

A Survey Of The Old Testament

Preliminary Issues: What Is The Old Testament

Pastor Eric Douma

Our Approach to the Study

Approach:

1. Exegesis – what does the text mean?
2. Application – what should we believe/ how should we live?
3. Apologetics – how does the text prove our presuppositions?

Presuppositions:

1. God exists, and is the only eternal being. (Creator)
2. The Bible is God's inerrant word to us.
3. We ought to believe/act upon what the Bible teaches.

What Is The Old Testament

The Old Testament is the first portion of our "Canon"

Canon = qaneh (Hebrew), kanon (Greek) "reed, or standard measuring stick"

The Tests for Canonicity:

- A. Written by God's spokesman (prophet/apostle)

Proven by the miraculous: Theophany, supernatural acts, predictive prophecy.

- B. Written in accord with previous revelation.
- C. Written to all people for all time (principles apply to more than the original audience).

1. Inspiration By God	
2. Recognition By People of God	
3. Preservation By People of God	
Prophetic Collection Theory:	
• Inspired books added to canon as they are finished	
• 1400 -400 B.C.	
• Successor often finished predecessor's book	
Redaction Theory:	
• Inspired redactors made substantial changes in the writings of earlier biblical authors (Geisler, Nix, 248).	
• Deut 2:20-23; Deut 34; Jeremiah versions	

Evidence	
Josh 1:8 This book of the law shall not depart from your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night...	
1 Kings 2:3 Keep the charge of the LORD your God, to walk in His ways, to keep His statutes, His commandments, His ordinances, and His testimonies, according to what is written in the Law of Moses...	
Josh 24:26 And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God	
1 Sam 10:25 Then Samuel told the people the ordinances of the kingdom, <u>and wrote them in the book and placed it before the LORD</u>	
2 Chron 9:29 Now the rest of the acts of Solomon, from first to last, are they not <u>written in the records of Nathan the prophet, and in the prophecy of Ahijah the Shilonite...</u>	

Jer 25:11-12; 29:10	
the word of the LORD to Jeremiah the prophet for the completion of the desolations of Jerusalem, <i>namely</i> , seventy years. (Jer 25:11-12; 29:10).	
Zech 13:2-3 It will come about in that day," declares the LORD of hosts, "that I will cut off the names of the idols from the land... and I will also remove the prophets and the unclean spirit from the land. And if anyone still prophesies, then his father and mother who gave birth to him will say to him, 'You shall not live, for you have spoken falsely in the name of the LORD'; and his father and mother who gave birth to him will pierce him through when he prophesies.	
Mal 4:5 "Behold, I am going to send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and terrible day of the LORD." (cf. Luke 1:17)	

What is the Old Testament

Do God's people "determine" or "recognize" the Canon?

Catholic View: The church (being infallible) determined what the Canon is.

Protestant View: The church (and Israel) merely recognized what God had determined all along.

Categories dealing with canonization

Homologoumena: "agreement" (accepted by all)

Antilegomena: "spoken against" (a few spoke against)

Pseudepigrapha: "spurious" (rejected by all)

Apocrypha: "hidden" (accepted by some)

NOTE: These disputed canonical books were only disputed after hundreds of years of clear acceptance by the Jews. They also were ultimately defended and never excluded: (School of Shammai 1st Century A.D.)

1. Song of Solomon (Too Sensual)
2. Ecclesiastes (Too Skeptical)
3. Esther (No mention of God's name)
4. Ezekiel (Ezekiel 40-48 contradicted ceremonial law)
5. Proverbs (Alleged contradictions)

Legendary :

1. The Book of Jubilee
2. The Letter of Aristeas
3. The Book of Adam and Eve
4. The Martyrdom of Isaiah

Apocalyptic :

1. 1 Enoch
2. The Testament of the 12 Patr.
3. The Sibylline Oracle
4. The Assumption of Moses
5. 2 Enoch
6. 2 Baruch
7. 3 Baruch

Pseudepigrapha (continued)

Didactical :	1. 3 Maccabees
	2. 4 Maccabees
	3. Pirke Aboth
	4. The Story of Ahikar
Poetical:	1. The Psalms of Solomon
	2. Psalm 151
Historical:	1. The Fragment of a Zadokite Work

Apocryphal Books (500-30 B.C.)

1. Book of Wisdom	11. Esther 10:4-16:24
2. Sirach	12. Daniel 3:24-90
3. Tobias	13. Daniel 13
4. Judith	14. Daniel 14
5. 3 Esdras*	15. Prayer of Manasseh*
6. 1 Maccabees	
7. 2 Maccabees	
8. Baruch chaps. 1-5	
9. Baruch chap. 6	
10. 4 Esdras*	note: * indicates that book was not initially accepted at Trent 1546

1. New Testament authors often quote from the Septuagint which contains the apocryphal books.
2. Some scholars claim that there was a wider "Alexandrian canon" that contained the additional 15 books of the Apocrypha. They claim this canon to be superior to the "Palestinian canon."
3. Several apocryphal books were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls.
4. Some early church fathers accepted the apocryphal books: Irenaeus (Wisdom); Clement of Alexandria (Tobit, Sirach, Wisdom)
5. Council of Trent (1546) declared Apocrypha as canon.

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Debunking Catholic Claims:1. **(Septuagint cited by N.T. authors)**

- Although there may be allusions to the pseudepigrapha, not one single N.T. writer quotes an apocryphal book.
- The earliest manuscripts that contain the Apocrypha (Codex Sinaiticus - 4th century, Codex Alexandrinus – 5th century, Codex Vaticanus – 4th century) all date from the 4th century onward. This means they were likely influenced by Augustine.
- Augustine reasoned that the Apocrypha should be accepted because it contained stories of martyred saints!

2. **(Supposed Superiority of the Alexandrian Canon)**

"The likelihood of a larger Alexandrian canon has been ruled out for the following reasons:

- Two assumptions on which it was based have now been proven false – first, that Hellenistic Judaism was largely independent of Palestinian Judaism, and second, that most of the Apocrypha was composed in Egypt in the Greek language.
- The prologue to Sirach specifically states that it was written in Egypt but mentions only the tripartite divisions of the Old Testament Scriptures, which probably did not include the Old Testament apocryphal books.

- Jewish writers who commonly used the Septuagint (e.g. Josephus and Philo) did not consider the apocryphal books to be divinely inspired.
- It is becoming increasingly unlikely that there were differing canons in these two regions; thus the existence of certain apocryphal books in extant copies of the Septuagint must be accounted for by some other means" (Paul Wegner, *The Journey From Texts To Translations*, pg. 116-117).

3. **(Apocryphal books found at Qumran):** Whereas the Old Testament is commented in commentaries and is on special parchment, this is not the case with the apocryphal books indicating their diminished status.

4. (Early church fathers approved of the Apocrypha)

- Not all quotations by the church fathers implies they believed that the Apocrypha was inspired: "When one examines the passages in the early Fathers which are supposed to establish the canonicity of the Apocrypha, one finds that some of them are taken from the alternative Greek text of Ezra (1 Esdras) or from additions or appendices to Daniel, Jeremiah or some other canonical book, which . . . are not really relevant; that others of them are not quotations from the Apocrypha at all; and that, of those which are, many do not give any indication that the book is regarded as Scripture" (Roger Beckwith, *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church and its Background in Early Judaism*, pg. 387).

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church council for the first four centuries thought them to be canonical. In fact, some individuals like Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Origen, and Jerome were vehemently opposed to the Apocrypha being regarded as Scripture.

5. (Catholic Church declared Apocrypha Scripture)

<u>Catholic</u>	<u>Protestant</u>
Church determines canon	Church recognizes canon
Church created the Bible	The Bible created church
Tradition and Bible- authority	Bible alone is the authority
Revelation is continuing	Revelation has ceased
Apocrypha is accepted	Apocrypha is rejected

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in 1518, published a Commentary on all the Authentic Historical Books of the Old Testament **that did not include the Apocrypha** in A.D. 1532" (Norman Geisler, William Nix, *A General Introduction to the Bible* pg. 269).

- The Apocrypha itself declares that it was not written by a prophet: **1 Macc. 9:27** "So was there a great affliction in Israel, the like whereof was not since the time that a prophet was not seen amongst them."
- Talmud declares that the Holy Spirit left after the latter prophets (Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Sanhedrin, VII-VIII, 24).
- There are many historical, and theological errors.

Evidence For The Hebrew Canon

- The prologue to the apocryphal book Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) written in 132 B.C. refers to the Hebrew Bible using the three-part divisions: Law, prophets, and the "others that followed them."
- The N.T. clearly affirms that two important facts: 1. The Jews had the right Scriptures; 2. The Jewish Scriptures were in the three-part division of the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings.

Matt. 23:34-35 Therefore, behold, I am sending you prophets and wise men and scribes; some of them you will kill and crucify, and some of them you will scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, so that upon you may fall *the guilt of* all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

1. Jesus is referring to Zechariah the O.T. prophet 500 B.C.
2. Jesus is referring to Zechariah son of Jehoiada (2nd Chronicles 24:20)(Jehoiada would be the grandfather)

Luke 24:44 Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

Romans 3:1-2 Then what advantage has the Jew? Or what is the benefit of circumcision? Great in every respect. First of all, that they were entrusted with the oracles of God.

Catholics must maintain that the Jews did not have the correct canon!

Evidence

Alexandria believed the same Hebrew Scriptures as in the protestant canon were inspired, but excluded the Apocrypha: "though Philo quotes all the books of the Pentateuch, most of the books of the Prophets and several of the books of the Hagiographa, often with formulas recognizing their divine authority, he never once quotes a book of the Apocrypha" (Wegner, Texts to Translations, 109-110).

Josephus (37-100 A.D.) "...we do not possess myriads of inconsistent books, conflicting with each other. Our books, those which are justly accredited, are but two and twenty, and contain the record of all time" (Contra Apion 1.7-8: 37-39)

<u>Torah</u>	<u>Prophets</u>	<u>Writings</u>
Genesis	Joshua	Psalms
Exodus	Judges+Ruth	Job
Leviticus	Samuel A, B	Proverbs
Numbers	Kings A,B,	Song of Songs
Deuteronomy	Isaiah	Ecclesiastes
	Jeremiah+Lament.	Esther
	Ezekiel	Daniel
	The Twelve	Ezra-Nehemiah
		Chronicles a,b

Josephus Continued: " From Artaxerxes to our own time the complete history has been written, but has not been deemed worthy of equal credit with the earlier records, because of the failure of the exact succession of the prophets. We have given practical proof of our reverence for our own Scriptures. For, although such long ages have now passed, no one has ventured either to add, or to remove, or to alter a syllable; and it is an instinct to every Jew, from the day of his birth, to regard them as the decrees of God, to abide by them, and if need be, cheerfully to die for them."

and the Writings but never quotes an apocryphal book.

2. The N.T. writers allude to Pseudepigraphical books and quote pagan philosophers, but never the Apocrypha!
3. Acceptance of the Apocrypha would imply the Jews had the wrong canon (Romans 3:2)!
3. An apocryphal book itself (1 Macc. 9:27) declares no prophet in Israel during the time the Apocrypha was written!
4. The Apocrypha contains hundreds of historical, chronological, and theological errors.
5. Philo, Josephus, and Jerome had the same O.T.

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