

The Apocrypha: Who Removed It & Why?

How 7 books were in the Christian Bible for 1,500 years - then suddenly weren't

1. WHAT IS THE APOCRYPHA?

"**Apocrypha**" = Greek *apokryphos* ("hidden, secret"). Term used by Protestants for 7 books they removed. Catholics call them "**Deuterocanonical**" ("second canon").

The 7 Books:

- Tobit** - Faithful Israelite family story
- Judith** - Jewish heroine defeats Assyrians
- 1 Maccabees** - Jewish revolt history (167-134 BC)
- 2 Maccabees** - Theology of resurrection, prayer for dead
- Wisdom of Solomon** - Philosophical wisdom
- Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)** - Ethical wisdom teachings
- Baruch** - Prophetic text (Jeremiah's scribe)

Plus additions to: Esther, Daniel (Susanna, Bel & Dragon)

Who Has Them Today:

Tradition	OT Books
Catholic	46 (includes all 7)
Orthodox	49-51 (7 + more)
Protestant	39 (removed 7)
Ethiopian	81 (includes Enoch, Jubilees)

2. THE TWO JEWISH BIBLES

In **Jesus'** day, there were **TWO Jewish scripture collections** - and they had **DIFFERENT books**.

Hebrew Bible (Palestine)

Language: Hebrew
Location: Palestinian Jews
Books: ~39 (no deuterocanonicals)
Status: Canon NOT officially closed until centuries after Christ
Later became: Masoretic Text (7th-10th century AD)

Septuagint (LXX) - Greek Bible

Language: Greek
Location: Jews throughout Roman Empire (Egypt, Asia Minor, Rome)
Date: Translated 3rd-2nd century BC in Alexandria
Books: **46** (39 + 7 deuterocanonicals)
Used by: Most Jews outside Palestine, early Christians

3. WHICH BIBLE DID JESUS USE?

Jesus and the apostles primarily used the SEPTUAGINT - the one **WITH** the extra books.

Gleason Archer & Gregory Chirichigno (Protestant scholars) studied OT quotes in NT:

340 NT citations match Septuagint
33 citations match Hebrew text

→ **10:1 ratio** favoring Septuagint

Mark 7:6-7: Jesus quotes Isaiah 29:13 - wording matches **Septuagint**, not Hebrew.

The early church used the Septuagint as their Old Testament.

4. NT REFERENCES TO APOCRYPHA

The New Testament quotes and alludes to these "**removed**" books - **proving the apostles considered them authoritative**.

Hebrews 11:35 → 2 Maccabees 7

Hebrews 11:35: "Some were **tortured, refusing to accept release**, that they might rise again to a better life."

Where is this story? NOT in Protestant OT!

Answer: 2 Maccabees 7 - Mother and 7 sons tortured by Antiochus IV, refusing to deny faith, declaring belief in resurrection.

→ Without 2 Maccabees, Hebrews 11:35 makes no sense.

Romans 1 → Wisdom 13-14

Paul's description of Gentile idolatry (Rom 1:18-25) closely parallels **Wisdom of Solomon 13-14**:
• Suppressing truth
• Worshiping creation over Creator
• Moral degradation from idolatry

Scholars agree Paul **adapted material** from Wisdom.

Matthew 11:28-30 → Sirach

Jesus: "Come to me... take my **yoke**... find **rest** for your souls."

Sirach 51:23-27: "Put your neck under her **yoke**... I found for myself much **rest**."

→ Jesus echoes Sirach, identifying Himself as divine Wisdom.

Other Clear Parallels:

NT Verse	Apocrypha
James 1:19	Sirach 5:11 - "quick to hear, slow to speak"
Matt 27:43	Wisdom 2:18 - mocking Jesus on cross
Rev 8:3-4	Tobit 12:12,15 - angel presents prayers
1 Cor 15:29	2 Macc 12:43-45 - prayer for the dead

5. THE EARLY CHURCH USED THEM

Fact: "Surviving Bibles from the early Church **always include**, with varying degrees of recognition, books now called deuterocanonical."

Codex Vaticanus (4th c.) - includes them
Codex Sinaiticus (4th c.) - includes them
Codex Alexandrinus (5th c.) - includes them

Church Councils Affirmed Them:

Council of Hippo (393 AD) - Listed 46 OT books (with deuterocanonicals)

Council of Carthage (397 AD) - Confirmed same 46 books

Council of Carthage (419 AD) - Reaffirmed 46 books

→ For **1,100+ years**, Christians used a Bible with these books.

6. JEROME'S OBJECTION (382 AD)

St. Jerome translated the Latin Vulgate. He preferred Hebrew texts and coined "**apocrypha**" for books not in Hebrew.

BUT: The Church **overruled him**. Pope Damasus and church councils required him to include them.

Jerome submitted to church authority and included them in the Vulgate - which became THE Bible for 1,000 years.

7. MARTIN LUTHER REMOVES THEM (1534)

After 1,500 years in the Christian Bible, ONE MAN removed them based on personal preference.

Martin Luther (1534) in his German Bible:
• **Removed** 7 deuterocanonical books from OT
• Placed them in separate "Apocrypha" section
• Labeled them: "Not equal to Holy Scriptures, but useful and good to read"

Luther's Reasons:

- Preferred Hebrew canon** over Septuagint
- 2 Maccabees 12:43-45** supports prayer for dead (contradicted his theology)
- Tobit & Sirach** emphasize good works (contradicted "faith alone")
- Personal judgment:** Books didn't "preach Christ" as he understood it

Luther also questioned NT books:

- **James** - called it "epistle of straw" (too much on works)
- **Hebrews, Jude, Revelation** - moved to back of his NT

If Luther could remove OT books, why not NT books too?

The Irony:

Luther followed the **Hebrew/Masoretic canon** - compiled by Jews **600-900 years AFTER Christ** who **rejected Jesus as Messiah**.

He rejected the Septuagint - which **Jesus and the apostles actually used**.

8. WHY PROTESTANTS REJECT THEM

- "Not in Hebrew Bible"**
→ But Jesus used the Septuagint, not the later Masoretic text
- "Jews rejected them"**
→ Jews also rejected Jesus and the entire NT
- "Never quoted as Scripture in NT"**
→ Neither is Esther, Ecclesiastes, Song of Solomon, or Ezra
- "Contain errors/contradictions"**
→ So do Protestant-accepted books (by their own standards)
- "Teach false doctrines"**
→ They teach prayer for dead, purgatory, works - doctrines Protestants reject

9. THE REAL REASON

Luther removed books that contradicted his NEW theology - not because of ancient tradition.

2 Maccabees 12:43-46: Judas Maccabeus "took up a collection... to provide for a **sin offering**... that they might be **released from their sin**."

→ Supports **prayer for the dead** and **purgatory**
→ Contradicts "faith alone" and "once saved always saved"

Tobit, Sirach: Emphasize almsgiving, good works, merit
→ Contradicts Luther's soteriology

10. LDS PERSPECTIVE

D&C 91:1-3: Joseph Smith asked about the Apocrypha. The Lord said:
"There are many things contained therein that are **true**... There are many things contained therein that are **not true**, which are interpolations by the hands of men."

→ **Some truth, some error** - read by the Spirit
→ Neither fully canonical nor fully rejected

The Pattern: For 1,500 years these books were Scripture. One man (Luther) removed them because they contradicted his theology. Protestants follow Luther's canon - determined by a 16th-century reformer, not by Jesus, the apostles, or the early church.

Date	Event	Books
3rd-2nd c. BC	Septuagint translated (Greek OT)	46 books (includes deuterocanonicals)
1st c. AD	Jesus & apostles quote Septuagint 340 times	Used the 46-book version
393-419 AD	Councils of Hippo & Carthage define canon	46 OT + 27 NT = 73 books
7th-10th c. AD	Masoretic Text compiled by Jews	39 books (Jewish rejection of deuterocanonicals)
1534 AD	Luther removes 7 books	39 OT (follows post-Christian Jewish canon)
1546 AD	Council of Trent reaffirms Catholic canon	46 OT + 27 NT = 73 books