

The Origin of the Bible

5. BOOKS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT (CANON)



The Bible is collection of books, claiming to be inspired by God; critics often challenge the Bible, questioning its source. Charging the Bible is a book of oral transmission, passed from generation to generation, because no writing existed. Here we will be dealing with the Old Testament, the Tanakh. Anybody who understands the history of the Old Testament, from the time Abraham can clearly see this was not the case. A literate culture clearly existed in Canaan, Mesopotamia and Egypt in Abraham's day. The area was the birthplace our modern alphabet.

The first five books of the Bible (a.k.a., Torah Pentateuch), are called the books of Moses because he was the writer. After Moses, God spoke through other individuals, prophets, revealing His *Word*. Determining what is revealed and not revealed is the spark of debate. This debate regards the *cannon*, which means rule or standard.

Bible readers often find themselves asking the question, how do they know which books of the Bible are inspired? This is a major issue, often dividing Catholics, Orthodox and Protestants. Even in the time of Jesus the debate was raging, Sadducees, only accepted the first five books, they were at odds with the Pharisees who accepted the whole Old Testament.

One of the main differences between the Catholic and Protestant churches among others is the discussion of canon in the Old Testament. The Catholics include seven additional books in the Old Testament, known as the *Deuterocanonical* or *Apocrypha*, as opposed to Protestants and Jews, who have the same books in their respective Old Testament. Orthodox churches on the other hand, also include the additional books in the Old Testament but are less adamant then Catholics about their inspiration.

With all this variation, is there a way to determine, what books of the Old Testament belong?

Definition of Cannon

The word canon refers to a collection of books, accepted as authoritative, inspired scripture. The source of the word comes from the Hebrew word, קנה *Qaneh*, which means reed or stalk, the English word "cane" comes from this Semitic or Hebrew word. Reeds were used as measuring rods, because of their straight form, hence the measuring or rule of scripture, became known as canon.

The word came to be associated with "Rule"; the Greeks associated the word with standard or guideline. Paul uses this word, **κανών** *Kanon*, in Philippians 3:16 and Galatians 6:16, in relation to a standard of behavior.

16 Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. Philippians 3:16

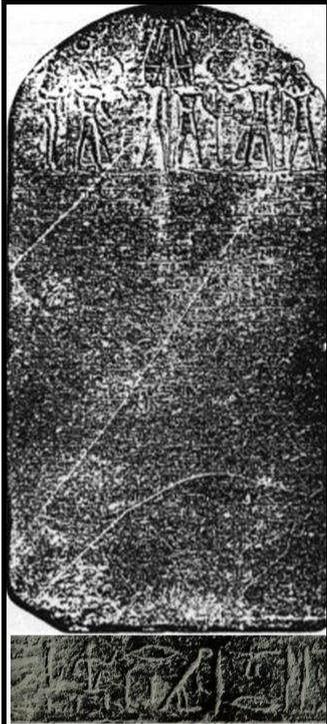
This word eventually came to mean a list, or standard of authoritative scripture passed down to the Church from both the Old and New Testaments. Athanasius¹ (296-373 A.D.) writes in

¹ theologian, ecclesiastical statesman, and Egyptian national leader; he was the chief defender of

the *Decrees of the Synod of Nicea* (5:18),

For the blessed Paul in his Epistle to the Hebrews says, "By faith we understand that the ages were framed by the Word of God, so that which is seen was not made of things which do appear." But nothing is common to the Word with the ages; for He it is who is in existence before that ages, by whom also the ages came to be. And in the Shepherd of [of Hermas] it is written (since they allege this book also, though it is not of the Canon)²

Authority of scripture



Merenptah Stele

1223-1211 B.C.
Pharaoh Merenptah the son of Ramesses II succeeded his father to the throne and mentioned his conquest of Israel in Canaan. This document proves Israel was an established people in the 13th century B.C.

Why do we need to have an authoritative collection of scripture? Well, if we believe scripture is from God, inspired by Him, we want to know what is His Word. We want to distinguish His Word, from uninspired works. Scripture originates from God, revealed to man for our benefit. Through the written word, God chose to communicate with humanity. Through His Word, we can know Him.

2 "And Moses alone shall come near the Lord, but they shall not come near; nor shall the people go up with him."

3 So Moses came and told the people all the words of the Lord and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, "All the words which the Lord has said we will do."

4 And Moses wrote all the words of the Lord. And he rose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain, and twelve pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel.

7 Then he took the Book of the Covenant and read in the hearing of the people. And they said, "All that the Lord has said we will do, and be obedient."
Exodus 24:2-4,7

Moses on Mount Sinai received the "Words" from the Lord, Moses then wrote these words down, using the written word, probably ancient Hebrew. The words would have been written to a scroll, or פֶּרֶךְ *Cepher*, meaning book or document. Here we learn the words of God, were recorded as a written document, to be read in the hearing of the people. From this portion of scripture, we learn five important points, which carry forward in the rest of the Old Testament.

1. Moses reported to the people the "Words" of the Lord
2. Moses wrote the words, requiring a written transmission.
3. Moses recorded the words in a book
4. Moses read from this book
5. The people proclaimed their obedience to the book

False prophets and false books

Joshua, who followed Moses, led Israel into the Promised Land. God proclaimed the mantel of leadership passed from Moses to Joshua, the words in Joshua are also inspired, contained in the book of Joshua. This set the stage on how God would reveal Himself and His Word, in successive generations.

God revealed through Moses, He would reveal His Word through individuals known as prophets. They people (Israel) would be required to obey the "Word" spoken by these individuals as if God Himself spoke them.

18 'I will raise up for them a Prophet like you from among their brethren, and will put My words in

Christian orthodoxy in the 4th-century battle against Arianism,

² Wegner, Paul D. *The Journey from the Texts to the Translations*, Pg. 102 Baker Academic .

His mouth, and He shall speak to them all that I command Him.
 19 'And it shall be that whoever will not hear My words, which He speaks in My name, I will require it of him. 20 'But the prophet who presumes to speak a word in My name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or who speaks in the name of other gods, that prophet shall die.'
 Deuteronomy 18:18-20

God also warns about the rise of *false prophets*, people that claimed to speak for God, but really spoke for themselves. Therefore, the existence of false prophets, and false teachers required Israel distinguish between *the inspired* and the *uninspired* (profane). They would need to test the words of those who claimed to be prophets false prophets were to die, because they attempted to deceive the people. If the words of a self-proclaimed prophet failed to pass, the false prophet was to die.

22 when a prophet speaks in the name of the Lord, if the thing does not happen or come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord has not spoken; the prophet has spoken it presumptuously; you shall not be afraid of him. Deuteronomy 18:22

The authority and of scripture was established for the nation. Also established was the possibility of false prophets, and false teachers, who would attempt to subvert the Word of God. For this reason, it was important for the nation to distinguish between the two, to test the prophets. Over the next thousand-years, from the time Israel entered the land, (1450 B.C) until the last prophet, Malachi (425 B.C.) the words of scripture were tested.

Prophet	Statement of Divine Authority
Hosea	The word of the Lord that came to Hosea the son of Beerī Hosea 1:1 When the Lord began to speak by Hosea, the Lord said to Hosea Hosea 1:2 "It shall come to pass in that day That I will answer," says the Lord; Hosea 2:21
Isaiah	Therefore the Lord says, The Lord of hosts, the Mighty One of Israel, Isaiah 1:24 For so the Lord said to me, Isaiah 18:4
Jeremiah	Jeremiah... to whom the word of the Lord came in the days of Josiah Jeremiah 1:1,2 Then the word of the Lord came to me, saying Jeremiah 1:4
Ezekiel	the word of the Lord came expressly to Ezekiel the priest Ezekiel 1:3 tell them, 'Thus says the Lord God,' Ezekiel 3:11
Daniel	And he said to me, "O Daniel, man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak to you, Daniel 10:11
Zechariah	In the eighth month of the second year of Darius, the word of the Lord came to Zechariah Zechariah 1:1
Malachi	The burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi Malachi 1:1

Designations of the Old Testament Canon



Another term for the canon of the Old Testament is *Tanakh*, which is an acronym for the 3-part division of the Hebrew scripture, the *Torah* (The Law), the *Nebium* (The Prophets) and the *Kethubim* (The Writings). Though the term *Tanakh* is more recent, the designations of the divisions of Hebrew scripture existed before the New Testament era.

One of the first to refer to this division is the grandson of *Jesus ben Sirach* (132 B.C.). His grandfather is the author of *Sirach*³ or *Ecclesiasticus*. In the prologue he writes the

³ Sirach is also called the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach a deuterocanonical (Apocrypha) work

following;

Whereas many and great things have been delivered unto us by the law and the prophets, and by others that have followed their steps, for the which things Israel ought to be commended for learning and wisdom; and whereof not only the readers must needs become skillful themselves, but also they that desire to learn be able to profit them which are without, both by speaking and writing: my grandfather Jesus, when he had much given himself to the reading of the law, and the prophets, and other books of our fathers, and had gotten therein good judgment, was drawn on also himself to write something pertaining to learning and wisdom; to the intent that those which are desirous to learn, and are addicted to these things, might profit much more in living according to the law. (King James Version)

The three-part division of scripture starts with the Torah or Law, the Hebrew word for Law is תורה **Towrah**. In fact, the Law (Torah) required the king to have a copy of the Law, which he copied from the copy held by the Levites. This demonstrates the principle of Manuscript transmission or copies. If Kings were copying, other would make copies also, including scribes and priests.

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.
19 "And it shall be with him, and he shall read it all the days of his life, that he may learn to fear the Lord his God and be careful to observe all the words of this law and these statutes, Deuteronomy 17:18-19

This copy of the Law, the Torah, included the first 5-books of the Bible. The King was required by the Law not only to read it, but also to copy it. The other parts or divisions were added as revelation came through prophets, who followed Moses.

Jesus in the New Testament also refers to the *three-part division* of the Old Testament. In His reference, the book of Psalms is the first book, of the third-division the Kethubim (the writings). Jesus is referring to scripture as inspired, pointing towards Him. The point being the 3-part division of the Hebrew canon speaks of Him.

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

Titles	Passages
The Law	I Cor 14:21; Philo Contempl 10:78 Eusebius Proep. Ev. 13.12; Luke 16:17; John 10:34;15:25
The Law and the Prophets	2 Macc 15:9; 4 Macc 18:10; Matt. 5:17; Luke 16:16
Moses and the Prophets	Luke 16:29,31; 24:27; John 1:45; Acts 26:22
The Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms	Luke 24:44
The Law and the Prophets and the rest of the books	Prologue to Sirach (three times)
Laws, and oracles delivered through the mouth of the prophets, and psalms	Philo Contempl. 3:25
The scriptures	Philo Abr. 61:236; Matt. 21:42; Mark 12:24; 2 Pet. 3:16
The scriptures laid up in the Temple	Josephus Ant. 5.1.17:61
The (Most) Holy Scriptures	Philo Spec 2.28 :159; 2.43 :238; Praem. 14:79; Contempl. 3 :28; 0:75, 78; Josephus B.J. 6.54 :311; Ant. 1.1.13:13; 10.10.4 :210; I Clem. 45.2
The Book of God	Phil Det. 37:139
The (Most) Holy Books	I Macc 12:9; Josephus Vita 75 :418; Eusebius Praep. Ev. 9.24
The (Most) Holy Record	Philo Somn. 1.27 :172; Congr. 31 :175
A very ancient and permanent record of the past	Josephus Contra Apion 1.2 :8

Formation of the Old Testament Canon

(accepted in the Roman Catholic canon but non-canonical for Jews and Protestants)

The Torah

The Torah before Moses? (Before 1450 B.C.)

The formation of the Old Testament Canon begins with the Torah, or the Law, (the books of Moses). Moses is dated to about 1450 B.C., before Moses was a period covered in Genesis, known as the *Patriarchal period*. Some may ask, how did Moses who lived about 600-years after Abraham, know the details of Abraham's life? Further how did Moses know about the events before the flood and what transpired in the Garden of Eden?

There are a couple of answers, which can clear up this question;

1. Since writing clearly existing in the time of Abraham, remember Abraham was from the urban centers of Ur. Abraham could have recorded the aspects of his life from the times of Noah until his day. What happened after his son Isaac, also could have been recorded, written down for later generations. This written transmission would continue until the days of Moses. Genesis ends with the death of Joseph (Genesis 50:25-26). Exodus begins with the time of Moses, with a reference to the 400-years of Egyptian bondage, from Joseph to Moses.

2. Since, many of the details of events in Genesis would require intimate knowledge of the events, knowledge only available to the Lord. Moses on Mount Sinai, received not only the 10 commandments, but additional revelations, revealing the creation of the world, Adam and Eve, the fall of man and so forth.

12 Then the Lord said to Moses, "Come up to Me on the mountain and be there; and I will give you tablets of stone, and the law and commandments which I have written, that you may teach them."

13 So Moses arose with his assistant Joshua, and Moses went up to the mountain of God.

14 And he said to the elders, "Wait here for us until we come back to you. Indeed Aaron and Hur are with you. If any man has a difficulty, let him go to them."

15 Then Moses went up into the mountain, and a cloud covered the mountain.

16 Now the glory of the Lord rested on Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days. And on the seventh day He called to Moses out of the midst of the cloud.

17 The sight of the glory of the Lord was like a consuming fire on the top of the mountain in the eyes of the children of Israel.

18 So Moses went into the midst of the cloud and went up into the mountain. And Moses was on the mountain forty days and forty nights.

For forty-days, Moses received revelation from God, including instructions on the building of the Tabernacle, and the laws to atone for sins.

The Torah (1450 to 536 B.C.)

Moses would have completed the Law (Torah) to Deuteronomy 33. Deuteronomy 34 includes the death of Moses, probably written down by Joshua, who succeeded Moses.

The Law of Moses, passed from generation to generation, several ways.

1. Every seven-years the Law was to be read in public. (Deuteronomy 31:9-11)
2. The Law was to be alongside the Arc of the Covenant. (Deuteronomy 31:24-26)
2. The priest were to have a copy of the Law (Deuteronomy 17:18)
4. The king himself was to make a copy of the law, which the priests kept. (Deuteronomy 17:19)

Joshua contributed *the book of Joshua* to scripture, as succeeding prophets would also add to the scripture, people such as Samuel, Amos, Isaiah, Ezekiel and others. Each succeeding generation, would point back to Moses and the line of scripture. Joshua set the example, as illustrated in Joshua chapter eight (See Joshua 8:35).

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.
Joshua 24:26

This process would continue for ages to come, the Law preserved at the Tabernacle, during the time

of the judges, until the Temple period (960 B.C) in the time of Solomon. Samuel like Joshua, wrote down the law in a book (I Samuel 10:25), preserving and transmitting the law for future generations. David followed the Law of Moses (1 Kings 2:3), unlike some of his descendents who forgot about the law.

The nation Israel fell into the sins of the lands, which they occupied. As a result, Israel became two nations, divided into northern and southern kingdoms, Israel in the north and Judah in the south. Judah, the southern kingdom, preserved the law and the prophets. The written revelations of Moses and the prophets were stored in the Temple. The law was also preserved and transmitted in other parts of Judah, as shown by the Qumran community at the Dead Sea. Judah also of fell away, followed by periods of revival, God often intervened by send prophets, bringing the people back. Prophets such as Isaiah (700 B.C.) and Jeremiah (605 B.C.) appeared on the scene to restore the people, and communicate God's word to backslidden nation.

In the days of Josiah (640-609 B.C.), the law was discovered in the Temple, leading to a revival prior to the destruction of the Temple and Jerusalem by the Babylonians in 586 B.C.. Ezekiel and Daniel were products of Josiah's revival. They set the stage for the captives who would be led into Babylon as the nation was judged for her sins.

8 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.

11 Now it happened, when the king heard the words of the Book of the Law, that he tore his clothes.
2 Kings 22:8,11

Through the ministry of Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, the Law was preserved, through the exile period⁴. Both Jeremiah and Ezekiel were priests and Daniel became a high official in the Babylonian and Persian Kingdoms. At the end of Daniel's life, the Jews were allowed to return and the Temple was rebuilt. Cyrus the great allowed the Jews to return and build the Temple.

The Prophets and other writings before the exile

Following Moses, the Lord revealed His word through prophets, including Joshua and others. Joshua for example, saw the Lord, before the conquest of Jericho (Joshua 5:13-15). From Joshua until the exile, twenty-three writers of the *canon* (Old Testament) preserved the revelations of God's Word.

The Old Testament records the written words of these prophets (2 Chron. 21:12; Isa. 30:8; Jer. 25:13; 29:1; 30:2; 36:1-32; 51:60-64; Ezek. 43:11; Dan. 7:1; Hab. 2:2). Their prophetic revelations take place within the context of the nation's history (1 Chron. 29:29; 2 Chron. 9:29; 12:15; 13:22; 20:34; 26:22 32:32; 33:18-19). Isaiah for example delivers God's message to a sinful people, who are being attacked by the Assyrian nation, a result of God's judgment for their sins.

Daniel a prophet taken into exile refers to the collection of books taken into the Babylon. The Jews taken to Babylon, preserved the writings of the Jewish prophets, who wrote before the exile. Daniel was an official in both Babylon and Persia, his status allowed him to preserve the texts, along with unknown others. Mordecai, Esther and Nehemiah were also officials in Persia, who maintained the revelations, prior to the exile. Today, Daniel's tomb to is in the city of Susa, in Iran.

2 in the first year of his reign I, Daniel, understood by the books, the number of the years specified by the word of the Lord through Jeremiah the prophet, that He would accomplish seventy years in the desolations of Jerusalem. Daniel 9:2

The books refer to the collection of books taken into the exile, among them a copy of Jeremiah or original from Jeremiah. The books would have also included the other prophets and the Law of Moses, which Daniel quotes from.

, Following the Exile (536 B.C. to New Testament times)



**Tomb of Daniel in
Susa, Iran**

⁴ The period of exile is when the Jewish nation was taken captive into Babylon from 605 to 539 B.C.

In the Babylonian exile, the words of the prophets were preserved. Daniel was added to the canon in the exile, Daniel was revealed during the exile under Babylon and Persia. After the Jews returned to Judah, and reestablish the Temple, the books of *Esther*, *Ezra*, *Nehemiah*, *Haggai*, *Zechariah* and *Malachi* were added to the canon.

During this period the words of were then preserved in the *Aramaic square script* as the manuscripts wore out, replacing the ancient Hebrew alphabet. *Second Maccabees* records the establishment of a library by Nehemiah, the Jewish governor appointed by the Persian king. This collection continued in the time of Judas Maccabees, who preserved the writing of the prophets.

The same things are reported in the records and in the memories of Nehemiah, and also that he founded a library and collected the books about the kings and prophets, and the writings of David, and letters of kings about votive offerings. In the same way, Judas also collected all the books that had been lost on account of the war which had come upon us, and they are in our possession. 2 Maccabees 2:13-14.

Ezra the scribe along with Nehemiah worked to maintain the people's fidelity to the Law of Moses.

1Now all the people gathered together as one man in the open square that was in front of the Water Gate; and they told Ezra the scribe to bring the Book of the Law of Moses, which the LORD had commanded Israel. 2So Ezra the priest brought the Law before the assembly of men and women and all who could hear with understanding on the first day of the seventh month.
Nehemiah 8:1-2

Following the time of Malachi (425 B.C.), the last prophet of the Jewish canon, who lived in the second Temple period, the Talmud records the closing of canon with the ceasing of the Holy Spirit.

Until then [the coming of Alexander the Great and the end of the empire of the Persians] the prophets prophesied through the Holy Spirit. From then on, "incline thine ear and hear the words of the wise" (Seder Olam Rabbah 30, quoting Prov. 22:17)

Surely R. Samuel b. Inia said: ..To indicate that in five things the first Sanctuary differed from the second: in the ark, the ark-cover the Cherubim, the fire, the Shechinah, the Holy Spirit [of Prophecy] and the Urim-we-Thummim [the oracle plate] (T.D. Yoma 21b;T.P. Ta'anit 2.1; T.P. Makkot 2.4-8)

R. Abdimi of Haifa said, Since the day when the Temple was destroyed, prophecy has been taken from the prophets and given to the wise. (T.B. Baba Batra 12a)⁵

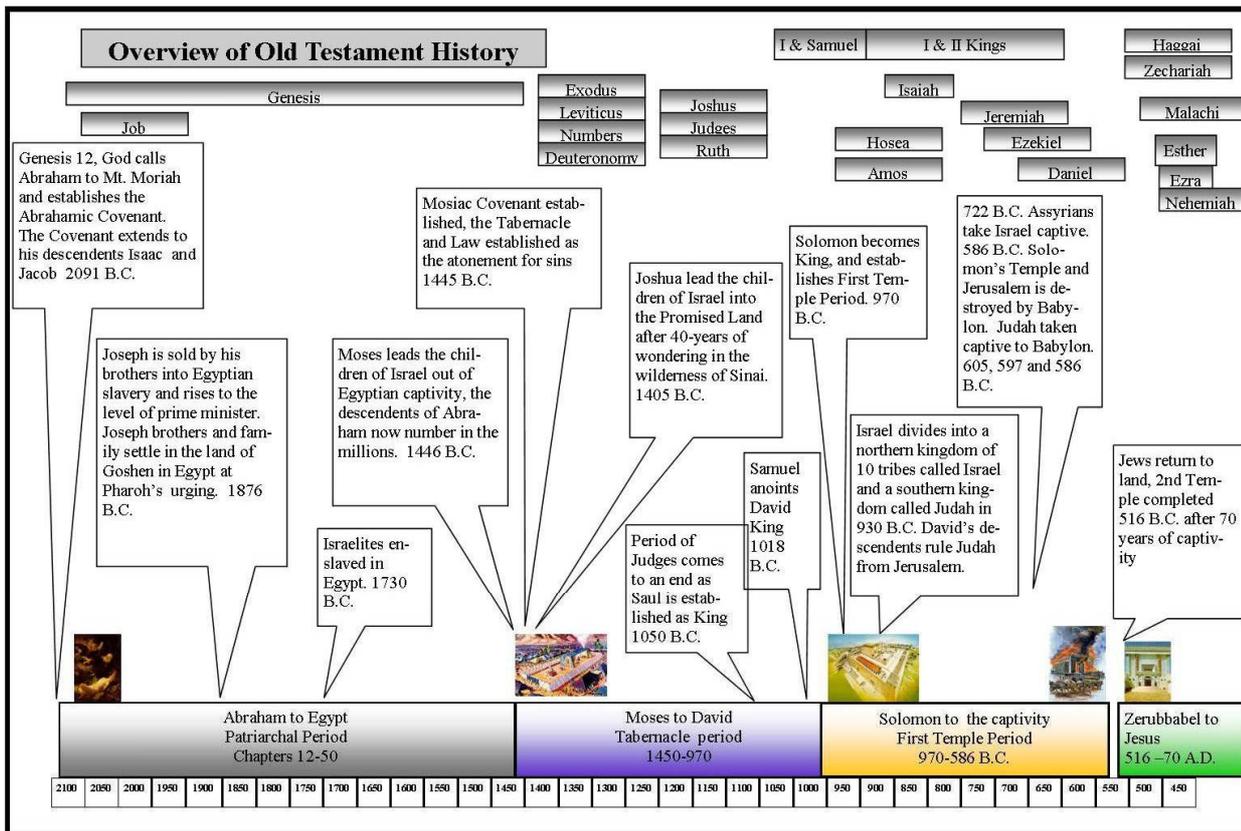
First Maccabees records Simon Maccabees who speaks of great sorrow in Israel since the prophets ceased to appear to the nation (I Macc. 9:27)

The Old Testament in the New Testament times

The foundation of the New Testament is the Old Testament. Jesus Christ (Messiah) is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies regarding the Messiah. Jesus Himself, proclaims the exalted position of the word of Moses, placing them above the heavens and the earth.

18 "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled. Matthew 5:18

⁵ Wegner, Paul D. The Journey from the Texts to the Translations, Pg. 106 Baker Academic 1999



The Debate of Old Testament Canon in the Church

The Apocrypha is collection of books, for the most part introduced during the time after Malachi (425 B.C.). From Malachi to the Maccabean period (165 B.C.), this period is known as the Intertestamental Period was when most of the books in the Apocrypha were written. The debate within Christian circles, Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox is whether these books are part of the canon. Encyclopedia Britannica summarizes the argument

In biblical literature, works outside an accepted canon of scripture. The history of the term's usage indicates that it referred to a body of esoteric writings that were at first prized, later tolerated, and finally excluded. In its broadest sense apocrypha has come to mean any writings of dubious authority.

There are several levels of dubiety within the general concept of apocryphal works in Judeo-Christian biblical writings. Apocrypha per se are outside the canon, not considered divinely inspired but regarded as worthy of study by the faithful. Pseudepigrapha are spurious works ostensibly written by a biblical figure. Deuterocanonical works are those that are accepted in one canon but not in all.

At the time when Greek was the common spoken language in the Mediterranean region, the Old Testament—the Hebrew Bible—was incomprehensible to most of the population. For this reason, Jewish scholars produced the Septuagint, a translation of the Old Testament books from various Hebrew texts, along with fragments in Aramaic, into Greek. That version incorporated a number of works that later, non-Hellenistic Jewish scholarship at the Council of Jamnia (AD 90) identified as being outside the authentic Hebrew canon. The Talmud separates these works as Sefarim Hizonim (Extraneous Books).

The Septuagint was an important basis for St. Jerome's translation of the Old Testament into Latin for the Vulgate Bible; and, although he had doubts about the authenticity of some of the apocryphal works that it contained (he was the first to employ the word apocrypha in the sense of "noncanonical"), he was overruled, and most of them were included in the Vulgate. On April 8, 1546, the Council of Trent declared the canonicity of nearly the entire Vulgate, excluding only the Third and Fourth Books of Maccabees, the Prayer of Manasseh, Psalm 151, and the First and Second Books of Esdras. Eastern Christendom, meanwhile, had accepted some of the Old Testament apocrypha—Tobit, Judith, the

Wisdom of Solomon, and Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach)—but rejected the rest.⁶

Evidence of the Old Testament Canon

What Old Testament did Jesus use?

Since Christianity is based on the identity of Jesus (The Messiah), the Old Testament Jesus used is the Old Testament his church should use. The internal evidence of New Testament reveals the Old Testament used by Jesus is same books used in the Jewish Bible today, the Tanakh. This would therefore exclude the seven books known as the *Apocrypha* to Protestants and Jews and the *Deuterocanonical books* to the Catholics. Lets examine the evidence.

1. Luke 24:44

Jesus makes reference in Luke 24:44, to a three part division of scripture; this division is the current structure of the Jewish Bible. Psalms is the first and longest book of the third section of the Jewish Bible.

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

The Law of Moses	The Torah
The Prophets	Nebhim (Prophets)
The Psalms	Kethubhim or Hagiographa

2. Luke 11:51, Matthew 23:35

"from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who perished between the altar and the temple. Yes, I say to you, it shall be required of this generation. **Luke 11:51**

"From the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah" With these words Jesus confirms his witness to the extent of the Old Testament canon. Abel was the first martyr recorded in Scripture (Genesis 4:8) and Zechariah the last martyr to be named in the Hebrew Old Testament order. Zechariah was stoned while prophesying to the people "in the court of the house of the Lord (2 Chronicles 24:21). Genesis was the first book in the Hebrew canon and 2 Chronicles the last.

Jesus is saying from "Genesis to II Chronicles," or according to our order Genesis to Malachi thereby confirming the divine authority and inspiration of the entire Hebrew canon. He confirms the 3-part division of the Old Testament.

3. John 10:31-36; Luke 24:44

Jesus disagreed with the oral tradition of the Pharisees (Mark 7, Matthew 15), not with their concept of the Hebrew canon. There is no evidence whatever of any dispute between Him and the Jews as to the canonicity of any Old Testament book.

Evidence outside of the Bible

4. Prologue to Ecclesiasticus

Sirach (130 B.C.)

Sirach who wrote and lived in Jerusalem makes mention of most famous men of the Old Testament. He makes explicit mention of the Twelve Prophets. (Minor Prophets) This would indicate the whole or at least most of the OT was known to him and already in his day the "Minor Prophets" were regarded as a special group by themselves.

In his prologue, he three-times refers to the *tripartite division* (3 part) of the OT. Example:

⁶ Encyclopedia Britannica, 2004 Apocrypha article

"Whereas many great teachings have been given to us through the law, and the prophets, and the others that followed them" Sirach 19:20-24

Reasons the Apocryphal parts of the LXX should be rejected as scripture

1. There is not sufficient evidence that they were reckoned as canonical by the Jews anywhere.
2. The LXX design was literary, to build the library of Ptolemy and Alexandrians.
3. All LXX manuscripts are Christian and not Jewish origin. With a 500 years difference between translation and existing manuscripts. Enough time for Apocryphal books to slip in.
4. LXX manuscripts do not all have the same apocryphal books and names.
5. During the 2nd Century AD the Alexandrian Jews adopted Aquila's Greek version of the OT without apocryphal books.
6. The manuscripts at the Dead Sea make it clear no canonical book of the OT was written later than the Persian period.
7. Philo, Alexandrian Jewish philosopher (20 BC-40 AD), quoted the Old Testament prolifically, and even recognized the threefold classification, but he never quoted from the Apocrypha as inspired.
8. Josephus (30-100 AD.), Jewish historian, explicitly excludes the Apocrypha; numbering the books of the Old Testament as 22 neither does he quote the apocryphal books as Scripture.
9. Jesus and the New Testament writers never once quote the Apocrypha, although there are hundreds of quotes and references to almost the entire book of the Old Testament.
10. The Jewish scholars of Jamnia (90 AD) did not recognize the Apocrypha.
11. No canon or council of the Christian church recognized the Apocrypha as inspired for nearly four centuries.
12. Many of the great fathers of the early church spoke out against the Apocrypha—for example, Origen, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Athanasius.
13. Jerome (AD 340-420) The great scholar and translator of the Latin Vulgate rejected the Apocrypha as part of the canon.
14. Not until 1546 AD in a polemical action at the counter-Reformation Council of Trent (1545-63), did the apocryphal books receive full canonical status by the Roman Catholic Church.

5. Philo

"Just after Christ (A.D. 20 B.C.-A.D.), Philo witnessed to a *threefold classification*, making reference to the Law, the Prophets (or Prophecies), as well as hymns and the others which foster and perfect knowledge and piety"⁷

6. Josephus (A.D. 37-100)

About 90 AD, the Jewish historian, Josephus, spoke about the closing of the Hebrew canon. "Since Artaxerxes' age the succession of prophets had ceased" This is what he wrote in *Contra Apion*. Showing in his day the "Canon" was closed.

Josephus also wrote about the number of books in the Hebrew canon.

It therefore naturally, or rather necessarily, follows (seeing that with us it is not open to everybody to write the records, and that there is no discrepancy in what is written; seeing that, on the contrary, the prophets alone had this privilege, obtaining their knowledge of the most remote and ancient history through the inspiration which they owed to God, and committing to writing a clear account of the events of their own time just as they occurred)—it follows, I say, that we do not possess myriads of inconsistent books, conflicting with each other. Our book, those which are justly accredited, are but two and twenty and contain the record of all time. *Contra Apion* 1:7-8

The twenty-two books here combine Jeremiah and Lamentation, and Ruth and Judges.

7. 2 Esdras

The apocryphal book of 2 Esdras (sometimes called 4 Esdras) was written in the first century.

In this fictional account Ezra rewrites the biblical

books after they were burned (2 Esd. 14:21), in forty days Ezra revealed ninety-four books, but only 24 were to be given to the people, the wise and un-wise.

"Make public the twenty-four books that you wrote first, and let the worthy and the unworthy read them; but keep the seventy that were written last, in order to give them to the wise among your people. For in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the river of knowledge." And I did so. (2 Esdras 14:45b-48)

The point here is the twenty-four books referred too is the Hebrew canon, which corresponds to the current accounting of the Old Testament in the time of Jesus.

8. Origen (A.D.185-253)

Origen one of the early church fathers writes regarding the number of books in the Hebrew canon.

⁷ Geisler, Norman, A General Introduction to the Bible, Pg. 246, Moody Press

“But it should be known that there are twenty-two canonical books, according to the Hebrew tradition; the same as the number of the letters of their alphabet.” He then lists them according to their Hebrew and Greek names.

9. Jerome (A.D.345-420)

Jerome was the translator of the Catholic Bible the Vulgate, and the eminent scholar of his day. In the preface to the book of Daniel he writes regarding the Jewish canon.

“For all scripture is by them divided into three parts: the law, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa [writings], which have respectively five, eight, and eleven books...”

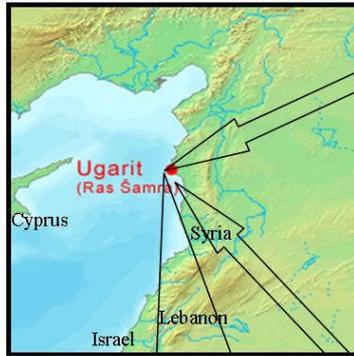
The twenty-four books listed by Jerome correspond to the thirty-nine books of our Old Testament. By adding the 12 books of the minor prophets and separating Lamentations, and Ezra. Samuel, Kings and Chronicles are also divided into two books instead of one each.

10. The Council of Jamnia A.D. 90

The council of Jewish rabbis affirmed the Tanakh, as being the inspired word of the Lord to the Jewish people. They rejected the Apocrypha as uninspired.

39 Books (Today order)		22 ⁸ , 24 (Josephus, 22, Jerome accounting 24)	
Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers Deuteronomy	5	Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy	5
Joshua, Judges, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings	6	Joshua, Judges-, Samuel (I & II), Kings (I & II)	4
Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi	15	Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the 12 Minor Prophets	4
Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah, I Chronicles, II Chronicles	13	Psalms, Proverbs, Job, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, Chronicles (I & II)	11
Total Books	39		24

⁸ When Jeremiah & Lamentations and Judges and Ruth are combined the total number of books is 22 as opposed to 24



Regarding the texts discovered at Ugarit and the Old Testament

These texts not only constitute a literature of high standing and great originality but also have an important bearing on Old Testament studies. It is now evident that the patriarchal stories in the Old Testament were not merely transmitted orally but were based on written documents of Canaanite origin, the discovery of which at Ugarit has led to a new appraisal of the Old Testament. *Encyclopaedia Britannica 2004*

The golden age of Ugarit

The most prosperous and the best-documented age in Ugarit's history, dated from about 1450 to about 1200 BC, produced great royal palaces and temples and shrines, with a high priests' library and other libraries on the acropolis. Some of the family vaults built under the stone houses show strong Mycenaean influence. Mycenaean and Cypriot pottery in great amounts has also been found.

After the discovery of the temple library, which revealed a hitherto unknown cuneiform alphabetic script as well as an entirely new mythological and religious literature, several other palatial as well as private libraries were found, along with archives dealing with all aspects of the city's political, social, economic, and cultural life.

The art of Ugarit in its golden age is best illustrated by a golden cup and patera (bowl) ornamented with incised Ugaritic scenes; by carved stone stelae and bronze statuettes and ceremonial axes; by carved ivory panels depicting royal activities; and by other fine-carved ivories. Despite Egyptian influence, Ugaritic art exhibits a Syrian style of its own.

Soon after 1200 BC Ugarit came to an end. Its fall coincided with the invasion of the Northern and Sea Peoples and certainly with earthquakes and famines. In the Iron Age and during the 6th–4th century BC, there were small settlements on the site (Leukos Limen).

The excavators of the site were fortunate in the number and variety of finds of ancient records in cuneiform script. The excavations continue, and each season throws some new and often unexpected light on the ancient north Canaanite civilization. The texts are written on clay tablets either in the Babylonian cuneiform script or in the special alphabetic cuneiform script invented in Ugarit. Several copies of this alphabet, with its 30 signs, were found in 1949 and later. A shorter alphabet, with 25, or even 22, signs, seems to have been used by 13th-century traders.

Scribes used four languages: Ugaritic, Akkadian, Sumerian, and Hurrian, and seven different scripts were used in Ugarit in this period: Egyptian and Hittite hieroglyphic and Cypro-Minoan, Sumerian, Akkadian, Hurrian, and Ugaritic cuneiform. These show clearly the cosmopolitan character of the city.

