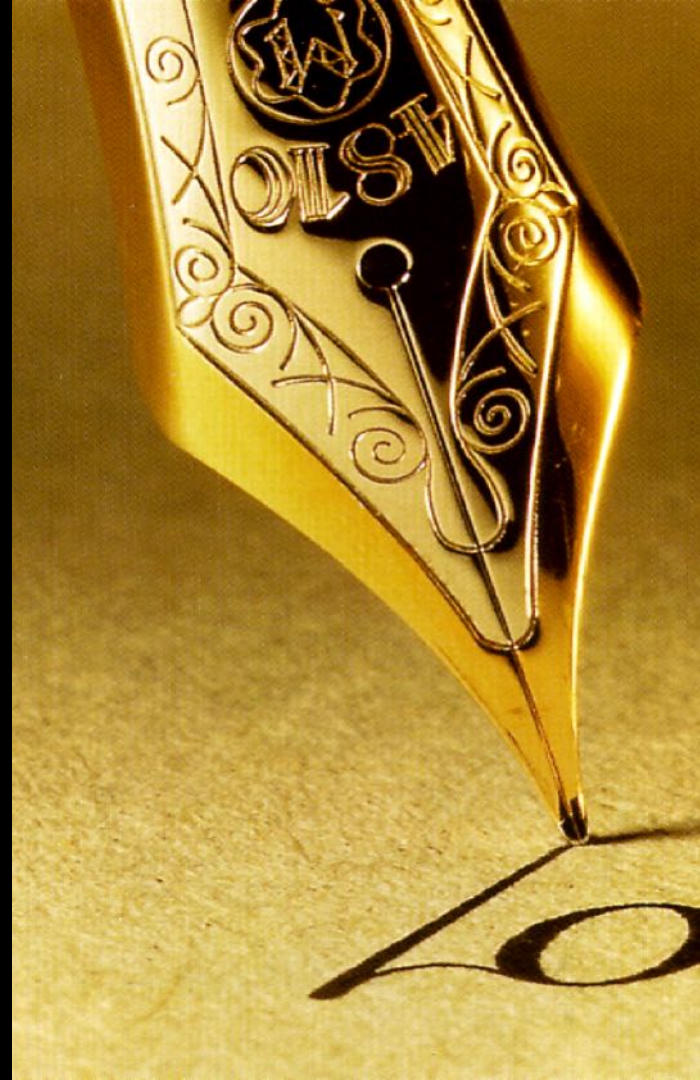


The Canon (Part 2)

Tom Pennington | September 18, 2016

The Canon of Scripture

1. The list of books acknowledged to be inspired.
2. The rule of belief and practice.



II. Official Church Recognition

- **Apostolicity**
- Antiquity
- Orthodoxy
- Catholicity
- Lection
- Inspiration



III. The Biblical Criteria



A. The Old Testament

- **1)** God unmistakably and undeniably chose Moses as His mouthpiece to the people.
- **2)** Moses predicted God would continue to raise up men like himself who would speak for God.



A. The Old Testament

- **3)** Moses gave three primary criteria for discerning a true prophet from the false...
 - Deut. 18:21-22—the true prophet's predictions always come true.
 - Deut. 13:1-5—the true prophet's message agrees perfectly with previous revelation.
 - Ex. 4:1-5, 27-31; 8:16-19 – God often authenticates true prophets by empowering them to work miracles.



B. The Apocrypha



1. What the Apocrypha Is

- “Things that are hidden”
- The 14 books included in the LXX that were not part of the Hebrew canon.
- Written between 200 BC and 100 BC
- The *Apocrypha* includes:
 - 1 & 2 Esdras
 - Tobit
 - Judith
 - The rest of Esther
 - The Wisdom of Solomon
 - Ecclesiasticus
 - Baruch
 - The Song of the Three Holy Children
 - Susanna
 - Bel & the Dragon
 - The Prayer of Manasseh
 - 1 & 2 Maccabees



2. Why some argue it should be in the canon

- #1: "Early versions of Scripture included them."
- #2: "The church fathers quote these books as authoritative."



3. Why we should not include it in the canon

- a) The Apocrypha distinguishes itself from the Law and the Prophets, or the canonical OT.
 - 1 Maccabees 4:45-46 (c. 100 BC) – “they tore down the altar and stored the stones in a convenient place on the temple hill until there should come a prophet to tell what to do with them.”
 - 1 Maccabees 9:27 – in the time of Maccabees, there had been no prophet for a long time; speaking of a time of great distress, the author writes, “such as had not been since the time that prophets ceased to appear among them.”



3. Why we should not include it in the canon

- b) The Jews never accepted the apocryphal books as a part of the canon of the OT.
 - In *Against Apion*, Josephus writes: “We have not tens of thousands of books, discordant and conflicting, but only twenty-two containing the record of all time, which have been justly believed to be divine.”
 - Josephus adds: “from Artaxerxes to our own times a complete history has been written, but has not been deemed worthy of equal credit with the earlier records, because of the failure of the exact succession of the prophets.”
 - Talmud: “after the latter prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi had died, the Holy Spirit departed from Israel.”



3. Why we should not include it in the canon

- c) Neither Jesus, the Apostles, nor any NT writer ever cites these books.
- d) Jesus affirmed the Jewish canon but not the Apocrypha (Matt. 5:18; Luke 24:44).
- e) In Rom. 3:2 Paul identified the writings the Jews embraced (our OT) as being from God.



3. Why we should not include it in the canon

- f) Church History argues against including these books as part of the canon.
 - Melito, bishop of Sardis
 - Origen
 - Athanasius
 - Augustine: “They are not found in the canon which the people of God received, because it is one thing to be able to write as men with the diligence of historians, and another as prophets with divine inspiration; the former pertained to the increase of knowledge; the latter to authority in religion, in which authority the canon is kept.”



3. Why we should not include it in the canon

- f) Church History argues against including these books as part of the canon.
 - Jerome : “Just as the church reads Judith and Tobias and Maccabees (in public worship) but does not receive them into the canonical Scriptures, so let it read these two books also for the edification of the people, not for the establishing of the authority of the doctrines of the church.”
 - Gregory the Great (pope circa 600 AD) on 1 Maccabees: “We address a testimony from books, though not canonical, yet published for the edification of the church.”
 - Luther: “These books are not to be regarded as equal in esteem with the Sacred Scriptures, but yet are useful and valuable for reading.”



A Summary of our Study of the Apocrypha

- Not inspired
- Not canonical
- Not authoritative
- Not to be treated differently from other human writings



C. The New Testament



1. The History

- In NT times

- 1 Tim. 5:18 – Paul quotes Luke 10:7 and calls it Scripture.
- 1 Cor. 2:13 – even the words were considered inspired.
- 1 Cor. 14:37-38 – the churches must acknowledge the apostles wrote the commands of Christ.
- 1 Cor. 11:2; 2 Th. 2:5 – churches were bound to obey the apostles' commands, including their written words.
- 2 Th. 3:6, 14 – those who refused to obey the apostles' words were to be put out of the church.
- 2 Pet. 3:16 – Peter calls Paul's "letters" Scripture, equal in authority to "the rest of the Scriptures."



1. The History

- The Early Church Fathers
 - “The Law and the Prophets, with the Gospels and the Apostles”
 - “The Law and the Gospel”
 - Clement (95) – 8
 - Ignatius (115) – 7
 - Polycarp (108) – 15
 - Irenaeus (185) – 21
 - Muratorian Canon (170) – 24
 - Athanasius (367) – 27
 - The Councils (300s) – 27



2. The Biblical Criteria

- Jesus pre-authenticated our NT!
 - By choosing the apostles to be His proxies.
 - Mark 3:14; Acts 10:41; Eph. 2:20
 - By authorizing them to write.
 - John 14:26; 15:26-27; 16:12-15; 17:20
 - By authenticating them with power to work miracles.
 - Acts 2:43; 14:3; 2 Cor. 12:12
 - By providing a list of inspired authors.



3. The Individual Books

- Most of the NT is in the canon because of direct, apostolic authorship...
 - Matthew
 - John – gospel, epistles, Revelation
 - Peter (1 & 2)
 - James
 - Paul – all the Pauline epistles
- Only five NT books were not directly written by an apostle...
 - Mark, Luke, Acts, Hebrews, and Jude.



Five Non-Apostolic NT Books

<u>NT Book...</u>	<u>Under the Apostle...</u>
Mark	Peter
Luke	Paul
Acts	Paul
Jude	James
Hebrews	Paul



IV. The Closed Canon

- The age of authenticated OT prophets ended, and there are no more NT apostles.
- Church history affirms the close of the canon.
- Scripture clearly implies the close of the canon.
 - Heb. 1:1-2
 - Jude 3
 - Rev. 22:18-19



The Practical Applications of a Closed Canon

- 1) God has completed everything he wanted to tell us.
- 2) There have been no additional writings from God.
- 3) We should not expect additional revelation of any kind.
- 4) We should not expect God to speak to us outside of Scripture.
- 5) We should not seek subjective impressions from God.
- 6) We only have to master one book.

