

The Deuterocanon

Introduction

The Deuterocanon books are a part of the Holy Bible.. The Protestants removed them from the Bible saying they were not the word of God, Although there are many evidences and historical proofs to verify them! The Orthodox and Catholic Churches believe in them.. Here you can find the full text of them in both English and Arabic languages, along with an intro for every one of the Deuterocanonical Books.

It was not until 1519 that there arose a huge uncalled-for controversy about how many books the Bible contains. Is it 73, as Orthodox and Catholics claim, or 66, as Protestants hold? In other words, do the books of Tobit, Judith, 1+2 Maccabees, Wisdom, Sirach, and Baruch, indeed belong to the Bible, or are they not inspired and should not be contained therefore in the Sacred Scriptures? These disputed books are referred to as the "deuterocanonical books" by Orthodox & Catholics, and as the "apocryphal books" by Protestants.

The question is a relevant one, one that divides Orthodox & Catholics and Protestants still to a great extent. Since Protestantism is based on Sola Scriptura, "Scripture alone," the issue about the deuterocanon is extremely significant since it puts into question the very essence of Scripture.

In a brief way, now, let me present the Protestant position by summarizing their main points:

1. The Jews themselves only have [39](#) books in their Old Testament, that is without the deuterocanonicals.
2. The Council of Trent added the 7 deuterocanonical books to the Bible in 1546.
3. [Jesus](#) never quoted from the deuterocanonical books, so they aren't inspired.

Before I go off into answering their assertions, let me point out that one of the best books to consult in defense of the Orthodox & Catholic position here is Mark. P. Shea, *By What Authority? An Evangelical Discovers Catholic Tradition* (Huntington, IL: Our Sunday Visitor, 1996). Former Protestant Mark Shea deals with all the issues involving biblical authority, and he explains how he could not remain a Protestant after he had researched the origins and essence of the Bible, and especially the epistemological problems revolving around it, that is, the "How do I know?" questions.

To answer the Protestant assertions:

In response to #1.

It is true that ever since 90 AD., the majority of Jews has not accepted the deuterocanonical books as inspired. Ergo, concludes the Protestant, they are not inspired and thus not Scripture, since "the Jews are entrusted with the oracles of God" ([Romans](#) 3:2).

We must, however, note that the Jews did not define a canon of their Scriptures until 90 AD., that is after the coming of the Messiah. In 90 AD., the Jews were no longer the true religion, since they had rejected the Messiah. Ever since Pentecost, the Church of Jesus, the Catholic Church, was the institution endowed with all authority (cf. [Matthew](#) 16:18-19; 18:18; [Ephesians](#) 3:10; Acts 15). Therefore, what the Jews may or may not have decided in a council after Christ, in 90 AD., is irrelevant. They had lost their status as the true religion when they rejected Jesus Christ. It has been the Orthodox Church, from Pentecost on, which is the true and real "Jewish Church," that is the fulfillment and flower of Judaism, that which Judaism was meant to be.

Why is it that the Jews decided on considering only 39 books inspired? Because they knew that the Christians, their arch-enemies, were using the Greek version of the Scriptures (which included the deuterocanonical books!!), and they wanted to be sure to distinguish themselves clearly from the Christians. They wanted their own identity back. Besides, the deuterocanon contains many Christian prophecies and allusions to the New Testament, something the Jews could not stand at all! A perfect example would be Wisdom 2:10-24, which is the clearest prophecy about Jesus' passion in the entire Scriptures. The Jews, however, were anti-Christian!

Indeed, the first Christians did use the deuterocanonical books. Proof of this can be found in art versions of the Scriptures (Vulgate, Syriac, and Coptic) as well as by looking at early Church liturgy.

Why, then, would or should we trust an institution that put curses on Christians and repudiated the Messiah and his liberating teachings, in order to know what belongs in the Bible? It makes no sense. Furthermore, if we trust the Jews concerning the Scriptural canon, we must be consistent, and thus we should also throw out all the books of the New Testament, since the Jews believe the New Testament has not been written yet (contains zero books therefore). Yet no Protestant does that. Indeed, Protestants want it both ways. They want to have only 39 books in the Old Testament (relying on the Jews for that decision), but yet also wish to have their 27 New Testament books (NOT relying on the Jews this time). Why this inconsistency?

In response to the second objection of Protestants.

This is my favorite, because it makes so little sense.

What really happened was that ever since the Councils of Rome, Hippo, and Carthage in the late 4th century AD, the Christian faithful were taught that the deuterocanonical books are Scripture, and they were used as such. It was not, however, till 1546 that these books were solemnly and dogmatically defined as belonging to the canon, because it was not until then that the inspiration of those books was called into question. And no doctrine is defined till called into question.

Why, though, did Martin Luther deny the inspiration of the deuterocanon? Because the 7 disputed books contain lots of scriptural proof for Orthodox & Catholic doctrine.. This Luther did not like. So he decided it be better to side with the Jews concerning the canon, so as to justify his breaking with Church teaching concerning certain doctrines. What Luther did, then, was simply cowardly. When given biblical proof for a doctrine he disagreed with, he asserted that, "Well, these books shouldn't be in the Bible." But that's easy. Someone could argue that the Virgin Birth of Jesus is not in the Bible. When confronted with passages from Matthew and Luke, the person could just say, "Yeah, well, those books don't belong in the Bible, though." This gets us nowhere.

Finally, a response to the third objection of Evangelicals. Their position is basically that if Jesus didn't quote directly from the deuterocanonical books, they aren't inspired. That charge, though, is insane. First of all, Jesus did not even quote from all of the 39 Old Testament books Protestants considered inspired, either! It is true he quoted from most of them, but that is not enough. "Most" won't do. What about those he did not quote, such as Ruth, Song of Songs, etc.? Are they not inspired? Secondly, we do not know whether Jesus might indeed have quoted from the Deuterocanon, since not all revelation is written down in the Bible (John 21:25). Thirdly, quotation from a book does not imply its inspiration. In Hebrews 11:36, for example, the author alludes to the Ascension of Isaiah 5:1-14. In Jude 9, we are told that Archangel Michael had a dispute with Satan over the body of Moses. This dispute is not found in the Old Testament, but in the Assumption of Moses, which is not inspired. The mere alluding to a book or quotation thereof simply does not make a book more or less God-breathed. An even more important aspect is that it is simply not true to say that the deuterocanonicals are never quoted or alluded to in the New Testament. Sirach 5:13-14 matches with James 1:19, Wisdom 2:12-20 with Matthew 27:41-43, and 1 Maccabees 4:36-59 and 2 Maccabees 10:1-8 with John 10:22-36.

There is really no reason to reject the 7 disputed books. Protestants accept the 27 books of the New Testament which were defined by the Councils of Rome, Hippo, Carthage, Florence, and Trent, and yet not the 46 books of the Old Testament defined by the same councils. Why not? Why this inconsistency?

What I have presented in this brief essay is history, it is fact. It is not merely my opinion. There is no reason to reject the deuterocanonical books as un-inspired. It was simply a turn Martin Luther had to take to justify his break-off from a 1500-year-old Church tradition.

Deuteronomy 4:2: "You shall not add to the word which I command you, nor take from it; that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you."



The Old Testament Before Christ

In popular history the earliest known canon of old testament books is known as the Septuagint. The Septuagint was translated from Hebrew to Greek by seventy (hence Septuagint, commonly abbreviated LXX) scholars for Alexander's [great library](#) in [Egypt](#) around the year 300 BC. Supposedly, the scholars were commissioned by [Alexander the Great](#) to collect the writings of all the major religions of the time. The Septuagint contains the Old Testament books shared by all Christians along with the Deuterocanonical books used by Orthodox & Catholics, and traditional Protestants.

In "The New Jerome Biblical Commentary" (NJBC) the authors suggest a more plausible history regarding the Septuagint arguing that the existence of the seventy seems unlikely, and it is more likely that the books were collected and translated over time. Other sources give different dates as well, but it is generally agreed the translation was complete by 100 BC.

Scripture During Jesus' Time

Much of the debate today centers on whether Jesus accepted the Septuagint as scripture. In the Gospels Jesus never quotes the Septuagint directly. This does not condemn the Deuterocanonical books since there are many other Old Testament (OT) books Jesus did not quote either. No Christian Church accepts only those OT books quoted by Jesus. Old Testament books not quoted by Jesus are still considered scripture. So what did Jesus mean when he refers to scriptures? This seems to be the more compelling question because apparently there was no closed canon of scripture in Jesus' time.

In The NJBC the authors maintain that there was no clear canon of scripture at the time of Christ. After reviewing the data they state "The conclusion that there was no rigidly closed canon in Judaism in the 1st or 2nd centuries AD means that when the church was in its formation period and was using the sacred books of the Jews, there was no closed canon for the church to adopt" [p. 1041] Part of the evidence they present is the existence of Deuterocanonical books in the Qumran scrolls (Dead Sea scrolls). In these scrolls were found parts of three Deuterocanonical texts giving the impression that there was very little distinction between a closed canon and all other texts. They note that both "scriptural" texts and secular texts are included together, with no apparent distinction.

They also dispel any notion that Jews in Jerusalem had a different canon than Jews elsewhere. "The thesis that the Jews in [Alexandria](#) had a different theory of inspiration from the theory shared by the Jews in Jerusalem is gratuitous" [p 1041]

Jamnia

Jamnia, (aka Jabneel) was a city about 12 miles south of Judah near the present day city of Yebna. In the late first century, after the fall of Jerusalem in 70 AD, it became a seat of Jewish learning. According to popular history a council was held in Jamnia that determined the canon of the Old Testament. The dates for this council range from 75 AD to 100 AD depending on the reference used. In The NJBC the authors maintain that there never was a council at Jamnia, but instead it was a well respected rabbinical school. "There is no evidence that any list of books was drawn up at Jamnia." (p 1040).

The Deuterocanonical Books in the Early Church

"In the first century the Christian Bible had simply been the Old Testament (read in the Septuagint version). Authority resided in this scripture and in the words of the Lord, which long circulated in oral tradition, as is apparent in the letter of Clement to the Corinthians." ("The Early Church" Henry Chadwick p 42)

The LXX version was also used by the authors of the New Testament. Most scholars date the New Testament books to various dates between 75 AD and about 150 AD depending on the book. The authors of scripture, writing in Greek, cite the Septuagint version Old Testament books since the Septuagint was in Greek.

As the Christian Church grew and started separating from Judaism, the Jews also began to codify a set of books that were inspired. (Either in response to Christianity or to divisions between the different Jewish schools.) In the NJBC they assert that the discussions with early Christians also contributed to the decisions of what OT books constituted scripture. In "The Early Church" Henry Chadwick points out that it was only after Christian appeals to the Septuagint became embarrassing that more literal (to the Hebrew) translations became favored by the Greek synagogue (p 12). Some rabbis

even denounced the making of the Septuagint as a sin like the worship of the golden calf!

It was in these early years of Church formation that the two distinct Old Testaments were codified. The Jews did not have access to the entire LXX texts in original Hebrew; using this as a basis, they rejected the Deuterocanonical books as not being inspired.

Jerome Versus Augustine

Until the 4th century most Christians used the LXX as the basis for the OT. Of course there was a considerable amount of literature floating around that was also considered scripture and the early Church councils dealt to a large degree with this issue. What exactly constituted scripture?

Surprisingly Saint Jerome, whose Latin vulgate translation became the official translation of the Catholic Church, did not want to include the Deuterocanonical books in the translation. Jerome lived in Palestine and was aware of the Hebrew canon that had developed. His contemporary Saint Augustine arguing from tradition, wanted them included in new vulgate translation. After conferring with Pope Damasus and realizing most people sided with Augustine, Jerome included the Deuterocanonical books in his translation. (It is important to note that many in Rome were opposed to anything Jerome did -- he was not well liked in the ancient capital.)

Jerome's vulgate, although not the only translation in the Church, was widely regarded and used in the Western world. The Septuagint along with Greek texts was widely used in the Eastern Church.

So What Happened?

For many years throughout Christendom the bible, with the Septuagint, was used. Martin Luther's break from Catholicism and the development of the idea of "faith alone" as the basis for salvation gave the reformers a chance to question books in the bible that did not support this view. The reformers particularly attacked Hebrews, Revelation, and the Deuterocanonical books. Since the New Testament books had already been agreed upon at the council at Carthage in 395AD, the idea of removing Hebrews and Revelation from the bible was not widely embraced. The Deuterocanonicals, however, did not fare so well. Some reformation churches included them in scripture and others did not. Finally the Church was forced to formally recognize what

books had been traditionally used. This was done at the council of Trent, and this list, based on traditional Christian teaching is the list of books used by Orthodox & Catholic today.

And here are some of the quotations from the Deuterocanon in the New Testament

- Matt. 2:16 - Herod's decree of slaying innocent children was prophesied in Wis. 11:7 - slaying the holy innocents.
- Matt. 6:19-20 - Jesus' statement about laying up for yourselves treasure in heaven follows Sirach 29:11 - lay up your treasure.
- Matt. 7:12 - Jesus' golden rule "do unto others" is the converse of Tobit 4:15 - what you hate, do not do to others.
- Matt. 7:16,20 - Jesus' statement "you will know them by their fruits" follows Sirach 27:6 - the fruit discloses the cultivation.
- Matt. 9:36 - the people were "like sheep without a shepherd" is same as Judith 11:19 - sheep without a shepherd.
- Matt. 11:25 - Jesus' description "Lord of heaven and earth" is the same as Tobit 7:18 - Lord of heaven and earth.
- Matt. 12:42 - Jesus refers to the wisdom of Solomon which was recorded and made part of the deuterocanonical books.
- Matt. 16:18 - Jesus' reference to the "power of death" and "gates of Hades" references Wisdom 16:13.
- Matt. 22:25; Mark 12:20; Luke 20:29 - Gospel writers refer to the canonicity of Tobit 3:8 and 7:11 regarding the seven brothers.
- Matt. 24:15 - the "desolating sacrilege" Jesus refers to is also taken from 1 Macc. 1:54 and 2 Macc. 8:17.
- Matt. 24:16 - let those "flee to the mountains" is taken from 1 Macc. 2:28.
- Matt. 27:43 - if He is God's Son, let God deliver him from His adversaries follows Wisdom 2:18.
- Mark 4:5,16-17 - Jesus' description of seeds falling on rocky ground and having no root follows Sirach 40:15.

- Mark 9:48 - description of hell where their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched references Judith 16:17.
- Luke 1:42 - Elizabeth's declaration of Mary's blessedness above all women follows Uzziah's declaration in Judith 13:18.
- Luke 1:52 - Mary's magnificat addressing the mighty falling from their thrones and replaced by lowly follows Sirach 10:14.
- Luke 2:29 - Simeon's declaration that he is ready to die after seeing the Child Jesus follows Tobit 11:9.
- Luke 13:29 - the Lord's description of men coming from east and west to rejoice in God follows Baruch 4:37.
- Luke 21:24 - Jesus' usage of "fall by the edge of the sword" follows Sirach 28:18.
- Luke 24:4 and Acts 1:10 - Luke's description of the two men in dazzling apparel reminds us of 2 Macc. 3:26.
- John 1:3 - all things were made through Him, the Word, follows Wisdom 9:1.
- John 3:13 - who has ascended into heaven but He who descended from heaven references Baruch 3:29.
- John 4:48; Acts 5:12; 15:12; 2 Cor. 12:12 - Jesus', Luke's and Paul's usage of "signs and wonders" follows Wisdom 8:8.
- John 5:18 - Jesus claiming that God is His Father follows Wisdom 2:16.
- John 6:35-59 - Jesus' Eucharistic discourse is foreshadowed in Sirach 24:21.
- John 10:22 - the identification of the feast of the dedication is taken from 1 Macc. 4:59.
- John 15:6 - branches that don't bear fruit and are cut down follows Wis. 4:5 where branches are broken off.
- Acts 1:15 - Luke's reference to the 120 may be a reference to 1 Macc. 3:55 - leaders of tens / restoration of the twelve.
- Acts 10:34; Rom. 2:11; Gal. 2:6 - Peter's and Paul's statement that God shows no partiality references Sirach 35:12.
- Acts 17:29 - description of false gods as like gold and silver made by men follows Wisdom 13:10.
- Rom 1:18-25 - Paul's teaching on the knowledge of the Creator and the ignorance and sin of idolatry follows Wis. 13:1-10.

- Rom. 1:20 - specifically, God's existence being evident in nature follows Wis. 13:1.
- Rom. 1:23 - the sin of worshipping mortal man, birds, animals and reptiles follows Wis. 11:15; 12:24-27; 13:10; 14:8.
- Rom. 1:24-27 - this idolatry results in all kinds of sexual perversion which follows Wis. 14:12,24-27.
- Rom. 4:17 - Abraham is a father of many nations follows Sirach 44:19.
- Rom. 5:12 - description of death and sin entering into the world is similar to Wisdom 2:24.
- Rom. 9:21 - usage of the potter and the clay, making two kinds of vessels follows Wisdom 15:7.
- 1 Cor. 2:16 - Paul's question, "who has known the mind of the Lord?" references Wisdom 9:13.
- 1 Cor. 6:12-13; 10:23-26 - warning that, while all things are good, beware of gluttony, follows Sirach 36:18 and 37:28-30.
- 1 Cor. 8:5-6 - Paul acknowledging many "gods" but one Lord follows Wis. 13:3.
- 1 Cor. 10:1 - Paul's description of our fathers being under the cloud passing through the sea refers to Wisdom 19:7.
- 1 Cor. 10:20 - what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God refers to Baruch 4:7.
- 1 Cor. 15:29 - if no expectation of resurrection, it would be foolish to be baptized on their behalf follows 2 Macc. 12:43-45.
- Eph. 1:17 - Paul's prayer for a "spirit of wisdom" follows the prayer for the spirit of wisdom in Wisdom 7:7.
- Eph. 6:14 - Paul describing the breastplate of righteousness is the same as Wis. 5:18. See also Isaiah 59:17 and 1Thess. 5:8.
- Eph. 6:13-17 - in fact, the whole discussion of armor, helmet, breastplate, sword, shield follows Wis. 5:17-20.
- 1 Tim. 6:15 - Paul's description of God as Sovereign and King of kings is from 2 Macc. 12:15; 13:4.
- 2 Tim. 4:8 - Paul's description of a crown of righteousness is similar to Wisdom 5:16.
- Heb. 4:12 - Paul's description of God's word as a sword is similar to Wisdom 18:15.

- Heb. 11:5 - Enoch being taken up is also referenced in Wis 4:10 and Sir 44:16. See also 2 Kings 2:1-13 & Sir 48:9 regarding Elijah.
- Heb 11:35 - Paul teaches about the martyrdom of the mother and her sons described in 2 Macc. 6:18, 7:1-42.
- Heb. 12:12 - the description "drooping hands" and "weak knees" comes from Sirach 25:23.
- James 1:19 - let every man be quick to hear and slow to respond follows Sirach 5:11.
- James 2:23 - it was reckoned to him as righteousness follows 1 Macc. 2:52 - it was reckoned to him as righteousness.
- James 3:13 - James' instruction to perform works in meekness follows Sirach 3:17.
- James 5:3 - describing silver which rusts and laying up treasure follows Sirach 29:10-11.
- James 5:6 - condemning and killing the "righteous man" follows Wisdom 2:10-20.
- 1 Peter 1:6-7 - Peter teaches about testing faith by purgatorial fire as described in Wisdom 3:5-6 and Sirach 2:5.
- 1 Peter 1:17 - God judging each one according to his deeds refers to Sirach 16:12 - God judges man according to his deeds.
- 2 Peter 2:7 - God's rescue of a righteous man (Lot) is also described in Wisdom 10:6.
- Rev. 1:18; Matt. 16:18 - power of life over death and gates of Hades follows Wis. 16:13.
- Rev. 2:12 - reference to the two-edged sword is similar to the description of God's Word in Wisdom 18:16.
- Rev. 5:7 - God is described as seated on His throne, and this is the same description used in Sirach 1:8.
- Rev. 8:3-4 - prayers of the saints presented to God by the hand of an angel follows Tobit 12:12,15.
- Rev. 8:7 - raining of hail and fire to the earth follows Wisdom 16:22 and Sirach 39:29.
- Rev. 9:3 - raining of locusts on the earth follows Wisdom 16:9.
- Rev. 11:19 - the vision of the ark of the covenant (Mary) in a cloud of glory was prophesied in 2 Macc. 2:7.

- Rev. 17:14 - description of God as King of kings follows 2 Macc. 13:4.
- Rev. 19:1 - the cry "Hallelujah" at the coming of the new Jerusalem follows Tobit 13:18.
- Rev. 19:11 - the description of the Lord on a white horse in the heavens follows 2 Macc. 3:25; 11:8.
- Rev. 19:16 - description of our Lord as King of kings is taken from 2 Macc. 13:4.
- Rev. 21:19 - the description of the new Jerusalem with precious stones is prophesied in Tobit 13:17.
- Exodus 23:7 - do not slay the innocent and righteous - Dan. 13:53 - do not put to death an innocent and righteous person.
- 2 Tim. 3:16 - the inspired Scripture that Paul was referring to included the deuterocanonical texts that the Protestants removed. The books Baruch, Tobit, Maccabees, Judith, Sirach, Wisdom were all included in the Septuagint that Jesus and the apostles used.

The Protestants attempt to defend their rejection of the deuterocanonicals on the ground that the early Jews rejected them. However, the Jewish councils that rejected them (e.g., council of Jamnia in 90 - 100 A.D.) were the same councils that rejected the entire New Testament canon. Thus, Protestants who reject the Orthodox and Catholic Bible are following a Jewish council who rejected Christ and the Revelation of the New Testament!

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| 1- <u>Tobit</u> : | Contains of 14 chapters, and it follows The Book of Nehmia in order. |
| 2- <u>Judith</u> : | Contains of 16 chapters, and it follows Tobit in order. |
| 3- <u>Esther</u> : | The rest of the Book of Esther, and contains chapters from 10 to 16. |

- 4- **Wisdom**: For Solomon the King, and contains of 14 chapters, and it should be after The Book of the Songs of Songs.
- 5- **Joshua Son of Sirach**
(Ecclesiasticus): Contains of 51 chapters, and it follows The Wisdom of Solomon in order.
- 6- **Baruch**: Contains of 6 chapters, and it follows The Book of Lamentations of Jeremiah in order.
- 7- **Daniel**: The rest of The Book of Daniel, and contains of the rest of Chapter 3, in addition to two extra chapters: 13, 14.
- 8- **First of Maccabees**: Contains of 16 chapters, and it follows The Book of Malachi in order.
- 9- **Second of Maccabees**: Contains of 15 chapters, and it follows The Book of Second Maccabees in order.
- 10- **Psalm 151**: After Psalm 150 by King David the prophet.