

CANONICITY #2: BETWEEN THE TWO TESTAMENTS
TIME: 460 BC TO ABOUT 45 AD
THE APOCRYPHA EXPLAINED

Coastline Life in 3d Class, Paul & Yvon Prehn

What we'll cover today



- History what was going on in
 - Secular history
 - Jewish history
- What was translated: The Septuagint
 - Greek translation of Hebrew Scriptures
 - Significance of it
- What was written: Books of the Apocrypha
 - Why they are not in our Bible
- Why does it matter?

Where we left off in OT history



- Jews are back in the land
- BUT they are under foreign domination (except for brief Macabee period)
- Writing of Old Testament CLOSES with Ezra and the Great Synagogue, last books probably 1,2 Chronicles, last prophet Malachi
- "400 Silent years....."
- NO scripture written during this time
- OT in Hebrew.....however.....that isn't what hardly anyone spoke during this time

Aramaic Language

Hebrew	Aramaic
א	ܐ
ב	ܒ
ג	ܓ
ד	ܕ
ה	ܗ
ו	ܘ
ז	ܙ
ח	ܚ
ט	ܛ
י	ܝ
כ	ܟ
ל	ܠ
מ	ܡ
נ	ܢ
ס	ܣ
ע	ܥ
פ	ܦ
צ	ܥ
ק	ܩ
ר	ܪ
ש	ܫ
ת	ܬ

- Language from the same linguistic group as Hebrew, same alphabet
- Language of the Assyrians and Babylonians, Medo-Persian empire
- It was the day-to-day language of Israel in the Second Temple period(539 BCE – 70 CE), was the original language of sections of the biblical books of Daniel and Ezra. Though in the land, under foreign control and spoke Aramaic.
- The main language of the Talmud and TARGUMS, paraphrase commentaries
- The language spoken by Jesus, heard in *Passion of the Christ*

Same alphabet, NOT language, e.g. English/Spanish


Commentaries, paraphrases, but no TRANSLATION of OT

Alexander the Great




Koine Greek becomes the language of the world

World History: 460 BC to about 45 AD



- The Golden Age of Greece takes place early in this period, the time of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle. As the Greek city states decline....
- Alexander the Great, 335-323 BC, comes to power, conquers the known world, unifies it and gives it the **Greek language, culture, religions & myth.**
- After Alexander dies, his kingdom is split into four parts

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Jewish History



- After Alexander, Israel first under Egypt.
- Then Selucids, until: **Antiochus IV Epiphanes**
- **Maccabean Revolution**, 165 BC. Hellenization a major cause. **Hanukah instituted at this time.**
- Then the Hasmonean dynasty was established under the leadership of Simon Maccabaeus, two decades after his brother Judas the Maccabee ("Hammer") defeated the Seleucid army during the Maccabean Revolt in 165 BC.
- The Hasmonean Kingdom survived for 103 years before yielding to the Herodian Dynasty in 37 BC. Even then, Herod the Great felt obliged to bolster the legitimacy of his reign by marrying a Hasmonean princess, Mariamne.
- Rome intervened in 63 BC and Rome takes charge of Judea under general Pompey (general who fought Spartacus)

Secular history



Alexander conquered the Medo-Persian empire, all of Israel, Greece, Egypt, India

**He wanted all of them to have the same language and culture: Greek

**Power of Greek language and culture (remember Golden Era of Greece, which influences us greatly even today) remained even after Alexander died.

- Jewish people were scattered all over Alexander's former empire
- Kione Greek was language of business, culture, military, all who interacted with them
- Need for Scriptures in their language, only had Hebrew with Aramaic Targums

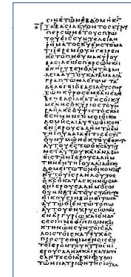
OT Canon Hebrew, Masoretic text

- This is the OT collection of books that has always been accepted by the Jews
- This is the text that has been shown to be almost perfect in its years of translations: e.g. the Dead Sea Scrolls
- This does not have any of the books of the Apocrypha in it



Septuagint, need for Greek OT

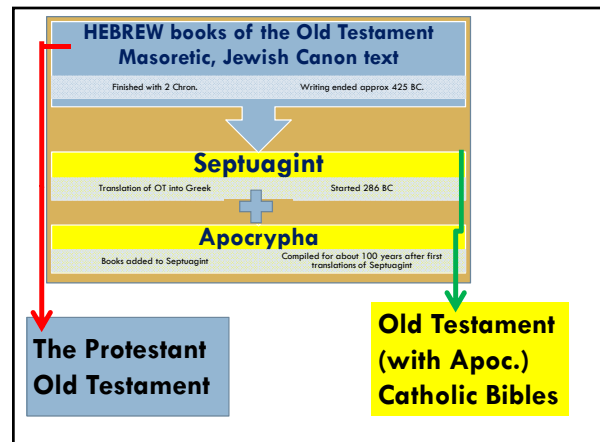
- The **Septuagint** or simply "**LXX**", referred to in critical works by the abbreviation is the Koine Greek version of the Hebrew Bible
- Scattered Jews and those who admired them "god-fearers" did not have the OT in their language.



From Codex Vaticanus

How the Septuagint came about

- **Ptolemy II Philadelphus** was the king of Ptolemaic Egypt from 283 BCE to 246 BCE.
- Legend: 'King Ptolemy once gathered 72 Elders. He placed them in 72 chambers, each of them in a separate one, without revealing to them why they were summoned. He entered each one's room and said: 'Write for me the Torah of Moshe your teacher.' God put it in the heart of each one to translate identically as all the others did'
- **Further books were translated over the next two centuries.** It is not altogether clear which was translated when, or where; some may even have been translated twice, into different versions, and then revised.
- These books are what we call the **Apocrypha**.
- **They are in the Septuagint, but not the Masoretic (Jewish Canon) text of the Hebrew Bible.**



What the Apocrypha consists of:

- 1 Esdras
- 2 Esdras
- Tobit
- Judith
- Rest of Esther
- Wisdom
- Ecclesiasticus
- Baruch
- Song of the Three Children
- Story of Susanna
- The Idol Bel and the Dragon
- Prayer of Manasses
- 1 Maccabees
- 2 Maccabees



- Additions to books of OT,
 - Many anonymous or of uncertain authorship
 - Mystical, fanciful stories added
- History
 - Probably valid history, some bad theology

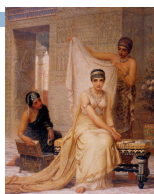
Why not accepted



- **Rejection by Jesus and the Apostles**
 - Never quoted or affirmed, most other books of OT quoted from
- **Rejection by the Jewish Community**
 - Ancient Jews rejected the Apocrypha as Scripture.
 - Philo never quoted the Apocrypha as Scripture.
 - Josephus explicitly rejected the Apocrypha and listed the Hebrew Canon to be 22 books.
 - The Jewish Community acknowledged that the prophetic gifts had ceased in Israel before the Apocrypha was written.
- **Many false teachings, not consistent with other scriptures (what follows mostly from www.carm.org)**

Additions to Biblical stories

- Title: **The Rest of the Chapters of the Book of Esther**
- "10:1: Then Mordecai said, God hath done these things."
- Most likely a scribal addition and answer to the problem that Esther does not contain the name of God.



Historical Errors



- Wrong historical facts:
 - Judith 1:5, "Now in the twelfth year of his reign, Nabuchodonosor, king of the Assyrians, who reigned in Ninive the great city, fought against Arphaxad and overcame him."
 - **The book of Judith incorrectly says that Nebuchadnezzar was the king of the Assyrians when he was the king of the Babylonians.**
 - Baruch 6:2, "And when you are come into Babylon, you shall be there many years, and for a long time, even to seven generations: and after that I will bring you away from thence with peace."
 - **Baruch 6:2 says the Jews would serve in Babylon for seven generations where Jer. 25:11 says it was for 70 years. "And this whole land shall be a desolation and a horror, and these nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years."**

Condone the use of magic



- **Condone the use of magic**
 - Tobit 6:5-7, "Then the angel said to him: Take out the entrails of this fish, and lay up his heart, and his gall, and his liver for thee: for these are necessary for useful medicines. . . . Then Tobias asked the angel, and said to him: I beseech thee, brother Azarias, tell me what remedies are these things good for, which thou hast bid me keep of the fish? 8 And the angel, answering, said to him: If thou put a little piece of its heart upon coals, the smoke thereof driveth away all kind of devils, either from man or from woman, so that they come no more to them."
- **Commentary: Is it true that the smoke from a fish's heart, when burned, drives away evil spirits? Of course not. Such a superstitious teaching has no place in the word of God.**

Not Prophetic, for- or forth-telling



- They are not prophetic, either for future or edification
- There is no supernatural confirmation of any of the apocryphal writers works
- There is no predictive prophecy
- There is no new Messianic truth revealed
- They are not cited as authoritative by any prophetic book written after them,
- They even acknowledge that there were no prophets in Israel at their time (cf. 1 Macc. 9:27; 14:41).

Teaches that forgiveness of sins is by human effort, primarily money

- Salvation by works:
- Tobit 4:11, "For alms deliver from all sin, and from death, and will not suffer the soul to go into darkness."
- Tobit 12:9, "For alms delivereth from death, and the same is that which purgeth away sins, and maketh to find mercy and life everlasting."



Money as an offering for the sins of the dead

- Maccabees 12:43, "And making a gathering, he sent twelve thousand drachms of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection."
- "When the coin in the coffer rings a soul from Purgatory springs" (a slogan to raise money in the days prior to the Reformation).



What about Catholic Church?

- **The Catholic Church has not always accepted the Apocrypha.**
- The Apocrypha was not officially accepted by the Catholic Church at a universal council until 1546 at the **Council of Trent**. This is over a millennium and a half after the books were written, and was a counter reaction to the Protestant Reformation.
- Many church Fathers rejected the Apocrypha as Scripture, and many just used them for devotional purposes. (My comment: DON'T)
- For example, Jerome, the great Biblical scholar and translator of the Latin Vulgate, rejected the Apocrypha as Scripture though, supposedly under pressure, he did make a hurried translation of it. In fact, most of the church fathers in the first four centuries of the Church rejected the Apocrypha as Scripture. Along with Jerome, names include Origen, Cyril of Jerusalem, and Athanasius.
- **Basis for false Catholic teachings: prayers for dead, alms for salvation**

Why does it matter?

- Because what you read and trust has an impact on your life.
- **READ the Bible without the Apocrypha.**
- No matter how "spiritual" something sounds, always check its content with the Bible.
- Know your Bible well so the false is easily apparent!



Questions

- **What did you know about the Apocrypha prior to the lesson today?**
- **Why is it important to understand what books properly belong in the Bible?**
- **How does what we read influence what we believe?**
- **What application does this have for what we read and look for us today?**