






Canon: Which Books Belong?

Lesson Seven: The Old Testament Canon

1. A Short History of the Old Testament Canon

A study of the Old Testament Canon quickly reveals that the 39 books enjoy a long history of general acceptance as canonical literature. A brief history of the Old Testament Canon helps strengthen confidence that the Divine wisdom was revealed, recorded, and protected by the Jewish nation.

- a.  Some of the books were met with opposition.
 - 1) The Samaritans rejected all except the Pentateuch.
 - 2) From 200 B.C. onwards, certain Apocryphal Books claimed the status of inspired writing and found acceptance by some people.
 - 3) The Jewish rabbis disputed the inspiration of 5 books—Ezekiel, Proverbs, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, and Esther.
 - 4) The points of debate regarding the Old Testament Canon are easily resolved and today there is general agreement that the Old Testament Canon consists of the books included by the Hebrew Bible.
- b.  The canonicity of the Old Testament is established by the authority they present.
 - 1) Exodus 24:7—The people’s response when Moses read from the Law.
 - 2) 2 Kings 22-23; 2 Chronicles 34—The response when the Book of Law is found by Hilkiah and read.
 - 3) Nehemiah 8:9, 14-17; 10:28-39; 13:1-3—The response when Ezra read from the Book of Law.
- c.  The Old Testament Canon existed because of the literary processes in Israel.
 - 1) Moses wrote God’s revelation (Exodus 17:14; 24:4; 34:27; Numbers 33:2; Daniel 28:58; 29:20-27).
 - 2) Other prophets wrote; the first was Samuel (1 Samuel 10:25; 1 Chronicles 29:29).
 - 3) A chain of verses in Chronicles gives us the tradition of a series of writing prophets in Israel (Harris, 166-169):

- a) 1 Chronicles 29:29—David’s history was written in the books of the prophets Samuel, Nathan, and Gad.
 - b) 2 Chronicles 9:29—Solomon’s history was written by the prophets Nathan, Ahijah, and Iddo.
 - c) 2 Chronicles 12:15 – Rehoboam’s history was written by the prophets Shemaiah and Iddo; Abijah’s by Iddo (2 Chronicles 13:22); Jehoshaphat’s by Jehu (2 Chronicles 20:34); Hezekiah’s by Isaiah (2 Chronicles 32:32); Manasseh’s by unnamed “seers” (2 Chronicles 33:19); the other Kings are said to have their deeds recorded in the “book of the kings of Israel and Judah” (2 Chronicles 35:27).
 - d) There is thus a long chain of writing prophets that reaches prior to David until the end of the Kingdom of Judah...The writings of these prophets would be given the same authority as their spoken word.
 - e) The situation in Jeremiah 26:18ff is interesting. A verse is quoted from the Book of Micah and is cited as authoritative because it is in a sacred book *and* because a prophet of God had spoken it (125 years earlier). We thus are given a clear illustration of how the prophet’s words (writings) were given canonical authority!
 - f) The interesting fact to consider is the ending “footnotes” at the end of some books (as Moses’ death record in Deuteronomy; Joshua’s death record in Joshua; Ruth’s ending genealogy of David; the closing verses of Kings were written after the Babylonian Exile). “It thus appears that in every case from the Pentateuchal history to the Post-Exilic writings a historical book is given a colophon or footnote that unites it in continuous narrative fashion to the succeeding book...The chain of prophets evidently wrote a chain of histories from Genesis to Nehemiah, and the writings of these prophets were accepted, one by one, through the centuries until, when the spirit of prophecy departed from Israel, the canon was complete” (Harris, 168-169).
- 4) The writing of God’s revelation can be attributed to:
- a) The need for its message to be sent elsewhere (Jeremiah 29:1; 36:1-8; 51:60; 2 Chronicles 21:12).
 - b) To preserve it for the future (Exodus 17:14).
 - c) To be a witness (Deuteronomy 31:24-26).
 - d) To counter the unreliability of oral transmission.

- d. 📖 The Old Testament's structure developed over a long period of time.
- 1) Even while the books were being gathered they were considered "God-breathed" (Deuteronomy was considered canonical even when Moses was alive—Deuteronomy 31:24-26).
 - 2) As prophetic succession occurred and additional volumes were added to the Canon. This process did not violate God's warnings since the books came from God (Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Proverbs 30:6).
 - 3) "We have here a practical and reasonable test of canonicity that could have been applied by all the generations of the Jews and, except for a few places where evidence now is more slender, can be readily applied even today. What was prophetic was regarded as the Word of God. What was not prophetic was, as we know from 1 Maccabees 4:46, etc., not regarded as the Word of God. The canon grew as the prophets succeeded one another in their ministry; it was finished, as Josephus says, when the Holy Spirit ceased speaking through prophets in Israel" (Harris, 174-175).
 - 4) Not all writers were prophets; some were Kings or wise men. But their experience of inspiration enabled their writings to be canonized (2 Samuel 23:1-3; 1 Chronicles 25:1; Ecclesiastes 12:11ff; Job 38:1; 40:6).
- e. 📖 The critical test: "Were the writings the words of Inspiration?" This test separated many of the ancient writings and allowed man to see the vast difference between those books inspired by God and those penned by mortals.
- 1) "Some ancient Hebrew books were certainly excluded. The evidence refutes the view that all old Hebrew books were eventually considered sacred" (Harris, 154).
 - 2) "Thus our conclusion would be that the words of a prophet in his teaching ministry were the very words of God and were received as such. His writings were of equal credence and none were to be rejected by his contemporaries or successors...Moses wrote at the command of God, collected his work into a law, and arranged for its preservation. Succeeding men, most of whom were clearly prophets and all of whom may have been prophets, added to the sacred scrolls, being conscious of the continuity of the record. All of this was received by contemporaries...as equal in authority to the speaking prophetic voice. In the days following the close of the Old Testament canon it was regarded as a complete and authoritative body of literature. The Lord Jesus Christ's seal of approval upon this literature...is guarantee enough of its canonicity and truth for those who find in Him the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (Harris, 178-179).
- f. *Note:* This brief historical summary underscores the general attitude that has existed throughout civilization regarding the Old Testament Scriptures.

2. The Old Testament Scriptures are divided into three sections. Each reflects the development of the Old Testament canon.

a. The Jews divided the Old Testament into three parts (Luke 24:44).

- 1) 📖 **The Law** contained the Pentateuch (Genesis-Deuteronomy). This section is often referred to as “The Torah” and was first recognized as canonical.
- 2) 📖 **The Prophets** were divided into two further groups: The “former” and “latter” prophets. This section included: Samuel, Judges, Kings, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and “the Book of the Twelve” (the twelve “minor” prophets).
- 3) 📖 **The Writings** (also called the “Hagiographa”) contained all poetic books, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Chronicles.
- 4) *The Jews* usually numbered the books of the Old Testament as twenty-four. This number was determined by combining several of the books of our English Bibles together (The twelve minor prophets were one book; combined also were 1 & 2 Chronicles; 1 & 2 Samuel; 1 & 2 Kings; Ezra-Nehemiah).

Josephus counted twenty-two books in the Jewish Old Testament. He arrived at this number by combining Ruth-Judges and Jeremiah-Lamentations.

Note: Such were combined in the Jewish list because the scrolls were large enough to contain both books. Hence being on one scroll they were counted as one book.

b. Only five of the books in the Old Testament were ever questioned (Neale Pryor, 42, 43).

- 1) **Esther**—does not mention God’s name.
- 2) **Ecclesiastes**—was thought too pessimistic.
- 3) **The Song of Solomon**—was thought too sensual.
- 4) **Proverbs**—because it appeared to contradict itself (26:4-5).
- 5) **Ezekiel**—because the Temple (chapters 40-48) he envisioned was never built.


3. Assurance that we have an inerrant Old Testament Canon is founded upon two strong facts.


a. 📖 The transmission of the text assured that it would be preserved as given by Inspiration. The text has been copied by hand over a period of 3,000 years, and this fact causes some to raise serious questions regarding the integrity of the text. However, the present state of the text is incredibly well-preserved. This indicates that God has watched over the Word He gave via Inspiration!

The following points show why the Old Testament text can be trusted:

- 1) The Masorets were rabbis who from the fifth century to the tenth century A.D. During that time they established the text of the Old Testament by choosing from the best manuscripts available. They copied these with extraordinary care.
 - 2) Each text was annotated to preclude errors in future copying. In the margin the number of letters, the repetitions of certain expressions, the middle letter, and the word and verse in the middle of each book was noted.
 - 3) If a word seemed incorrect, they left it in the manuscripts and made a corrected note in the margin. Thus the Masorets made a great contribution to the Old Testament text and assurances of its integrity!
 - 4) The Masorets were checked by older documents accepted as authoritative:
 - a) **The Septuagint** was made between 250-150 B.C. It was based upon a Hebrew text 1,000 years older than the Masoretic text.
 - b) **The Samaritan Pentateuch** was a text transmitted independently of the Masoretic text and is one of the earliest examples of the combination of the first five books. This comparison shows the integrity of the Masoretic text.
 - c) **The Malabar Manuscripts** was discovered among the black Jews of Malabar, India, at the beginning of the nineteenth century. All that is lacking is Leviticus and a part of Deuteronomy. When compared with the Masoretic text there are only slight differences.
 - d) **The Dead Sea Scrolls** were discovered in 1947 and have enabled scholars to go back 1,000 years further than was possible with the manuscripts known up to that time. The Isaiah scroll shows almost 100% agreement with the Masoretic Text.
- b. 📖 The overruling power of Providence assures us that the Old Testament text is valid today.
- “Were all of the prophetic writings preserved? Of course we cannot say. Most of these inspired speeches of the prophets have perished. A number of their inspired writings may also have been lost...But the writings that we have were providentially preserved from destruction. We may therefore add to our tests for canonicity the factor of divine providence in preserving for us such writings as God wished us to have through succeeding generations.” (Harris, 175)
4. 📖 **The Apocryphal Books.** One of the most interesting factors of the Old Testament Canon is the debate over the inclusion, or exclusion, of the Apocryphal Books.

- a. 📖 The word “Apocrypha” is the name given to Jewish religious books of obscure origin (📖 literally it means “the secret or hidden”). These were books not included in the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, but have been included in other translations. Some of these translations are still used today.
- b. The Books of the Apocrypha and a brief summary:
- 1) **1 & 2 Esdras** (the Greek form of the name Ezra) are additions to the books of Ezra and Nehemiah purportedly written by Ezra. The books contain historical material, describe the destruction of Jerusalem because of the sins of Israel, the coming of the Son of Man, and the visions of these days.
 - 2) **Tobit** is a tale of domestic piety. It is the story of Tobit, from the tribe of Naphtali, who is exiled to Assyria where, despite his righteousness, misfortune befalls him. The book ends with Tobias, his son, rectifying the wrong done to his father.
 - 3) **Judith** contains a tale of a heroine, Judith, who used her charm and deceit to lure the invading Assyrian general Holofernes to his death by decapitation. She, thereby, lifted the siege of her city. The book is important for its description of Judith's meticulous observance of various religious laws.
 - 4) The **Additions to Esther** are popular expansions (six passages) to the biblical story, designed to introduce and supply an underlying religious theme to the Book of Esther which does not mention the name of God.
 - 5) The **Wisdom of Solomon** pays homage to the traditional founder of Wisdom Literature without claiming to be written by Solomon. The book consists of interesting and helpful proverbs that sound like the canonical book of Proverbs.
 - 6) **Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Sirach)** is a well-written book similar to Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. It contains poems and proverbs offering advice on practical and godly living.
 - 7) **Baruch** contains a prayer of confession, a poem in praise of wisdom, and songs of comfort. The book is attributed to Baruch, who was the scribe of the prophet Jeremiah. It was probably written after A.D. 70 after the fall of Jerusalem to Rome but it was written as though it were written during the time of Baruch and Jeremiah when the Babylonians captured Jerusalem.
 - 8) The **Letter of Jeremiah** is a short work attributed to Jeremiah in which the prophet condemns the worship of idols. It was written about the same time as Baruch.
 - 9) **The Song of the Three Holy Children (Addition to Daniel)** recounts the prayers of Shadrach, Meshach, and Azariah, and centers on the misfortunes encountered by Jews despite God's covenant with them.

- 10) **Susannah and the Elders (Addition to Daniel)** is an attempt to explain the high regard and detective ability of Daniel. The book tells the story of how Daniel saved Susannah from a false charge of adultery, prompted by her rejection of the advances of two elders. Daniel's interrogation of the elders proved that they were not telling the true story.
- 11) **Bel and the Dragon (Addition to Daniel)** contains two stories in which Daniel proves the fraudulence of the idols worshipped by the Babylonians as a god.
- 12) **The Prayer of Manasseh** is an attempt to write the prayer of the most even king of Judah that is referred to in 2 Chronicles 33:18 but not recorded. It is a brief book that lacks any evidence that it came from the time of Manasseh.
- 13) **1 & 2 Maccabees** are the chief sources for a history of the events of the Hasmonean revolt from the conquest of Alexander the Great and the Syrians. 1 Maccabees is thought to have been an accurate account of history and includes the primary source for the festival of Hanukkah. 2 Maccabees **has** a stronger emphasis of the religious aspects of the revolt rather than serving as an historical account. Among the prominent religious themes in the book is the concept of martyrdom.
- c. The apocrypha can easily be seen as non-canonical once the issues and substance of the books are studied. It becomes clear why the Apocryphal Books were not considered inspired when several facts are considered:
- 1) Except for interesting historical information and a few beautiful moral thoughts, these books contain absurd legends, historical, geographical, and chronological errors, as well as heretical doctrine.
 - a)  Judith lives a life of falsehood and deception in which she is represented as being assisted by God.

¹⁰Smite by the deceit of my lips the servant with the prince, and the prince with the servant: break down their stateliness by the hand of a woman. ¹¹For thy power standeth not in multitude nor thy might in strong men: for thou art a God of the afflicted, an helper of the oppressed, an upholder of the weak, a protector of the forlorn, a saviour of them that are without hope. ¹²I pray thee, I pray thee, O God of my father, and God of the inheritance of Israel, Lord of the heavens and earth, Creator of the waters, king of every creature, hear thou my prayer: ¹³And make my speech and deceit to be their wound and stripe, who have purposed cruel things against thy covenant, and thy hallowed house, and against the top of Sion, and against the house of the possession of thy children. (Judith 9:10-13)
 - b)  Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Sirach) and the Wisdom of Solomon inculcate a morality based upon expediency.

- c) 📖 Ecclesiasticus teaches that giving alms atones for sin.

²⁹The heart of the prudent will understand a parable; and an attentive ear is the desire of a wise man. ³⁰Water will quench a flaming fire; and alms maketh an atonement for sins. ³¹And he that requiteth good turns is mindful of that which may come hereafter; and when he falleth, he shall find a stay. (Ecclesiasticus 3:29-31)

- d) 📖 The book of Baruch teaches that God hears the prayers of the dead.

O Lord Almighty, thou God of Israel, hear now the prayers of the dead Israelites, and of their children, which have sinned before thee, and not hearkened unto the voice of thee their God: for the which cause these plagues cleave unto us. (Baruch 3:4)

- e) 📖 2 Maccabees teaches we should pray for the dead.

⁴³And when he had made a gathering throughout the company to the sum of two thousand drachms of silver, he sent it to Jerusalem to offer a sin offering, doing therein very well and honestly, in that he was mindful of the resurrection: ⁴⁴For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should have risen again, it had been superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. ⁴⁵And also in that he perceived that there was great favour laid up for those that died godly, it was an holy and good thought. Whereupon he made a reconciliation for the dead, that they might be delivered from sin. (2 Macc. 12:43-45).

Note: In 1 Maccabees there are historical and geographical errors. (Note: This information was from “*The Holy Scriptures*,” Ft. Worth Lectures, 1979, 115)

- 2) 📖 How did these Apocryphal Books gain acceptance?

- a) 📖 The basic argument for including the Apocryphal Books states that these books were “hidden” for a long time and their discovery should cause them to be revered.

- b) 📖 Many of the books were included in the Septuagint. The Septuagint was the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, consisting of the Old Testament scriptures, that was used in New Testament times. The translation was done between the 2nd and 3rd Century B.C. in Alexandria, likely completed before 132 B.C. Although the books were included, much doubt existed even in early times as to their inspired quality. Some of the books were even written in Greek and merely added to the Septuagint editions, casting further doubt as to their validity and inspiration.

It is entirely possible the books were added by translators because they were similar in type and style of some of the canonized books. Even those of Jewish faith became less-inclined to use the Septuagint when the discrepancies appeared between it and the original Hebrew text.

c) ☞ Canonized by the Roman Catholic Church. Even though these Apocryphal Books were never accepted in the Hebrew Bible, by Jesus Christ, by the Apostles, or by the Early Church, they were canonized by Rome and Constantinople at the Council of Trent in 1546 to justify unscriptural practices.

i. ☞ Prayers for the dead (*see above*, 2 Maccabees 12:44).

ii. ☞ The Expiatory Sacrifice (later to become “Mass,” 2 Maccabees 12:39-45).

iii. ☞ Almsgiving with atonement value (later modified to purchase deceased souls from Purgatory)

*⁸Prayer is good with fasting and alms and righteousness. A little with righteousness is better than much with unrighteousness. It is better to give alms than to lay up gold: ⁹For **alms doth deliver from death, and shall purge away all sin.** Those that exercise alms and righteousness shall be filled with life: ¹⁰But they that sin are enemies to their own life. (Tobit 12:8-10)*

*⁹For thou layest up a good treasure for thyself against the day of necessity. ¹⁰Because that **alms do deliver from death, and suffereth not to come into darkness.** ¹¹For alms is a good gift unto all that give it in the sight of the most High. (Tobit 12:9-11)*

iv. ☞ Invocation and intercession of the saints (*see above*, Baruch 3:4).

Then Onias answered, saying, This is a lover of the brethren, who prayeth much for the people, and for the holy city, to wit, Jeremias the prophet of God. (2 Maccabees 15:14)

v. ☞ The worship of Angels.

¹⁵I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One. ¹⁶Then they were both troubled, and fell upon their faces: for they feared.. (Tobit 12:15-16)

vi. ☞ Purgatory and the redemption of souls after death (*see above*, 2 Maccabees 12:40-45).

5. ☞ The Apocryphal Books have been rejected from the Canon because of valid reasons.

a. ☞ They were composed *after* the period when prophecy was recognized to have ceased in Israel. This argument against canonization focuses upon the dates of these books. The Old Testament Apocrypha was written between 200 B.C. and 200 A.D. This date gives great argument to eliminate these books from the Canon.

“There was a strong tradition among the Jews that inspiration ceased in the days of Artaxerxes, king of Persia. This would be about the time of Nehemiah or Malachi, 400

B.C. (See Josephus, *Against Apion*, I, 8). Therefore, in order to get into the Old Testament, books had to be written by men who lived before 400 B.C.” (Pryor, 45)

Some of the Apocryphal books even aid this argument by recognizing there was not a prophet of God around to give canonical literature (see below, 1 Maccabees 4:46; 9:27; 14:41).

- b. ☞ They are all anonymous except for two (Ecclesiasticus and Baruch). However the authorship of these two is discredited!
 - 1) ☞ Ecclesiasticus claims its author was a prophet through whom the Lord spoke. But this claim was rejected in the time period of 132 B.C.
 - 2) ☞ Baruch claims to have been written by Jeremiah’s scribe. This is discredited because Baruch and Jeremiah went to Egypt (Jeremiah 43:6) but the Book of Baruch says he was in Babylon (Baruch 1:1). It also has other inconsistencies with Scripture:
 - a) It claims the Temple vessels were returned from Babylon, yet Ezra and Nehemiah state otherwise (verses?).
 - b) It gives a date for Belshazzar which is much too early.
 - c) It predicts the captivity would last seven generations (Baruch 6:3) which contradicts Jeremiah’s predictions and Ezra’s fulfillment.
- c. ☞ Some Apocryphal Books claim NO inspiration or prophetic authorship. In fact, Maccabees states there were NO inspired prophets, hence there would be no canonical literature.

*And laid up the stones in the mountain of the temple in a convenient place, **until there should come a prophet to shew what should be done with them.*** (1 Maccabees 4:46)

*So was there a great affliction in Israel, the like whereof was not since **the time that a prophet was not seen among them.*** (1 Maccabees 9:27)

*Also that the Jews and priests were well pleased that Simon should be their governor and high priest for ever, **until there should arise a faithful prophet;*** (1 Maccabees 14:41)

- d. ☞ The scenes of some of the books contain obvious errors.

The scenes of Tobit and Judith are in the days of the Assyrian and Babylonian captivities and are thus within the scope of the writing prophets, yet “The books of Tobit and Judith abound in geographical, chronological, and historical mistakes...To make it doubtful whether they even rest upon a basis of fact” (Harris, 182).

- e. ☞ The books were never accepted by Christ and His Apostles.

There is no question that Christ accepted the books of the Hebrew Bible as canonical. There are about 600 quotations of the Old Testament in the New Testament plus other allusions of wording and events. The Old Testament was regarded as absolute truth. However, the seven Apocryphal Books and the minor Apocryphal additions are *never* quoted in any way.

- f. ☞ The books have been discredited from the Canon because of their treatment by historians. Historical validation for the Old Testament Canon is given by the following men:

- 1) *Josephus* lists the five books of Law, thirteen books of prophets, four books of hymns. His list contains a total of 22 which agrees with the Hebrew Bible and our English Old Testament.
- 2) *Philo*, the learned Jew of Alexandria, revealed the views of the first century Jews regarding the Old Testament. He cites as authoritative all of the books of the Jewish Canon except for Esther, Ezekiel, Daniel, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. These books are not denied, there was just no need for him to cite them in his work.

Note: The above is conclusive—excellent witnesses have rejected the Apocryphal Books as authoritative religious writings! These books have been rejected by Jesus Christ, the New Testament writers, the Palestinian Jews (*Josephus*) and the Egyptian Jews (*Philo*). (See *Harris*, p. 188ff for later historians rejecting the Apocryphal Books).

6. ☞ With the evidence so strongly against accepting the Apocryphal Books, one wonders how they could have become so accepted. Here are two major arguments for the inclusion of the Apocryphal Books in the Canon.



- a. The great Bible manuscripts contained the Old Testament Apocrypha, plus some other early Christian writings included them.


The inclusion of these spurious books does not make them canonical. What the inclusion does indicate is that these were literary works which were read and thus the “extra pages” in the codex were used to record them (*Harris*, 187-188).



- b. ☞ The New Testament writers quote from the LXX (Septuagint) and it contained the Apocrypha. Thus, these books must have been accepted by Christ and the New Testament since they used the LXX.

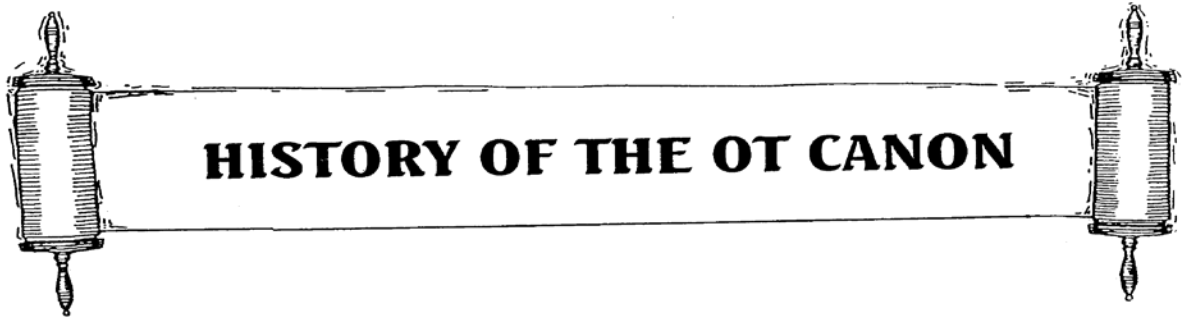
There is NO evidence that the Jews ever accepted the Apocrypha as equal to canonical literature (See *Harris*, 186-187; *Pryor*, 52). The New Testament writers never quote from the Apocryphal Books! The reference in *Jude* 9 does not prove canonicity! *Jude* does not sanction the Book of Enoch any more than Paul sanctioned the Greek poets *Aratus*

(Acts 17:28), Meander (1 Corinthians 15:33), and Epimenides (Titus 1:12) from whom he quoted.

7.  Concluding points about the rejection of the Apocryphal Books for the Canon.
 - a.  The basic principle of Canon—"Was this a literary work of God's spokesman?"—guided the development which excluded the Apocryphal Books. This basic principle remains valid.

"We have here a practical and reasonable test of canonicity that could have been applied by all the generations of the Jews and, except for a few places where evidence now is more slender, can be readily applied even today. What was prophetic was regarded as the Word of God. What was not prophetic was, as we know from 1 Maccabees 4:46, etc., not regarded as the Word of God. The canon grew as the prophets succeeded one another in their ministry; it was finished, as Josephus says, when the Holy Spirit ceased speaking through prophets in Israel" (Harris, 174-175).
 - b.  The Canon of the Old Testament was the product of Inspiration guiding the record of God's revelation to man.

"The chain of prophets evidentially wrote a chain of histories from Genesis to Nehemiah, and the writings of these prophets were accepted, one by one, through the centuries until, when the spirit of prophecy departed from Israel, the canon was complete" (Harris, 168-169).
 - c.  "One conclusion, on the basis of the historical evidence, that the Apocrypha should be rejected fully supports our view as to why the canonical books should be accepted. Just as the canonical books should be accepted on the authority of their authors as prophets of God, so also the Apocryphal books should be rejected ... for they are human writings. No 'thus saith the Lord' is found in them. They were written after prophecy had been withdrawn from Israel. Their authors are conscious of that fact and speak accordingly. They claim no divinity and, as far as we have any information, were never so received by contemporaries or even their immediate successors. The proof is complete" (Harris, 194-195).
 - d.  "Let us thank God that He has so marvelously watched over the integrity of His Word and that He permitted the whole canon of the ancient Scriptures to come down to us—and nothing else but that. What was sufficient for the Jews, for our Lord Jesus Christ, for His apostles, and for the Reformers is also enough for us" (Pache, 173).
 - e. Modern theories may attempt to cast doubt and discredit the Old Testament Canon, yet they will fail as have their kindred in past centuries! How can a modern theory eliminate the unanimous testimony given by history, the Jewish synagogue, Christ, the Apostles, and, the Church?



**Some books were met with
opposition:**

Ezekiel; Proverbs; Song of Solomon; Ecclesiastes; Esther; Apocryphal Books

Established by intrinsic authority

Existed because of literary abilities



Developed over many years

The critical test:
*"Were the writings the words of
inspiration?"*

Transparency 7/1

THREE SECTIONS OF THE Old Testament

The Law

The Prophets

The Writings (Hagiographa)

Transparency 7/2

**Strong Assurance Is Given By
Two Specific Facts!**



**The Transmission
Of The Text**

**The Overruling
Power of
Providence**



Transparency 7/3

DEBATE!
**“Do we include
or exclude?”**

**What is the
"Apocrypha"?
The term means
"hidden" and refers to
religious writings never
included in the Canon.**



**How did these gain acceptance?
Rejected by the Jews, Christ, and the
Early Church, these books were
canonized in 1546 to justify
unscriptural practices/doctrines.**

**What was the reason for admission?
It was felt the "discovery" of these
books required their recognition as
God's Word.**

Transparency 7/4

**DANGEROUS
ERRORS TAUGHT**

BY THE APOCRYPHA!

1 Timothy 4:1, 2

Divine approval of deception (Judith 9:10-13)

Creation of the world from pre-existent matter (Wisdom 11:17)

Alms atone for sin (Ecc 3:30)

God hears prayers of the dead (Bar 3:4)

We should pray for the dead (2 Macc 12:44)

Expiatory value of all—later modified to redeem souls from Purgatory (Tobit 12:9; 4:10; 2 Macc 12:40-46)

Invocation and intercession of the saints (2 Macc 15:14; Bar 3:4)

The worship of Angels (Tobit 12:12)

Transparency 7/7

WHY SHOULD WE REJECT THE APOCRYPHAL BOOKS?

**Written after prophecy
had ceased!**

**All anonymously written!
Two claim authorship but
they are discredited**

They do not claim inspiration!

They contain errors!

They were never accepted by Christ!

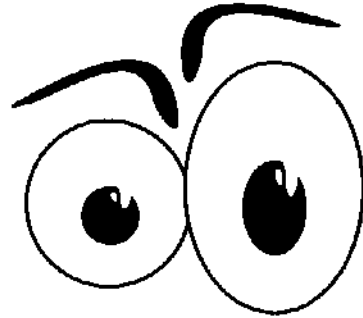
They have been discredited by history!



Transparency 7/6

Why were the Apocryphal Books ever accepted as inspired?

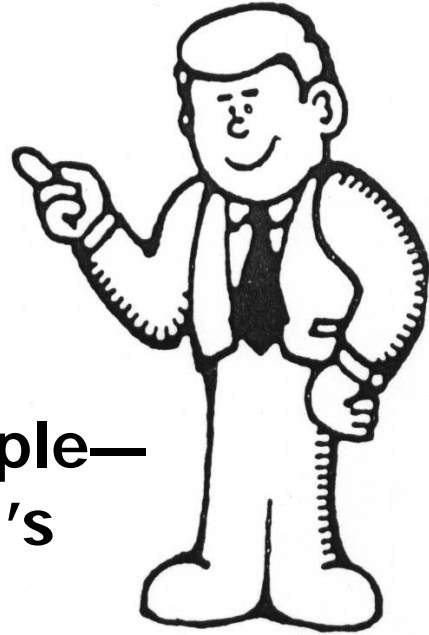
The great MSS contained these books.



The NT writers quote from the LXX which contained these books.

Transparency 7/7

CONCLUDING POINTS THAT CONSOLE



**Guided by a basic principle—
“Was this a work of God’s
spokesman?”**

**Produced by a chain of inspired
prophets!**

The proof is complete!

Providence has protected!