



**animate**



## Canon: Mining for the Word

---



Eric Elnes

# How do you choose a book to read?

- Fiction or non-fiction?
- Classic or contemporary?
- Read to relax or read to learn?

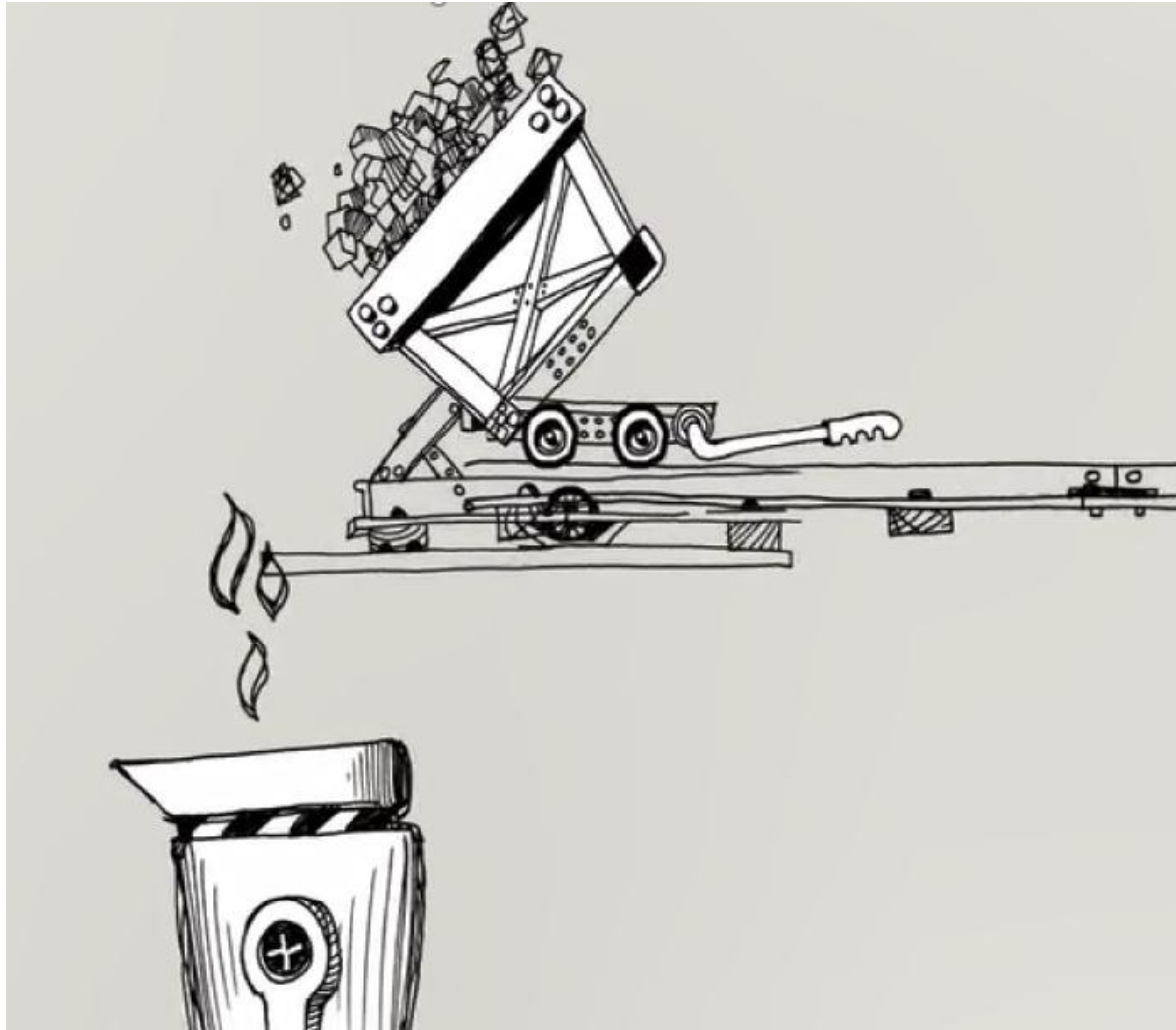




## Scripture

is more like rocks  
with veins of gold  
running through  
them than pure  
gold itself.





# Scripture

Not every word of the Bible holds equal weight and significance. We need to keep sifting through it to find the gold.

# Old Testament

Canonization of the Law and the Prophets began during the Exile and was completed by Ezra around 400 BC. The wisdom writings were added later.



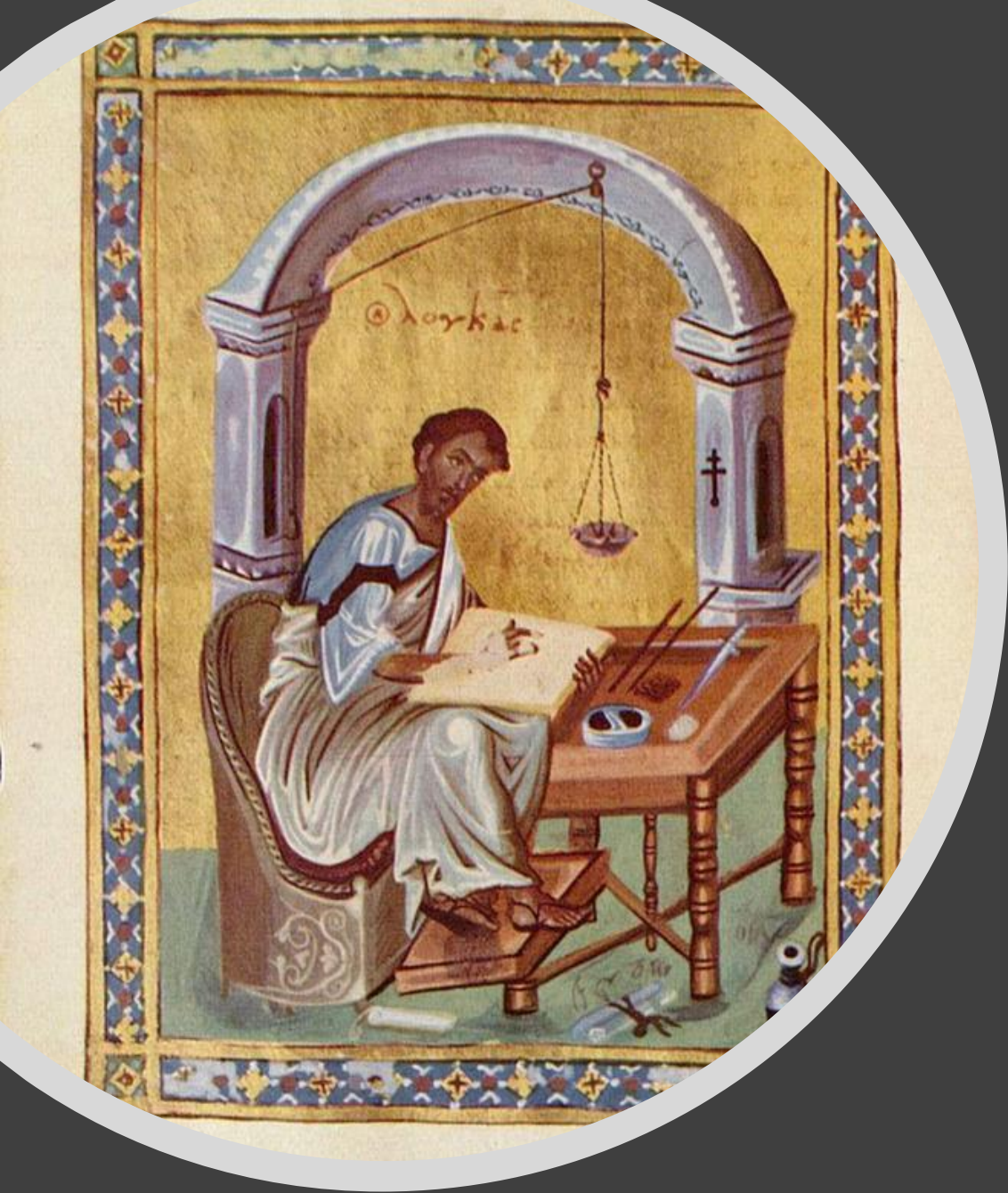
The New Testament canon didn't exist for 3 centuries

# שער י"ב

## פרק שני ויהי

בגושן ספר אלו ארנס  
ליונס קנדל שיכע ארנס  
נמלצת מעגפת ברומ  
במקדש, ניונס אש זכים סיס ולא רכס לישב עמס ולא לילי לילינס  
לכזמס לזנשס ולא לזנוכס לזנש, אגלי סיס רכס לזנש  
עגליס, נזמסבו זגס סגבר זלג נסמ חלוק נבזס זליו זמלוס  
זממכ ינסק מן כור פרכ לקמפ זשפך זכיס שזכור  
במקדש סיס מעגפת, נפלד מן נפמקד שמו יזנע ז סוס  
יושיע זש עמ מעגפת מל לם לזנני זש שזכע זשע  
פזזז על זי זי סמ סעלמס סכס נפלד מן נקראת  
שזר עממנל שזל עממ נקיס נקן ינסק זשזשני ינעס  
כפל זשכ זכס אונפ חלוק זי נקל זש זשזשני ולא זכע  
אונפ עז שילכס זש סזכס, נקרא זש שמו יזנע





The first man to propose a canon was Marcion



Marcion threw out the Old Testament  
and kept Luke and 10 Letters of Paul





**Marcion vs.  
Irenaeus, Tertullian & Justin Martyr**





Irenaeus, Tertullian & Justin Martyr sifted through all the writings circulating among the churches



# 20 Books Made the Cut/Others Did Not

Matthew

Philippians

Gospel of Thomas

Mark

Colossians

Infancy Gospel of Thomas

Luke

1 Thessalonians

Didache

John

2 Thessalonians

Gospel of Phillip

Acts

1 Timothy

Secret Book of John

Romans

2 Timothy

Gospel of Truth

1 Corinthians

Titus

Gospel to the Egyptians

2 Corinthians

Philemon

Secret Book of James

Galatians

1 John

Apocalypse of Paul

Ephesians

1 Peter

Letter of Peter to Phillip





100 Years Later 7 Books  
Were Added

Hebrews

James

2 Peter

2 John

3 John

Jude

Revelation

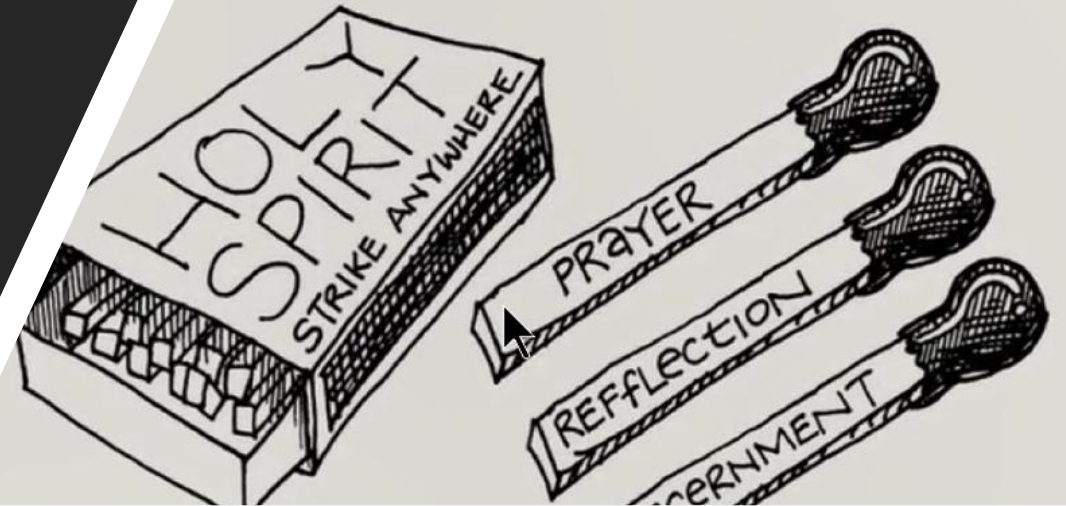
# Eusebius

---



# Prayer, Reflection, Discernment

Do you ever experience the Holy Spirit helping you to find “gold” from your reading of the Bible?





Modern scholarship has cast doubt on the authorship of several books of the Bible, such as Ephesians & Hebrews

How important is authorship to you?

In our modern sensibilities, much of the Bible seems excessively Violent and Brutal.

How do we justify this as “helpful?”







Parts of the Bible, such as the Book of Revelation, are filled with weird dream imagery and prophetic imagination

How might we move beyond the strangeness to find the “gold” in these stories

## 2 Timothy 2:25-26

*Many scholars concede that 2 Timothy was not actually written by Paul. Does this change how you think about this controversial chapter?*

(A servant of the Lord) must be gentle when he corrects people who oppose him, in the hope that God may give them a change of mind so that they recognize the truth and come to their senses, escaping the trap of the devil who made them his captives and subjected them to his will.

# In what ways are these passages helpful?

## **1 Chronicles 5:20**

God came to their help, and the Hagarites and all their allies fell into their hands, for they called on God as they fought, and because they put their trust in him, he heard their prayer.

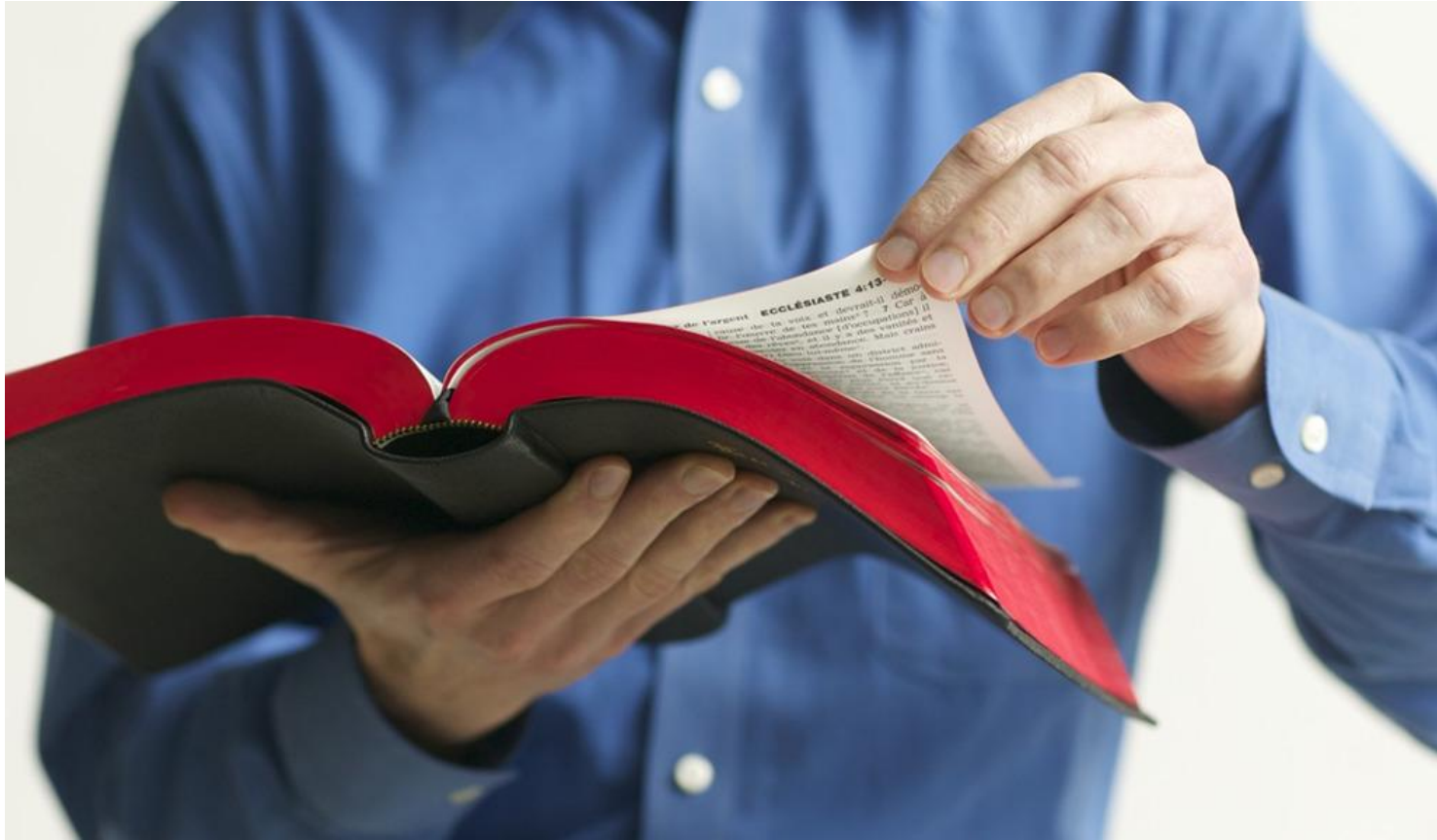
## **Matthew 5:43-44**

You have heard how it was said, You will love your neighbor and hate your enemy. But I say this to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.

Is there anything relevant about this weird passage in the Bible?

### Exodus 4:24-26

At a lodging place on the way, the Lord met Moses and was about to kill him. But Zipporah (Moses' wife) took a flint knife, cut off her son's foreskin and touched Moses' feet with it. Surely you are a bridegroom of blood to me," she said. So the Lord let him alone.



Those who created the canon mined the gold for us

As lay people, we don't always feel qualified to determine the truth or value of something we find in the Bible. Eric suggests that we ask: Who Said It? How Good Is It? How Weird Is It?



They understood that Scripture's purpose is to  
**point beyond itself,**  
to set us into a  
living relationship with God  
through the Holy Spirit.



Thank you