

Ministering to Catholics
The Catholic Bible
Chris Williams
Valley Bible Church, Lancaster, California
www.valleybible.net

Introduction

- Why is this important to study as we consider this class on ministering to Catholics?
 - We want to be prepared to give an answer or defense as to why and what we believe concerning our Bibles
 - We can help teach and care for those who have questions or who are struggling with some of the teachings found in the Apocrypha
 - This should also encourage us in that we can have certainty that we are not missing any part of God's Word

What is the Apocrypha?

- As you open a Catholic edition of a Bible you may quickly notice that there are some books in there that you have never heard of before. That is because the Catholic Church includes 13 additions to the Old Testament, which we call the "apocrypha"
- The term "apocrypha" is actually a Greek term that means "hidden." There is disagreement as to why they were called this. Some, on the positive side, say that they were hidden because they were so profound for most to understand. On the negative side, some say they were hidden away from people due to false doctrines that they taught
- It is important to note that Catholicism refers to these books as the "deuterocanon" (the second canon). They use the term "apocrypha" for the set of books we call the "pseudepigrapha," which means "false writings" and includes books such as 3 and 4 Maccabees and the books of Enoch, etc. The term "apocrypha" will be continued to be used here because I believe that this better expresses our belief in the rejection of these additions as being part of the canon. However, this is something important to keep in mind for the sake of clarity when you are engaging in a discussion with proponents of Catholicism

What Are the Contents of the Apocrypha?

- As was mentioned above there are 13 additions to the Old Testament that make up the Apocrypha
- These 13 additions include 7 stand alone books and 6 passages that have been incorporated into other books of the Old Testament
- The 7 books include:
 - Wisdom of Solomon
 - Sirach (Ecclesiasticus)
 - Tobit
 - Judith

- 1 Maccabees
- 2 Maccabees
- Baruch
- The 6 passages incorporated into other books are:
 - Letter of Jeremiah (normally chapter 6 of Baruch)
 - Additions to Esther
 - Prayer of Azariah (added to Daniel)
 - Song of Three Young Men (added to Daniel)
 - Susanna (Daniel 13)
 - Bel and the Dragon (Daniel 14)

Where did the Apocrypha come from?

- The books contained in the Apocrypha were all written by the Jewish people during the intertestamental period (the time between the Old and New Testaments), which would put their time of writing in the 4th-1st century B.C.
- Here is an estimation of dates for each particular addition:
 - Wisdom of Solomon = ca. 30 B.C.
 - Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) = ca. 132 B.C.
 - Tobit = ca. 200 B.C.
 - Judith = ca. 150 B.C.
 - 1 Maccabees = ca. 110 B.C.
 - 2 Maccabees = 110-70 B.C.
 - Baruch = ca. 150-50 B.C.
 - Letter of Jeremiah = ca. 300 B.C.
 - Additions to Esther = 140-130 B.C.
 - Prayer of Azariah = 2nd or 1st century B.C.
 - Song of Three Young Men = 2nd or 1st century B.C.
 - Susanna = 2nd or 1st century B.C.
 - Bel and the Dragon = ca. 100 B.C.

Summarizing Definition: The Apocrypha (called the Deuterocanon by Roman Catholicism) consists of the 13 additions written by the Jewish people during the Intertestamental Period that Roman Catholicism accepts as part of the Old Testament canon but are rejected by the Jewish and Protestant canons of the Old Testament.

Reasons for Accepting the Apocrypha

1. Allusions in the New Testament
 - This argument states that the writers of the NT often alluded to the Apocrypha and some of these allusions occur around direct quotes from the other canonical books of the Old Testament, which means that they must have considered the books of the Apocrypha canonical as well
2. Inclusion in the Septuagint (LXX)
 - Proponents of the Apocrypha also appeal to its inclusion in the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Old Testament)

- The argument is that the writers of the New Testament often quoted from the Septuagint and since the Apocrypha is included in the Septuagint, the writers of the New Testament must have accepted the Apocrypha as well
3. Presence among the Dead Sea Scrolls
 - Another defense is made by appealing to the fact that some of the Apocryphal books were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls (scrolls found in the caves in Qumran near the Dead Sea in Israel, which contained most of the books of the Old Testament)
 4. The Testimony of Early Church Fathers
 - Some of the early church fathers used the Apocrypha in their teaching and writing and therefore they viewed it as inspired and part of the canon
 - One of the main proponents of the Apocrypha was Augustine in the fourth and fifth century
 5. Church Councils
 - Church councils throughout church history have recognized and affirmed the canonicity of the books of the Apocrypha
 - This began in the councils of Hippo (393 A.D.) and Carthage (397 A.D.) and then culminated in the Council of Trent (1546 A.D.) where the Apocrypha was declared to be sacred and canonical

Geisler and Nix give a very good summary of the basic overall argument used by Roman Catholicism in trying to defend the acceptance of the Apocrypha, “In summary argument, this position argues that the widespread employment of the Apocrypha by Christians from the earliest centuries is evidence of their acceptance by the people of God. This long tradition was culminated by an official recognition of these books as inspired and canonical by the Council of Trent (1546).”

Reasons for Rejecting the Apocrypha

1. Evidence from the Old Testament
 - The Old Testament itself suggests a problem with accepting the Apocrypha as part of the actual canon.
 - As was mentioned before, all of the books of the Apocrypha were written in the 4th-1st century B.C. This means they were all written after the last of the prophetic books, Malachi, which was written in the late 5th century B.C.
 - Christians (of the Protestant tradition) recognize that there is a large gap between the last prophecies of Malachi and the first events of the New Testament. This gap has been called the “400 years of silence.” It is called this because it is held that prophetic activity ceased after Malachi and did not pick up again until the ministry of John the Baptist. This creates a problem for Roman Catholicism because if the word of the Lord was not coming to his people during this time then how can these books be considered inspired by God rather than just the writings of men.

- Roman Catholicism has to believe that some sort of succession of prophets continued after the time of Malachi in order to have the word of the Lord coming to the people and this is exactly what they claim.
- The problem, however, arises when one examines the close of Malachi. The book of Malachi closes with these last two verses:

“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the LORD comes. And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the land with a decree of utter destruction.” (Malachi 4:5-6)

- So Malachi ends his book with the note that Elijah is going to be the next to come. The coming of Elijah is the next event in God’s plan, which is why the New Testament opens up with the announcement of the birth of John the Baptist (Luke 1:5-25) who is clearly identified as this Elijah by Jesus himself (Matthew 17:10-13) [these verses also support that this mindset was shared by the Jews of the day that Elijah was the next event, which we see in John 1 as well]
- This would then suggest that the word of the Lord did in fact cease from the people from the time of Malachi until the time of John the Baptist, which would indicate that the succession of prophets ceased. This would then cast serious doubt on the books of the Apocrypha being inspired by God

2. Never Quoted in the New Testament

- A point that is often made against the Apocrypha is the fact that the writers of the New Testament never directly quote it or reference it with the preface “It is written” or any such introductory statement that would indicate its position in Scripture
- Roman Catholic apologists will be quick to point out that there are other books in the Old Testament that are not directly quoted either and so such an argument does not hold much weight.
- This is true, however, a further point can be made. Even though only a few books of the Old Testament are not directly quoted, a large portion of them are (about 33 of the 39). As for the Apocrypha, none of them are ever directly quoted in the New Testament. The Apocrypha makes up about 16% of the Old Testament. This is a significant chunk and it is therefore very surprising as to why none of these books are directly quoted in the New Testament.
- Even though the New Testament does not directly quote the Apocrypha, is it true that it alludes to it often as proponents claim?
- There are some instances where maybe an allusion can be seen, for example the potential connection between Matthew 27:41-43 and Wisdom of Solomon 2:17-22:

Matthew 27

41 So also the chief priests, with the scribes and elders, mocked him, saying,

42 *“He saved others; he cannot save himself. He is the King of Israel; let him come down now from the cross, and we will believe in him.*

43 *He trusts in God; let God deliver him now, if he desires him. For he said, ‘I am the Son of God.’”*

Wisdom of Solomon 2

17 *Let us see whether his words be true;
let us find out what will happen to him in the end.*

18 *For if the righteous one is the son of God, God will help him
and deliver him from the hand of his foes.*

19 *With violence and torture let us put him to the test
that we may have proof of his gentleness
and try his patience.*

20 *Let us condemn him to a shameful death;
for according to his own words, God will take care of him.”*

21 *These were their thoughts, but they erred;
for their wickedness blinded them,*

22 *And they did not know the hidden counsels of God;
neither did they count on a recompense for holiness
nor discern the innocent souls’ reward.*

- However, this is more of the exception. More often the claimed allusions are very vague and not convincing, for example the supposed connection between Luke 14:13 and Tobit 4:7:

Luke 14:13

But when you give a feast, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, the blind

Tobit 4:7

Give alms from your possessions. Do not turn your face away from any of the poor, so that God’s face will not be turned away from you.

- Another point must be made in regard to allusions as well. Just because something is alluded to or referenced in the New Testament does not make the work being quoted canonical or inspired. For example you have Paul quoting pagan poets in Acts 17:28, but that does not mean that that particular work is inspired or should be part of the canon. Sometimes the writers will reference things or use a thought that was common at the time to express their point and as a way to effectively communicate with their audience. This does not necessarily mean that whatever they are alluding to or referencing should be part of our Scriptures.

3. Rejected by the Jewish People

- This reason is actually one of the most convincing to me and it is the fact that the Jewish people never accepted these books as part of their canon.

So the people who wrote these books never viewed them as part of their Scriptures.

- That this was in fact true can be further confirmed by the Jewish historian Josephus who lived during the first century A.D. In his work *Contra Apion*, he makes the following statement:

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.* 'Tis true, our history hath been written since Artaxerxes very particularly; but hath not been esteemed of the like authority with the former by our forefathers; because there hath not been an exact succession of Prophets since that time. And how firmly we have given credit to these books of our own nation, is evident by what we do. For during so many ages as have already passed, no one has been so bold, as either to add anything to them; to take anything from them; or to make any change in them. But it is become natural to all Jews, immediately, and from their very birth, to esteem these books to contain divine doctrines; and to persist in them: and, if occasion be, willingly to die for them.

- Notice that Josephus states that they have 22 books in their canon. These 22 books are the equivalent of the 39 in the Protestant canon. 1 and 2 Samuel were one book, 1 and 2 Kings were one book, 1 and 2 Chronicles were one book, Ezra and Nehemiah were one book, the minor prophets were all one book, Ruth was attached to Judges, and Lamentations was attached to Jeremiah.
- Notice too that Josephus is aware of the existence of other books that he does not consider part of the divine 22 books.
- So we have testimony from a first century Jewish historian that the Jews around the time of Jesus and the apostles did not view the Apocrypha as part of the canon

4. Errors in Some of the Apocryphal Books

- Another reason for rejecting the Apocrypha is that some of the books contain errors and so do not line up with the inerrancy of Scripture. One main example will suffice.
- The age of Tobit is a problem. In the book of Tobit he claims that he was alive when his father's house split from the house of David and Jerusalem (1:4), which took place around 931 B.C. The book then ends by stating that Tobit heard of the destruction of Nineveh before he died (14:15), which occurred in 612 B.C. The problem occurs in 14:14 where the text says that Tobit died at the age of 127. However, from the dates we have above he would have had to be around 300 years old. Some apologists

try to shrug this off by saying Tobit is merely an extended parable or even that it is a religious novel and thus the historical events and names are added just to provide vivid detail. It is interesting that while the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops describes it as a religious novel, they state that this is the same style as the book of Esther. We acknowledge that Esther is a historical book with real people and real events and all of its historical data are correct, so why is that not the case with Tobit? Just because it is viewed as a parable or a religious novel, does that mean it can have clear factual errors in it like we saw?

5. Inconsistencies with the Rest of the Bible

- This is another major reason as to why the Apocrypha should be rejected. While these issues are extremely important, we will only briefly mention some of the issues now but they will be dealt with in much more detail in later classes.
- 2 Maccabees 12:44-45 speaks of praying for the dead and those who have died being delivered from their sins. These verses are also used to support the teaching of purgatory. Scripture is clear that it is only through the blood of Christ that people can be delivered from their sin (Ephesians 1:7) and that Christ's sacrifice was completely sufficient and we do not need further cleansing after we die (Hebrews 10:14)
- Tobit 12:9 teaches that almsgiving "saves from death and purges away every sin." Sirach 3:30 also teaches that "almsgiving atones for sin." These passages go against salvation by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9; Titus 3:5) and instead promotes a salvation by works.
- Sirach 3:3 mentions that "those who honor their father atone for sins," which again promotes a salvation by works.
- The fact that passages such as these contradict the clear teachings of the rest of Scripture is another clear sign as to why the Apocrypha should be rejected.

6. Dead Sea Scrolls Contained Many Other Books

- Some proponents point to the Apocrypha's presence among the books found among the Dead Sea Scrolls. However, many other books were found there such as portions of the books of Enoch, which indicates that they had a wide variety of texts there in that community and not all that was found there should be taken as canonical.
- It is interesting that among the Dead Sea Scrolls they found commentaries on books of the Bible, however, so far no commentaries on any of the books of the Apocrypha have been found.

7. Many Early Church Fathers Also Rejected It

- Proponents of the Apocrypha are quick to appeal to church history in trying to defend their position and sometimes sweeping statements are made that make it seem as if all of church history is on their side. However, we will see that there were many church fathers who rejected the Apocrypha as being part of the canon

Melito, quoted in Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History, 4.26

But in the Extracts made by him the same writer gives at the beginning of the introduction a catalogue of the acknowledged books of the Old Testament, which it is necessary to quote at this point. He writes as follows: "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, esteamest 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 written below. Their names are as follows: Of Moses, five books: Genesis, Exodus, Numbers, Leviticus, Deuteronomy; Jesus Nave, Judges, Ruth; of Kings, four books; of Chronicles, two; the Psalms of David, the Proverbs of Solomon, Wisdom also, Ecclesiastes, Song off 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.

Athanasius, *Festal Letter 39, 3-4, 7*

3. In proceeding to make mention of these things, I shall adopt, to commend my undertaking, the pattern of Luke the Evangelist, saying on my own account: 'Forasmuch as some have taken in hand ,' to reduce into order for themselves the books termed apocryphal, and to mix them up with the divinely inspired Scripture, concerning which we have been fully persuaded, as they who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the Word, delivered to the fathers; it seemed good to me also, having been urged thereto by true brethren, and having learned from the beginning, to set before you the books included in the Canon, and handed down, and accredited as Divine; to the end that anyone who has fallen into error may condemn those who have led him astray; and that he who has continued steadfast in purity may again rejoice, having these things brought to his remembrance.

4. *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. . .

7. *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, and that which is called the Teaching of the Apostles, and the Shepherd. But the former, my brethren, are included in the Canon, the latter being [merely] read; nor is there in any place a mention of apocryphal writings. But they are an invention of heretics, who write them when they choose, bestowing upon them their approbation, and assigning to them a date, that so, using them as ancient writings, they may find occasion to lead astray the simple.

Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*, 4.35

35. *Of these read the two and twenty books, but have nothing to do with the apocryphal writings.* Study earnestly these only which we read openly in the Church. Far wiser and more pious than yourself were the Apostles, and the bishops of old time, the presidents of the Church who handed down these books. Being therefore a child of the Church, trench thou not upon its statutes. 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.

Origen, quoted in Eusebius' *Ecclesiastical History*, 6.25.1-2

"It should be stated that the canonical books, as the Hebrews have handed them down, are twenty-two; corresponding with the number of their letters."

Farther on he 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, *Ammesphkodeim*; Deuteronomy, *Eleaddebareim*, 'These are the words'; Joshua, 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, *Dabreiamain*, 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, *Me-loth*; Ecclesiastes, *Koelth*; the Song of Songs, *Sir Hassirim*; Isaiah, *Jessia*; Jeremiah, with Lamentations and the epistle in one, *Jeremia*; Daniel, *Daniel*; Ezekiel, *Jezeziel*; Job, *Job*; Esther, *Esther*. And besides these there are the Maccabees, which are entitled *Sarbeth Sabanaiel*. He gives these in the above-mentioned work.

Gregory in vol. 37 of Migne's *Patrologia Graeca*, cols. 471-474

The divine oracles should always on the tongue and in the mind be rehearsed. For God will indeed give a reward for this labor, so that you may obtain light from anything hidden, or, what is far better, that you may be spurred by God to greater purity, and thirdly, be called away from the cares of the world by such study. But let not extraneous books seduce your mind. For many malignant writings have been disseminated. Accept, o friend, this my approved number. These are all twelve of the historical books, of the most ancient Hebrew wisdom: First there is Genesis, then Exodus, Leviticus too. Then Numbers, and the Second Law. Then Joshua and Judges. Ruth is eighth. The ninth and tenth books [are] the acts of Kings, and [the eleventh is] Chronicles. Last you have Ezra. The poetic books are five: Job being first, then [the Psalms of] David; and three of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Canticles and Proverbs. And similarly five of prophetic inspiration. There are the Twelve written in one book: Hosea and Amos, and Micah the third; then Joel, and Jonah, Obadiah, Nahum also, and Habakkuk, and Zephaniah, Haggai, then Zechariah, and Malachi. All these are one. The second is of Isaiah. Then the one called as an infant, Jeremiah, Then Ezekiel, and the gift of Daniel. *I count therefore, twenty-two of the ancient books, corresponding to the number of the Hebrew letters.*

Jerome, *Preface to Jerome's Works*, p. 492

As, then, the Church reads Judith, Tobit, and the books of Maccabees, but does not admit them among the canonical Scriptures, so let it read these two volumes [Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus] for the edification of the people, not to give authority to doctrines of the Church.

- This brief list is sufficient to show that church history is not necessarily on the side of the Apocrypha. From the first few centuries after the time of Jesus and the apostles there were many who rejected the Apocrypha as being part of the canon.

8. The Councils of Hippo and Carthage Were Local Councils

- Another defense made by proponents of the Apocrypha is that the councils of Hippo (393 A.D.) and Carthage (397 A.D.) accepted the Apocrypha as part of the canon, which indicates that this was the view of the Church at that time
- This reasoning, however, fails to recognize that these two councils were only local councils and did not speak for all of Christendom. As we saw from the quotes above, Jerome being a prime example since he was alive during the time of these councils, show that the Church as a whole did not accept the Apocrypha as canon.
- Also, these two councils were heavily influenced by Augustine, who lived in that area, and so they largely went with his belief that Apocrypha should be included primarily because it was part of the Septuagint.
- Quotes from later in church history also make it clear that the Church did not universally accept the Apocrypha as canon at this point in time

From the Prologue of the *Glossa Ordinaria* (15th century A.D.)

Many people, who do not give much attention to the holy scriptures, think that all the books contained in the Bible should be honored and adored with equal veneration, not

knowing how to distinguish among the canonical and non-canonical books, the latter of which the Jews number among the apocrypha. Therefore they often appear ridiculous before the learned; and they are disturbed and scandalized when they hear that someone does not honor something read in the Bible with equal veneration as all the rest. Here, then, we distinguish and number distinctly first the canonical books and then the non-canonical, among which we further distinguish between the certain and the doubtful. *The canonical books have been brought about through the dictation of the Holy Spirit. It is not known, however, at which time or by which authors the non-canonical or apocryphal books were produced. Since, nevertheless, they are very good and useful, and nothing is found in them which contradicts the canonical books, the church reads them and permits them to be read by the faithful for devotion and edification. Their authority, however, is not considered adequate for proving those things which come into doubt or contention, or for confirming the authority of ecclesiastical dogma, as blessed Jerome states in his prologue to Judith and to the books of Solomon. But the canonical books are of such authority that whatever is contained therein is held to be true firmly and indisputably, and likewise that which is clearly demonstrated from them.* For just as in philosophy a truth is known through reduction to self-evident first principles, so too, in the writings handed down from holy teachers, the truth is known, as far as those things that must be held by faith, through reduction to the canonical scriptures that have been produced by divine revelation, which can contain nothing false. Hence, concerning them Augustine says to Jerome: To those writers alone who are called canonical I have learned to offer this reverence and honor: I hold most firmly that none of them has made an error in writing. Thus if I encounter something in them which seems contrary to the truth, I simply think that the manuscript is incorrect, or I wonder whether the translator has discovered what the word means, or whether I have understood it at all. But I read other writers in this way: however much they abound in sanctity or teaching, I do not consider what they say true because they have judged it so, but rather because they have been able to convince me from those canonical authors, or from probable arguments, that it agrees with the truth.

Cardinal Cajetan (the opponent of Martin Luther)

Here we close our commentaries on the historical books of the Old Testament. For the rest (that is, Judith, Tobit, and the books of Maccabees) are counted by St Jerome out of the canonical books, and are placed amongst the Apocrypha, along with Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, as is plain from the Prologus Galeatus. Nor be thou disturbed, like a raw scholar, if thou shouldest find anywhere, either in the sacred councils or the sacred doctors, these books reckoned as canonical. For the words as well of councils as of doctors are to be reduced to the correction of Jerome. Now, according to his judgment, in the epistle to the bishops Chromatius and Heliodorus, these books (and any other like books in the canon of the bible) are not canonical, that is, not in the nature of a rule for confirming matters of faith. Yet, they may be called canonical, that is, in the nature of a rule for the edification of the faithful, as being received and authorised in the canon of the bible for that purpose. By the help of this distinction thou mayest see thy way clearly through that which Augustine says, and what is written in the provincial council of Carthage.

- Therefore we see that all the way up to the time of the Reformation there were still those among the Church that rejected the Apocrypha as being part of the canon.

9. The Council of Trent Was Largely Polemical

- The Council of Trent is when things changed. It was here that the Roman Catholic Church universally declared that the Apocrypha was inspired and was to be considered part of the canon of Scripture.

From the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent

“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 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...

But if any one receive not, as sacred and canonical, the said books entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church, and as they are contained in the old Latin vulgate edition; and knowingly and deliberately contemn the traditions aforesaid; let him be anathema. Let all, therefore, understand, in what order, and in what manner, the said Synod, after having laid the foundation of the Confession of faith, will proceed, and what testimonies and authorities it will mainly use in confirming dogmas, and in restoring morals in the Church.”

- The New Catholic Encyclopedia also supports the claim that it was at the Council of Trent when the Catholic Church definitively stated the Apocrypha was part of the canon, “The Council of Trent definitively settled the matter of the OT Canon. That this had not been done previously is apparent from the uncertainty that persisted up to the time of Trent.”
- What drove the Catholic Church to canonize the Apocrypha at this time? The likely answer is that it was a polemical response to the Reformation. In debates with Luther and other reformers the Apocrypha was often quoted to defend particular doctrines (e.g., praying for the dead), but when Luther and the other reformers began to challenge the canonicity of these books the Roman Catholic Church responded by canonizing them. You can begin to understand why the strong language mentioned in the quote above from the Council of Trent. Particular doctrines were being threatened and so they responded forcefully by stating that whoever rejected these books were to be considered anathema.

Conclusion

- While this class was heavy on the intellectual side of things we have to keep in mind that the goal of this series is to consider how we can minister to Catholics.
- Hopefully we are better prepared to engage with those who may have more understanding concerning the Apocrypha.
- As we saw in our examination today, a lot of the emphasis of salvation by works finds its roots in the Apocrypha. Bringing this understanding to people can bring great freedom and encouragement as we share the beautiful Biblical truth of salvation by grace through faith.
- And lastly, hopefully we are encouraged that we are not missing anything out of our Bibles but instead we have everything the Lord has given us pertaining to life and godliness.