

# Supplementary Information About the Bible

## THE CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

### DEFINITION OF “CANON”

- A. The word “Canon” literally meaning “cane,” or “measuring rod,” came to be used as the name of the list of books which were recognized as the genuine, original, inspired, authoritative WORD of God, the “rule” of Faith.
- B. In the long ago Solomon wrote in **Ecclesiastes 12:12** - “. . . Of making many books there is no end . . .”
- C. While that is true, not every book that has been written is canonical, that is not the genuine, original, inspired, authoritative Word of God, and thus does not belong among the sixty-six books that make up the Bible.

### EARLY IN HISTORY GOD BEGAN THE FORMATION OF THE BOOK WHICH WAS TO BE THE MEDIUM OF HIS REVELATION OF HIMSELF TO MAN.

- A. Ten Commandments were written on stone. **Deuteronomy 10:4-5** - “And He wrote on the tablets according to the first writing, the Ten Commandments, which the LORD had spoken to you in the mountain from the midst of the fire in the day of the assembly; and the LORD gave them to me.  
Then I turned and came down from the mountain, and put the tablets in the ark which I had made; and there they are, just as the LORD commanded me.”
- B. The laws given to and through Moses were written in a book. **Deuteronomy 31:24-26** - “So was, when Moses had completed writing the words of this law in a book, when they were finished,  
that Moses commanded the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying:  
Take this Book of the Law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there as a witness against you.”
- C. Copies of this book were made. **Deuteronomy 17:18** - “Also it shall be, when he sits on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write for himself a copy of this law in a book, from the one before the priests, the Levites.”
- D. Joshua added to the book. **Joshua 24:26** - “Then Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of the LORD.”

- E. **Samuel wrote in a book, and laid it up before God.** **1 Samuel 10:25** - “Then Samuel explained to the people the behavior of royalty, and wrote it in a book and laid it up before the LORD. And Samuel sent all the people away, every man to his house.”
- F. **This book was well known 400 years later.** **2 Kings 22:8-20** - “Then Hilkiah the high priest said to Shaphan the scribe, “I have found the Book of the Law in the house of the LORD.” And Hilkiah gave the book to Shaphan, and he read it.”
- G. **Prophets wrote in a book.** One example: **Jeremiah 36:32** - “Then Jeremiah took another scroll and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote on it at the instruction of Jeremiah all the words of the book which Jehoiakim king of Judah had burned in the fire. And besides, there were added to them many similar words.”
- H. **Ezra read this book of God publicly.** **Nehemiah 8:5, 18** - “And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up.  
Also day by day, from the first day until the last day, he read from the Book of the Law of God. And they kept the feast seven days; and on the eighth day there was a sacred assembly, according to the prescribed manner.”

## SCRIPTURES DURING JESUS’ DAY

- A. In Jesus’ day this book was called “The Scriptures” and was taught regularly and read publicly in synagogues.
1. It was commonly regarded among the people as the “Word of God.”
  2. Jesus Himself repeatedly called it the “Word of God.”
- B. In the New Testament there are about 300 quotations from the Old Testament. The ten Old Testament books most cited in the New Testament are:
1. 419 from Isaiah. Isaiah is quoted the most.
  2. 414 from the Psalms. Only five times less than Isaiah.
  3. 240 times from Exodus.
  4. 238 times from Genesis.
  5. 196 times from Deuteronomy.
  6. 141 times from Ezekiel.
  7. 133 times from Daniel.
  8. 125 times from Jeremiah.
  9. 107 times from Leviticus.
  10. 73 times Numbers.
- C. With one exception, no book outside the books of the Old Testament are quoted in the New Testament. The one exception occurs in the Book of Jude wherein the words of Enoch are included and quoted as a prophecy the Book of Jude, verses 14-15

D. Many of the New Testament quotations are from the Septuagint version of the Old Testament which was in common use in New Testament times.

1. Somewhere around 285 B.C., and at the request of Ptolemy Philadelphus, seventy Jewish linguists from Jerusalem began the translation in Alexandria, Egypt.
2. **Important Note:** Even though the Septuagint contained the Apocryphal books, there is not one quotation from the Apocryphal books to be found by Christ or any other of the New Testament writers.
3. This is evidence that neither Jesus nor the Apostles recognized the Apocryphal books as part of “The Scriptures.”

## THE OLD TESTAMENT

A. The Old Testament (“The Scriptures”) were composed of the 39 books which constitute our Old Testament, though under a different arrangement.

B. They were spoken of as:

1. **The Law** (5 books)
  - a. Genesis
  - b. Exodus
  - c. Leviticus
  - d. Numbers
  - e. Deuteronomy
2. **The Prophets** (8 books)
  - a. Joshua
  - b. Judges
  - c. Samuel
  - d. Kings
  - e. Isaiah
  - f. Jeremiah
  - g. Ezekiel
  - h. The Twelve
3. **The Writings** (12 books)
  - a. Psalms
  - b. Proverbs
  - c. Job
  - d. Song
  - e. Ruth
  - f. Lamentations
  - g. Ecclesiastes
  - h. Esther
  - i. Daniel
  - j. Ezra-Nehemiah

## k. Chronicles

- C. Thus: • Combining the 2 books each of Samuel, Kings, and Chronicles into 1;  
 • Ezra-Nehemiah into 1;  
 • The 12 Minor Prophets (which were written on one roll) into 1;  
 these 24 books are exactly the same as the 39 books of our Old Testament.
- D. Just when this group of books was completed and set apart as the definitely recognized Word of God, is involved in obscurity. Jewish tradition says it was done by Ezra.

## **THE PLACE OF THE NEW TESTAMENT IN THE BIBLE**

- A. Each book of the Bible holds its own special place and purpose with regard to all the others books of the Bible.
1. Each of the 66 books of the Bible holds a basic position in the Bible.
  2. Each of the 66 books of the Bible is there for a purpose . . . for an inspired reason . . . to meet an intended goal.
  3. All that can be studied in the Old Testament carefully prepares one to unfold the pages of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, and the other New Testament books.
- B. If a person has studied the Old Testament carefully, then he is prepared for the unfolding of the Gospel record.
1. The Old Testament is:
    - a. The consummation of the preceding centuries of revelation.
    - b. The fulfillment of the promises and prophecies concerning the Messiah.
  2. That marvelous Messianic line began with Seth and proceeded regularly and steadily through the ages. Note: • Seth was the third son of Adam and Eve, born after Cain murdered Abel (Gen. 4:25-26; 5:3-8).  
 • He was the father of Enos and an ancestor of Jesus Christ (Luke 3:38)  
 • Seth died at the age of 912.
  3. With the coming of Christ, that for which a whole nation was chosen, had been achieved.
  4. All the past, from Genesis to Malachi, has come to rest in the:
    - a. Christ of the law.
    - b. Christ of the history.
    - c. Christ of the poetry.
    - d. Christ of the prophecy.
  5. The greatest moment of human history has arrived.
- C. The coming of Christ signifies: • The coming of a new revelation  
 • The new covenant.

- The greatest self-revelation of God.
1. The law is now superseded by grace and truth of which Christ is its embodiment.
  2. He came when all that was designed by Old Testament revelation was accomplished.
  3. He, the New Testament High Priest, is the way into the holiest of all places.
- D. As the Christ of the Gospel record is the fulfillment of what has preceded, so the truth of the Gospel Record is the foundation of the Christian system that is to follow.
1. It is the moment for the sending of His followers into the world to spread the glad tidings. This is a new thing that could not occur before.
  2. A new day has dawned for mankind.
    - a. The gospel of life and light is to be proclaimed to Gentile and Jew alike.
    - b. The great doctrines of:
      - Redemption      • Justification
      - Regeneration    • Sanctification
      - Adoption
 are to be formulated because of the teachings and atoning work of the Lamb of God.
  3. The Messiah, the central fact of the Old Testament, is now the central fact of the New Testament, and in the triumph of the cross, the central fact of all human history.
  4. It is through the coming of Christ that:
    - a. Salvation from sin could be realized.
    - b. The church (kingdom) would be made available to the world.
    - c. Man could be reconciled back to God.
    - d. All people could have opportunity to become God's children.

## **CONTEMPORARY HISTORY**

- A. The Roman Empire was in its infancy when Jesus was born, the Roman Republic having passed away some 31 years before.
1. Augustus was the first emperor (31 B.C. - 14 A.D.). The internal strife during the last century of the Roman Republic had so seduced Rome that its dissolution was quiet conceivable.
  2. It was by the wisdom and strength of Augustus that she rose from a state of weakness to that of might and power. The Empire was stabilized.
- B. An outstanding fact of the forty-five years of the reign of Augustus was the remarkable state of peace that prevailed throughout the empire.
1. Literature and art flourished.
  2. It was the golden age of Latin literature.

- C. It was in the happy state of things when all the world was at peace that Christ, the Prince of Peace, was born.
1. It was two years after the boy Jesus talked with the doctors in the temple that Augustus died, and the tyrannical and suspicious Tiberius came to the throne as emperor of Rome. That occurred when Jesus was around fourteen years old.
  2. About that time Marcus Ambivius was made governor of Judea.
- D. About two years before Jesus began his public ministry, (that would make Jesus about twenty-eight years old) Pontius Pilate was appointed governor of Judea.
1. Pilate must have heard many things about the wonderworking Christ, little thinking that he would pass judgment upon Him, that he would declare Him innocent of the charges brought against Him, but in his cowardly weakness would deliver Him into the hands of the murderers of the Son of God.
  2. History is His-story.

## **THE APOCRYPHA**

**NOTE:** The Apocrypha is accepted by Catholics, and perhaps others, as inspired books to be included in their Canon of the Bible. On the other hand, The Apocrypha is believed by most Protestants not to be an inspired part of the Bible and therefore are not included in the Bibles they use.

### **INTRODUCTION**

- A. Apocrypha is the name given to the 14 books contained in some Bibles between the Old and New Testaments.
1. The word “Apocrypha” signifies “secret” or “hidden.”
  2. They originated in the 1st to 3rd centuries B.C.
  3. They are mostly of unknown authorship.
  4. They were added to the Septuagint, the Greek translation made of the Old Testament made in that period.
  5. They were not in the Hebrew Old Testament
  6. They were written after Old Testament prophecy, oracles and direct revelation had ceased.
  7. Josephus rejected them as a whole.
  8. They were never recognized by the Jews as part of the Hebrew Scriptures.
  9. They were never quoted by Jesus or His apostles.
  10. They are never quoted anywhere in or by any writer of the New Testament.

11. They were not recognized by the early church as of canonical authority, nor as of divine inspiration.

B. How the Apocrypha came into use.

1. When the Bible was translated into Latin in the 2nd century A.D., its Old Testament was translated, not from the Hebrew Old Testament, but from the Greek Septuagint version of the Old Testament.

a. From the Septuagint these Apocryphal books were carried over into the Latin translation.

b. Then from the Latin translation into the Latin Vulgate which became the common version in Western Europe till the time of the Reformation.

2. Protestants (Pro-test-ants - protesting Catholicism), basing their movement on the Divine Authority of God's Word, the early church as the ancient Hebrews had done, refused the Apocryphal books as a part of the canon of the Bible.

3. When the Council of Trent in A.D. 1546 was held to stop the Protestant Movement, the council declared these 14 books of the Apocrypha to be canonical and they are still in the Douay Version (Roman Catholic Bible). Note: Although they were included as a part of the Old Testament Canon by the Council of Trent in 1546 A.D. they were assigned a somewhat inferior rank.

**C. If these books are a part of the Scriptures, are canonical, we have no right to exclude them, and if the claims made for their canonicity are erroneous they should be rejected.**

D. The fourteen books of the Apocrypha are:

1. 1 Esdras
2. 2 Esdras
3. Tobit
4. Judith
5. Additions to the Book of Esther
6. The Wisdom of Solomon
7. Ecclesiasticus
8. Baruch
9. The Song of the Three Holy Children
10. The History of Susanna
11. Bel and Dragon
12. The Prayer of Manasses
13. 1 Maccabees
14. 2 Maccabees

## **A BRIEF LOOK AT THE FOURTEEN BOOKS OF THE APOCRYPHA**

### **A. 1 ESDRAS**

1. Esdras is the Greek form of Ezra.

2. 1 Esdras is a compilation of passages from Ezra, 2 Chronicles, and Nehemiah, with added legends about Zerubbabel.
3. Its object was to picture the liberality of Cyrus and Darius toward the Jews as a pattern for the Ptolemies.

#### **B. 2 ESDRAS**

1. Sometimes called “4 Esdras.”
2. 2 Esdras purports to contain visions given to Ezra dealing with three things.
  - a. God’s government of the world.
  - b. A coming new age.
  - c. The restoration of certain lost Scriptures.

#### **C. TOBIT**

1. The book of Tobit is a romance, entirely devoid of historical value, of a rich young Israelite captive in Nineveh, who was led by an angel to wed a “virgin widow” who had lost seven husbands.

#### **D. JUDITH**

1. A historical romance of a rich, beautiful and devout Jewish widow who, in the days of the Babylonian invasion of Judah, adroitly went to the tent of the Babylonian general, and under the guise of offering herself to him, cut off his head, and thus saved her city.

#### **E. ADDITIONS TO THE BOOK OF ESTHER**

1. Interpolated passages in the Septuagint version of the Old Testament book of Esther, mainly to show the hand of God in the story.
2. These fragments were gathered, and grouped together by Jerome.

#### **F. THE WISDOM OF SOLOMON**

1. Very similar to the parts of Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes.
2. A sort of fusion of Hebrew thought and Greek philosophy.
3. Written by an Alexandrian Jew who impersonates himself as Solomon.

#### **G. ECCLESIASTICUS**

1. Also called the “Wisdom of Jesus, the Son of Sirach.”
2. Resembles the Book of Proverbs.
3. Written by a widely traveled Jewish philosopher.
4. Gives rules for conduct in all details of civil, religious, and domestic life.
5. It extols a long list of Old Testament heroes.

#### **H. BARUCH**

1. The book purports to come from Baruch, the scribe of Jeremiah, who is represented as spending the last portion of his life in Babylon.
2. It is addressed to the exiles.
3. It consists mostly of paraphrases from Jeremiah, Daniel, and other Prophets.

#### **I. SONG OF THE THREE CHILDREN**

1. The three children are Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

2. Song of the Three Children is an unauthentic addition to the book of Daniel, inserted after Daniel 3:23, purporting to give :
  - a. The prayer of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego while they were in the fiery furnace.
  - b. Their triumphal song of praise for being delivered.

#### **J. HISTORY OF SUSANNA**

1. The History of Susanna is another unauthentic amplification of the book of Daniel, relating how the godly wife of a wealthy Jew in Babylon, falsely accused of adultery, was cleared by the wisdom of Daniel.

#### **K. BEL AND THE DRAGON**

1. Another unauthentic addition to the book of Daniel.
2. Two stories, in both of which Daniel proves that the idols Bel and Dragon are not gods, one of which is based on the story of the Lion's den.

#### **L. PRAYER OF MANASSES**

1. Purports to be a prayer of Manasses, king of Judah, when he was held captive in Babylon, which is spoken of in 2 Chronicles 22:12-13.

#### **M. 1 MACCABEES**

1. A historical work of great value on the Maccabean period, relating events of the Jews' heroic struggle for liberty (175-135 B.C.)
2. Written about 100 B.C. by a Palestinian Jew.

#### **N. 2 MACCABEES**

1. 2 Maccabees is also an account of the Maccabean struggle, confining itself to the period of 175-161 B.C.
2. It professes to be an abridgement of a work written by a certain Jason of Cyrene, of whom nothing is known.
3. While 2 Maccabees supplements 1 Maccabees, it is inferior to it.

### **CONCLUSION**

- A. The fourteen books of the Apocrypha are rejected by Protestants and are not allowed even inferior place in the Sacred Canon.
- B. The true Bible, our all inspired Word of God, contains the sixty-six books that we presently have . . . and no more.