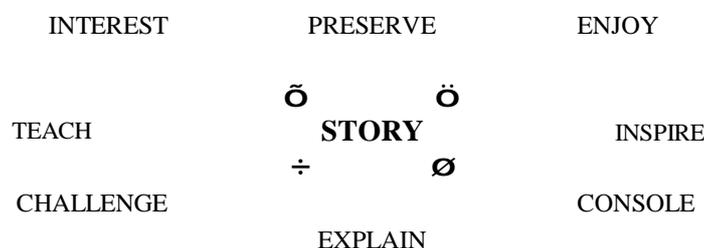


Syllabus Objectives	<p><i>Knowledge</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • have a knowledge of how the Bible came to be written • be familiar with the variety of literary genres found in the Bible <p><i>Understanding</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be aware that the Bible is made up of a variety of literary genres and that the identification of the genre is important for the understanding, interpretation, and application of the text • recognise that for the Christian traditions, this text is respected as the Word of God. <p><i>Skills</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify and differentiate between some of the literary genres found in the Bible <p><i>Attitudes</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an appreciation of the central place of the Bible in Judaeo-Christian traditions
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Procedure**Topic: 2.1 The formation of the Hebrew Scriptures***Oral tradition**The preservation of oral tradition and the formation of the community*

Discuss: Why stories are important to people?

Or Word Wall Assignment:



Pick one of the words from the wall that in your experience has been true of a story.

Take feedback from the students inviting them to outline how the word they have chosen has been true of a story in their experience. Conclude that to a considerable extent, we interpret the world, ourselves and other people through stories.

Research Assignment:

Examine the folk traditions collected in your own areas in the 1930s and 1940s (See local library or <http://www.tuosist.com/sosuilleabhain.asp>) or interview some older people in your area who may have stories or songs about the locality.

Take feedback and conclude by referring to contemporary examples of oral tradition that are to be found in Ireland in the many stories that surround the lives of saints, holy wells, historical events (e.g. 1798 in the South East of Ireland), historical sites (e.g. Tara, Seir Kieran), place names (Leaba Dhiarmada agus Gráinne, Devil's Bit). The great deeds of sportsmen are still recounted in story and song as for example the songs about John Joe O'Reilly the footballer from Cavan, Christy Ring from Cork. The Folklore Commission in Ireland has collected a large body of traditional oral material of which stories form a considerable part.

*The development of writing**The three phases of the historical narratives - The Torah - The Deuteronomic History - The Chronicler's History*

The earliest body of stories that constitute the Hebrew Scriptures was transmitted orally by tribal communities that valued their oral traditions and carefully preserved them from generation to generation. Oral traditions are constantly changing and developing because each telling of a story is different.

The writing down of oral traditions preserves them or freezes them at that point in time. The editor or redactor who gathers together and orders or organizes such traditions leaves his own perspective on the resulting work. Later editors who combine such accounts into larger accounts likewise leave their own imprint on their production. When and where such stories were first committed to writing is not clear. Writing probably

developed during the monarchies of David and Solomon with court officials who compiled administrative records, collections of laws and religious documents. It would be some time, however, before the first written narrative appeared in the shape of the Yahwist's narrative in the 9th century. Even then oral tradition continued to be highly valued alongside the written tradition.

Oral traditions were preserved in the Hebrew Scriptures in -

- Ø The form of songs e.g. Song of Deborah (Judges 5) and the Song of Moses (Ex 15)
- Ø Narrative form e.g. stories of Abraham and Sarah (Ex 12-22), Samson (e.g. Jdg 14-16) and Elisha (2 Kgs 2). The preaching of the prophets was often preserved by their disciples and later written down (e.g. Amos, Jeremiah).

THE THREE PHASES OF THE HISTORICAL NARRATIVES:

<i>The Torah or Pentateuch</i>	<i>The Deuteronomistic History</i>	<i>The Chronicler's History</i>
<p>The Torah, as it is known in the Hebrew canon, consists of the first five books of the bible, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. It covers the story of Israel from the creation of the world and humanity down to the farewell discourses of Moses on the plains of Moab and contains the 'the foundational events and theology of the people of God' (Murphy, <i>NJBC</i>, 7)</p> <p>There appear to have been four main periods in its composition:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. An initial body of oral and written traditions was gathered together and organized into a coherent whole with some unifying themes. This work is attributed to the 9th century BCE Yahwist writer (J) who was a lively storyteller. 2. This body of material was edited and added to in the 8th century BCE by the Elohist (E) whose particular interests may be detected in his redaction of the material. 3. The third strand present in the Pentateuch is that of the 7th century BCE Deuteronomist editor whose main contribution is evident in the book of Deuteronomy. In language and style that are characteristic of him he insists on obedience to the divine commands and threatens punishment on those who do not obey. 4. The final phase in the production of the Pentateuch is usually attributed to the postexilic Priestly writer (P) whose priestly concerns are evident in his redaction of the material (e.g. cult and ritual in Leviticus, genealogies in Genesis). He too had his own language and style. 	<p>This traces the history of Israel from the time of Moses and the conquest of the land to the exile (587-538). This is found in the books of Joshua, Judges 1 and 2, Samuel 1 and 2, Kings, with Dt 1-4 acting as a prologue. It is so-called because it gets its major inspiration from the theology of Deuteronomy. It has a uniform style and outlook and prophecy is central to the work. The aim of the Deuteronomistic writer is to give a theological explanation for the fall of the two kingdoms. The God of Israel was not powerless. The disasters that had befallen Israel was the result not of the weakness but of the power of Yahweh. The prophets had been repeatedly warned the people and its leaders of the consequences of their unfaithfulness. The prophets had repeatedly exhorted conversion but the people had failed to respond. This failure brought the predicted divine judgement in the shape of the fall of the kingdoms of Israel (722/1) and Judah (587/6 BCE) and the exile in Babylon. But God had not abandoned Israel. This was part of the great scheme of things. Keeping the covenant still meant blessing, but breaking it meant punishment. The work with its vision of a faithful God who remains true to his people despite their unfaithfulness is intended to encourage a people on its knees.</p> <p>The history was initially put together in the 7th century BCE after the death of Josiah when stories, chronicles and other elements were gathered together to form a continuous narrative that reflected the community's sense of identity. It was redacted during the exile (587/6-538 BCE) in light of the tragedies that had befallen Israel.</p>	<p>The 4th century Chronicler's History represents a rereading of the history of Israel. It is 'sacred history'. It begins with genealogies from Adam to David (1 Chr 1-9), and continues with the lives of David (1 Chr 10-29) and Solomon (2 Chr 1-9) and the break-up of David's kingdom to the exile (2 Chr 10-36). Most of it represents a rereading of the narrative of Samuel and Kings. It is the first major example of reinterpretation of earlier biblical material. The main part of the Chronicler's history was written after the preaching of the prophets Haggai and Zechariah and the rebuilding of the temple (516) and it was intended to help Israel rebuild itself.</p> <p>The Chronicler omits some material and adds more. Some of the information contained in his history comes from a reliable source not recorded in the books of Samuel and Kings (e.g. Josiah's reform in 2 Chr 34:3-7). But he has his own particular theological viewpoint and accommodates historical events to that viewpoint. He approaches certain historical problems in terms of reward and punishment as in his explanation of the long reign of the wicked Manasseh. He extols the works of God in history and traces the rules of life and worship back to Abraham, Moses and David. He does not give prophecy a central place in his work, as the Deuteronomist had done. For him the temple and its worship are central to the history of Israel and he clarifies religious organization in society. David is portrayed in a much more positive light than in the Deuteronomistic history. His positive points are highlighted and his faults omitted or downplayed.</p>

Assignment:

Using two different voices read the Genesis Creation accounts from the NRSV, Jerusalem or Good News Bible.

Gen 1:1-2:4a (P)	Gen 2:4b-25 (J)

Discuss: How are the accounts of creation similar?

How are the accounts different?

What does each account show about its writer?

Compare the portrait of David presented in the Deuteronomistic and Chronicler's Histories.

Outcomes: As a result of studying this section, students should be able to -

- explain why stories are important to humankind
- give two contemporary examples of oral tradition
- give two examples of how oral traditions have been preserved in the Hebrew scriptures
- contrast oral tradition with written tradition as a means of preserving the traditions of a community
- identify redaction or editorial tradition behind each phase of narrative
- give an example of each of the different types of historical narrative
- identify two characteristics of each type

Topic: 2.2 The Gospels

the gospel as oral form

Write the term “Gospel” on the chalkboard and brainstorm students understanding of the word.

Take feedback and conclude that the term ‘Gospel’ comes from the old English ‘godspel’ meaning ‘good tidings’ and is taken to refer to a book that narrates the story of Jesus, especially one of the four canonical gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke or John.

The term is used to translate the Greek word euaggelion (Latin evangelium) meaning ‘good news’. Originally, however, the Greek word did not refer to a written document but rather to the ‘good news’ of salvation. It referred to the good news that Jesus himself preached (Mk 1:15; Lk 4:18) or the apostolic preaching about Jesus (Acts 5:42; Rom 1:1-3). Jesus did not leave anything in writing. His teaching and his actions were preserved in various forms (miracle stories, pronouncement stories, parables and sayings) by his disciples and by the communities formed on the basis of their faith in Jesus. The ‘good news’ was preached by ‘evangelists’ (Acts 21:8; Eph 4:11) for several decades before there were any written accounts of Jesus’ ministry. When the gospel was being written down the term still applied to the contents of what was being written not to the ‘type’ of book that was produced.

Review Junior Certificate Sample lesson plan Section B Part 2 or explain that scripture scholars generally recognise that the Gospels were developed in three distinct stages. They are the result of a somewhat gradual process of formation and composition. Present students with information on the three stages in the development of the Gospels from *Jesus and You J.Finley & M.Pennock pages 23-26* or from other resources listed at the end of this lesson plan.

The three stages can be visualised with reference to the following *Overhead / Chart*:

Stage 1: <i>The historical Jesus</i>	Stage 2: <i>Oral preaching of the early Church</i>	Stage 3: <i>The writing of the Gospels</i>			
The words and deeds of Jesus	<p>The preaching and teaching of the apostles recalling:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sayings of Jesus • Parables • Miracle accounts • Short creeds • Hymns • Prayers <p><i>As time went by various statements, memorable speeches, vivid images.... were written down.</i></p>	<p>The Evangelists Matthew Mark, Luke and John</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • selected • edited • assembled material to meet the needs of their communities 			
..... 30 CE		Mark 67-70*	Matthew 80-90*	Luke 80*	John 90 -100*

(*The New Jerome Biblical Commentary - authors' articles)

Written Assignment:

1. How long is it after the death and resurrection of Jesus until the first Gospel was written?
2. Over what time period were the Gospels written?
3. Which of the following stages came first, second and third in the writing of the Gospels?

Stage:___	Mark writes his gospel in approximately 65-66CE. Matthew and Luke write theirs between approximately 80-90CE. John is the last gospel to be written between approximately 90-100CE.
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Stage: __	Jesus carried out his preaching and teaching.
Stage: __	The apostles (early church) spend their time learning more about Jesus by sharing their stories with each other. They go around preaching and teaching about Jesus.

Take feedback from students and correct their assignment on the stages in the development of the Gospels elaborating on the following stages:

Stage 2:

The formation of communities based on their faith in the risen Christ facilitated the preservation of material about Jesus and this material in turn helped to develop the communities' identity. Gradually collections of stories and sayings were made and the telling and retelling of such traditions shaped the tradition. Sayings collections such as Q and the collection that may underlie the 2nd century gospel of Thomas were probably first made as a help to teachers and preachers. But it is likely that the earliest accounts were of Jesus' passion and death. What prompted the appearance of the first written 'gospel' may have been the passing of early eyewitnesses or concerns about the accuracy of what was being preached or taught. But the traditions about Jesus did not cease to circulate in oral form simply because much of it had been written down. The gospel tradition had been forming and developing for decades from the time of Jesus' ministry (c.27/30-30/33) but a time came when the need was felt to preserve the traditions about Jesus in a narrative account.

the gospel as literary form *the formation of the four gospels*

Stage 3:

In the second century, the term gospel began to be applied to the books produced by the four evangelists (Cf. Didache 15:3-4; 2 Clement 8:5). It then began to be used as a designation for a type of work. Gospel in this case is being treated as a literary form. Some argue that 'gospel' is a unique genre first exemplified in the gospel of Mark and later developed by Matthew, Luke and John, the canonical gospels. The designation 'gospel' is, however, also applied to works that are quite different from the canonical gospels. These appeared in the second century and later and contain elements similar only in part to those found in the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John (narrative, sayings, stories). This third stage in the formation of the gospels saw the appearance of three synoptic gospels, Mark, Matthew and Luke. They are called synoptic because they give a 'common view' of the story of Jesus. The fourth gospel was attributed to John, and while it shares much in common with the synoptic gospels it is also very different from them.

Student work: *The four gospels*

<p><i>The gospel of Mark</i></p> <p>It is generally accepted that the gospel of Mark was the first of such works and was written shortly before 70 CE. According to Papias, Mark's primary source was the oral preaching of Peter. But whatever the link between the two was, it is clear that the author of Mark's gospel had a number of different sources at his disposal when he composed his work. These included a tradition concerning John the Baptist, controversy stories, parables, miracle stories, community instruction, and an earlier passion narrative.</p> <p>It is possible that a general outline of Jesus' ministry such as one finds in the preaching of Peter in Acts 10:34-43 had already emerged (John the Baptist, Jesus' ministry in Galilee and Judea, his death in Jerusalem, the resurrection, appearances to witnesses, mission). Mark may have used such an outline although he concludes his gospel somewhat abruptly with the empty tomb story and without any appearances of the risen Christ. Whatever happened, it is clear that Mark imposed a literary form and arrangement of his own on the material that he gathered together. Working with a purpose and a readership in mind and against the background of the concerns of his own community he produced a story full of pathos and drama with a vividness and intensity that one does not find in the other gospels. Many hold that</p>	<p><i>The gospel of Matthew</i></p> <p>Most scholars today are of the view that the author of Matthew's gospel, the second longest of the three synoptics, took over the basic outline of his work from Mark. While preserving 90% of Mark's material and its order to a considerable extent, he reshaped it as he retold the story of Jesus. In so doing he was addressing the needs of a Christian community endeavouring to define itself over against Judaism. The community's dialogue with the synagogue is reflected in its focus on Jewish customs and rites, on the Mosaic law, and on the fulfilment of prophecy, elements that give the work a definite Jewish tone. But evidence of an outreach to the Gentiles is found right throughout the gospel (2:1-12; 8:5-13; 15:21-28; 27:54) and especially in the mission charge of 28:16-20. The gospel may have been written in Antioch of Syria, between 70 and 85 CE. Its comprehensiveness in comparison with the gospel of Mark may suggest that the author was anxious to provide a more complete account of the traditions about Jesus in order to meet the emerging concerns and needs his community.</p> <p>Evidence of Matthew's reshaping of Mark's gospel may be seen from the very beginning of the gospel. Whereas Mark begins with John the Baptist, Matthew begins with a genealogy (1:1-17) and other stories about Jesus' birth as well as quotations from the Hebrew Scriptures to show that God's plan is being fulfilled. His gospel concludes not as in Mark with the frightened women leaving the empty tomb but with resurrection appearances of the risen Lord and a mission charge. Another feature of Matthew's gospel that distinguishes it from Mark's is his presentation of Jesus as a teacher. A striking feature of the gospel is the arrangement of</p>
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those for whom the gospel was written were Roman Christians who were suffering persecution or under threat of persecution. Suffering, lack of understanding and failure were part of their lives as Christians – and are part of the presentation of the theme of discipleship that is a prominent feature of Mark’s gospel.	Jesus’ teaching in five main discourses or ‘sermons’, the first of which, the Sermon on the Mount, sets the tone for his ministry. Quite a substantial amount of the material in Matthew’s gospel came not from Mark’s gospel but from other sources – partly from a sayings source shared with Luke’s gospel, namely, Q (see below), and partly from what is referred to as Matthew’s ‘special tradition’ or M.
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<p><i>The Gospel of Luke</i></p> <p>At roughly about the same time that Matthew produced his gospel, the Gospel of Luke appeared. The author indicates at the beginning of the work that he made use of a number of sources (Lk 1:1-4). It is generally accepted that one of these sources was Mark’s gospel about half of which he included in his work and whose basic outline he followed. Like Matthew he reshaped this material considerably and added to it a substantial amount of material from other sources, namely, the sayings source Q and his own special material not found in Matthew or Mark and referred to as L. Using a three part geographical principle of arrangement he divides his narrative into three parts, a Galilean ministry of Jesus (Lk 5:1-9:50), a long travel narrative (9:51-19:48) and a final phase in Jerusalem (Lk 20-24). Like Matthew he begins his work with an infancy narrative and concludes it with resurrection appearances and a universal mission given to the disciples. Luke is a good storyteller leaving us with the parables of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:30-37) and the Prodigal Son (Lk 15:11-32). The gospel is sometimes called the gospel of reconciliation because of its images of a Jesus who reaches out continually to sinners (5:29-32; 7:36-50; 15; 19:1-10; 23:43). Other characteristics of the gospel are its presentation of Jesus as a model and teacher of prayer, the universality of its inclusive message of salvation, its positive attitude towards women, its teaching on discipleship and possessions and on the dangers of wealth. Unlike the other synoptic gospels the gospel of Luke does not stand alone but is the first part of a two-volume work, Luke-Acts.</p>	<p><i>The Gospel of John</i></p> <p>The fourth gospel to appear was the gospel attributed to John. While it has many points in common with the synoptics it is also very different from them. The story of Jesus, which it tells, emerges from the concerns and beliefs of a Johannine community and is written for that community. It is presented against the background of the liturgical life of Israel. Significant individual encounters and dialogues between Jesus and individuals have an important role in its message. Jesus is the Word made flesh, the Light of the World, the Good Shepherd, the Way, the Truth and the Life, the Lamb of God. He speaks in long discourses about himself and his mission. His world in John’s gospel is not a world of sayings and parables, but of concepts such as light and darkness, life and truth, peace and conflict, unity and division, love and enmity. John is more reflective, more theologically minded, and is interested in the significance of the facts. It presents the story of Jesus in two parts, his public ministry in Jn 1-12 and his passion, death and resurrection in Jn 13-20. It was probably produced nearer the end of the first century and over a period of time (Jn 20:30-31, the first ending and a later ending in Jn 21:25). In the synoptics Jesus’ ministry begins in Galilee and moves gradually towards Jerusalem, especially in Luke. In John Jesus’ ministry begins in Judea and moves back and forth between Judea and Galilee. Like the other gospels it uses several sources. And like the synoptic writers John reshaped the material that he gathered with his own concerns and the concerns of his community in mind and with a purpose – to strengthen the faith of his readers (20:30-31).</p>
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Discuss: How is the Gospel of John different to the synoptic gospels?

an introduction to the synoptic problem

Discuss: What do the synoptic gospels have in common?

Take feedback and conclude that the striking similarities between the synoptic gospels suggest that there is some kind of literary relationship between them. None of the evangelists tells us that he has read the other’s gospel - Luke’s preface comes nearest to doing that. But a reading of the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke shows that they have a great deal in common. The problem of explaining the relationship between these three gospels is called the Synoptic Problem.

Read Student work: Solution to the Synoptic Problem

<i>Two-Source Theory</i>	<i>Griesbach hypothesis</i>
This theory claims that the gospel of Mark was written first and was then used as a source by Matthew and Luke who also had access to another body of material usually known as Q. The theory recognizes that Matthew and Luke also had traditional material of their own.	This hypothesis suggests that Mark’s gospel was written after that of Matthew (first) and Luke with the purpose of reproducing what was common to both. This theory dispenses with Q.

There are other solutions to the Synoptic Problem, some of which make use of other oral traditions in their explanations of the relationships between the gospels. Given the complexity of these relationships, any theory that is solely based on documentary sources may be an over simplification.

similarities and differences in the synoptics (Higher Level only)

Assignment: THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS

Outline a table of content based on what is included in each of the following gospels:

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When students have completed their assignment profile their finding on the chalkboard.

Discuss: In what ways is the content of these gospels similar?

In what ways is the content of these gospels different?

Take feedback and conclude that the synopses which place the three gospels side by side in parallel columns show how they have a great deal in common. Almost all of Mark's gospel is reproduced in either Matthew or Luke or both, and largely in Mark's order. The outline of Jesus' ministry is similar in all three, beginning in Galilee, calling the twelve and sending them out, a journey to Jerusalem, teaching in Jerusalem, passion, death and the announcing of Jesus' resurrection. There are striking agreements between all three and between Matthew and Luke in content; in the order of episodes and in the vocabulary of the stories and sayings they have in common. But there are also striking differences between them, differences that suggest a complex relationship between them.

the 'Q' source (Higher Level only)

Discuss: In what ways is the content of the gospels of Matthew and Luke similar?

In what ways is the content of the gospels of Matthew and Luke different?

Take feedback with reference to the way they treat the following:

The Gospels Matthew and Luke

Similarities

Differences

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • John the Baptist's preaching • Etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sermon on the Mount/Sermon on the Plain • The placing of events • The sayings of Jesus • Etc.
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The priority of Mark does not explain the close parallels between Matthew and Luke in material that is not found in Mark. Matthew and Luke have about 235 verses of non-Markan material in common. The solution to this for scripture scholars was to propose the existence of a collection of sayings that is known as Q (from the German Quelle or source). Q, then, is a hypothetical collection of Jesus' sayings that circulated initially in Aramaic and later in Greek. Many scripture scholars feel that Q was a written document and offer linguistic evidence and evidence from the order of the material to support this. They are of the view that Luke's order is the one that best reflects the likely original order of Q.

Written Questions

1. Give two examples that show how the oral tradition has been preserved in the Gospels.
2. St Luke wrote his Gospel for Gentiles. Explain how this audience influenced his gospel.
3. Explain the stages of development of the Bible from oral tradition to written tradition.
4. The gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke are known as the Synoptic Gospels. Give one similarity between any of the three Synoptics and give one area of variation between any of the three Synoptics.
5. St Mark was the first to write his gospel. However he did have a written source 'Q' on which to base his work. Explain the importance of Q as in influence on Mark's gospel.
6. Explain the 'synoptic problem'.

Outcomes: As a result of studying this section, students should be able to:

- appreciate the need for the preservation of the tradition for the continuity of the community
- give two examples of how oral traditions have been preserved in the gospels
- distinguish between gospel as historical narrative and gospel as testimony of faith
- give an overview of how the gospels were formed under the following headings:
 - the evangelists and their communities
 - the variety of gospel material
 - editing of the gospels
- outline two key issues underlying the synoptic problem
- comment on any two areas of similarity between any of the three synoptics
- comment on any two areas of variation between any of the three synoptics
 - explain the importance of 'Q'.