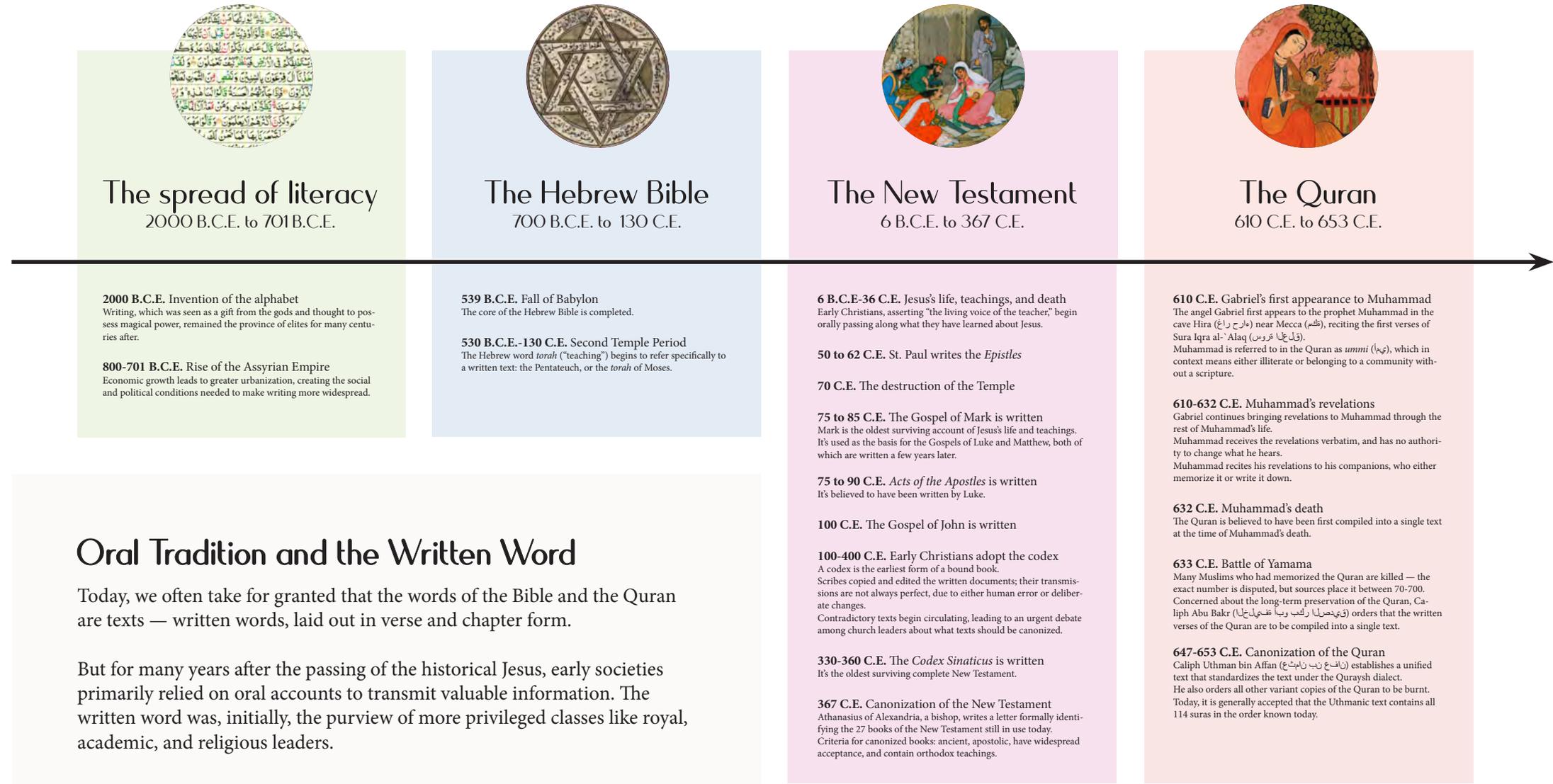




Timeline: How the Bible and the Quran Were Passed Down



Oral Tradition and the Written Word

Today, we often take for granted that the words of the Bible and the Quran are texts — written words, laid out in verse and chapter form.

But for many years after the passing of the historical Jesus, early societies primarily relied on oral accounts to transmit valuable information. The written word was, initially, the purview of more privileged classes like royal, academic, and religious leaders.

The Quran in Islam

The Quran is the central text of Islam. Muslims believe it to be a revelation from God, and that its current presentation is complete and untouched. Most denominations use the Quran together with *hadith* (oral and written traditions) to interpret *sharia* law. During prayers, the Quran is recited in Arabic only.

The Quran refers to more than fifty people and events also found in the Bible. The Bible's writing archaeologically predates the Quran's — but because the Quran is directly revealed from God, Muslims generally believe that the transmission of the Biblical versions may have been flawed. That said, belief in the holy books revealed unto Moses and Jesus is still an integral article of faith for Muslims.

The Bible in Christianity

The Bible is a collection of sacred texts, regarded by Christians as the product of divine inspiration. Many different authors have contributed to the Bible, and what is considered canonical may vary according to different Christian groups. Some denominations today abide by *sola scriptura* (scripture alone), where the Bible is the only source of Christian teaching; a majority, including Roman Catholics, high church Anglicans, and Eastern Orthodox Christians, abide by the Bible as well as church teachings that have emerged over time.