

# APOCRYPHA AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

## I. THE APOCRYPHA (“hidden”)

- A. Books written 300 BC-AD 100 by Jews/Jewish Christians; never part of the Hebrew Bible canon
- B. Christian Use of the Apocrypha
  - 1. Included in Septuagint (except 2 Esdras); thus in Eastern Orthodox Bibles
  - 2. never “officialized” in LXX, but Augustine accepted LXX and Apocrypha as Canon
  - 3. Reluctantly put in Latin Vulgate by Jerome; thus used throughout Middle Ages by Roman church
  - 4. Protestant reformers began to separate them or leave them out of modern language translations
  - 5. Roman Catholic response: Council of Trent, 1546
    - a. Declared Latin Vulgate and all its contents as Canon
    - b. Non-canonical: 1 & 2 Esdras, Prayer of Mannasseh
    - c. Deuterocanonicals = “second Canon”
  - 6. ultimately rejected by most Protestants
- C. **Contents by genre**
  - 1. *Historical Books*:
    - a. **1 Esdras**: another version of Ezra-Nehemiah material
    - 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); sometimes listed separately as:
      - 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)
  - 5. *additional 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)

## II. PSEUDEPIGRAPHA (“false writings”)

- A. Designates other biblical-related literature not included in any canon; most written 200 BC-AD 200
- B. Character/nature
  - 1. many attributed to OT figures such as Enoch, 12 Patriarchs, Abraham, Elijah, Solomon, etc.
  - 2. many build upon OT stories; i.e., Life of Adam and Eve, Jubilees, Assumption of Moses
  - 3. most of Jewish origin; Some written or reworked by Christians