

# APOCRYPHA AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

## I. THE APOCRYPHA

- A. Means "things hidden"
- B. Books Written 300 BC-AD 100 by Jews/Jewish Christians
- C. Jewish Use
  - 1. Not part of Hebrew Bible (Jewish Canon)
  - 2. Included (except 2 Esdras) in the LXX
    - a. Used and Associated with OT Scriptures
    - b. Never Given Canonical Status
- D. Contents
  - 1. Historical Books:
    - a. **1 Esdras**: another version of Ezra-Nehemiah
    - b. **1 Maccabees**: Maccabean Revolt, Antiochus IV to John Hyrcanus I
    - c. **2 Maccabees**: Selucid Domination and Maccabean Revolt from 180-161 BC
  - 2. Religious Fiction:
    - a. **Tobit**: folklorish tale of romance, piety, and moral teaching
    - b. **Judith**: Jewish heroine beheads an oppressor
    - c. **Additions to Esther** (included in Esther in LXX; Orthodox Bibles)
    - d. **Additions to Daniel** (included in Daniel in LXX; Orthodox Bibles)
      - 1) Song of the Three Young Men
      - 2) Bel and the Dragon
      - 3) Suzanna
  - 3. Wisdom Literature:
    - a. **Ecclesiasticus**; also called **Wisdom of Jesus ben Sirach** (or just Sirach)
    - b. **Wisdom of Solomon**: wisdom purportedly by Solomon
    - c. **Baruch**: wisdom purportedly by Jeremiah's scribe
    - d. **The Letter of Jeremiah**: from Jeremiah to Jews about to be exiled (often included in Baruch)
    - e. **Prayer of Mannasseh**: penitential prayer (in appendix to Latin Vulgate after Council of Trent)
  - 4. Apocalyptic: **2 Esdras** (not in LXX; since Council of Trent, in appendix of Vulgate)

**Table 1. Nomenclature of the Books of Ezra/Nehemiah/Esdras**

English/Apocrypha	Septuagint	Latin Vulgate
Ezra	2 Esdras 1-10	1 Esdras
Nehemiah	2 Esdras 11-23	2 Esdras
1 Esdras	1 Esdras	3 Esdras
2 Esdras	-	4 Esdras

- 5. Books Used by Eastern Orthodox
  - a. **3 Maccabees** (in LXX, Armenian, Syriac; not in Vulgate): Persecution of Jews under Ptolemies
  - b. **4 Maccabees** (in some LXX mss; not in Vulgate): a diatribe on religious reason
  - c. **Psalms 151** (in LXX version of Psalms)
- E. Christian Use of the Apocrypha
  - 1. Included in Septuagint (except 2 Esdras)
  - 2. Reluctantly put in Latin Vulgate by Jerome; used through Middle Ages
  - 3. Began to be left out of Protestant Bibles during Reformation
  - 4. Roman Catholic Council of Trent, 1546
    - a. declared Latin Vulgate = Canonical
    - b. non-canonical: 1 & 2 Esdras, Prayer of Mannasseh
    - c. Deuterocanonicals = "second Canon"
  - 5. Ultimately rejected by Most Protestants

## II. PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

- A. "Writings with a False Superscription"
- B. Most Written 200 BC-AD 200
- C. Character
  - 1. Many Attributed to OT Figures
    - a. 1 & 2 Enoch
    - b. Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs
    - c. Apocalypse of Abraham
    - d. Apocalypse of Zephaniah
    - e. Apocalypse of Elijah
    - f. Psalms of Solomon
  - 2. Some Attributed to Other Authors: Sibyllene Oracles
  - 3. Many Build upon OT Stories
    - a. Life of Adam and Eve
    - b. Jubilees
    - c. Joseph and Aseneth
    - d. Jannes and Jambres
    - e. Assumption of Moses
    - f. Testament of Job
  - 4. Most of Jewish Origin; Some Reworked/Written by Christians

## III. THE CHRISTIAN OT CANON

- A. East:
  - 1. Hebrew OT Books Accepted; Esther Sometimes Omitted
  - 2. Apocrypha
    - a. Often Accorded Lesser Authority
    - b. Baruch and Letter of Jer. Usually Included in Jer.
- B. West:
  - 1. Latin Writers Before Jerome
    - a. Did Not Have Vulgate Edition
    - b. No Distinction Between Hebrew Canon & Apocrypha
  - 2. Jerome Used Term "Apocrypha" Indicating Lesser Status
  - 3. Augustine (354-430)
    - a. Accepted LXX as Inspired; Apocrypha as Canonical
    - b. Church Councils Followed Suit: Accepted Apoc.