The History of the Bible

200 BC - The Old Testament is Written in Greek
The Jewish people have scattered across many lands and many have started to use Greek as their first language rather than Hebrew (Greek was the universal language of that time)
Rabbis translate the OT from Hebrew to Greek and call it the Septuagint (abbreviated to LXX)
The LXX ultimately includes 73 books of the old testament

The Septuagint (46 books) is the book used by Jesus and the Apostles as well as the Jews during the period

AD 90 - Jews Remove 7 Books
Rabbis meet at the Council of Javneh and decide to include in their canon only 39 books since only these can be found in Hebrew.

Papal Authority
By the time the last book of the New Testament is written there had been at least 5 Popes

Council of Bishops
The Catholic Church has commenced a system of Councils who convene whenever there is a need to confirm what Christian doctrine e.g. Council of Hippo 393, Carthage 397, Trent 1546

Council of Bishops Canonise the New Testament
During the period leading up to the canonisation of the Bible there were 3 classes of books that had to be reviewed:
1. Books acknowledged as canonical by all scholars
2. Disputed books
3. Books declared spurious or false
The first category included all the books that everyone agreed were written by the apostles
The second category consisted of books that were disputed and included some books that were eventually included in the bible e.g. the Epistles of James, Jude, 2nd Epistle of Peter, 2nd and 3rd John, the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Apocalypse of St John
In the third category the books that were stated NOT to be canonical included Gospel of St James, Gospel of John. These and other books were considered to be apocrypha (false, spurious, uncanonical)
The Catholic Bishops had to sift and sort and make decisions about all the books (guided by the Holy Spirit) before arriving at the final bible

AD 100
The Old Testament Books are Written

Council of Hippo AD393
The 46 books of the Old Testament are confirmed as part of the canon.

AD 1546
Council of Trent dogmatised all 73 books of the bible i.e. making it more than canon and impossible to add or subtract from the number of books.

Luther Removes Books from the Bible
• Luther translates the bible into German and puts 7 Old Testament books into the appendix.
• He also removed 4 NT books (Hebrews, James, Jude and revelation) placing them in the appendix

AD 1516
The NT books are written.

AD 1535
Council of Trent AD1546
The Council of Trent dogmatised all 73 books of the bible i.e. making it more than canon and impossible to add or subtract from the number of books.

AD 1539
Luther translates the bible from Hebrew and Greek into Latin (called the Vulgate)

AD 382 Council of Rome
Pope Damascus started the ball rolling for the defining of a universal canon

AD 393 Council of Hippo
Catholic Bishops hold a debate about which books are inspired and therefore should be in the canon

AD 397 Council of Carthage
Catholic Bishops refine the list of books in the bible

AD 419 Council of Carthage
Catholic Bishops renewed the decrees of the earlier Councils and declare that its act should be sent to Pope Boniface for the purposes of confirming it

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