

The Bible:  
 The Canon Of  
 The Old Testament  
 February 8, 2023

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Old Testament – Not All The Same

- Likely, you grew up with a 39 book Old Testament that you did not question.
- The Old Testament of a Catholic Bible has additional books that a Protestant Old Testament does not have.
- The Eastern Orthodox has the same books as the Catholic Church but adds 3 & 4 Maccabees and others.
- The Oriental Orthodox Church adds even more with a total of 81 books for their entire bible.
- All KJV Bibles published in 1611 included the Apocrypha but was ‘separate.’ Not removed until 1666. ????????????????

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Canon – Rule of Measurement

- Canon of the Old Testament:
  - The 24 writings of the Hebrew Bible – unquestioned and was used for reading, teaching, and worship.
  - They did not view a set canon as something to concern with.
  - After the writing of Malachi (c. 430 BC), other books found their way into the area of Israel.
  - The Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes became rival theological schools (theological interpretation, law) around 143 BC.
  - However, they all agreed by this late date on the 24 scrolls of the TaNaKh. To them, it was settled, in essence a canon.
  - Council of Jamina in Jerusalem in 90 AD reaffirmed this.

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### Hellenization of the World

- Greek culture, language, religion & identity by non-Greeks:
  - About 100 years after the return from exile, the **use** and **influence** of the Greek language was on the **rise**.
  - This is due to the conquest of Alexander the Great (333 - 323 BC).
  - Due to the increasing use of the Greek language, a Greek **translation**; **Septuagint** **made sense**; wider use of the sacred text.
  - This was very helpful for Alexandrian, Greek speaking Jews.
  - Written over time; Torah was the 1<sup>st</sup> section to be written (c. 280 BC) with later sections soon thereafter.
  - Believed to be complete by c. 100 BC with *minor translation updating* continuing till c. 200 BC. (*Bible in 1<sup>st</sup> century*)

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### Canon – Rule of Measurement

- The Septuagint:
  - Not all writings were the same – some were more literal; some were more thought for thought. (similar to what we have today)
  - Popular with Jews who were returning from (exile) since they and others knew Greek much better than Hebrew.
  - **It added:** Prayer of Manasseh, 1 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, additions to Esther, 1-4 Maccabees, Wisdom of Solomon, Wisdom of Sirach, Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah, additions to Daniel, Psalms of Solomon.
  - 1 Enoch; among the *Dead Sea Scrolls*; *not considered canonical*.
  - Respect for these books but not considered as ‘inspired’ books.
  - Jesus affirmed the TaNaKh in John 5:39 & Luke 24:44.

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### The Canon Of The Old Testament

- Josephus: Jewish Historian (born in 37/38 AD):
- “From Artaxerxes to our own times, a complete history has been written, but has not been deemed worthy of equal credit with the earlier record, because of the failure of the exact succession of the prophets.” (Meaning they deviated from the words of Moses.)
  - Artaxerxes died in 424BC. Malachi = 430 BC.
  - Josephus was aware of the additional writings now considered part of the Apocrypha but referencing Jewish scholarship said of them; “not worthy of equal credit.”
  - Referenced from “Against Apion” (Greek cultural influence)

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### The Canon Of The Old Testament

The Latin Vulgate:

- In AD 382, Jerome embarked on a new Latin translation of the Scriptures (entire Bible) – Latin Vulgate.
- Started with the Old Testament. Used the Hebrew Bible, not the Septuagint.
- Said “only the writings from the TaNaKh are authoritative Scripture for the Old Testament.”
- He was aware of the Apocrypha & did not want to include it.
- He was overruled by Pope Damasus and ordered to include them. *The rumor he later accepted the Apocrypha is false.*

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### The Decision By The Reformers

- Martin Luther did not consider the Apocrypha as canonical but did include them in his German translation of the Bible.
- Like many before him; ok to read but not God-Breathed.
- The Catholic Church became corrupt. Luther only wanted to ‘reform’ it and the church would not even discuss it.
- Due to doctrines such as indulgences, prayers for the dead, purgatory, and many others, the reformers wanted change.
- They rejected the additional books that were not adopted by Israel. *“The Catholic Church cannot change that.”*
- They accepted the 27 books of the NT like everyone else.

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### How Do We Know What Was Written

Psalm 34:20

- He protects all **his** bones; not one of them **is** broken.
- **He** protects all his bones; not one of them is broken.
- He protects all his bones;     one of them is broken.
- He protects     his bones; not one of them is broken.
- He **protects** all his bones; not     of them is broken.
- He protects all his bones; **protects** them is broken.
- all his bones; not one of them is broken.

*He protects all his bones; not one of them is broken.*

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