

New Testament prophets - this is normative

✱ - "Cessationists" say the "extraordinary" gifts have ceased since we now have the New Testament.

Do not quench the Spirit; do not despise prophecies, but examine all things; hold fast to that which is good; (1 Thessalonians 5:19-21 LSB)

✱ This is not what Paul is talking about here.

# How did the early church preach the Gospel?

The first Christians did **NOT** have the New Testament for many years.

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# How the New Testament came to be

The earliest Christians generally believed that the Lord Jesus would return "very soon" -- within their lifetimes.

Therefore having written records was not considered very important.

As time passed, and some apostles and other witnesses of the resurrection died, it became more important to preserve the Word in writing.

Over a period of several decades, starting about 15 years after the resurrection, the books of the New Testament were written.

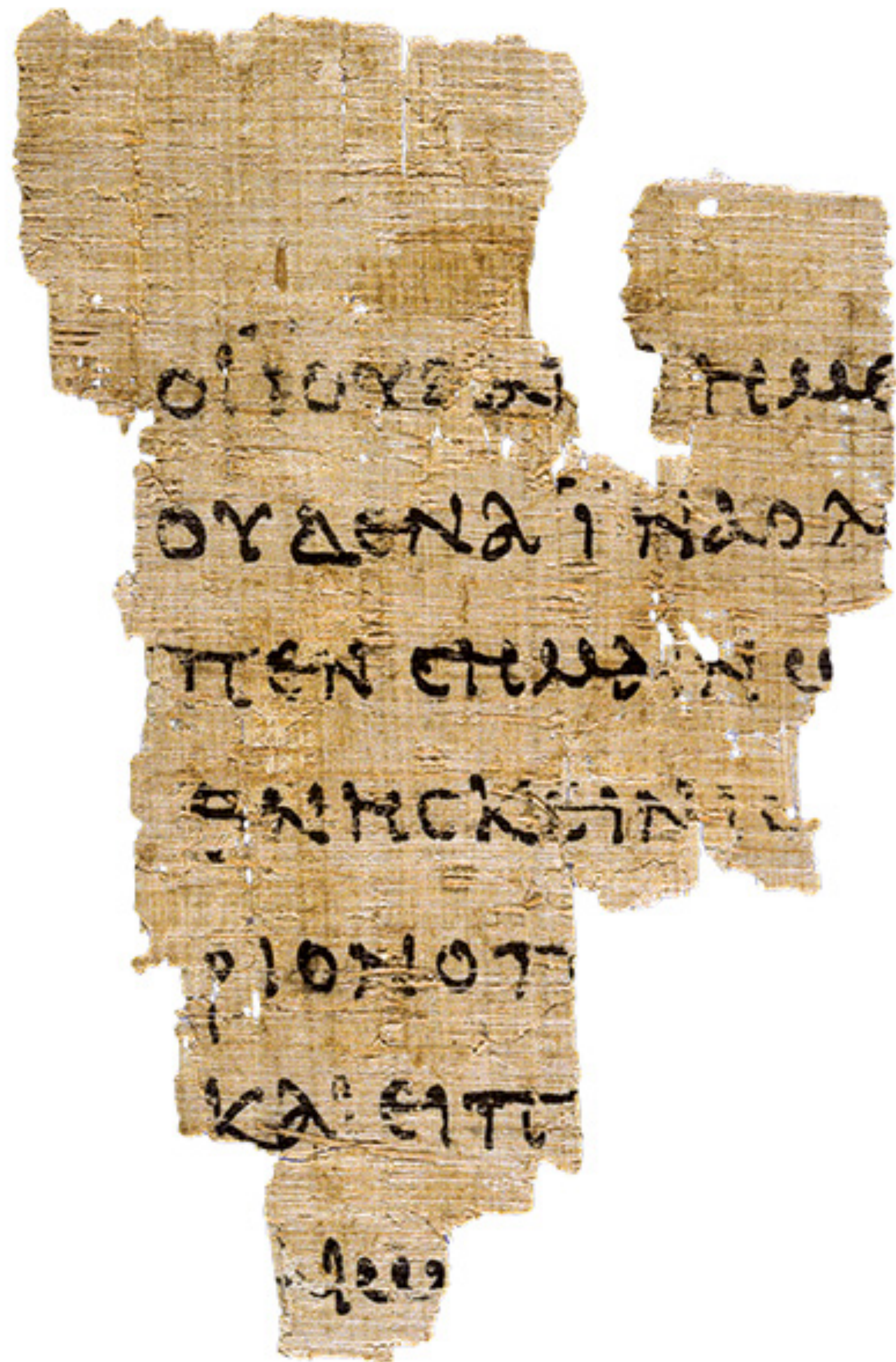
Writing was time-consuming and expensive - the books of the New Testament were most often dictated to a professional scribe (amanuensis), rather than written by the author himself. (e.g. Romans 16.22, 1 Peter 5.12)

# The Manuscripts

- \* - "manuscript" means "written by hand" - there were no typewriters
- \* - writing was labor-intensive and quite expensive
- \* - over 5800 Greek manuscripts - the most well-attested ancient text by far - it is not even close
- \* - all are copies of the autographs - no originals
- \* - only very minor variations which are mainly due to copying mistakes
- \* - no spaces, no punctuation marks. Writing was expensive

# The Scrolls

- \* - all the earliest manuscripts were written on *papyrus*,  
a tall, water-loving plant that grows mainly in the Nile Valley in Egypt
- \* - Scrolls of the Torah and other Hebrew Scripture were stored in local synagogues
- \* - limited length of scrolls - hence the length of the Gospels
- \* - not easy to find a place since you could not "flip to a page"
- \* - we read of Jesus reading from the scroll of Isaiah in Luke 4.16-19



Papyrus 52 - c. 110-140

Oldest known papyrus fragment

John 18:31-33

# The Codices

- \* - mostly written on parchment or vellum, specially cured animal skins
- \* - a "Codex" is pages bound together to make a book - definite improvement on scrolls, as you could now "flip to a page"
- \* - "Codices" is the plural of "Codex"
- \* - "Uncial" means all capital letters, aka. "majuscules"
- \* - No spaces or punctuation marks
- \* - the 3 earliest "Great" Uncial Codices:

*Codex Vaticanus* (B) – c. AD 325–350

*Codex Sinaiticus* (Ⲭ, Aleph) – c. AD 330–360

*Codex Alexandrinus* (A) – c. AD 400–440

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ΕΝΤΩ ΦΩΤΙΣ ΙΝΑ ΚΑΙ ΤΟΝ ΑΛΗ

# Textual Criticism

- \* - not *criticizing* the text, but rather determining what the original text was
- \* - comparing all the manuscript evidence to determine the original

## Four Text Types:

- \* Alexandrian (Egypt) - concise, oldest, basis of modern Bibles.
- \* Western (Rome) - looser, paraphrasing, early but less precise.
- \* Byzantine (Byzantium aka Constantinople, modern day Istanbul, Turkey) - majority of manuscripts (copies of copies), smoother style, refined, basis of "Majority Text".
- \* Caesarean (Caesarea) - possible mixed tradition, not universally accepted.

# The Canon

- \* - "Canon" from Greek κανών (kanōn) 'rule or standard', as in a measuring rod
- \* - How do we know which books were accepted as inspired?
  - \* - quotations by early church fathers
  - \* - translations (e.g. Syriac, Old Latin, Coptic)
  - \* - lectionaries (bible reading plans)
  - \* - statements by early church councils - they published lists

# The Canon

The early Church did not *create* the Canon, but *recognized* it.

- \* - we know what it means to *recognize* the quality of something
  - \* - a discerning ear can tell a genuine Bach cantata from an attempt by one of his students (No council of music critics got together and decreed that this is a 'classic' - it just is.)
  - \* - a discerning eye can tell an authentic Rembrandt from a bad imitation
  - \* - a discerning palate can tell real hand-made ice cream from a fake "cold dessert" with all kinds of artificial flavors
- \* This is critically important, because it reveals what is the ultimate authority: The Scripture or The Church

# Criteria for the Canon

- \* - Recognition over time (no such thing as an "instant classic")
- \* - Edifying effect on Christians
- \* - Agreement with the oral tradition
- \* - Apostolic - written either by an apostle, or one in close association with an apostle

# Structure of the Canon

- \* - not chronological in order
- \* - different genres of writing, e.g. letter, narratives, apocalyptic
- \* - wide variety in author's styles - compare Peter with John and Paul!
- \* - yet agreement in content and purpose!

Q. How doth it appear that the Scriptures are the Word of God?

A. The Scriptures manifest themselves to be the Word of God, by their majesty and purity; by the consent of all the parts, and the scope of the whole, which is to give all glory to God; by their light and power to convince and convert sinners, to comfort and build up believers unto salvation: but the Spirit of God bearing witness by and with the Scriptures in the heart of man, is alone able fully to persuade it that they are the very Word of God.

# Approximate Chronological Order

- James – c. A.D. 48
- First Thessalonians – c. A.D. 52
- Second Thessalonians – c. A.D. 53
- Galatians – c. A.D. 50
- First Corinthians – c. A.D. 54
- Second Corinthians – c. A.D. 55
- Romans – c. A.D. 57
- Mark – c. A.D. 60
- Philippians – c. A.D. 61
- Colossians – c. A.D. 61
- Philemon – c. A.D. 61
- Ephesians – c. A.D. 61
- Luke – c. A.D. 63
- Acts – c. A.D. 64
- First Peter – c. A.D. 64
- First Timothy – c. A.D. 64
- Titus – c. A.D. 64
- Second Timothy c. A.D. 66
- Matthew – c. A.D. 68
- Hebrews – c. A.D. 69
- Second Peter – c. A.D. 68
- Jude – c. A.D. 68
- Revelation - c. A.D. 68
- John – c. A.D. 90
- Letters of John – c. A.D. 90

# Answering the Skeptics

- \* - The enemies of Jesus would have produced his body
- \* - The disciples were not expecting the resurrection, and yet they all bore witness, and were willing to suffer and die
- \* - This would not have happened if it were an intentional deception
- \* - Unlike those who accused Jesus, the testimony of the apostles all agreed!
- \* - None of his enemies (Pharisees, Priests) were able to refute the claims
- \* - If the account had been made up, it would not have included the witness of women!

# Answering the Skeptics

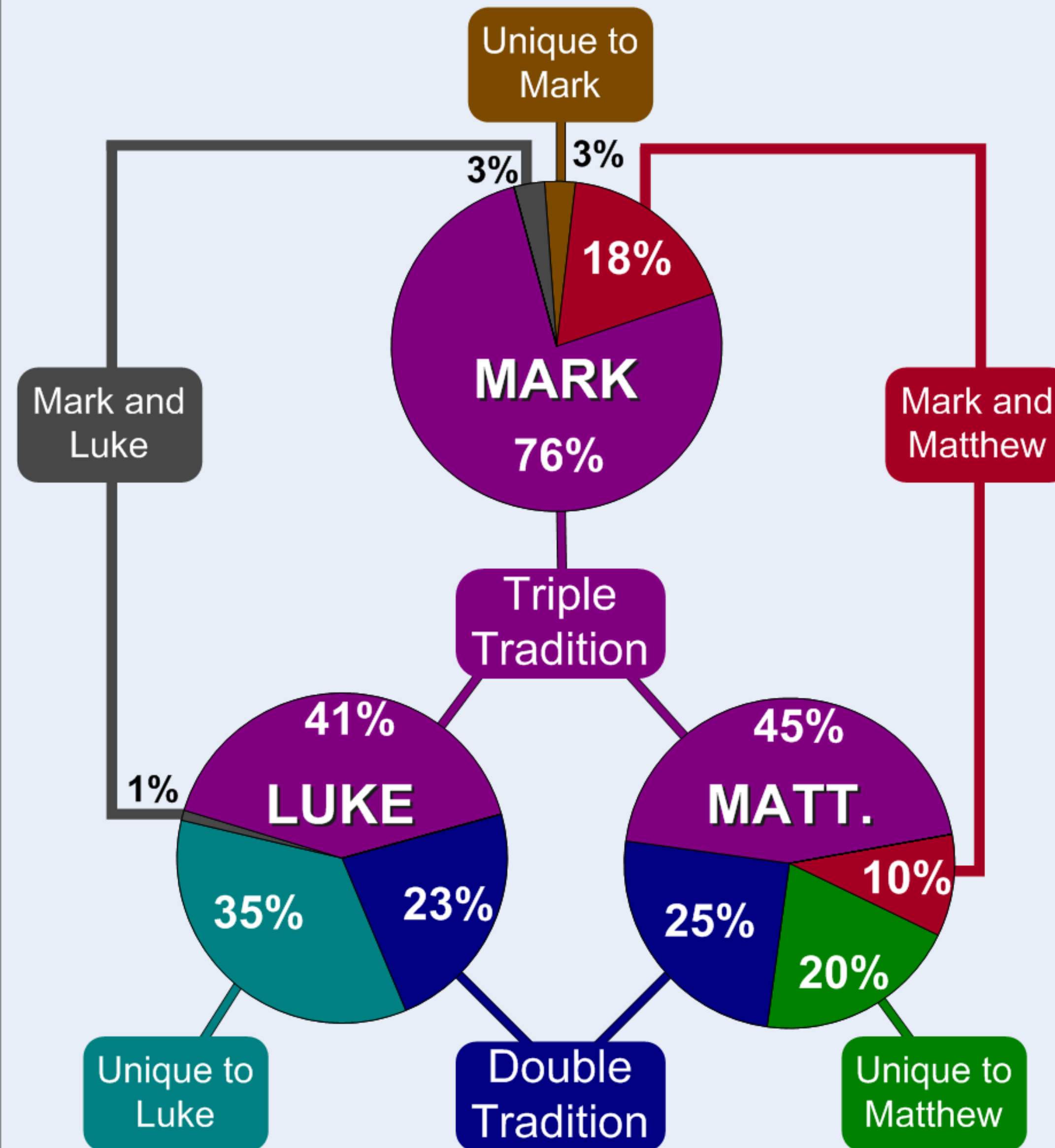
**There were over 500 living witnesses to the resurrection!**

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve. After that **He appeared to more than five hundred brothers** at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep (1 Corinthians 15:3-6 LSB)

# The Synoptic Gospels

- \* - "Synoptic" from Greek word "sunopsis" meaning "seen together"
  - \* - "Syn" as in synchronize, "Optic" as in "Seeing"
- \* - Similar content, structure, and tone in the three books of Matthew, Mark and Luke
  - \* - Differences in style
- \* - Follow a similar geographic sequence of events
  - \* - John is quite different: focuses on Jesus in Jerusalem for the feasts
- \* - Many sayings of Jesus in common
  - \* - John has many sayings of Jesus which do not occur in the Synoptics, e.g. John 13-17 "The Upper Room discourse"

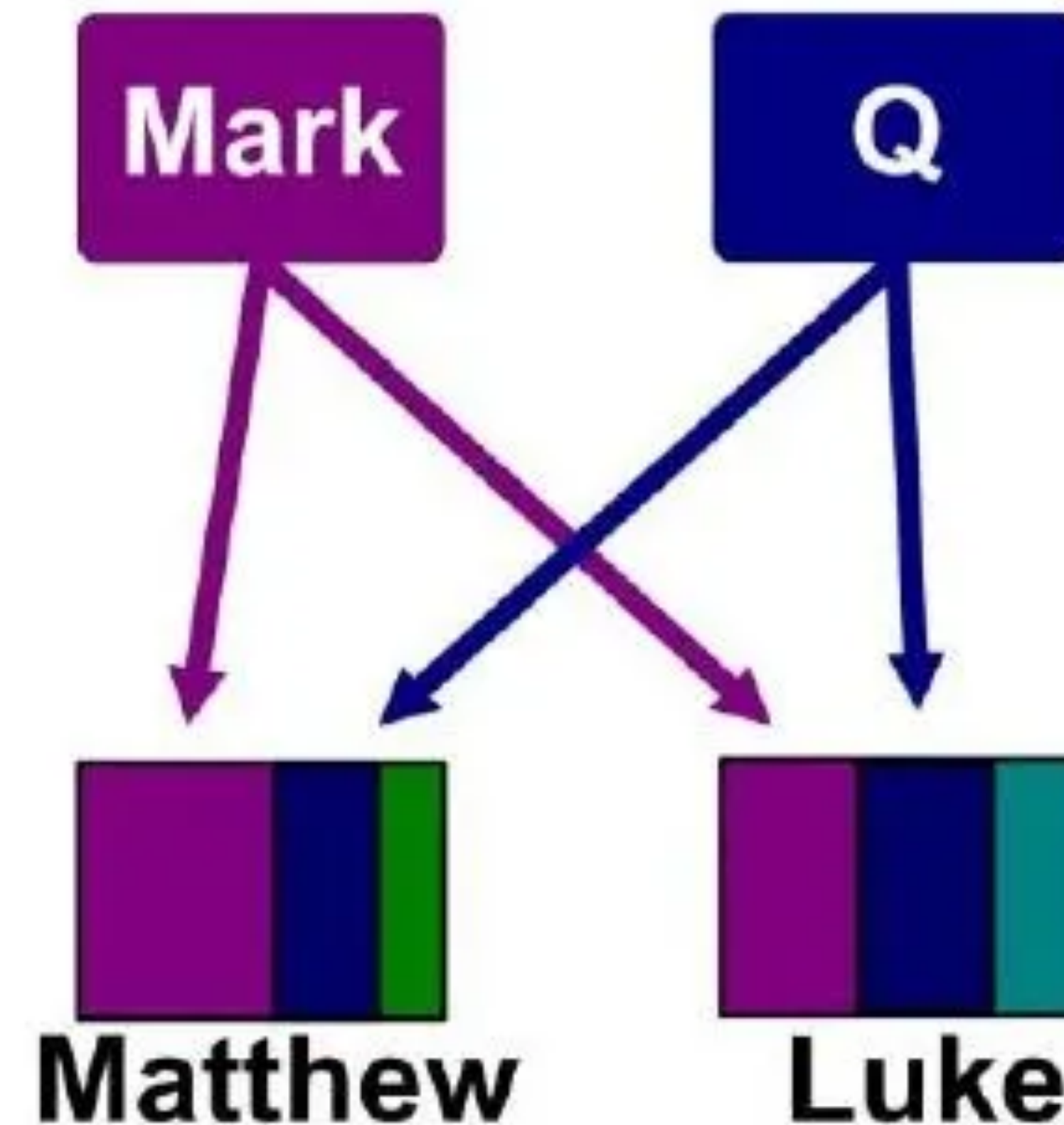
# Relationships between the Synoptic Gospels



# The “Same Eye” Gospel Tradition

- What are the Synoptic Gospels?
  - The word synoptic comes from Greek roots meaning “same eye.”
  - Matthew, Mark, and Luke are called “Synoptic” Gospels because, when examined side-by-side, immediately there appears similarities in structure and content.

## Two-source Hypothesis



## 2 Source Theory (Mark and "Q")

- \* - Mark and "Q" are the 2 sources for the material common to Matthew and Luke
- \* - "Q" stands for "Quelle" the German word for "source"
- \* - Early church Father Papias (c. AD 95) who heard the apostle John
- \* - quoted by Eusebius in *The History of the Church*, 3.39 c. AD 315

Ματθαῖος μὲν οὖν Ἑβραϊδὶ διαλέκτῳ τὰ **λόγια** συνετάξατο,  
ἡρμήνευσεν δ' αὐτὰ ὡς ἦν δυνατὸς ἕκαστος.

"Matthew, then, compiled **The Sayings** in the Hebrew dialect, and each one interpreted them as he was able."

Narrative Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Ministry Begins			
John the Baptist's Ministry	3:1-12	1:2-8	3:1-18
Baptism of Jesus	3:13-17	1:9-11	3:21-22
Temptation in the Wilderness	4:1-11	1:12-13	4:1-13
Early Galilean Ministry			
Calling of First Disciples	4:18-22	1:16-20	5:1-11
Sermon on the Mount/Plain	5-7	—	6:17-49
Healing of Leper	8:1-4	1:40-45	5:12-16
Healing of Paralytic	9:1-8	2:1-12	5:17-26
Call of Matthew/Levi	9:9-13	2:13-17	5:27-32

Narrative Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Parables and Teachings			
Parable of the Sower	13:1-23	4:1-20	8:4-15
Parable of the Mustard Seed	13:31-32	4:30-32	13:18-19
Miracles			
Calming the Storm	8:23-27	4:35-41	8:22-25
Feeding of the 5000	14:13-21	6:30-44	9:10-17
Walking on Water	14:22-33	6:45-52	—
Journey to Jerusalem			
Peter's Confession	16:13-20	8:27-30	9:18-21
Transfiguration	17:1-13	9:2-13	9:28-36
Triumphal Entry	21:1-11	11:1-11	19:28-44

Narrative Event	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Final Week			
Cleansing of the Temple	21:12-17	11:15-19	19:45-48
Last Supper	26:17-30	14:12-26	22:7-38
Garden of Gethsemane	26:36-46	14:32-42	22:39-46
Arrest and Trial	26:47-27:26	14:43-15:15	22:47-23:25
Crucifixion	27:27-56	15:16-41	23:26-49
Burial	27:57-66	15:42-47	23:50-56
Empty Tomb	28:1-10	16:1-8	24:1-12
Post-Resurrection Appearances	28:9-20	16:9-20*	24:13-53

Saying/Teaching	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Discipleship and Following Jesus			
<b>Take Up Your Cross and Follow Me</b> <i>"Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves..."</i>	16:24-26	8:34-37	9:23-25
<b>Instructions to the Twelve</b> <i>"Take nothing for the journey except a staff..."</i>	10:5-15	6:8-11	9:3-5
<b>Whoever Is Not Against Us Is For Us</b> <i>"Do not stop him... for whoever is not against us is for us"</i>	12:30	9:40	9:50
Parables and Kingdom Teaching			
<b>Parable of the Sower</b> <i>"Listen! A farmer went out to sow his seed..."</i>	13:3-23	4:3-20	8:5-15
<b>Purpose of Parables</b> <i>"To you has been given the secret of the kingdom..."</i>	13:10-17	4:10-12	8:9-10
<b>Parable of the Mustard Seed</b> <i>"The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed..."</i>	13:31-32	4:30-32	13:18-19
<b>Lamp Under a Basket</b> <i>"No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket..."</i>	5:15	4:21	8:16

Saying/Teaching	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Identity and Authority			
<b>Peter's Confession Response</b> <i>"Get behind me, Satan! You do not have in mind the concerns of God..."</i>	16:21-23	8:31-33	9:22
<b>Who Is the Greatest?</b> <i>"Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all"</i>	18:1-4	9:33-37	9:46-48
<b>Authority Question Response</b> <i>"I will ask you one question. Answer me, and I will tell you..."</i>	21:23-27	11:27-33	20:1-8
Controversies and Debates			
<b>Render to Caesar</b> <i>"Give back to Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's"</i>	22:15-22	12:13-17	20:20-26
<b>Greatest Commandment</b> <i>"Love the Lord your God... and love your neighbor as yourself"</i>	22:34-40	12:28-34	10:25-28
<b>Beware of the Scribes</b> <i>"Beware of the scribes, who like to walk around in long robes..."</i>	23:1-7	12:38-40	20:45-47

Saying/Teaching	Matthew	Mark	Luke
Future and Signs			
<b>Olivet Discourse - Beginning</b> <i>"Watch out that no one deceives you..."</i>	24:4-14	13:5-13	21:8-19
<b>Abomination of Desolation</b> <i>"When you see standing in the holy place the abomination..."</i>	24:15-22	13:14-20	21:20-24
<b>Coming of the Son of Man</b> <i>"Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven..."</i>	24:29-31	13:24-27	21:25-28
<b>Fig Tree Lesson</b> <i>"From the fig tree learn its lesson..."</i>	24:32-36	13:28-32	21:29-33
Last Supper and Passion			
<b>Institution of the Lord's Supper</b> <i>"This is my body... This is my blood of the covenant..."</i>	26:26-29	14:22-25	22:19-20
<b>Betrayal Prediction</b> <i>"Truly I tell you, one of you will betray me"</i>	26:21-25	14:18-21	22:21-23
<b>Gethsemane Prayer</b> <i>"My Father, if it is possible, may this cup be taken from me..."</i>	26:36-46	14:32-42	22:40-46
<b>Response to Arrest</b> <i>"Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest me...?"</i>	26:55-56	14:48-49	22:52-53

# Class Information

- \* Link to class notes will be posted in Populi, and sent to you in group chat
- \* Homework assignments will be posted in Populi, and sent to you in group chat
- \* Homework is due at the beginning of next class. Add your name so you get credit!
- \* Contact me with any questions: [wonder@hey.com](mailto:wonder@hey.com) -- 360.600.9962