

Topic: What is the Apocrypha? Why is it not in our Bible?

What is the Apocrypha?

“Apocrypha”—the etymology of the word means “hidden.” It is a term used today to refer to books not included in the standard editions of major versions (e.g., KJV, NKJV, ASV, NASB, ESV). Some of these will have special editions with the Apocrypha. The earliest MSS to include Apocryphal books is the Greek translation of the OT, called the Septuagint, or LXX, in the fourth century A.D. While there are fifteen Apocryphal books listed below, in the Roman Catholic Bible they number seven, thus making their Old Testament number 46 books. *I and II Esdras* and *The Prayer of Manasseh* are rejected and thus omitted (-3), and five others are absorbed into other books (-5), thus 15-8=7. See chart below.

Below is a listing of the Old Testament Apocrypha. [Acronyms: “RC” - Roman Cath. Church; “a” - absorbed “r” -rejected]

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| 1. The Wisdom of Solomon (c. 30 B.C.) | 9. I Esdras (c. 150-100 B.C.) [r] |
| 2. Ecclesiasticus (Sirach) (132 B.C.) | 10. II Esdras (c. A.D. 100) [r] |
| 3. Tobit (c. 200 B.C.) | 11. Letter of Jeremiah (c. 300-100 B.C.) [a in Baruch] |
| 4. Judith (c. 150 B.C.) | 12. Additions to Esther (140-130 B.C.) [a in Esther] |
| 5. I Maccabees (c. 110 B.C.) | 13. Prayer of Azariah (second or first century B.C.) (Song of Three Young Men, or Children) [a in Daniel] |
| 6. II Maccabees (c. 110-70 B.C.) | 14. Susanna (second or first century B.C.) [a in Daniel] |
| 7. Baruch (c. 150-50 B.C.) | 15. Bel and the Dragon (c. 100 B.C.) [a in Daniel] |
| 8. Prayer of Manasseh (second or first century B.C.) [r] | |

Why is it not in our Bible?

1. Why were the writings Timothy learned as a child “sacred” (“holy” NKJV), worthy of “continuing” reading and study, and “profitable” for “teaching,” “reproof,” “correction,” “training” in righteousness? **2Tim 3:14-17.**
 - a. Compare how Jesus and the apostles appealed to these very “Scriptures” as the standard of truth, faith, and conduct - **Lk 10:26; 24:25-27; Jn 5:39,45-47; 10:34-35; Ac 15:15; 17:2-3; Rom 15:9-12.**
 - b. See **Gal 1:1...6:11; 1Co 1:1...14:37-38...16:21; Col 1:1...4:16; 1Th 2:13...5:27; 2Th 2:2...15,17.** What was appealed to giving these particular letters “sacred” status worthy reading, teaching, and being part of the standard of truth, faith, and conduct? What were the readers warned about?
2. Following are evidences that the books of the “Apocrypha” do not meet this criterion, and therefore do not belong in the book esteemed as the Word of God, “The Holy Bible.” We will discuss these in class as time allows. Note: being included in the book we call “The Bible” does not make the books in it inspired by God; being *inspired by God* is what gave them the right to be included in “The Holy (Sacred) Bible.”
 - a. They were never included in the Hebrew canon of the Old Testament. The Old Testament is a collection of books by Jewish authors for the Jewish nation, and these divine “oracles” were “entrusted to them,” **Rom 3:2.**
 - b. They were never quoted or referred to as the Word of God by Jesus, the apostles, or the New Testament prophets. Compare, “It is written” (**Mt 4:7**), “God said” (**Mt 15:4**), “Scripture says” (**Rom 10:11**), etc.
 - c. They never claimed inspiration. In fact, they were written after the period Old Testament revelation was recognized to have ceased.
 - d. They contain errors. Some contain historical, chronological, and geographical errors. Some contain clearly doctrinal errors. Some are clearly fictitious.