

The Apocrypha

After Nehemiah are inserted:

Tobit

- Only a few fragments of the original Hebrew text exist. That which was translated into Latin by Jerome came from Greek and Aramaic translations, both of which are represented today by only a few fragments. So, the Latin translation of 382 AD is the only ancient text.
- The book probably was written by the Jews of the dispersion between 500 and 300 BC, possibly in Egypt.
- Tobit was not accepted into the Hebrew Bible.
- The Roman Catholic church accepted in in 382 AD.
- The Greek Orthodox church accepted it in 682 AD.
- Several serious historical and geographical errors are in the text:
 - In 1:4, Tobit was a young man when Israel divided in 931 BC. If this reference is excluded, the other dates are feasible.
 - In 13:1, he died at the age of 112.
 - In 1:1, Tobit was exiled to Assyria in the reign of Shalmaneser in 734 BC.
 - In 14:5, Tobit's son did not die until after the fall of Nineveh in 612 BC.
 - In 1:14 – 15, Sennecarib is said to succeed Shalmaneser, skipping Sargon.
 - In 5:6 – 8, Ecbatana is said to be on a plain, when it is at an elevation of 6000 feet. Rhanges is said to be two days journey from Ecbatana, although they are 200 miles apart through mountains.
- The story: At Nineveh, there lives a man named Tobit, exiled with his tribe, Naphthali. He was devout, law-abiding, charitable, and now blind. In Ecbatana lives his kinsman Raguel; this man's daughter Sarah had lost seven bridegrooms in succession, killed on the wedding night by the demon Asmodeus. Both Tobit and Sarah beg God to let them die. Instead, God sends His angel Raphael who brings Tobit's son, Tobias, safely to Raguel, marries him to Sarah, and gives him a cure for his father's blindness. The story promotes good character, alms-giving, and following the Law in a foreign land.

Judith

- No fragments of the original Hebrew text exist. That which was translated into Latin by Jerome came from Greek and Aramaic translations (382 AD). That which Jerome used has been lost. Slightly different versions of the same story can be found, but only in fragments.
- Judith was not accepted into the Hebrew Bible.
- The Roman Catholic church accepted in in 382 AD.
- The Greek Orthodox church accepted it in 682 AD.
- Judith was written some time between 125 and 75 BC.
- Several serious historical and geographical errors are in the text:
 - In 1:1, the story begins with Nebuchadnezzar reigning over Assyria in Nineveh. Nineveh was captured and destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar's father.
 - In 4:3 and 5:19, the return from captivity under Cyrus had already taken place, and Nebuchadnezzar was still on his throne.

- The army in 2:21 – 28 jumps across a thousand miles, then back. The locations cannot be sequential. Most of the geography uses names unknown to history, so cannot be confirmed.
- The story: The Israelites are victorious over Nebuchadnezzar's Assyrian army thanks to the intervention of a woman, Judith. Nebuchadnezzar's army, headed by Holofernes, sought to destroy all indigenous religions so that all would worship Nebuchadnezzar. The Israelites were besieged in Bethulia (unknown location, but clearly in the Northern Kingdom). The water supply failed and surrender was imminent. Judith, a beautiful young widow, rebukes the leading men of the city for their lack of faith. After praying, she went to Holofernes to negotiate, using her charms to get him alone, at which point she cut off his head. The Assyrian army retreated in disarray. The Israelites plunder the spoils in the Assyrian camp. The people sang praises to Judith and went to Jerusalem for a solemn thanksgiving.

Esther

- The Hebrew text is shorter than the Greek text.
- The Hebrew text has been accepted in the Hebrew Bible and Protestant Bibles. The Greek text as included in the Bible for Catholics in 382 and 682 AD as with Tobit and Judith.
- The extra parts to the story in the Greek text are:
 - First verse contains a short story in which Mordecai had dream revealing a plot to assassinate the king. He reported this to the king, who thwarted the attempted coup. Mordecai received high office and many presents.
 - At the end of chapter 3, the text of the decree to exterminate the Jews was reproduced.
 - Between 4:8 and 4:9 is added a short paragraph concerning Mordecai's advice to Esther.
 - At the end of Chapter 4 are two long prayers by Mordecai and Esther.
 - Details were added to 5:1 describing Esther's beauty.
 - After 8:12 has been inserted the text of the second decree of Ahasuerus.
 - After 10:3 has been added a postscript by Mordecai, summarizing the moral of the story.

1 and 2 Maccabees

- The Hebrew text no longer exists. The only available ancient copies are in Greek.
- The two books of the Maccabees are not part of the Hebrew Bible.
- This history covers the beginning of the uprising of the Jews against the Syrian empire set up by Alexander's general, Antiochus. Antiochus Epiphanes, about 171 BC, profaned the Temple by having a pig sacrificed on the altar, then setting up a statue of Zeus in the Temple compound. In an attempt to stamp out Judaism, the king required all to offer a sacrifice to the king's idol. Matthias, as respected leader, when his turn came, killed the king's messenger and fled into the hills, calling for revolution.
- The first two chapters of 1 Maccabees tell of the start of the revolt. The stories of each of his three sons are given in succession in the rest of the book. This covers a period of about 40 years.
- The books were written between 134 BC (the end of the history in the books) and 63 BC, when the Romans conquered Jerusalem.

- These books represent perhaps the best available history of the period.
- 2 Maccabees retells the story, but only the part recorded in the first 7 chapters of 1 Maccabees. The point of 2 Maccabees was to encourage Jews living in Egypt to return to Israel. The Maccabee leaders knew that they did not have sufficient numbers to defend their country.
- The origin of Hanukkah are given in 1 Maccabees 4 and 2 Maccabees 10. Neither records the miracle of the oil, but only an eight-day celebration to commemorate the rededication of the Temple.

After Song of Solomon are inserted:

Wisdom

- The original was written in Greek, although attributed to Solomon (7:7 – 8).
- This book was not accepted by the Roman Catholic church until 382 AD, later by the Greek Orthodox.
- This book has not been accepted by the Hebrew Bible.
- The contents:
 - Chapters 1 – 5: The function of wisdom in man’s destiny
 - Chapters 6 – 9: The origin and nature of wisdom and how it may be won.
 - Chapter 10 – 19: The part played by wisdom and by God in the history of Israel this a long digression (chapters 13 – 15) against idolatry.
- The author probably was a Hellenized Jew (because of his figures of speech and command of the Greek language of the time of the Ptolemies) of Alexandria, using the Septuagint for quotation, so written between 25 BC and 30 AD.
- The claim is made that some verses are quoted in the New Testament:
 - Colossians 1:15 – 16 has been claimed to be borrowed from Wisdom 7:26.
 - Hebrews 1:3 has been claimed to be borrowed from Wisdom 7:22.
 - The concept of the Word in John is said to be parallel with and drawn from the idea of Wisdom in this book.

Ecclesiasticus

- The original was written in Hebrew, although only the Greek version is accepted by the Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches. The Hebrew version (a manuscript of which was not found until 1896) has significant differences.
- The original title was “The Wisdom of Jesus Ben Sirach,” who is named in 50:27.
- A forward was added by the author’s grandson when he translated it into Greek in Egypt in about 132 BC. Therefore, the original was written about 190 BC, supposedly in Jerusalem (50:27).
- The author opposed Hellenization vigorously. After this writing, Antiochus Epiphanes (175 – 163 BC) enforced Greek culture, as recorded in the books of the Maccabees.
- This book has not been accepted by the Hebrew Bible.
- No mention was made of the Messiah, although the author did pray for the re-institution of Israel.
- Many passages from this book are claimed to be reproduced in the New Testament. Examples:

- James 1:19 from 5:11
- Revelation 14:13 from 14:19.
- James 1:13 – 14 from 15:11
- 1 Peter 3:20 from 44:17
- 2 Peter 2:5 from 44:17

After Lamentations is inserted:

Baruch

- This book has not been accepted by the Hebrew Bible.
- The Greek Orthodox Bible places this book before Lamentations.
- The original Hebrew manuscripts have been lost.
- The author is claimed to be Baruch, Jeremiah's scribe, writing from Babylon after being exiled. But, the date of writing may be as much as four centuries later. However, Jeremiah 43:1 – 7 implies that Baruch went with Jeremiah and some survivors to Egypt after the captives had been deported.
- The subject matter refers to the Jewish communities of the Dispersion: how to maintain religious life without a Temple. It addresses prayer, devotion to the Law, thirst for retribution, and messianic hope.
- In 6:2, the duration of the Exile is said to be as long as seven generations, as opposed to Jeremiah's 70 years.

Daniel

- Two extra chapters were added, each containing one story in which Daniel is the hero.
- The extra chapters are not in the Hebrew Bible.
- Chapter 13: "Susanna" is the story of a virtuous Jewish woman of the Captivity who is blackmailed by some older, evil men. The men peek over Susanna garden wall to spy on her bath. Afterwards, they confront her with the proposition that, unless they consent to lay with them, they will charge her with immorality which they had supposedly witnessed in her garden. She declines, so is charged. The word of two elders was about to sway the judges in their favor. Daniel arrives before the verdict is tendered. He suggests that the two elders be separated and interrogated about the details of what they saw. Of course, they did not agree. The court immediately exonerated the woman and put the elders to death (the punishment they had sought for the woman supposedly caught in adultery).
- Chapter 14: "Bel and the Dragon" is the story of the practices of the priests of Bel in Babylon. The priests made the claim that their god ate a sumptuous meal every evening, so was certainly real. Every evening, a meal was laid out for all to see. Then, the room was shut and sealed. In the morning, the door was opened and the food had been consumed. Daniel went on the tour. As he passed around the table of food, he secretly dropped ashed out of a hole in his pocket. In the morning, Daniel was first in line at the Temple of Bel. He announced loudly that there were footprints in the ash leading to a blank wall. The secret door was uncovered. The king hear about the deception and had all the priests executed. Further, he awarded the idol and its temple to Daniel.
- At the end of chapter 14 are two paragraphs relating how Daniel exposed the fakery behind a bronze dragon idol. The bronze dragon supposedly ate food, also. Daniel fed it a

combustible mixture and it blew up. The people were so angry that they forced the king to cast Daniel in the lion's den for six days. But, the prophet Habakkuk came to his rescue.