

## **Bible Basics - Chapter 3**

### **Apocryphal Books**

Apocrypha means 'hidden things' in Greek language. The Latin word apocryphus means "secret, or non-canonical". Most Catholic, Coptic, Orthodox and Greek churches consider these as authoritative scriptures, but they are generally regarded as non-canonical by most others. These books were written in the period between 2nd century B.C. and the 1st century A.D. 14/15 extra books that make up the Apocrypha are included in certain Bibles.

### **Old Testament Apocrypha**

1. The First Book of Esdras (also known as Third Esdras)
2. The Second Book of Esdras (also known as Fourth Esdras)
3. Tobit
4. Judith
5. The Additions to the Book of Esther
6. The Wisdom of Solomon
7. Ecclesiasticus, or the Wisdom of Jesus the Son of Sirach
8. Baruch
9. The Letter of Jeremiah (Some put this as the last chapter of Baruch. When this is done the number of books is fourteen instead of fifteen.)
10. The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Young Men
11. Susanna
12. Bel and the Dragon
13. The Prayer of Manasseh
14. The First Book of Maccabees
15. The Second Book of Maccabees

### **New Testament Apocrypha**

They are dated beginning in the 2nd century A. D. They try to “imitate” the authentic New Testament books.

A few examples

1. “Gospel of Thomas”
2. “Gospel of Peter”
3. “Protoevangelium of James”
4. “Gospel of Bartholomew”
5. “Infancy Story of Thomas”
6. “Acts of Peter,” “Acts of John,” “Acts of Paul,” etc.

## 2. Reasons why Apochrypha should not be included in the Bible

A. These books were never included in the Hebrew Canon of the Old Testament. This is noted by consulting writers such as Josephus

B. Jesus and the Apostles never quoted from these books

C. Jewish writers such as Philo and Josephus did not accept them.

D. Jerome (About 400 A. D.), whose Latin Vulgate is the basis for the Catholic Bible, believed them to be “apocryphal.”

E. They are not worthy of inspiration, and do not have qualities worthy of inclusion in the Canon of the Old Testament