

The Apocrypha

source: <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bib/apo/index.htm>

The Apocrypha refer to texts which are left out of officially sanctioned versions ('canon') of the Bible. The term means 'things hidden away,' which implies secret or esoteric literature. However, none of these texts were ever considered secret.

In some Protestant Bibles, they are placed between the New and Old Testament. In the Roman Catholic Bibles the books are interspersed with the rest of the text. In this case they are also called 'Deuterocanonical', which means 'secondary canon.' The books on this page are all Deuterocanonical.

Jerome rejected the Deuterocanonical books when he was translating the Bible into Latin circa 450 CE, (see the [Vulgate](#)). This was because no Hebrew version of these texts could be found, even though they were present in the Greek Old Testament (the Septuagint). However, they eventually were accepted by the Church, and most of them remained part of the Bible. Protestants rejected these books during the Reformation as lacking divine authority. They either excised them completely or placed them in a third section of the Bible. The Roman Catholic Council of Trent, on the other hand, declared in 1546 that the Deuterocanonical books were indeed divine.

Of these books, seven: Tobias, Judith, the Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, Baruch, and 1 and 2 Maccabees, remain in the Catholic Bible. First Esdras, Second Esdras, Epistle of Jeremiah, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manasseh, and the Prayer of Azariah are not today considered part of the Catholic apocrypha.

There are many other apocryphal books, which do not fall into the 'Deuterocanonical' category, such as the many additional New Testament Gospels, and the apocalyptic book of Enoch.

List of 15 Deuterocanonical books:

[1 Esdras](#); [2 Esdras](#); [Additions to Esther](#); [1 Macabees](#); [2 Macabees](#); [Tobias](#); [Judith](#); [Wisdom](#); [Sirach](#); [Baruch](#); [Epistle of Jeremiah](#); [Susanna](#); [Prayer of Azariah](#); [Prayer of Manasseh](#); [Bel and the Dragon](#)

Biblical books sometimes called "apocrypha"

source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apocrypha>

During the birth of Christianity, some of the Jewish apocrypha that dealt with the coming of the Messianic kingdom became popular in the rising Jewish-Christian communities. Occasionally these writings were changed, but on the whole it was found sufficient to reinterpret them as conforming to a Christian viewpoint. Christianity eventually gave birth to new apocalyptic works, some of which were derived from traditional Jewish sources.

The Jewish apocrypha were part of the ordinary religious literature of the early Christians. This was not strange, as the large majority of Old Testament references in the New Testament are taken from the Greek [Septuagint](#), which is the source of the [deuterocanonical books](#) ("secondary canon") as they are known by many Christians. The *Style Manual for the Society of Biblical Literature* recommends the use of the term *deuterocanonical literature* instead of *apocrypha* in academic writing, although not all apocryphal books are properly deuterocanonical.

These books form part of the [Roman Catholic](#), [Eastern Orthodox](#) and [Oriental Orthodox](#) canons. New Testament reliance on these books includes these examples: [James](#) 1:19 shows dependence on [Sirach](#) 5:11, [Hebrews](#) 1:3 on [Wisdom](#) 7:26, [Hebrews](#) 11:35 on [2 Maccabees](#) 6, [Romans](#) 9:21 on [Wisdom](#) 15:7, [2 Cor.](#) 5:1, 4 on [Wisdom](#) 9:15, etc.

The [Book of Enoch](#) is included in the biblical canon only of the Oriental Orthodox churches. However, the [Epistle of Jude](#) quotes the prophet, Enoch, by name, and use of this book appears in the four gospels and [1 Peter](#). The genuineness and inspiration of Enoch were believed in by the writer of the Epistle of Barnabas, [Irenaeus](#), [Tertullian](#) and [Clement of Alexandria](#), and much of the early church. The epistles of Paul and the gospels also show influences from the [Book of Jubilees](#), which is part of the Oriental Orthodox canon, as well as the [Assumption of Moses](#) and the [Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs](#), which are included in no biblical canon.

The high position which some apocryphal books occupied in the first two centuries was undermined by a variety of influences in the Christian church. All claims to the possession of a secret tradition (as held by many Gnostic sects) were denied by the influential theologians like Irenaeus and Tertullian, the timeframe of "true inspiration" was limited to the apostolic age, and universal acceptance by the church was required as proof of apostolic authorship. As these principles gained currency, books deemed apocryphal tended to become regarded as spurious and heretical writings, though books now considered deuterocanonical have been used in liturgy and theology from the first century to the present.