

Canon of the Old Testament

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The word canon came from the Greek *kanon* meaning measuring rod or ruler. The Canon of the Bible, which is a Christian's term¹, refers to the list of books, which Christians believe to be written through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The Jews, on the other hand prefer to use the phrase "the ones that defile their hands" (i.e. they need to wash their hands after touching it) for their canonical books. As shown in Table 1 Jewish scripture has twenty-four books in three divisions: the Law (*Torah* or *Pentateuch* in Greek), The Prophets (*Nevim*) and the Writings (*Ketuvim* or *Hagiographa* in Greek). The name *Tanakh* is the acronym of Torah, Nevim and Ketuvim.

Table 1: Jewish Scripture or Tanakh

The Law (Torah)	The Prophets (Nevim)	The Writings (Ketuvim)
1. Genesis 2. Exodus 3. Leviticus 4. Numbers 5. Deuteronomy	Former Prophets 6. Joshua 7. Judges 8. Samuel 9. Kings Latter Prophets 10. Isaiah 11. Jeremiah 12. Ezekiel 13. Twelve Minor Prophets (Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi)	Poetical books 14. Psalms 15. Proverbs 16. Job Megilloth 17. Song of Songs (or Song/Canticle of Solomon) 18. Ruth 19. Lamentations 20. Ecclesiastes 21. Esther Historical books 22. Daniel 23. Ezra-Nehemiah 24. Chronicles
Note: The Table shows the present day book's arrangement. The second and third divisions have different order of books in the past (<i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i> , Vol. 4, pages 829-830).		

The Old Testament of Catholic Bible has *protocanonical* and *deuterocanonical*² books. There are other (non-canonical) books that the Church refers as *Apocryphal* (means hidden)

¹ First used by *Athanasius*, bishop of Alexandria in *Defence of the Nicene Definition* 5:18 written in c. 350.

² The terms proto & deuterocanonical books come from *Sixtus of Sienna* (1520 to 1569) in 1566. He was Catholic convert from Judaism.

books. The names *proto* (first) and *deutero* (second) do not indicate that the Church recognises two sets of canon. They only indicate that the latter became part of the Old Testament after some dispute, i.e. they were accepted by some early Christians but rejected by others. Protocanonical books are the twenty-four books of Jewish scripture, rearranged into thirty-nine books by separating Samuel, Kings, Ezra-Nehemiah and Chronicles into two books and Twelve Minor Prophets into twelve books. Deuterocanonical books are: *Tobit*, *Judith*, *Wisdom of Solomon*, *Sirach* or *Ecclesiasticus*, *Baruch* with *Letter of Jeremiah*, *1 & 2 Maccabees* and additional chapters in the books of *Esther* (6 chapters) and *Daniel* (*Prayer of Azariah*, *Song of Three Young Men*, *Susanna* and *Bel & Dragon*). Protestant's Old Testament is shorter, i.e. it has only protocanonical books, which they refer as canonical books. To Protestants all deuterocanonical books as well as *1 Esdras*, *2 Esdras* (refer to Table 2) and *Prayer of Manasseh* are apocrypha while *pseudepigraphal* books³ are equal to the rest of Catholic's apocryphal books. The use of the same name (apocrypha) to refer to different class of books may confuse some. Unless otherwise stated this article follows the Catholic classification.

Table 2: Nomenclature of books of Esdras

Septuagint (LXX)	Vulgate	English Bible (RSV, KJV)	Slavonic Bible
2 Esdras (Esdras β) (Chapters 1 to 10)	1 Esdras	Ezra	1 Esdras
2 Esdras (Esdras β) (Chapters 11 to 23)	2 Esdras	Nehemiah	Nehemiah
1 Esdras (Esdras α)	3 Esdras (apocrypha)	1 Esdras (apocrypha)	2 Esdras
	4 Esdras (apocrypha)	2 Esdras (apocrypha)	3 Esdras
Vulgate is Latin translation of the Bible			

According to a story recorded in the *Letter of Aristeas*, Greek translation of the five books of Law was made during the reign of King Ptolemy II of Egypt (287 to 247 BC). Seventy-two elders, six from each twelve Jewish tribes, did the translation in seventy-two days that gives the name *Septuagint* or LXX (Latin numeral for seventy). Greek translations of other books were made subsequently. In LXX Samuel and Kings are referred as 4 books of *Kings* (or *Reigns*) while the Greek name of Chronicles is *Paralipomenon*. We need to pay attention on *Esdras*, the Greek form of Ezra because nomenclature of books of Esdras is confusing. The same name can refer to different books or the same book can have different names (refer to the Table 2). To avoid confusion, this article will refer the apocryphal Esdras as 1(3) Esdras and 2(4) Esdras, the canonical ones as 1 Esdras or Ezra and 2 Esdras or Nehemiah

³ For list and text of apocryphal (pseudepigraphal) books refer to J.H. Charlesworth: "*The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*", Vol. 1 & 2, Doubleday & Co., Inc., New York.

while in Tables 2, 3 and 5 LXX' designation of Esdras α and Esdras β is retained. 1(3) Esdras belongs to LXX and its content has parallels in 2 Chronicles, Ezra and Nehemiah except a short section from 3:1 to 5:6. 2(4) Esdras on the other hand, does not belong to LXX and is sometime split into three books: *4 Ezra* (Chapters 3 to 14), *5 Ezra* (Chapters 1 to 2) and *6 Ezra* (Chapters 15 to 16). Chapters 3 to 14 or 4 Ezra was the part written in c. 100 AD while the other chapters were composed and added in the second and third centuries. LXX books are divided into four divisions: the *Law*, the *Prophets*, *Poetical or Wisdom* and *Historical* books. Table 3 shows the arrangement of books in LXX as compared to Catholic and Protestant's Old Testament. Note that both Catholic and Protestant's Old Testament follows LXX divisions. Compared to Jewish scripture LXX has more books, of which seven are deuterocanonical books. LXX was the scripture of the first Christians as most of quotations in the New Testament are taken from it.

Among the three divisions of Jewish scripture, the Law was the first to be canonized by the Jews, perhaps during the return of Babylonian exile, followed by the Prophets. According to 2 Maccabee 2:13, *Nehemiah* (c. fifth century BC) started the collection of books by founding a library and collected books about the kings and prophets, and the writings of David, and letters of kings about votive offerings. In c. 165 BC *Judas Maccabeus* collected all books that has been lost on account of the war (2 Maccabee 2:14). The prologue of the *Sirach* (*Ecclesiasticus*) written c. 170 BC says that the Jewish scripture comprises the Law, the Prophets and the others books. While it is the earliest reference to the three divisions of the Jewish scripture, it does not state the total number of books, number of books of each division and the name of the third division.

From the New Testament we know that Christianity started as a movement within Judaism (Acts 22:19, 26:11). The first followers of Jesus attended Jewish temple (Acts 2:46) and broke bread in their homes (Acts 2:46) on Sundays (Acts 20:7). Peter and John went to temple to pray (Acts 3:1) and Paul and others in Acts 21:26 gave offering to announce the days of purification after performing the ritual. Thus if the Jews in Jesus times already had a closed canon of their scripture⁴, then the apostles and the first Christians just simply inherited it from them. But the evidence shows it was not the case.

⁴ The theory that the Jews before first century AD had two canons: the shorter Palestinian canon for the Hebrews speaking Jews and the longer Alexandrian (Greek) canon for the Greek speaking Jews & first Christians has been abandoned. If Alexandrian canon existed and was adopted by the Christians, then they would accept the same number of books from 1st century AD onward, which was not the case.

First the terms "Scripture" and "canon of Scripture", while they are indeed related, do not have the same meaning, i.e. the latter indicates a *closed* or *fixed* list of Scriptures. Thus while the word "scripture" or even "all scriptures" (cf. Luke 24:27, 2 Timothy 3:16) appears in many places in the New Testament, it does not mean that there was already a fixed list or canon of inspired books. The title "scripture" can be applied to a book or books long before the canon was closed. For example Daniel in the **first** year of Darius reign already cited Jeremiah (Daniel 9:2) as word of God or as Scripture before Zechariah (Zechariah 1:1) and Haggai (Haggai 1:1) who received revelation in the **second** year of Darius reign wrote their books.

Among the three divisions of the *present* Jewish scripture, only two appear in the New Testament: the Law (of Moses) and the Prophets (cf. Matthew 7:12, John 1:45, Acts 13:15, Romans 3:21). The closest we can get to the three divisions is in Luke 24:44 that say "the Law of Moses, the Prophets and Psalms". However stating that Psalms represents the whole and the rest of the Writings is a weak argument because the same is never applied to the Law and the Prophets. Whilst it indicates the existence of the three divisions of the Jewish scripture, Luke 24:44 gives more evidence that the third division (Writings) in Jesus time was still open-ended. The absence of quotation in the New Testament from Esther, Song of Songs, Ecclesiastes, Ezra and Nehemiah⁵, all belong to the Writings, gives further evidence.

In the New Testament what comprises "the Law and the Prophets" has loose limit. For example Psalms (in John 10:34) and Isaiah (in 1 Corinthians 14:21) are considered as part of the Law. In fact "the Law and the Prophets" might also refer to collection of books of the Old Testament **without** the third division as attested in 2 Maccabees 15:9. In apocryphal *4 Maccabees* 18:10-19 (written in c 50 BC - 50 AD) a series of quotations from "the Law and Prophets" include not only those from Genesis, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Isaiah, Ezekiel but also from Daniel, Proverbs and Psalms. *Hegesippus*, who lived in 2nd century AD referred the Old and New Testaments as the Law, the Prophets and the Lord⁶. Coming back to Luke

⁵ The New Testament does not quote from Obadiah, Nahum and Haggai but the Twelve Minor Prophets was traditionally reckoned as one book. Apparently there is no quotation from Judges, but Ruth, the source of Jesus genealogy in the first Gospel, was commonly combined with it. Also Lamentations, from where there is also no quotation, was combined with Jeremiah.

⁶ Hegesippus (c. 110 to 180 AD), a Greek Christian, wrote five books of *Hypomnemata* or *Memoirs*, where he wrote what he observed on his journey from Corinth to Rome, visiting many churches on the way. Only few fragments are preserved in Eusebius' (c. 260 to 339 AD) Church History. English Translation from *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, Vol. 1
In every succession, and in every city that is held which is preached by the law and the prophets and the Lord.

Eusebius: *Church History* 4.22.3

24:44, if Jesus did refer to the three-fold division of Jewish Scripture then why He did not refer to Daniel, a book that belongs to the third division (refer to Table 1) and has prophecy about Him (Daniel 7:13-14 quoted in Matthew 24:30, 26:64)? It is possible that Jesus considered Daniel to belong to the Prophets (as in LXX, refer to Table 3). This might indicate that grouping of books in the second and third divisions was not finalized in Christ time. A testimony from Josephus (c. 90 AD), as we will see later, will give further evidence.

If canon of the Old Testament was already closed in the Jesus time, then we can expect to find quotation and/or allusion in the New Testament only from the closed canon, which Protestants and "Bible only" Christians believe to be the 39 books of the protocanonical books. But while the New Testament has no direct quotation from any deuterocanonical books, we can find allusion to them (Table 4). Furthermore we also have quotation in New Testament from outside both proto and deutero-canonical books. Jerome⁷ saw a manuscript of apocryphal work (now lost) attributed to Jeremiah that had the exact words quoted in Matthew 27:9⁸. What Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:9, preceded with the phrase "it is written", resembles but not equal to Isaiah 64:4. According to Ambrosiaster⁹ (c. 4th century AD) it is quotation from apocryphal *Apocalypse of Elijah*. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:4 about the spiritual rock that followed the Israelites during Exodus, which is not mentioned in the book of Exodus. In 2 Peter 2:22, Proverbs 26:11 is placed *in par* with a proverb from outside the Bible. Jude 9 quotes from the apocryphal *Ascension of Moses*¹⁰

⁷ Jerome or Eusebius Hieronymus (c. 347 to 420 AD) was scripture scholar who translated the Bible into Latin known as Vulgate. He also wrote commentaries and homilies on books of the Bible and other books.

⁸ Jerome, *Commentary on Matthew*, 4.27.10, quoted in *Ancient Christian Commentary of Scripture*, New Testament, Vol. 1b, Inter Varsity Press, 2002, page 275. However Jerome still believed that Matthew 27:9-10 is mix-quotation from Zechariah and Jeremiah.

⁹ Ambrosiaster, *Commentary on 1 Corinthians*, quoted in *Ancient Christian Commentary of Scripture*, New Testament, Vol. 7, Inter Varsity Press, 2002, page 23. Ambrosiaster (pseudo Ambrose) was the name given by Dutch theologian Erasmus (1466 to 1536) to otherwise anonymous 4th century author who wrote commentary of all Paul's epistles.

¹⁰ The work is now lost but we have fragments of the so-called *Testament of Moses*. English translation is from Anti Nicene Fathers, Vol. 3.

We have now to notice, agreeably to the statements of Scripture, how the opposing powers, or the devil himself, contends with the human; race, inciting and instigating men to sin. And in the first place, in the book of Genesis, the serpent is described as having seduced Eve; regarding whom, in the work entitled The Ascension of Moses (a little treatise, of which the Apostle Jude makes mention in his Epistle), the archangel Michael, when disputing with the devil regarding the body of Moses, says that the serpent, being inspired by the devil, was the cause of Adam and Eve's transgression.

Origen, *de Principiis* 3:2

Origen (c. 185 to 251 AD) was teachers and prolific authors who wrote commentaries of almost every book of the Bible, homilies as well as other books. His famous work is *Hexapla*, now lost,

and Jude 14-16 quotes from the apocryphal *1 Enoch 1:9*. We also have quotation from unknown scripture in John 7:38 and James 4:5, both preceded with the phrase "scripture says". The standard reply for quotation in Jude 9 and 14-16 is they are not quoted as scripture, just like Paul quoted from Cretan poet *Epimenides* in Acts 17:28 and Titus 1:12. However quotation from non-Jewish works was obviously non-scriptural to the Jews. In contrast quotation in Jude 9 and 14-16 are taken from the Jewish works. Others might argue that they are quoted without preceded with phrases like "it is written", "Scripture says", "prophet says" and therefore should not be considered as scriptural quotation. However quotations from recognized Scripture are also quoted without those words. For example those phrases do not appear in the book of Revelation; certainly it does not mean Revelation does not quote any single verse from Old Testament.

Among the Jews in Jesus time we also find different limits of scripture. The *Sadducees* might not accept Daniel and Isaiah as inspired because they support resurrection (Daniel 12:2 and Isaiah 26:19), which they denied (Mark 12:18). Thus when Jesus debated with them about the resurrection, He quoted from Exodus 3:6. Another Jewish group, the *Essenes*, left for us the dead sea scrolls where fragments or complete manuscript of protocanonical books except Esther, as well as Tobit, Sirach, Letter of Jeremiah and apocryphal *Jubilee*, *1 Enoch* and *Psalms 151* were found. Even if the Essenes had a closed canon of their scripture, we may never know for sure its limit. Others like *Samaritans* accept only (their version of) the five books of Moses (or the Law) as their scripture to this day. The manuscript of Samaritan book of Law discovered in 1616 has many deviations from the standard (Masoretic¹¹) Hebrew text of the Old Testament, estimated at about six thousand. Interestingly roughly one third of those deviations agree with LXX.

Protestants and those who believe that the canon of the Old Testament was already closed in Jesus time, usually quote from the following verse to support their belief.

Therefore also the Wisdom of God said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and persecute,' that the blood of all the prophets, shed from the

where he placed in six columns (hence hexapla) text of the Old Testament in Hebrews, its transliteration in Greek and four translations in Greek (LXX and the ones made by *Aquila*, *Symmachus* and *Theodotion*).

¹¹ Traditional Hebrew text of the Jewish Bible, meticulously assembled and codified, and supplied with diacritical marks to enable correct pronunciation. This monumental work was begun around the 6th century AD and completed in the 10th by scholars at Talmudic academies in Babylonia and Palestine, in an effort to reproduce, as far as possible, the original text of the Hebrew Old Testament (source: Encyclopedia Britannica).

foundation of the world, may be required of this generation, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah, who perished between the altar and the sanctuary.

Luke 11:49-51¹²

Protestants interpret the phrase "from (the blood of) Abel to (the blood of) Zechariah" to mean "from Genesis to Chronicles", the first and the last books of the *present* Jewish scripture (refer to Table 1). The murder of Abel is mentioned in Genesis 4:8 and Zechariah was the one in 2 Chronicles 24:20-21 because he was murdered in the court of the house of the Lord. However, parallel verse in Matthew 23:35 says that Zechariah was the son of *Barachiah* while Zechariah of 2 Chronicles was the son of *Jehoiada*. Thus Jesus may refer to the prophet Zechariah who was the son of *Berechiah* (Zechariah 1:1, Ezra 5:1) and who together with Haggai and Malachi were the *last* Jewish prophets¹³. The Bible is silent of how and where he died but Jesus might rely on extra biblical source¹⁴, just like Paul named the magicians, *Jannes* and *Jambres*, who opposed Moses in 2 Timothy 3:8 and about the spiritual rock that followed the Israelites during Exodus (1 Corinthians 10:4). Even if Zechariah of 2 Chronicles was the one Jesus meant, the order of books (written in scrolls, not bound together as in the present day Bible) could not be clearly defined in Jesus time. We also have evidence that Chronicles was not always the last book of the Jewish scripture. Three of the eight early lists of Jewish scripture have Chronicles as the first book of the Writings¹⁵ including *Leningrad Codex*, the oldest (c. 1009) complete Masoretic text of Jewish scripture. Those with Chronicles as the last book include the earliest known list of Jewish scripture dated end of 2nd century AD¹⁶. But even earlier (as we will see later) is the testimony of Josephus (c. 90 AD) where Chronicles could not be the last book. Thus Jesus did not set the limit of Old Testament in Luke 11:49-51 and Matthew 23:35. In fact there is no evidence that He or any of His apostles gave us the list of inspired books. Had they done

¹² Unless otherwise stated verses from the Bible are taken from RSV Catholic Edition

¹³ Other proposed candidates are Zechariah, father of John the Baptist (according to Origen) and sceptics proposed Zechariah, son of Baruch who was murdered in c. 68 AD in the temple (Josephus, *Wars of the Jews* 4.5.4).

¹⁴ S.H. Blank: The Death of Zechariah in Rabbinic Literature, *Hebrew Union College Annual*, Vol. 12-13, pages 327-346. The author refers to a comment on *Targum* (Aramaic translations or paraphrases of the Old Testament) of Lamentations 2.20 saying that prophet Zechariah, son of Iddo, the High Priest, was murdered in the sanctuary of the Lord on the Day of Atonement.

¹⁵ *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol. 4, pages 829-830

¹⁶ *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol. 4, pages 827. It is not a manuscript of the Jewish scripture but a quotation from *baraita* in the Babylonian Talmud, tractate Baba Bathra 14b.

Our Rabbis taught: the order of the Prophets is Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and the Twelve; The order of the Ketuvim is Ruth, the Book of Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Song of Songs, Lamentations, Daniel, the Scroll of Esther, Ezra and Chronicles.

so, then the Christians would agree from the very beginning about what comprises the Bible, which as we will see was not the case.

Some Protestant apologists rely on the testimony of *Philo Judaeus* of Alexandria, Jewish philosopher (born c. 25 BC), who knew only LXX but never quoted from deuterocanonical books and who already recognized three divisions of the Jewish scripture. In one of his works Philo wrote about Jewish *ascetic*¹⁷ sect, *Therapeutae*:

And in every house there is a sacred shrine which is called the holy place, and the monastery in which they retire by themselves and perform all the mysteries of a holy life, bringing in nothing, neither meat, nor drink, nor anything else which is indispensable towards supplying the necessities of the body, but studying in that place the laws and the sacred oracles of God enunciated by the holy prophets, and hymns, and psalms, and all kinds of other things by reason of which knowledge and piety are increased and brought to perfection.

Philo, *On the Contemplative Life*, 3(25)¹⁸

What Philo wrote is the practice of a Jewish sect (not that of the Jews in Alexandria) and it is not clear evidence that they recognized the three (or more) divisions of their scripture. While in all his extant works Philo did not quote from deuterocanonical books, neither did he quote from Ezekiel, Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentation, Ecclesiastes, Esther and Daniel¹⁹. Note that except Ezekiel the rest belong to the Writings. There is also evidence that Philo quoted other books as attested in his other work (emphasis mine):

*This is what the lawgiver in one passage says, while declaring the will of God, that, "**thou shall complete the number of thy days,**" This is what enigmatically implied in other expressions, where the holy writer says that such a man "**shall deserve blessings both at his coming in and going out;**" . . .*

Philo, *On Rewards and Punishments*, 19(111,113)²⁰

¹⁷ Ascetics are those who dedicate their life to a pursuit of contemplative ideals and practices extreme self denial of worldly pleasure or self-mortification for religious reasons.

¹⁸ C.D. Yonge (1993): *The Works of Philo*, Hendrickson Publishers, page 700.

¹⁹ P.R. Ackroyd and C.A. Evans: *The Cambridge History of the Bible. From the Beginnings to Jerome*, page 148 and *The New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. 2, page 117. Refer also to the scripture index in C.D. Yonge: *The Works of Philo*, pages 913-918.

²⁰ C.D. Yonge (1993): *The Works of Philo*, Hendrickson Publishers, page 675.

Table 4 Some Allusions to Deuterocanonical books in the New Testament

New Testament	Deuterocanonical allusion
<p><i>Ever since the creation of the world his invisible nature, namely, his eternal power and deity, has been clearly perceived in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse; for although they knew God they did not honour him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man or birds or animals or reptiles.</i></p> <p>Romans 1:20-23</p>	<p><i>For from the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their Creator. Yet these men are little to be blamed, for perhaps they go astray while seeking God and desiring to find him. For as they live among his works they keep searching, and they trust in what they see, because the things that are seen are beautiful. Yet again, not even they are to be excused;</i></p> <p>Wisdom 13:5-8</p> <p><i>For all men who were ignorant of God were foolish by nature; and they were unable from the good things that are seen to know him who exists, nor did they recognize the craftsman while paying heed to his works;</i></p> <p>Wisdom 13:1</p> <p><i>For they went far astray on the paths of error, accepting as gods those animals which even their enemies despised; they were deceived like foolish babes.</i></p> <p>Wisdom 12:24</p>
<p><i>For this reason God gave them up to dishonourable passions. Their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural, and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in their own persons the due penalty for their error. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a base mind and to improper conduct. They were filled with all manner of wickedness, evil, covetousness, malice. Full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malignity, they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless.</i></p> <p>Romans 1:26-29</p>	<p><i>they no longer keep either their lives or their marriages pure, but they either treacherously kill one another, or grieve one another by adultery, and all is a raging riot of blood and murder, theft and deceit, corruption, faithlessness, tumult, perjury, confusion over what is good, forgetfulness of favours, pollution of souls, sex perversion, disorder in marriage, adultery, and debauchery. For the worship of idols not to be named is the beginning and cause and end of every evil.</i></p> <p>Wisdom 14:24-27</p>
<p>Both verses in Romans and Wisdom say that (1) men should recognize God by observing the greatness of His creation. (2) They have no excuse when they reject Him and worship idols made in the form of animals and (3) as a result they fell into a sinful and immoral life.</p>	

Table 4 (continued)

<p><i>Has the potter no right over the clay, to make out of the same lump one vessel for beauty and another for menial use?</i> Romans 9:21</p>	<p><i>For when a potter kneads the soft earth and laboriously molds each vessel for our service, he fashions out of the same clay both the vessels that serve clean uses and those for contrary uses, making all in like manner; but which shall be the use of each of these the worker in clay decides.</i> Wisdom 15:7</p>
<p><i>What if God, desiring to show his wrath and to make known his power, has endured with much patience the vessels of wrath made for destruction, in order to make known the riches of his glory for the vessels of mercy, which he has prepared beforehand for glory,</i> Romans 9:22-23</p>	<p><i>For if thou didst punish with such great care and indulgence the enemies of thy servants and those deserving of death, granting them time and opportunity to give up their wickedness,</i> Wisdom 12:20</p>
<p><i>Know this, my beloved brethren. Let every man be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger,</i> James 1:19</p>	<p><i>Be quick to hear, and be deliberate in answering.</i> Sirach 5:11</p>
<p><i>The wall [of new Jerusalem] was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, clear as glass. The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every jewel; the first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass.</i> Revelation 21:18-21</p>	<p><i>For Jerusalem will be built with sapphires and emeralds, her walls with precious stones, and her towers and battlements with pure gold. The streets of Jerusalem will be paved with beryl and ruby and stones of ophir;</i> Tobit 13:16-17</p>
<p><i>he has put down the mighty from their thrones, and exalted those of low degree;</i> Luke 1:52</p>	<p><i>The Lord has cast down the thrones of rulers, and has seated the lowly in their place.</i> Sirach 10:14</p>
<p><i>And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against any one; so that your Father also who is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses.</i> Mark 11:25</p>	<p><i>Forgive your neighbour the wrong he has done, then your sins will be pardoned when you pray.</i> Sirach 28:2</p>

The earliest list of books of the Jewish scripture without naming the books comes from the work of Jewish historian (written c. 90 AD), *Flavius Josephus* (born c. 37 AD):

For we have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another [as the Greeks have], but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all the past times; which are justly believed to be divine; and of them five belong to Moses, which contain his laws and the traditions of the origin of mankind till his death. This interval of time was little short of three thousand years; but as to the time from the death of Moses till the reign of Artaxerxes, king of Persia, who reigned after Xerxes, the prophets, who were after Moses, wrote down what was done in their times in thirteen books. The remaining four books contain hymns to God, and precepts for the conduct of human life.

Josephus, *Against Apion* 1:8 (38-40)²¹

Although Josephus mentioned three divisions, they are not the same with the present Jewish scripture (refer to Table 1). The total number of books is twenty-two instead of twenty-four; the number of books in the second division (the Prophets) is thirteen instead of eight while that of third division is four instead of eleven. Josephus did not name them one by one, so we can only speculate whether they are the condensed form of the twenty-four books or not. It has been proposed that Josephus' list has Psalms, Proverbs, Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes for the third division. To produce twenty-two books from twenty-four, Ruth is combined with Judges and Lamentations with Jeremiah, which was a common practice. The number twenty-two corresponds to the number of letters in Hebrew's alphabet. Josephus list indicates that in his time what books belonged to the Prophets and the third division was still fluid and, in relation with Luke 11:49-51, Chronicles could not be the last book. The fact that he did not refer the third division as the Writings indicates that even the title of the third division was also not decided in his time. Josephus knew LXX because he made use 1(3) Esdras, LXX addition to Esther and 1 & 2 Maccabees in his work: *The Antiquities of the Jews*, books 11-13. Protestant apologists may use Josephus testimony to deny the canonicity of deuterocanonical books because they were written after the death of Artaxerxes (c. 432 BC) where there were no more prophets in Israel²². But Josephus had no authority to determine the period of God's revelation and it contradicts the words of Christ who said: *For all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John* [the Baptist]

²¹ W. Whiston (1987): *The Works of Josephus*, Hendrickson Publishers, page 776.

²² It was Elias Levita who in 1538 first proposed the theory that the Jewish canon was closed in Ezra time (refer to McDonald and Sanders: *The Canon Debate*, page 146).

(Matthew 11:13). As mentioned earlier the Law and the Prophet is the most common New Testament's designation for the Old Testament. While the last Jewish prophets were Zechariah, Haggai and Malachi, prophecies and revelation did not cease and may be given *not* only through prophets. In John 11:50-52, *Caiphas* who condemned Jesus was given the gift of prophecy. In contrast Ezekiel 13:1-16 says that prophets of Israel had spoken falsehood and lie. Furthermore we do have a prophecy of Christ in the book of Wisdom:

"Let us lie in wait for the righteous man, because he is inconvenient to us and opposes our actions; he reproaches us for sins against the law, and accuses us of sins against our training.

He professes to have knowledge of God, and calls himself a child of the Lord. He became to us a reproof of our thoughts; the very sight of him is a burden to us, because his manner of life is unlike that of others, and his ways are strange. We are considered by him as something base, and he avoids our ways as unclean; he calls the last end of the righteous happy, and boasts that God is his father. Let us see if his words are true, and let us test what will happen at the end of his life; for if the righteous man is God's son, he will help him, and will deliver him from the hand of his adversaries.

Let us test him with insult and torture, that we may find out how gentle he is, and make trial of his forbearance.

Let us condemn him to a shameful death, for, according to what he says, he will be protected."

Wisdom 2:12-20

The apocryphal 2(4) Esdras 14:42-47 (written c. 100 AD) says that twenty-four is the number of books to be made public out of ninety-four. The other seventy are reserved for the wise among the people because they are the spring of understanding, the fountain of wisdom, and the stream of knowledge. *Salatiel* (Greek for Shealtiel in Ezra 3:2, Nehemiah 12:1) claimed that he dictated those ninety-four books to five scribes in forty days to replace God's law that had been burned. Both Josephus and 2(4) Esdras give evidence that the Jews in the late or end of first century AD began to limit their canon into 22/24 books.

It is commonly believed that after the destruction of the Jerusalem temple in 70 AD, the Jews under the leadership of *Yohanna ben Zakkai* decided at *Jamnia* or *Javneh* (in c. 90 AD) to adopt the twenty-four books as their scripture. However there is no evidence that there

was the so-called Jamnia council who closed the canon of the Jewish scripture. Jamnia hypothesis was made based on the Jewish *Mishnah*²³, which actually only discusses the canonical status of Songs of Song and Ecclesiastes. The hypothesis was proposed by *Heinrich Graetz* in 1871²⁴ and was popularized in Ryle's book: *The Canon of the Old Testament*, published in 1892. *Encyclopaedia Judaica*²⁵ indicates that third part (the Writings or Ketuvim) remained open-ended until 2nd century AD. Furthermore 22/24 book-canon was also not accepted by Ethiopian Jews whose canon is equal to that of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church²⁶. There is evidence that in the 2nd century AD the Jews still considered Sirach as inspired (part of the Writings or Hagiographa)²⁷. In contrast their rejection of Sirach and other books including Christian Gospels is attested in the following:

²³ *If the writing in a scroll was erased yet there still remained eighty-five letters, as many as are in the paragraph: And it came to pass when the Ark set forward ..., it still renders the hands unclean. A [single] written sheet [in a scroll of the Scripture] in which are written eighty-five letters, as many as are in the paragraph: And it came to pass when the Ark set forward renders the hands unclean. All the Holy Scriptures render the hands unclean. The Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes render the hands unclean. R. Judah says: The Song of Songs renders the hands unclean, but about Ecclesiastes there is dissension. R. Jose says: Ecclesiastes does not render the hands unclean, and about Songs of Song there is dissension. R. Simeon says: Ecclesiastes is one of the things about which the School of Shammai adopted the more lenient, and the School of Hillel the more stringent ruling. R. Simeon b Azzai said: I have heard a tradition from the seventy-two elders on the day when they made R. Eleazar b. Azariah head of the colleges [of Sages], the Songs of Song and Ecclesiastes both render the hands unclean. R. Akibah said: God forbids! – no man in Israel ever disputed about the Songs of Song [that he should say] that it does not render the hands unclean, for all the ages are not worth the day in which the Songs of Songs was given to Israel; for all the Writings are holy, but the Song of Songs is the Holy of Holies. And if aught was in dispute the dispute was about Ecclesiastes alone. R. Johanan b. Joshua, the son of R. Akiba's father in law said: According to the words of Ben Azzai so did they dispute and so did they decide.*

Mishnah, Sixth Division, *Yadayim* 3.5

Translated by Herbert Darby, Oxford University Press, pages 781-2

Mishnah is the oldest authoritative post-biblical collection and codification of Jewish oral laws, systematically compiled by numerous scholars over a period of about two centuries. The codification was given final form early in the 3rd century AD. The *Mishnah* supplements the written, or scriptural, laws found in the Pentateuch (source *Encyclopædia Britannica* 2000).

²⁴ McDonald and Sanders: *The Canon Debate*, page 146.

²⁵ *On the other hand, there is plenty of evidence to show that the collection of the Ketuvim as a whole, as well as some individual books within it, was not accepted as being finally closed until well into the second century c.e. [common era = AD]*

As noted above, the practice of calling the entire Scriptures the "Torah and Prophets" presupposes a considerable lapse of time between the canonization of the second and third parts of the Bible. The fact that the last division had no fixed name points in the same direction. Even the finally adopted designation "Ketuvim" is indeterminate, since it is also used in Rabbinic Hebrew in the two senses of the Scriptures in general and in individual texts in particular.

Encyclopaedia Judaica, Vol. 4 page 824

S.Z Leiman in *The Canonization of Hebrew Scripture: The Talmudic and Midrashic Evidence*, says that the Jewish canon was closed during the Maccabean period (c. 164 BC).

²⁶ *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol. 6 page 1147.

²⁷ *ibid*, Vol. 4, page 825.

Raba [again] said to Rabbah b. Mari: whence can be derived the popular saying, 'A bad palm will usually make its way to a grove of barren trees'? – He replied: This matter was written in the Pentateuch, repeated in the Prophets, mentioned a third time in the Hagiographa, and also learnt

The Gospels and heretical books do not defile the hands. The book of Ben Sira and all other books written from then on, do not defile the hands.

*Tosefta Yadayim 2:13*²⁸

Thus both Gospels and Sirach (and other books) were considered not to defile the hands or non-canonical. Based on Romans 3:2 some Protestant apologists insist that we should rely on the Jews to determine the canon of the Old Testament, i.e. the one without deuterocanonical books. But how can we rely on their decision if they rejected not only deuterocanonical books but the Gospels as well? Christians are not obliged to follow a Jewish decision made after Jesus crucifixion, considering what Jesus taught through His parable of the vineyard's tenants in Matthew 21:33-41!

When the Jews gradually closed their canon, which excluded all deuterocanonical books, Christianity was no longer a movement in Judaism and already became independent religion. Christians of the late first and of the second century continued using proto and deuterocanonical as well as *other books*. *1 Clement* (written c 96 AD) quoted from the Wisdom, Judith and from unknown scripture²⁹. *Didache*, written in 1st or 2nd century AD

in a Mishnah and taught in a baraita: It is stated in the Pentateuch as written, So Esau went unto Ishmael [Genesis 28:9], repeated in the prophets, as written, And there gathered themselves to Jephthah idle men and they went out with him [Judges 11:3], mentioned a third time in the Hagiographa, as written: Every fowl dwells near its kind and man near his equal [Sirach 13:15];

*Babylonian Talmud, Seder Nazikin, Baba Kamma 92b
Translated by E.W. Kirzner, Soncino Press (1961)*

.....And R Aha b. Jacob said: There is still another Heaven above the heads of the living creatures, for it is written: And over the heads of the living creature there was a likeness of a firmament, like the colour of the terrible ice, stretched forth over their heads above [Ezekiel 1:22]. Thus far you have permission to speak, thenceforward you have not permission to speak, for so it is written in the Book of Ben Sira: Seek not things that are too hard for thee, and search not out things that are hidden from thee. The things that have been permitted thee, think thereupon; thou hast no business with the things that are secret [Sirach 3:21-22]

*Babylonian Talmud, Seder Mo'ed, Hagigah 13a,
Translated by Israel Abrahams, Soncino Press (1961)*

Talmud is explanation and discussion or commentary of Mishnah. We have Babylonian and Palestinian (or Jerusalem) Talmuds, indicating the places of their compilation into written form from former orally transmitted information.

²⁸ Quoted in S.Z. Leiman: *The Canonization of Hebrew Scripture: The Talmudic and Midrashic Evidence*, page 93. Tosefta is a collection of tannaic baraita (oral tradition outside Mishna or Oral Law).

²⁹ English translation is from *Anti Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1 (scripture reference and emphasis are mine).

For this reason righteousness and peace are now far departed from you, inasmuch as every one abandons the fear of God, and is become blind in His faith, neither walks in the ordinances of His appointment, nor acts a part becoming a Christian, but walks after his own wicked lusts, resuming the practice of an unrighteous and ungodly envy, by which death itself entered into the world. [Wisdom 2:24]

quoted from Sirach³⁰. In his epistle to the *Magnesians* Ignatius (died c. 107 AD), bishop of Antioch quoted from Susanna³¹. Polycarp (died c. 156), bishop of Smyrna, quoted Tobit³² in his epistle. *Epistle of Barnabas* written in c. 130 AD cited Wisdom, 1 Enoch as scripture and quoted from unknown work³³. *Shepherd of Hermas* (written c. early second century) cited as scripture the apocryphal (now lost) *Eldad and Modad*³⁴. *Irenæus*, bishop of Lyon (c. 115 to 202) quoted from Baruch, Susanna, Bel and Dragon and 1 Enoch³⁵. *Justin Martyr*

He established all things, and by His word He can overthrow them. "Who shall say unto Him, What hast thou done? or, Who shall resist the power of His strength?" [Wisdom 12:12]

1 Clement 27

Many women also, being strengthened by the grace of God, have performed numerous manly exploits. The blessed Judith, when her city was besieged, asked of the elders permission to go forth into the camp of the strangers; and, exposing herself to danger, she went out for the love which she bare to her country and people then besieged; and the Lord delivered Holofernes into the hands of a woman. [Judith 8]

1 Clement 55

Such examples, therefore, brethren, it is right that we should follow; since it is written, "Cleave to the holy, for those that cleave to them shall [themselves] be made holy." [unknown scripture]

1 Clement 46

³⁰ English translation is from *Anti Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 7 (scripture reference is mine).

Be not a stretcher forth of the hands to receive and a drawer of them back to give. [Sirach 4:31]

Didache 4:5

³¹ English translation is from *Anti Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1 (scripture reference is mine).

For Daniel the wise, at twelve years of age, became possessed of the Divine Spirit, and convinced the elders, who in vain carried their grey hairs, of being false accusers, and of lusting after the beauty of another man's wife. [Susanna or Daniel 13]

Ignatius, *Epistle to Magnesians* 3 (longer version)

³² English translation is from *Anti Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1 (scripture reference is mine).

When you can do good, defer it not, because "alms delivers from death." [Tobit 4:10]

Polycarp, *Epistle to the Philippians* 10

³³ English translation is from *Anti Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1 (scripture reference and emphasis are mine).

For the prophet speaks against Israel, "Woe to their soul, because they have counselled an evil counsel against themselves, saying, Let us bind the just one, because he is displeasing to us." [Wisdom 2:12]

Barnabas 6

What, then, says He in the prophet? "And let them eat of the goat which is offered, with fasting, for all their sins." [unknown scripture]

Barnabas 7

In like manner He points to the cross of Christ in another prophet, who saith, "And when shall these things be accomplished? And the Lord saith, When a tree shall be bent down, and again arise, and when blood shall flow out of wood." [unknown scripture]

Barnabas 12

For the Scripture saith, "And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the Lord will deliver up the sheep of His pasture, and their sheep-fold and tower, to destruction." [1 Enoch 89:56,66]

Barnabas 16

³⁴ English translation is from *Anti Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 2. Eldad and Modat are the names of two prophesying Jews in Numbers 11:26-27.

The Lord is near to them who return unto Him, as it is written in Eldad and Modat, who prophesied to the people in the wilderness."

Shepherd of Hermas, Second Vision 3

³⁵ English translation is from *Anti Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1 (scripture reference and emphasis are mine).

(died c. 165), martyr and apologist, alluded to 1 Enoch³⁶. Clement of Alexandria (c. 160 to 215), Christian writer and theologian, quoted Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Sirach, Baruch, 4 Ezra

And Jeremiah the prophet has pointed out, that as many believers as God has prepared for this purpose, to multiply those left upon earth, should both be under the rule of the saints to minister to this Jerusalem, and that [His] kingdom shall be in it, saying, "Look around Jerusalem towards the east, and behold the joy which comes to thee from God Himself. Behold, thy sons shall come whom thou hast sent forth: they shall come in a band from the east even unto the west, by the word of that Holy One, rejoicing in that splendour which is from thy God. O Jerusalem, put off thy robe of mourning and of affliction, and put on that beauty of eternal splendour from thy God. Gird thyself with the double garment of that righteousness proceeding from thy God; place the mitre of eternal glory upon thine head. For God will show thy glory to the whole earth under heaven. For thy name shall for ever be called by God Himself, the peace of righteousness and glory to him that worships God. Arise, Jerusalem, stand on high, and look towards the east, and behold thy sons from the rising of the sun, even to the west, by the Word of that Holy One, rejoicing in the very remembrance of God. For the footmen have gone forth from thee, while they were drawn away by the enemy. God shall bring them in to thee, being borne with glory as the throne of a kingdom. For God has decreed that every high mountain shall be brought low, and the eternal hills, and that the valleys be filled, so that the surface of the earth be rendered smooth, that Israel, the glory of God, may walk in safety. The woods, too, shall make shady places, and every sweet-smelling tree shall be for Israel itself by the command of God. For God shall go before with joy in the light of His splendour, with the pity and righteousness which proceeds from Him." [Baruch 4:36 to 5:9 quoted as part of Jeremiah]

Irenæus, *Against Heresies* 5.35.1

For who is the God of the living unless He who is God, and above whom there is no other God? Whom also Daniel the prophet, when Cyrus king of the Persians said to him, "Why dost thou not worship Bel?" did proclaim, saying, "Because I do not worship idols made with hands, but the living God, who established the heaven and the earth and has dominion over all flesh." [Bel and Dragon or Daniel 14:24-25]

Irenæus, *Against Heresies* 4.5.2

and they shall hear those words, to be found in Daniel the prophet: "O thou seed of Canaan, and not of Judah, beauty hath deceived thee, and lust perverted thy heart, Thou that art waxen old in wicked days, now thy sins which thou hast committed aforetime are come to light; for thou hast pronounced false judgments, and hast been accustomed to condemn the innocent, and to let the guilty go free, albeit the Lord saith, The innocent and the righteous shalt thou not slay." [Susanna or Daniel 13:56]

Irenæus, *Against Heresies* 4.26.3

Enoch, too, pleasing God, without circumcision, discharged the office of God's legate to the angels although he was a man, and was translated, and is preserved until now as a witness of the just judgment of God, because the angels when they had transgressed fell to the earth for judgment, but the man who pleased [God] was translated for salvation. [1 Enoch 12:4-5, 13:4-7 and 15:2]

Irenæus, *Against Heresies* 4.16.2

³⁶ English translation is from *Anti Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1

God, when He had made the whole world, and subjected things earthly to man, and arranged the heavenly elements for the increase of fruits and rotation of the seasons, and appointed this divine law-for these things also He evidently made for man-committed the care of men and of all things under heaven to angels whom He appointed over them. But the angels transgressed this appointment, and were captivated by love of women, and begat children who are those that are called demons; and besides, they afterwards subdued the human race to themselves, partly by magical writings, and partly by fears and the punishments they occasioned, and partly by teaching them to offer sacrifices, and incense, and libations, of which things they stood in need after they were enslaved by lustful passions; and among men they sowed murders, wars, adulteries, intemperate deeds, and all wickedness.

Justin Martyr, *2 Apology* 5

and 1 Enoch³⁷. Early Christians were aware of the difference between their scripture (LXX) and that of the Jews. However Justin considered LXX as the reliable text of the Old Testament and so did Irenæus³⁸. First Christians' use of LXX to support their belief

³⁷ English translation is from *Anti Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 2 (scripture reference and emphasis are mine).

At this stage some rise up, saying that the Lord, by reason of the rod, and threatening, and fear, is not good; misapprehending, as appears, the Scripture which says, "And he that feareth the Lord will turn to his heart;" [Sirach 21:6]

Clement of Alexandria, *The Instructor* 1.8

This Scripture has briefly showed, when it says, "What thou hatest, thou shalt not do to another." [Tobit 4:15]

Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 2.23

By ignorance he means, in my opinion, death. "And he that is near the Lord is full of stripes." [Judith 8:27]

Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 2.7

"By alms then, and acts of faith, sins are purged." [Sirach 3:30]

Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 2.15

And so it is said in the book of Wisdom: "For He hath given me the unerring knowledge of things that exist, to know the constitution of the word," and so forth, down to "and the virtues of roots." Among all these he comprehends natural science, which treats of all the phenomena in the world of sense. And in continuation, he alludes also to intellectual objects in what he subjoins: "And what is hidden or manifest I know; for Wisdom, the artificer of all things, taught me." [Wisdom 7:17,20,21,22]

Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 2.2

Accordingly it is rightly said in Solomon, "Wisdom is in the mouth of the faithful. [Sirach 15:10] aided doubtless by Solomon, who says, "If thou lovest to hear, thou shalt comprehend; and if thou incline thine ear, thou shalt be wise. [Sirach 6:33]

Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 2.5

English translation is from *The Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 85 (scripture reference is mine).

"Why did my mother's womb not become my tomb, to prevent me from seeing Jacob's trials and the troubles of the house of Israel?" says the prophet Esdras. [4 Ezra 5:35]

Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 3.16

It is in relation to these matters that the prophet says, "It was through your own sins that you were sold," [Isaiah 50:1] and again, "you experienced defilement in an alien land." [Baruch 3:10]

Clement of Alexandria, *Stromata* 3.12

³⁸ English translation is from *Anti Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 1 (words in bracket added)

"But I am far from putting reliance in your [Trypho the Jew] teachers, who refuse to admit that the interpretation made by the seventy elders who were with Ptolemy [king] of the Egyptians is a correct one; and they attempt to frame another. And I wish you to observe, that they have altogether taken away many Scriptures from the translations effected by those seventy elders who were with Ptolemy, and by which this very man who was crucified is proved to have been set forth expressly as God, and man, and as being crucified, and as dying; but since I am aware that this is denied by all of your nation, I do not address myself to these points, but I proceed to carry on my discussions by means of those passages which are still admitted by you.

Justin Martyr, *Dialogue with Trypho* 71

For before the Romans possessed their kingdom, while as yet the Macedonians held Asia, Ptolemy the son of Lagus, being anxious to adorn the library which he had founded in Alexandria, with a collection of the writings of all men, which were [works] of merit, made request to the people of Jerusalem, that they should have their Scriptures translated into the Greek language. And they-for at that time they were still subject to the Macedonians-sent to Ptolemy seventy of their elders, who were thoroughly skilled in the Scriptures and in both the languages, to carry out what he had desired. But he, wishing to test them individually, and fearing lest they might perchance, by taking counsel together, conceal the truth in the Scriptures, by their interpretation, separated them from each other, and commanded them all to write the same translation. He did this with respect to all the books. But when they came together in the same place before Ptolemy, and each of them

prompted the Jews to make new Greek translation from their scripture, which was done by *Aquila* in c. 130 AD and later by *Symmachus* and *Theodotion* in c. 170 AD. Thus Proto and deutero-canonical books as well as other book like 1 Enoch³⁹ were the scripture of the early Christians or they did not have a closed canon yet.

*Melito*⁴⁰ gave us the earliest known list of Christian Old Testament. It was preserved in *Eusebius' Church History* (written in c. 324).

"Melito to his brother Onesimus, greeting: Since thou hast often, in thy zeal for the word, expressed a wish to have extracts made from the Law and the Prophets concerning the Saviour and concerning our entire faith, and hast also desired to have an accurate statement of the ancient book, as regards their number and their order, I have endeavored to perform the task, knowing thy zeal for the faith, and thy desire to gain information in regard to the word, and knowing that thou, in thy yearning after God, esteemest these things above all else, struggling to attain eternal salvation.

Accordingly when I went East and came to the place where these things were preached and done, I learned accurately the books of the Old Testament, and send them to thee as

compared his own interpretation with that of every other, God was indeed glorified, and the Scriptures were acknowledged as truly divine. For all of them read out the common translation [which they had prepared] in the very same words and the very same names, from beginning to end, so that even the Gentiles present perceived that the Scriptures had been interpreted by the inspiration of God. Since, therefore, the Scriptures have been interpreted with such fidelity, and by the grace of God, and since from these God has prepared and formed again our faith towards His Son, and has preserved to us the unadulterated Scriptures in Egypt, where the house of Jacob flourished, fleeing from the famine in Canaan; where also our Lord was preserved when He fled from the persecution set on foot by Herod; and [since] this interpretation of these Scriptures was made prior to our Lord's descent [to earth], and came into being before the Christians appeared-for our Lord was born about the forty-first year of the reign of Augustus; but Ptolemy was much earlier, under whom the Scriptures were interpreted;-[since these things are so, I say,] truly these men are proved to be impudent and presumptuous, who would now show a desire to make different translations, when we refute them out of these Scriptures, and shut them up to a belief in the advent of the Son of God. But our faith is steadfast, unfeigned, and the only true one, having clear proof from these Scriptures, which were interpreted in the way I have related; and the preaching of the Church is without interpolation.

Irenæus, *Against Heresies* 3.21.2-3

³⁹ 1 Enoch continued enjoying scriptural status until third century AD. While he was aware that some doubted its authority Tertullian (c. 160 to 230), bishop of Carthage defended it because it preaches Christ and was cited in Jude 14-16 (*On the Apparel of Women* 1.3). On the other hand Origen both cited (*de Principiis* 1.3.3 and 4.35) and rejected it (*Against Celsus* 5:54). In the fourth century Jerome called it apocryphal in *Homily 45* on Psalms 132(133). Augustine in *City of God* 15:23 and 18:38 wrote that Enoch left some divine writings quoted in Jude but stated 1 Enoch had no canonical authority. Today only the Ethiopian Orthodox Church has 1 Enoch in their Bible.

⁴⁰ Melito (c. last third of 2nd century AD) was bishop of Sardis in Asia minor (present day Turkey) wrote at least seventeen books (according to Eusebius) of which only fragments survive in Eusebius' Church History.

written below. Their names are as follows: Of Moses, five books: Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, Deuteronomy; Jesus Nave [Joshua], Judges, Ruth; of Kings, four books; of Chronicles, two; the Psalms of David, the Proverbs of Solomon, **Wisdom** also, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Job; of Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah; of the twelve prophets, one book; Daniel, Ezekiel, **Esdras**. From which also I have made the extracts, dividing them into six books." Such are the words of Melito.

Eusebius, *the Church History* 4:26⁴¹ (emphasis mine)

If we assume that Melito combined Lamentations with Jeremiah, his Esdras is equal to Ezra-Nehemiah then Melito's list is equal to the present Jewish scripture minus Esther but includes Wisdom. Note that Melito went to the east (Palestine) where "things were preached and done" indicating that his "canon" may belong to the Jews, not to Christians. The next list of the Old Testament books was the work of biblical scholar *Origen*⁴² also preserved in Eusebius' Church History.

Farther on he [Origen] says: "The twenty-two books of the Hebrews are the following: That which is called by us Genesis, but by the Hebrews, from the beginning of the book, Bresith, which means, `In the beginning'; Exodus, Welesmoth, that is, `These are the names'; Leviticus, Wikra, `And he called'; Numbers, Ammesphekodeim; Deuteronomy, Eleaddebareim, `These are the words'; Jesus, the son of Nave, Josoue ben Noun; Judges and Ruth, among them in one book, Saphateim; the First and Second of Kings, among them one, Samouel, that is, `The called of God'; the Third and Fourth of Kings in one, Wammelch David, that is, `The kingdom of David'; of the Chronicles, the First and Second in one, Dabreïamein, that is, `Records of days'; Esdras, First and Second in one, Ezra, that is, `An assistant'; the book of Psalms, Spharthelleim; the Proverbs of Solomon, Meloth; Ecclesiastes, Koelth; the Song of Songs (not, as some suppose, Songs of Songs), Sir Hassirim; Isaiah, Jessia; Jeremiah, with Lamentations **and the epistle in one**, Jeremia; Daniel, Daniel; Ezekiel, Jezekiel; Job, Job; Esther, Esther. And **besides these there are the Maccabees**, which are entitled Sarbeth Sabanaiel. He gives these in the above-mentioned work.

Eusebius, *the Church History* 6:25⁴³ (emphasis mine)

⁴¹ Schaff, P. and Wace, H. (Editors): *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, Vol. 1, WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., page 206.

⁴² Refer to footnote 10

⁴³ Schaff, P. and Wace, H. (Editors): *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, Vol. 1, WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., page 272.

Because Origen explicitly stated twenty-two books then the omission of the Twelve Prophets must be copyist error of the manuscript of Eusebius' Church History. His list includes Letter of Jeremiah combined with Jeremiah and Lamentations. It is wrong to attribute the list to Origen because he indicated that it was according to the Hebrews. The fact that he accepted a wider canon is attested in his letter to *Africanus*⁴⁴ where he insisted that Susanna was part of Daniel and stated that LXX chapters of Daniel and Esther as well as Tobit were part of the Christian scripture. Elsewhere he cited Tobit, Judith, Sirach, Baruch and 2 Maccabee as scripture, only Wisdom he stated as non-authoritative⁴⁵.

⁴⁴ A Letter from Origen to Africanus, Anti Nicene Fathers, Vol. 4

⁴⁵ English translation is from *Anti Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 4 (scripture reference and emphasis are mine).

But that we may believe on the authority of holy Scripture that such is the case, hear how in the book of Maccabees, where the mother of seven martyrs exhorts her son to endure torture, this truth is confirmed; for she says, "I ask of thee, my son, to look at the heaven and the earth, and at all things which are in them, and beholding these, to know that God made all these things when they did not exist." [2 Maccabee 7:28]

Origen, *de Principiis* 2.1.5

English translation is from *the Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 89 (scripture references and emphasis are mine).

Now it appears that those saints who have previously departed this life are concerned about the people, as it is written in the Maccabees so many years after the assumption of Jeremiah, "This is Jeremiah, the prophet of God, who prays much concerning the people." [2 Maccabee 15:14]

Origen, *Commentary on John*, 13.403

English translation is from *the Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 83 (emphasis is mine).

....But it is time for us to use the words of holy Susanna against these wicked presbyters, which indeed those who deny the story of Susanna excise from the list of divine books. But we both receive it and aptly use it against them

Origen, *Homily 1 on Leviticus*, 1.3

English translation is from *the Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 97 (scripture references and emphasis are mine).

When someone becomes a worshipper in the land, God has arranged that someone rejected from their own and came to the land about which it is written: Hear Israel. "Why is it that you are in the land of enemies, that you are counted among those in Hades? You have forsaken the fountain of life, the Lord. If you have walked in the way of God, you would have dwelt in peace forever." [Baruch 3:9-13]

Origen, *Homily 7 on Jeremiah*, 3.3

But we reproach both those who repent and those who convert, though the Scripture says: 'Do not reproach a man who turns away from sin.' [Sirach 8:5]

Origen, *Homily 16 on Jeremiah*, 6.2

I want to give an example from Scripture of righteous lack of faith in an agreement in order to demonstrate that man can call upon faithlessness in act. Judith made an agreement with Holophernes that though she would leave for certain number of days to pray to God, she also would present herself after these days at the marriage bed of Holophernes.

Origen, *Homily 20 on Jeremiah*, 7.3

English translation is from *the Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 103 (scripture references and emphasis are mine).

But what will they do about the fact that we find many martyrs even under the law? The ought to read the books of Maccabees, where a blessed mother endured martyrdom with complete constancy together with her seven sons.

Origen, *Commentary on Romans*, 4.10.2

Naturally some people will ask why this day, concerning which we have, in the foregoing, deployed the library of the prophet, is appointed at the end of the world, so that all those who have died

A list of books of the Bible dated early 4th century, Codex *Claromontanus* has Tobit, Judith, 1, 2 and 4 Maccabees, Wisdom and Sirach while Chronicles are missing. *Cyril of Jerusalem*⁴⁶ wrote his list of 22 Old Testament books in c. 345.

*And of the Old Testament, as we have said, study the two and twenty books, which, if thou art desirous of learning, strive to remember by name, as I recite them. For of the Law the books of Moses are the first five, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. And next, Joshua the son of Nave, and the book of Judges, including Ruth, counted as seventh. And of the other historical books, the first and second books of the Kings are among the Hebrews one book; also the third and fourth one book. And in like manner, the first and second of Chronicles are with them one book; and the first and second of Esdras are counted one. Esther is the twelfth book; and these are the Historical writings. But those which are written in verses are five, Job, and the book of Psalms, and Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs, which is the seventeenth book. And after these come the five Prophetic books: of the Twelve Prophets one book, of Isaiah one, of Jeremiah one, **including Baruch and Lamentations and the Epistle**; then Ezekiel, and the Book of Daniel, the twenty-second of the Old Testament.*

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Lecture 4 of Catechetical Lectures*⁴⁷

Cyril also combined Baruch and the Epistle of Jeremiah with Jeremiah and Lamentations. However he did not limit his canon in those 22 books because in his other works he still quote from Wisdom, Sirach, Baruch, Song of Three Young Men, Susanna and Bel &

from the beginning of the world until its end are reserved for the last day of judgment. The interior cause of this matter are certainly veiled in deep mysteries. And indeed "it is good to conceal the mystery of the kings." [Tobit 12:7]

Origen, *Commentary on Romans*, 2.4.4.5

English translation is from the *Ancient Christian Writers*, No. 19 (scripture reference and emphasis are mine).

For the Scripture says that after they had prayed, the prayers of them both were heard in the sight of the glory of the great Raphael, and he was sent to heal them both [Tobit 3: 16-17].

Origen, *on Prayer* 11

English translation is from *Anti Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 4 (scripture reference and emphasis are mine).

*And if this word "matter" should happen to occur in any other passage, it will never be found, in my opinion, to have the signification of which we are now in quest, unless perhaps in the book which is called the Wisdom of Solomon, **a work which is certainly not esteemed authoritative by all**. In that book, however, we find written as follows: "For thy almighty hand, that made the world out of shapeless matter, wanted not means to send among them a multitude of bears and fierce lions."* [Wisdom 11:17]

Origen, *de Principiis* 4.33

⁴⁶ Cyril (died 386 AD) was bishop of Jerusalem from 350 to 351 AD.

⁴⁷ Schaff, P. and Wace, H. (Editors): *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, Vol. 7, WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., page 27.

Dragon⁴⁸. The same books but with slightly different order were promulgated in the council of Laodicea (c. 362)

*These are all the books of Old Testament appointed to be read: 1, Genesis of the world; 2, The Exodus from Egypt; 3, Leviticus; 4, Numbers; 5, Deuteronomy; 6, Joshua, the son of Nun; 7, Judges, Ruth; 8, Esther; 9, Of the Kings, First and Second; 10, Of the Kings, Third and Fourth; 11, Chronicles, First and Second; 12, Esdras, First and Second; 13, The Book of Psalms; 14, The Proverbs of Solomon; 15, Ecclesiastes; 16, The Song of Songs; 17, Job; 18, The Twelve Prophets; 19, Isaiah; 20, Jeremiah, and **Baruch**, the Lamentations, and the **Epistle**; 21, Ezekiel; 22, Daniel.*

Canon LX of Council of Laodicea⁴⁹ (emphasis mine)

⁴⁸ English translation is from *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, Vol. 7 (scripture reference is mine).

*If any man attempt to speak of God, let him first describe the bounds of the earth. Thou dwellest on the earth, and the limit of this earth which is thy dwelling thou knowest not: how then shalt thou be able to form a worthy thought of its Creator? Thou beholdest the stars, but their Maker thou beholdest not: count these which are visible, and then describe Him who is invisible, **Who telleth the number of the stars, and calleth them all by their names** [Psalms 147:4]. Violent rains lately came pouring down upon us, and nearly destroyed us: number the drops in this city alone: nay, I say not in the city, but number the drops on thine own house for one single hour, if thou canst: but thou canst not. Learn then thine own weakness; learn from this instance the mightiness of God: **for He hath numbered the drops of rain** [Job 36:27], which have been poured down on all the earth, not only now but in all time. The sun is a work of God, which, great though it be, is but a spot in comparison with the whole heaven; first gaze stedfastly upon the sun, and then curiously scan the Lord of the sun. **Seek not the things that are too deep for thee, neither search out the things that are above thy strength: what is commanded thee, think thereupon** [Sirach 3:21-22].*

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 6:4

*The Divine Nature then it is impossible to see with eyes of flesh: but from the works, which are Divine, it is possible to attain to some conception of His power, according to Solomon, who says, **For by the greatness and beauty of the creatures proportionably the Maker of them is seen** [Wisdom 13:5]. He said not that from the creatures the Maker is seen, but added proportionably. For God appears the greater to every man in proportion as he has grasped a larger survey of the creatures: and when his heart is uplifted by that larger survey, he gains withal a greater conception of God.*

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 9:2

*Wouldest thou learn that to comprehend the nature of God is impossible? The Three Children in the furnace of fire, as they hymn the praises of God, say **Blessed art thou that beholdest the depths, and sittest upon the Cherubim.** [Song of Three Young Men or Daniel 3:32]*

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 9:3

*And wouldest thou know that He who was begotten of the Father, and afterwards became man, is God? Hear the Prophet saying, **This is our God, none other shall be accounted of in comparison with Him. He hath found out every way of knowledge, and given it to Jacob His servant, and to Israel His beloved. Afterwards He was seen on earth, and conversed among men.** [Baruch 3:35-37]*

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 11.15

For when they speak against the ascension of the Saviour, as being impossible, remember the account of the carrying away of Habakkuk: for if Habakkuk was transported by an Angel, being carried by the hair of his head [Bel & Dragon or Daniel 14:36], much rather was the Lord of both Prophets and Angels, able by His own power to make His ascent into the Heavens on a cloud from the Mount of Olives.

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 14.25

Athanasius of Alexandria⁵⁰ gave list of 22 Old Testament books in c. 367:

*There are, then, of the Old Testament, twenty-two books in number; for, as I have heard, it is handed down that this is the number of the letters among the Hebrews; their respective order and names being as follows. The first is Genesis, then Exodus, next Leviticus, after that Numbers, and then Deuteronomy. Following these there is Joshua, the son of Nun, then Judges, then Ruth. And again, after these four books of Kings, the first and second being reckoned as one book, and so likewise the third and fourth as one book. And again, the first and second of the Chronicles are reckoned as one book. Again Ezra, the first and second are similarly one book. After these there is the book of Psalms, then the Proverbs, next Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs. Job follows, then the Prophets, the twelve being reckoned as one book. Then Isaiah, one book, then Jeremiah with **Baruch**, Lamentations, and **the epistle**, one book; afterwards, Ezekiel and Daniel, each one book. Thus far constitutes the Old Testament.*

*But for greater exactness I add this also, writing of necessity; that there are other books besides these not indeed included in the Canon, but appointed by the Fathers to be read by those who newly join us, and who wish for instruction in the word of godliness. The Wisdom of Solomon, and the Wisdom of Sirach, and **Esther**, and Judith, and Tobit*

Athanasius, *39th Festal Letter*⁵¹ (emphasis mine)

Athanasius list also includes Baruch and Letter of Jeremiah as part of Jeremiah together with Lamentations but it omits Esther (to get the same number of twenty-two, he separated Ruth from Judges). He considered Esther together with Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, Judith and Tobit as having inferior grade but still approved them to be read (edifying) in the church. Athanasius distinguished three categories of books: canonical, edifying and apocryphal (not to be read at all). However in his other works, Athanasius cited Tobit, Sirach and Wisdom as scripture⁵², indicating that he did not always restrict himself to only those 22 books.

⁴⁹ Schaff, P. and Wace, H. (Editors): *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, Vol. 14, WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., page 159.

⁵⁰ Athanasius (c. 350 to 373 AD) was bishop of Alexandria from 328 to 373 AD.

⁵¹ Schaff, P. and Wace, H. (Editors): *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, Vol. 14, WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Vol. 4, page 552.

⁵² English translation is from *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, Vol. 4 (scripture reference and emphasis are mine).

And they are not ashamed to parade the sacred mysteries before Catechumens, and worse than that, even before heathens: whereas, they ought to attend to what is written, `It is good to keep

*Epiphanius*⁵³ gave us *three* lists of Old Testament canon. The first one⁵⁴ comprises Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, 4 books of Kingdoms, 2 books of Chronicles, The Twelve, Isaiah, Jeremiah + Lamentations + *Epistle of Jeremiah* + *Baruch* in one book, Ezekiel, Daniel, 2 books of Esdras, Esther. It is equal but with different order of books to that of Cyril of Jerusalem. The second list⁵⁵ has Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Joshua, Judges & Ruth in one book, 1 & 2 Chronicles in one book, 1 & 2 Kingdoms in one book, 3 & 4 Kingdoms in one book, the Twelve, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, 2 books of Esdras, Esther. The third list⁵⁶ comprises Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Job, Judges, Ruth, Psalms, 2 books of Chronicles, 4 books of Kingdoms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, the Twelve, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, 2 books of Esdras, Esther. In the second and third lists Lamentations is missing (unless it is combined with Jeremiah) and all deuterocanonical books are excluded. Interestingly Epiphanius considered Wisdom and Sirach to be part of New Testament⁵⁷. The 2nd century AD *Muratorian* list also placed Wisdom as one of New Testament books.

close the secret of a king [Tobit 12:7];' and as the Lord has charged us, 'Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine [Matthew 7:6].'

Athanasius, *Defence Against the Arians* 11

Wherefore when Diogenes came, and Syrianus laid in wait for us, both he and we and the people demanded to see the Emperor's letters, supposing that, as it is written, 'Let not a falsehood be spoken before the king [Sirach 7:5];' so when a king has made a promise, he will not lie, nor change.

Athanasius, *History of Arians* 52

I congratulate the most excellent Sarapion, that he is striving so earnestly to adorn himself with holy habits, and is thus advancing to higher praise the memory of his father. For, as the Holy Scripture somewhere says, 'though his father die, yet he is as though he were not dead: for he has left behind him a memorial of his life [Sirach 30:4].

Athanasius, *Defence Against the Arians* 66

Since, however, after all his severe sufferings, after his retirement into Gaul, after his sojourn in a foreign and far distant country in the place of his own, after his narrow escape from death through their calumnies, but thanks to the clemency of the Emperor, -distress which would have satisfied even the most cruel enemy, -they are still insensible to shame, are again acting insolently against the Church and Athanasius; and from indignation at his deliverance venture on still more atrocious schemes against him, and are ready with an accusation, fearless of the words in holy Scripture, 'A false witness shall not be unpunished [Proverbs 19:5];' and, 'The mouth that belieth slayeth the soul [Wisdom 1:11];' we therefore are unable longer to hold our peace, being amazed at their wickedness and at the insatiable love of contention displayed in their intrigues.

Athanasius, *Defence Against the Arians* 3

⁵³ Epiphanius (c. 315 to 403 AD) was bishop of Salamis in Cyprus.

⁵⁴ *Adversus Haereses* or *Panarion* (Medicine Chest) 8.6

⁵⁵ *de Mensuris et Ponderibus* (on Weights and Measurements) 4

⁵⁶ *de Mensuris et Ponderibus* (on Weights and Measurements) 23

⁵⁷ *Adversus Haereses* or *Panarion* (Medicine Chest) 76 *Conf. Act* 5 p. 941

*Amphilochius*⁵⁸ gave us list⁵⁹ of 22 books comprising Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 4 books of Kingdoms in one book, 2 books of Chronicles in one book, 2 books of Esdras in one book, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, the Twelve, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Esther. Lamentations might be combined with Jeremiah and deuterocanonical books are not included.

The list of *Hilary of Poitiers*⁶⁰ has 5 books of Moses, Joshua, Judges & Ruth in one book, 1 & 2 Kingdoms in one book, 3 & 4 Kingdoms in one book, 1 & 2 Chronicles in one book, 1 & 2 Esdras in one book, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, the Twelve, Isaiah, Jeremiah + Lamentations + *Epistle of Jeremiah* in one book, Daniel, Ezekiel, Job, Esther. But he mentioned that some added *Tobit* and *Judith* to make 24 books from 22. In his works Hilary also cited as scripture a number of deuterocanonical books⁶¹.

*Gregory of Nazianzus*⁶² gave us a list comprising Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges & Ruth in one book, Kings, Chronicles, Esdras, Job, Psalms,

⁵⁸ Amphilochius (c. 340 to 394 AD) was bishop of Iconium in Asia minor (present day Konja in Turkey).

⁵⁹ J.P. Migne: *Patrologia Græca*, 37, 1593-6.

Jacques Paul Migne (1800 to 1875) was priest and publisher of theological works. He compiled the works of Ecclesiastical writers in Latin (*Patrologia Latina* or PL, 217 volumes plus 4 volumes of index) and in Greek with Latin translation (*Patrologia Græca* or PG, 166 volumes). *Patrologia Latina* has the extant works from the earliest Church Fathers to that of Pope Innocent III (died in 1216) while *Patrologia Græca* covers the works until Council of Florence (1438 to 1439).

⁶⁰ J.P. Migne: *Patrologia Latina*, 9, 241.

Hilary (c. 315 to 367 AD) was bishop of Poitiers in France.

⁶¹ English translation is from *The Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 25 (scripture references and emphasis are mine).

While the religious mind was held captive by the error of its own weakness, the words of the Prophet impart to it this method for apprehending the knowledge of God's supreme beauty: 'For by the greatness of the work and the beauty of creatures the creator of generations is reasonably known.' [Wisdom 13:5]

Hilary of Poitiers, *The Trinity* 1.7

He foresees everything, as blessed Susanna asserts: 'O eternal God, the one who knowest hidden things, who knowest all things before they come to pass.' [Daniel 13:42]

Hilary of Poitiers, *The Trinity* 4.8

But the revelation of the divine Scripture does not allow this explanation. According to the Prophet, everything has been made from nothing, [2 Maccabee 7:28]

Hilary of Poitiers, *The Trinity* 4.16

Besides Moses and Isaias, listen in the third place to Jeremias, who teaches us the same doctrine when he declares: 'This is our God, and there shall be no other accounted of in comparison with him, who has found all the way of knowledge and gave it to Jacob his servant and to Israel his beloved. Afterwards, he was seen upon earth and conversed with men.' [Baruch 3:36-38, cited as part of Jeremiah]

Hilary of Poitiers, *The Trinity* 4.42

⁶² J.P. Migne: *Patrologia Græca*, 37, 472-74.

Gregory of Nazianzus (c. 329 to 390 AD) was bishop of Constantinople (present day Istanbul) from 379 to 381 AD.

Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, Proverbs, the Twelve, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel. Esther and deuterocanonical books are excluded. Like Hilary in his writings he still cited as scripture a number of deuterocanonical books⁶³.

Two lists of Old Testament books are attributed to *John Chrysostomos*⁶⁴. The first one⁶⁵ comprises Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 4 books of Kingdoms, 2 books of Esdras, Proverbs, *Sirach*, Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs, 16 prophets (Jeremiah, Isaiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and the Twelve), Ruth, Psalms (Ruth is counted twice) while the second list⁶⁶ has Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 4 books of Kingdoms, 2 books of Chronicles, 2 books of Esdras, Esther, *Tobit*, *Judith*, Job, *Wisdom*, Proverbs, *Sirach*, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, the Twelve.

The list of Old Testament books in the *Constitution of the Holy Apostles* written c. 380 has Judith, Sirach and 1 to 3 Maccabees.

Let the following books be esteemed venerable and holy by you, both of the clergy and laity. Of the Old Covenant: the five books of Moses-Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy; one of Joshua the son of Nun, one of the Judges, one of Ruth, four of the Kings, two of the Chronicles, two of Ezra, one of Esther, one of Judith, three of the

⁶³ English translation is from Nicene and Anti Nicene Fathers, Series II, Vol. 7 (scripture reference is mine).

How did God sustain her? Not by raining down manna, as for Israel of old [Exodus 16:14] or opening the rock, in order to give drink to His thirsting people [Exodus 17:6], or feasting her by means of ravens, as Elijah [1 Kings 17:6], or feeding her by a prophet carried through the air, as He did to Daniel when a-hungred in the den [Bel & Dragon or Daniel 14:36].

Gregory of Naziansus, *Oration* 18.30

And how shall we preserve the truth that God pervades all things and fills all, as it is written "Do not I fill heaven and earth? saith the Lord," [Jeremiah 23:24] and "The Spirit of the Lord filleth the world," [Wisdom 1:7] if God partly contains and partly is contained?

Gregory of Naziansus, *Oration* 28.8

But if not, what will you say to the suggestion on the other side, that on your hypothesis the Son has been called the only God. In what passage? Why, in this: -This is your God; no other shall be accounted of in comparison with Him, and a little further on, after this did He shew Himself upon earth, and conversed with men. [Baruch 3:35-37]

Gregory of Naziansus, *Oration* 30.13

The Father doth not glory in the dishonour of the Son. If a wise Son maketh a glad Father [Proverbs 10:1]. how much more doth the honour of the Son become that of the Father! And if you also accept this saying, My Son, glory not in the dishonour of thy Father [Sirach 3:10], similarly the Father doth not glory in the Son's dishonour.

Gregory of Naziansus, *Oration* 37:18

⁶⁴ John Chrysostomos (c. 347 to 407 AD) was bishop of Constantinople from 398 AD. He was known as great preacher (hence the name Chrysostomos or golden mouthed)

⁶⁵ J.P. Migne: *Patrologia Græca*, 56, 314-315

⁶⁶ *ibid*, 56, 387-388

Maccabees, one of Job, one hundred and fifty psalms; three books of Solomon-Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Songs; sixteen prophets. And besides these, take care that your young persons learn the Wisdom of the very learned Sirach.

Ecclesiastical Canon of the Holy Apostles 47.85⁶⁷

A late 4th century list, now known as *Cheltenham* or *Mommsen* list (after Theodor Mommsen who discovered it in Phillips collection at Cheltenham in 1885) has Maccabees, Tobit, Judith and perhaps Wisdom but it lacks Ezra-Nehemiah. Table 5 gives the books of the three earliest manuscripts we have of LXX, all made by Christians. The different arrangement and number of books of the three manuscripts also indicate that the Christian canon of the Old Testament was not fixed in 3rd/4th century AD. Note also that deuterocanonical books are interspaced among protocanonical books or they are treated as equal to protocanonical books.

*Jerome*⁶⁸ gave us the well-known Latin translation of the Bible known as the Vulgate. In his preface to the books of Vulgate written in 391 he stated his list of Old Testament books.

The first of these books is called Bresith, to which we give the name Genesis. The second, Elle Smoth, which bears the name Exodus; the third, Vaiekra, that is Leviticus; the fourth, Vaiedabber, which we call Numbers; the fifth, Elle Addabarim, which is entitled Deuteronomy. These are the five books of Moses, which they properly call Thorath, that is law.

The second class is composed of the Prophets, and they begin with Jesus the son of Nave, who among them is called Joshua the son of Nun. Next in the series is Sophtim, that is the book of Judges; and in the same book they include Ruth, because the events narrated occurred in the days of the Judges. Then comes Samuel, which we call First and Second Kings. The fourth is Malachim, that is, Kings, which is contained in the third and fourth volumes of Kings. And it is far better to say Malachim, that is Kings, than Malachoth, that is Kingdoms. For the author does not describe the Kingdoms of many nations, but that of one people, the people of Israel, which is comprised in the twelve tribes. The fifth is Isaiah, the sixth, Jeremiah, the seventh, Ezekiel, the eighth is the book of the Twelve Prophets, which is called among the Jews Thare Asra.

⁶⁷ Roberts, A. and Donaldson J. (Editors): *The Anti Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 7, WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., page 505.

⁶⁸ Refer to footnote 7

To the third class belong the Hagiographa, of which the first book begins with Job, the second with David, whose writings they divide into five parts and comprise in one volume of Psalms; the third is Solomon, in three books, Proverbs, which they call Parables, that is Masaloth, Ecclesiastes, that is Coeleth, the Song of Songs, which they denote by the title Sir Assirim; the sixth is Daniel; the seventh, Dabre Aiamim, that is, Words of Days, which we may more expressively call a chronicle of the whole of the sacred history, the book that amongst us is called First and Second-Chronicles; the eighth, Ezra, which itself is likewise divided amongst Greeks and Latins into two books; the ninth is Esther.

And so there are also twenty-two books of the Old Testament; that is, five of Moses, eight of the prophets, nine of the Hagiographa, though some include Ruth and Kinoth (Lamentations) amongst the Hagiographa, and think that these books ought to be reckoned separately; we should thus have twenty-four books of the old law. And these the Apocalypse of John represents by the twenty-four elders, who adore the Lamb, and with downcast looks offer their crowns, while in their presence stand the four living creatures with eyes before and behind, that is, looking to the past and the future, and with unwearied voice crying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, who wast, and art, and art to come.

*Jerome, Prefaces of the Books of the Vulgate version of the Old Testament*⁶⁹

Jerome followed the three-division of the present day Jewish scripture, except that he placed Ruth and Lamentations in the second division. His list is equal but with a different order of books to the twenty-four books of the present Jewish scripture and thirty-nine protocanonical books in the Catholic's Old Testament or thirty-nine canonical books in that of Protestant's. He included deuterocanonical books in his Latin translation but referred them as apocrypha. On the other hand *Rufinus*⁷⁰ referred Wisdom, Sirach, Tobit, Judith and Maccabees as "ecclesiastical" books in his list, written c. 407.

Of the Old Testament, therefore, first of all there have been handed down five books of Moses, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Then Jesus Nave, (Joshua the son of Nun), The Book of Judges together with Ruth; then four books of Kings (Reigns), which the Hebrews reckon two; the Book of Omissions, which is entitled the Book of Days (Chronicles), and two books of Ezra (Ezra and Nehemiah), which the Hebrews reckon one, and Esther; of the Prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; moreover of the twelve (minor) Prophets, one book; Job also and the Psalms of David, each one book. Solomon

⁶⁹ Schaff, P. and Wace, H. (Editors): *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, Vol. 6, WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., pages 489-490.

⁷⁰ Rufinus of Aquileia (c. 345 to 410 AD) was monk and translator.

gave three books to the Churches, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Canticles. These comprise the books of the Old Testament.

But it should be known that there are also other books which our fathers call not "Canonical" but "Ecclesiastical:" that is to say, Wisdom, called the Wisdom of Solomon, and another Wisdom, called the Wisdom of the Son of Syrach, which last-mentioned the Latins called by the general title Ecclesiasticus, designating not the author of the book, but the character of the writing. To the same class belong the Book of Tobit, and the Book of Judith, and the Books of the Maccabees.

Rufinus, *A Commentary on the Apostles' Creed* 37-38⁷¹

Table 5: Three early manuscripts of LXX

Codex Vaticanus (4th century AD)	Codex Sinaiticus* (4th century AD)	Codex Alexandrinus (5th century AD)
Genesis	Genesis	Genesis
Exodus	...	Exodus
Leviticus	...	Leviticus
Numbers	Numbers	Numbers
Deuteronomy	...	Deuteronomy
Joshua	...	Joshua
Judges	...	Judges
Ruth	...	Ruth
1-4 Kingdoms	...	1-4 Kingdoms
1-2 Chronicles	1 Chronicles	1-2 Chronicles
Esdras α	...	The Twelve Minor Prophets
Esdras β	Esdras β	Isaiah
	Esther	Jeremiah
Psalms	Tobit	Baruch
Proverbs	Judith	Lamentations
Ecclesiastes	1 & 4 Maccabees	Epistle of Jeremiah
Song of Songs	Isaiah	Ezekiel
Job	Jeremiah	Daniel
Wisdom	Lamentations	Esther
Sirach	...	Tobit
Esther	...	Judith
Judith	The Twelve Minor Prophets	Esdras α
Tobit	(incomplete)	Esdras β
The Twelve Minor Prophets	Psalms	1,2,3,4 Maccabees
Isaiah	Proverbs	Psalms
Jeremiah	Ecclesiastes	Job
Baruch	Song of Songs	Proverbs
Lamentations	Wisdom	Ecclesiastes
Epistle of Jeremiah	Sirach	Song of Songs
Ezekiel	Job	Wisdom
Daniel		Sirach

* Codex Sinaiticus is damaged and incomplete

⁷¹ Schaff, P. and Wace, H. (Editors): *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, Vol. 3, WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., pages 557-558

However after his relation with Jerome deteriorated, Rufinus changed his mind and approved a longer canon as attested in his Apology, where he harshly criticized Jerome.

Perhaps it was a greater piece of audacity to alter the books of the divine Scriptures which had been delivered to the Churches of Christ by the Apostles to be a complete record of their faith by making a new translation under the influence of the Jews. For what can we call it but havoc, when some parts of it are transformed, and this is called the correction of an error? For instance, the whole of the history of Susanna, which gave a lesson of chastity to the churches of God, has by him been cut out, thrown aside and dismissed. The hymn of the three children, which is regularly sung on festivals in the Church of God, he has wholly erased from the place where it stood. But why should I enumerate these cases one by one, when their number cannot be estimated? This, however, cannot be passed over. The seventy translators, each in their separate cells, produced a version couched in consonant and identical words, under the inspiration, as we cannot doubt, of the Holy Spirit; and this version must certainly be of more authority with us than a translation made by a single man under the inspiration of Barabbas.

But, putting this aside, I beg you to listen, for example, to this as an instance of what we mean. Peter was for twenty-four years Bishop of the Church of Rome. We cannot doubt that, amongst other things necessary for the instruction of the church, he himself delivered to them the treasury of the sacred books, which, no doubt, had even then begun to be read under his presidency and teaching. What are we to say then? Did Peter the Apostle of Christ deceive the church and deliver to them books which were false and contained nothing of truth? Are we to believe that he knew that the Jews possessed what was true, and yet determined that the Christians should have what was false?

"The ears of simple men among the Latins ought not after four hundred years to be molested by the sound of new doctrines." Now you are yourself saying: "Every one has been under a mistake who thought that Susanna had afforded an example of chastity to both the married and the unmarried. It is not true. And every one who thought that the boy Daniel was filled with the Holy Spirit and convicted the adulterous old men, was under a mistake. That also was not true. And every congregation throughout the universe, whether of those who are in the body or of those who have departed to be with the Lord, even though they were holy martyrs or confessors, all who have sung the Hymn of the three children have been in error, and have sung what is false.

Rufinus, *Apology*, Book II, 32-35⁷²

⁷² *ibid*, page 475-476

There is evidence that Jerome too later changed his mind and started quoting deuterocanonical books as scripture in his later works⁷³.

Jerome's younger contemporary, *Augustine*⁷⁴ listed forty-four canonical books of the Old Testament in 397 and stating how they were selected.

Now, in regard to the canonical Scriptures, he must follow the judgment of the greater number of catholic churches; and among these, of course, a high place must be given to

⁷³ English translation is from *The Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 48 (scripture references and emphasis are mine).

Though the evil doer is subject to the hatred of God, the liar perishes together. 'A lying mouth slays the soul'. [Wisdom 1:11]

Jerome, *Homily 2* on Psalm 5

It is Solomon who says that he longed to make wisdom his bride [Wisdom 8:2]. In another place, he says again of wisdom: Love her, and she will embrace you; embrace her and she will preserve you.' [Proverbs 4:6,8]

Jerome, *Homily 42* on Psalm 127 (128)

English translation is from *The Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 53 (scripture references and emphasis are mine).

Almsgiving atones for sin that we have not been able to wash away otherwise. What does Scripture say in this regard? "Water quenches a flaming fire, and alms atone for sins." [Sirach 3:30] The effects of almsgiving are similar to those of baptism; just as baptism remits sin, even so almsgiving atones for sins.

Jerome, *Homily 46* on Psalm 133(134)

It is the practice of Scripture, nevertheless, when intending to reveal something secret, hidden, or mysterious, to say: 'O searcher of heart and reins, o God [Psalm 7:9]; so since the heart is secret, the more secret regions of the heart are the reins. In Wisdom, too, a book attributed to the famous Solomon, we find: 'God is witness of his reins, and the sure observer of his heart and listener to his tongue [Wisdom 1:6];

Jerome, *Homily 61* on Psalm 15(16)

You who love the Lord, hate evil [Psalm 97:10]. If the Lord is good ... What is it that we read? 'The good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep' [John 10:11]; and again in another parable: 'Friend, art thou envious because I am generous?' [Matthew 20:15] 'You who love the Lord, hate evil.' There cannot be two contradictory loves in one man. Just as there is no harmony between Christ and Belial, between justice and iniquity [2 Corinthians 6:14-15], so it is impossible for one soul to love both good and evil. You who love the Lord, hate evil, the devil; in every deed, there is one love of one and hatred of the other. 'He who has my commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves me.' [John 14:21] On the other hand, what is said in regard to the devil? 'By the envy of the devil, death entered the world, and they follow him who are on his side.' [Wisdom 2:24]

Jerome, *Homily 73* on Psalm 95(96)

In another place in Scripture, we read appropriately of the Son: "They have forsaken the fountain of wisdom [Baruch 3:12];

Jerome, *Homily 92* on Psalm 41(42)

English translation is from *The Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 57 (scripture reference is mine).

His works are all true, and His ways justice, and He can humiliate the proud. Antiochus Epiphanius, a very cruel king, overturned the altar and caused Justice itself to be trampled underfoot, because it was permitted by the Lord; the reason given is: 'because of many sins.' [2 Maccabees 5:17]

Jerome, *Against the Pelagians 2.30*

⁷⁴ Augustine (354 to 430) was bishop of Hippo, North Africa and was, perhaps, the most well-known Church Fathers. A prolific writer he wrote enormous volumes of works, which has profound impact on Christianity.

such as have been thought worthy to be the seat of an apostle and to receive epistles. Accordingly, among the canonical Scriptures he will judge according to the following standard: to prefer those that are received by all the catholic churches to those which some do not receive. Among those, again, which are not received by all, he will prefer such as have the sanction of the greater number and those of greater authority, to such as are held by the smaller number and those of less authority. If, however, he shall find that some books are held by the greater number of churches, and others by the churches of greater authority (though this is not a very likely thing to happen), I think that in such a case the authority on the two sides is to be looked upon as equal.

*Now the whole canon of Scripture on which we say this judgment is to be exercised, is contained in the following books: -Five books of Moses, that is, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; one book of Joshua the son of Nun; one of Judges; one short book called Ruth, which seems rather to belong to the beginning of Kings; next, four books of Kings, and two of Chronicles -these last not following one another, but running parallel, so to speak, and going over the same ground. The books now mentioned are history, which contains a connected narrative of the times, and follows the order of the events. There are other books which seem to follow no regular order, and are connected neither with the order of the preceding books nor with one another, such as Job, and **Tobias**, and Esther, and **Judith**, and the **two books of Maccabees**, and the two of Ezra, which last look more like a sequel to the continuous regular history which terminates with the books of Kings and Chronicles. Next are the Prophets, in which there is one book of the Psalms of David; and three books of Solomon, viz., Proverbs, Song of Songs, and Ecclesiastes. For two books, one called **Wisdom** and the other **Ecclesiasticus**, are ascribed to Solomon from a certain resemblance of style, but the most likely opinion is that they were written by Jesus the son of Sirach. Still they are to be reckoned among the prophetic books, since they have attained recognition as being authoritative. The remainder are the books which are strictly called the Prophets: twelve separate books of the prophets which are connected with one another, and having never been disjoined, are reckoned as one book; the names of these prophets are as follows: -Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi; then there are the four greater prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Ezekiel. The authority of the Old Testament is contained within the limits of these forty-four books.*

Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* 2:8⁷⁵

⁷⁵ Schaff, P. (Editor): *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series I, Vol. 2, WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., pages 538-539.

Following Cyril of Jerusalem and Athanasius, Augustine also combined Lamentations, Baruch and Letter of Jeremiah with Jeremiah. He cited Baruch 3:35-37 but attributed it to Jeremiah in one of his monumental works, *City of God* 18:33. In the same book (18:36 and 18:43) he defended the use of LXX as the scripture of the Church. From *City of God* 17:20 we know that he was aware that the Jews did not recognize deuterocanonical books but he accepted them based on the practice of the Church. Baruch and Lamentations are now separated from Jeremiah to make forty-six books of the present Catholic Old Testament. Augustine's list of the books of both Old and New Testaments was declared at Church Council in *Hippo* (Augustine's see) in 393 and subsequently reaffirmed at third Council of *Carthage*, another provincial council in 397. Another council at Carthage in 419 again confirmed the same list of Old Testament. The same councils also declared the canonicity of the 27 books of the New Testament. In a letter to bishop of Toulouse written in 405, Pope Innocent I also listed the same 44 books of the Old Testament.

In around 427 Augustine made some revisions in chronological order on the numerous works he had written and retracted some of his statements. Regarding what he wrote in "On Christian Doctrine", Book 2, he wrote:

In the second book, however, with regard to the author of the book which many call the Wisdom of Solomon, I learned later that it is not certain that Jesus, the son of Sirach, wrote this as well as Ecclesiasticus, as I stated; and I found out that it is, indeed, more probable that he is not the author. Furthermore, when I said: "The authority of the Old Testament is confined to these forty-four books," I spoke of it according to the way in which the Church customarily speaks of it. However, the Apostle seems to give the title "Old Testament" only to that which was given in Mount Sinai.

Augustine, *The Retractations*, 2:30⁷⁶

Thus Augustine wrote that the title "Old Testament" should be applied only to the ones given in Mount Sinai (i.e. the five books of the Moses). Perhaps, since he did not elaborate, he made this conclusion from 2 Corinthians 3:14-15 where the Apostle (i.e. Paul) used the term "old covenant" (RSV) or "old testament" (KJV) to refer to the Law of Moses. Augustine did not change his mind about his list of inspired books because in the same book he still cited as scripture deuterocanonical books Wisdom and Sirach (or Ecclesiasticus).

⁷⁶ Deferrari, R.J. (Editorial Director): *The Fathers of the Church*, Vol. 60, Catholic University of America Press, pages 125-126

In another place, I said: "God does not seek the death of anyone." This should be interpreted as follows: man brought death on himself by abandoning God and he who does not return to God brings it on himself according to what is written. "For God made not death." [Wisdom 1:13] But the following, too, is no less true: "Life and death are from the Lord God," [Ecclesiasticus 11:14] that is, life is from the giver, death from the avenger.

ibid, 1:20⁷⁷ (scripture references are mine)

The above historical facts show that deuterocanonical books were declared officially in a council at the end of the 4th century, not added in the sixteenth century as some may claim. It is a true fact that they were first disputed but the same also applies to Esther and to seven New Testament books (2 Peter, 2 & 3 John, Jude, James, Hebrews, Revelation). The councils at Hippo and Carthage are African synods and are not ecumenical councils, i.e. they did not speak for the whole church. Thus the canon of both Old and New Testaments remained open-ended until sixteenth century. The so-called *Gelasian Decree* ascribed to *Pope Gelasius* dated in the late fifth century has Wisdom and Sirach. The sixth century *Codex Amiatinus*, the oldest manuscript we have of Latin Vulgate has all deuterocanonical books except Baruch (Letter of Jeremiah is appended to Jeremiah). *Pope Gregory I the Great* who reigned from 590 to 604 considered 1 Maccabee as edifying but not canonical⁷⁸. The list of Old Testament books of *John of Damascus*, monk and theologian who lived in the eight century AD has only protocanonical books arranged into 22 books.

Observe, further, that there are two and twenty books of the Old Testament, one for each letter of the Hebrew tongue. For there are twenty-two letters of which five are double, and so they come to be twenty-seven. For the letters Caph, Mere, Nun, Pe, Sade are double. And thus the number of the books in this way is twenty-two, but is found to be twenty-seven because of the double character of five. For Ruth is joined on to Judges, and the Hebrews count them one book: the first and second books of Kings are counted one: and so are the third and fourth books of Kings: and also the first and second of Paraleipomena: and the first and second of Esdra. In this way, then, the books are collected together in four Pentateuchs and two others remain over, to form thus the canonical books. Five of them are of the Law, viz. Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy. This which is the code of the Law, constitutes the first Pentateuch. Then comes another Pentateuch, the so-called

⁷⁷ *ibid*, page 91

⁷⁸ J.P. Migne: *Patrologia Latina*, 76, 119

Grapheia, or as they are called by some, the Hagiographa, which are the following: Jesus the Son of Nave, Judges along with Ruth, first and second Kings, which are one book, third and fourth Kings, which are one book, and the two books of the Paraleipomena which are one book. This is the second Pentateuch. The third Pentateuch is the books in verse, viz. Job, Psalms, Proverbs of Solomon, Ecclesiastes of Solomon and the Song of Songs of Solomon. The fourth Pentateuch is the Prophetical books, viz the twelve prophets constituting one book, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel. Then come the two books of Esdras made into one, and Esther. There are also the Panaretus, that is the Wisdom of Solomon, and the Wisdom of Jesus, which was published in Hebrew by the father of Sirach, and afterwards translated into Greek by his grandson, Jesus, the Son of Sirach. These are virtuous and noble, but are not counted nor were they placed in the ark.

John of Damascus. *Exposition of the Orthodox Faith* 4:17⁷⁹

The ecumenical council of Basel-Ferrara-Florence-Rome (Session 11 on 4 February 1442) listed as inspired forty-six books of the Old Testament. But even after this council, Catholic scholars like *Cardinal Ximenes* (1436 to 1517) and *Cardinal Cajetan* (1469 to 1534) did not accept deuterocanonical books as canonical.

Martin Luther in his German translation placed deuterocanonical books in the appendix and did not consider them equal to the other thirty-nine, but they are still useful and good to read. At one time he seemed to reject Esther as well⁸⁰. He also gave inferior status to four books of the New Testament: James, Jude, Hebrews and Revelation.

As response to the Reformation, the Catholic Church held the ecumenical *Council at Trent* where one of the decisions (Session 4 on 8 April 1546) was reaffirming the canonicity of the forty-six books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven books of the New Testament.

And it has thought it meet that a list of the sacred books be inserted in this decree, lest a doubt may arise in any one's mind, which are the books that are received by this Synod. They are as set down here below: of the Old Testament: the five books of Moses, to wit, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Josue, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, two of Paralipomenon, the first book of Esdras, and the second which is entitled

⁷⁹ Schaff, P. and Wace, H. (Editors): *The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Series II, Vol. 9, WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., pages 89-90.

⁸⁰ *I [Luther] hate Esther and 2 Maccabee so much that I wish they do not exist; they contain too much Judaism and no little heathen vice.*

quoted in F.F. Bruce, *The Canon of Scripture*, page 101

Nehemias; Tobias, Judith, Esther, Job, the Davidical Psalter, consisting of a hundred and fifty psalms; the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Canticle of Canticles, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Isaias, Jeremias, with Baruch; Ezechiel, Daniel; the twelve minor prophets, to wit, Osee, Joel, Amos, Abdias, Jonas, Micheas, Nahum, Habacuc, Sophonias, Aggaeus, Zacharias, Malachias; two books of the Machabees, the first and the second.

Council of Trent, Decrees concerning the canonical scripture

To Catholics, the canon of Bible was closed in this (ecumenical) council of Trent. No one, not even the Pope or other ecumenical councils, can add/drop any book from the Bible. The Eastern Orthodox Church also recognized the canonicity of thirty-nine books of the Jewish scripture and 1 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, 1 to 3 Maccabees, Wisdom, Sirach, Baruch and Letter of Jeremiah at their synods held at *Jassy* (1642) and *Jerusalem* (1672). On the other hand, the Reformed Church in the 1561 Belgic Confession Article 4 accepted only protocanonical books:

In the church of God the list is as follows: In the Old Testament, the five books of Moses—Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth; the two books of Samuel, and two of Kings; the two books of Chronicles, called Paralipomenon; the first book of Ezra; Nehemiah, Esther, Job; the Psalms of David; the three books of Solomon—Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and the Song; the four major prophets—Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel; and then the other twelve minor prophets—Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

Article 4 of Belgic Confession: The Canonical books

The canonicity of only 39 books was also stated in 1647 Westminster Confession of Faith.

Under the name of Holy Scripture, or the Word of God written, are now contained all the books of the Old and New Testament, which are these: Of the Old Testament: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, I Samuel, II Samuel, I Kings, II Kings, I Chronicles, II Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.

Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 1: Of the Holy Scripture

Some Protestant Bibles, like RSV and first edition of KJV (1611), have deuterocanonical (referred as apocryphal) books sandwiched between the Old and New Testaments.

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