

How We Got Our Old Testament

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How We Got Our Old Testament Bible

Introduction

We will be trying to cram 4,000 years of history into five weeks of study so don't feel intimidated if you don't remember all the material that will be presented to you in this series.

Let's discuss some basics.

The Protestant Christian Bible is made up of **66** books. There are **39** Old Testament Books and **27** New Testament Books. In this class we will look at how we came about receiving the **39** Old Testament books.

Historical time in the world today, is normally divided into two segments, BC- the time before Christ - and A.D. the time after Christ's birth which come from the words "*Anno Domini*" in Latin or "*the year of the Lord*" in English. Today secular scholars have been trying to change these references in time to BCE, which stands for "*Before Common Era*" and CE which stands for "*Common Era*." It is really silly because these new terms only have meaning in relation to Christ's birth anyway.

Today we refer to the Bible as the Old Testament and New Testament. However, originally it was referred to as the "Covenant" or the "Book of the Covenant" as we see in Luke 22:20, where the Bible says, "Likewise He (Jesus) also *took* the cup after supper, saying, "This cup *is* the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you." In order for there to be a New Covenant, there must have been a previous covenant.

A covenant is basically a contract made between two parties and is considered valid as long as the terms of the covenant are kept. Most of the covenants in the Bible are in the Old Testament and are one sided with God making up the terms putting the majority of the covenant responsibility on Himself.

Biblical Covenants were made up of three basic components:

The **Words of the Covenant** (or promises)

The **Blood of the Covenant**

The **Seal of the Covenant**

A modern example of a covenant can be found in the marriage vows recited at a wedding. In most marriage ceremonies there are several sets of vows or promises that the couple asks of one another. The couple speaks these vows of commitment to one another in the presence of witnesses. They vow their lives to one another and place rings on each other's hand as a seal and sign of their covenant with each other.

Now, there are **four basic types** of covenants in the Bible:

An Everlasting Covenant: which is an eternal covenant.

A Temporal Covenant: which is in place until something better is to take its place.

An Irrevocable Covenant: which is only dependent on God.

A Revocable Covenant: which has requirements of man.

We are talking about divine covenants here and only God can institute a divine covenant. However, for any covenant to be established there must be an agreement and commitment between all parties.

The following is a list of the nine covenants of God found in the scripture.

1. **The Edenic Covenant** – Genesis 1-2 Concerning commandments given for the original creation that God made with man.
2. **The Adamic Covenant** – Genesis 3 Concerning new commandments and consequences from the results of sin.
3. **The Noahic Covenant** – Genesis 6-9 Concerning new commandments in Noah's new world.
4. **The Abrahamic Covenant** – Genesis 12-22 Concerning commandments and promises about the heritage of Abraham.
5. **The Mosaic Covenant** – Exodus 19-40 Concerning the 610 new commandments given to Moses.
6. **The Palestinian Covenant** – Deuteronomy 27-33 (29:1) Concerning the new commandments for generation of Jews that were to enter into the land of Canaan.
7. **The Davidic Covenant** – II Samuel 7; Psalms 89; Psalms 132 Concerning covenant of the kingly lineage of David.
8. **The New Covenant** – Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8; Matthew 26 Concerning Christ's new promises and commandments instituted by Christ's atonement.
9. **The Everlasting Covenant** – All other covenants are progressively pointing to this one. (Some commentators only recognized 1-8)

Now the Bible is made up of what we call **scripture** which is the divine collection of literature that define the practical working out of God's covenants with mankind.

How the Bible was First Transmitted and Preserved

1. It was first **verbally** transmitted from Adam to Moses by generational story telling. From first recorded history we know that some people have been gifted in memorization and story telling. In fact, that is what our playhouses are all about even today.

(Arnold Fruchtenbaum's Grandfather's Testimony).

He was raised to be Hassidic head Rabbinic Jew in Poland in World War 1. By 13 he memorized the Torah, by 18 memorized the whole Hebrew Bible, at 21 he had to pass an exam by a nail being driven indiscriminately through the whole Hebrew Bible and Arnold's grandfather had to tell the Rabbis every word that the nail pierced. Good Bible memory work, huh?¹

So the Bible first transmitted verbally and Oh by the way, there were only four generations that overlapped from Adam to Abraham that had to tell the story. Adam to Methuselah, Methuselah to Shem, Shem to Abraham.

(See Supplement One – The Bible Timeline) Page 10 in student's workbook

2. Secondly the Bible was given by **inspiration** – Breathed out of God into mind and spirit of man. “Biblical inspiration can be defined in these words: “God’s superintendence of the human authors so that using their own individual personalities, they composed and recorded

¹ Also you may want to watch the movie – “The Chosen” a true story about two Jewish boys and the beginning of the State of Israel.

without error His revelation to man in the words of the original autographs.”²

Another fancy word that theologian used for inspiration is “Plenary” which means divinely given or dictated by God.

Let’s take a look at some of the scriptures that support inspiration.³

II Tim 3:16-17

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”

II Peter 1:21

“For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit.”

So the Bible was transmitted first verbally, then given by inspiration and

Thirdly, the Bible was **dictated** from God to man – Exodus 34:1. The first five books of the Old Testament were called the **Torah** or the **Law**, and later called the Pentateuch by Origen in the 2nd Century. These first five books were written by **Moses and Joshua** (Deut. 31:24-26; Josh 24:25-26).

² (Fruit from the Frucht, Winter 2001)

³ There are about 803 “*Thus Saith the Lords*” in the Old Testament.

Deuteronomy 31:24-26 (NKJV) *“So it was, when Moses had completed writing the words of this law in a book, when they were finished, that Moses commanded the Levites, who bore the ark of the covenant of the LORD, saying: “Take this Book of the Law, and put it beside the ark of the covenant of the LORD your God, that it may be there as a witness against you.”*

Joshua 24:25 - Joshua 24:28 (NKJV) *“So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and made for them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem.”*

“Then Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God. And he took a large stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the sanctuary of the LORD. And Joshua said to all the people, “Behold, this stone shall be a witness to us, for it has heard all the words of the LORD which He spoke to us. It shall therefore be a witness to you, lest you deny your God. So Joshua let the people depart, each to his own inheritance.”

However, many Bible Scholars believe **Job** is the oldest book in the Bible and was re-written by Moses. Job⁴ very well may have been mentioned in Gen 46:13, and Eliphaz who was one of Job’s counselors is likely mentioned in Gen 36:10.

Now there have been many skeptics who have said that it was impossible for Moses to have written the Pentateuch because they say that man did not know how to write that when Moses lived on the earth. However, writing and documents were uncovered in 1929 of a library in Ugarit on the North West coast of Syria that were from the 14th century BC. This was about the time of Moses and these documents were in a Semitic (Jewish) language. We know Moses was

⁴ Many translations list Job, others list Jashub.

skilled in all the education of the Egyptians and probably also skilled in the education of the Hebrews according to Acts 7:22.

Also you may recall that God called Abraham out of Ur of the Chaldeans recorded in Genesis Chapter 12. Well guess what? The city of Ur that existed in 21st century BC has since been discovered. We have tablets from Abraham's hometown a half millennium before Moses and papyrus from the Nile –3000 to 2000 BC. Abraham was most likely a contemporary with Job and the book of Job was probably already written, Ur was also on the same plane as Midian where Moses was banished by Pharaoh. His newfound family was probably familiar with the story of Job.⁵

Various prophets, priests and kings, whom we will view shortly, wrote the rest of the books.

So in the **classic definition** of inspiration what part of the Bible was not God inspired? **The Ten Commandments**

Why? **They were written by God's own hand** – Exodus 31:18

⁵ (Ralph Earl, How We Got Our Bible, page 43)

Unique Characteristics of the Bible

As mentioned above, the Bible was infallible or inerrant (without error) in its original writings. And we have mentioned that there are no original manuscripts available. All the original Old Testament and New Testament scriptures have worn out through use and time or have been destroyed. All we have are copies and translations so there is no particular translation that is the infallible word of God. Though the Catholic Church did decree the Pope was infallible at the Vatican Council of 1869.

There are 5 basic principles used to determine if a document is considered scripture;

1. **Is it authoritative?** Did it come from the hand of God. (A Thus Saith the Lord)
2. **Is it prophetic?** Speaking forth the mind of God. (Twenty-five percent of the Bible is prophetic)
3. **Is it authentic?** (If in doubt throw it out was the early Fathers attitude)
4. **Is it dynamic?** (Life changing by the power of God)
5. **Was it received, collected and used?** (Accepted by the people of God).

Other unique characteristics of the Bible are:

1. **It has forty authors**⁶
2. **It was written in 3 languages**

What were these languages? **Hebrew Aramaic⁷ Greek**

3. **It was written over a period of 1500 years**

⁶ There are eight authors of the New Testament not counting the writer of Hebrews.

⁷ Most the Aramaic is found in Daniel, Esther and the New Testament Gospels.

There is no other works of antiquity (ancient writings) that has been written that has this much diversity and yet is in harmony.

The Divisions and Structure of the Bible

The Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) is divided into three sections. What do you think they are?

1. **The Law**
2. **The Prophets**
3. **The Writings**

Jesus seemed to confirm this in Luke 24:44-45:

“Then He said to them, “These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms (Writings) concerning Me.” And He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures.

However the New Testament Church divided the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament) into four parts:

1. **The Law**
2. **The Historical Books**
3. **The Poetical Books**
4. **The Prophets**

What the Bible Was Written On

One of the main materials used to write on was **Papyrus** – Made from the **papyrus plant** a reed that grew in shallow lakes and rivers in Egypt and Syria. Large shipments of papyrus were sent through the Syrian port of Byblos. So, it is surmised that the Greek word for books, *Biblos* came from the name of this port. The English word “paper” also comes from the Greek word, papyrus. The word Bible may also come from the Greek word, “*Ta-Bibia*”, meaning, “The Books.” The Latin singular word for Bible is *Biblia*, which also means, The Book.⁸

Now there were other materials used such as:

Parchment – skins of animals from the city Pergamum.

Vellum – fine calf skin (Poor babies cows exploited again!) (veal)

Other materials used for writing were, pottery, stone, clay and wax.

The Hebrews divided the books up not according to **importance**, but according to **length**. Each scroll had a limited length. The scrolls were normally **20 –35** feet, but some of the *papyrus* scrolls are known to be **144** feet long. If they ran out of cowhide or paper, they would divide the books into parts, such as: I or II Samuel, I or II Kings, I or II Chronicles. Most scrolls are one sided, but some are two sided as mentioned in Revelation 5:1.⁹

When the entire Pentateuch is present on a scroll, it is called a "Torah." An entire Torah Scroll, if completely unraveled, is over 150 feet long! As most sheep are only about two to three feet long, it took an entire flock of sheep to

⁸ See page 20 of Earle's work.

⁹ From “A General Introduction to the Bible” by David Ewert, page 32

make just one Torah scroll. The Jewish scribes who painstakingly produced each scroll were perfectionists. If they made even the slightest mistake in copying, such as allowing two letters of a word to touch, they destroyed that entire panel (the last three or four columns of text), and the panel before it, because it had touched the panel with a mistake! While most Christians today would consider this behavior fanatical and even idolatrous (worshiping the scripture, rather than the One who gave it to us), it nevertheless demonstrates the level of faithfulness to accuracy applied to the preservation of God's Word throughout the first couple of thousand years of Biblical transmission.

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After a scroll was written, it was only used for a certain amount of time. Once it became “old” it was given a funeral and destroyed. This also helps explain why there are few ancient Hebrew Bible scrolls.

The Hebrews unlike us gentiles do not want any old scrolls laying around. It was their desire to protect the scriptures from being misread or copied and provide the misfortune of being remembered or re-copied with mistakes in them. After the Babylonian Captivity, the scribes and rabbis believed that God gave them the responsibility to watch over the Word of God.

In Romans 3:1 Paul wrote:

“What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? ²Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.”

¹⁰ http://www.worldbiblesociety.org/history_of_bible.html

The Jewish people started out kinda slow concerning their faithfulness to God but later on, especially after the Babylonian captivity, they took their job very seriously which we will discuss more later on in this study.

The oldest leather scrolls date back to **1500 BC**. Classic authors wrote on papyrus until about the 3rd century AD. Papyrus was difficult to preserve and thus made the **Dead Sea Scrolls** a miraculous find. We will be talking more about the Dead Sea Scrolls in our next class.

The Canonization of the Old Testament

Let's talk about the word "Canon." It is not a big gun that you might picture on a pirate ship. The word canon comes from the root word "**reed**." The English word is "cane", the Hebrew is "ganeh" and the Greek "kanon." The reed was used as a measuring rod and eventually became to mean "standard" (Job 40:21; I Kings 14:15; Gal. 6:16). Later it came to mean "list" when applied to scripture means "an **officially** accepted list of books."

The Hebrew Bible

For the next portion of the study I may refer to the Old Testament as the Hebrew Bible, or the Hebrew Old Testament to distinguish it from the Protestant Old Testament, howbeit, they are all both the same.

The Hebrew Bible then, (Old Testament) contains the same information as the Protestant Old Testament Canon but the division of the books are different. The Hebrew Bible originally had 24 books whereas the Protestant Old Testament Canon has 39. The Catholic Bible has fourteen additional books. Why? We will discuss this at the end of this lesson when we address the Apocrypha.

I've included with your study guide a list of how the Old Testament books were divided up differently by Jews, Protestants and Catholics.

(Show Power Point Supplement Two now- Page 10 in student's workbook)

The Role of Divine Providence in Compiling the Hebrew Bible

One must believe that God used providence to get us His Bible.

What is Providence? Divine guidance or care; Or - God conceived as the power of sustaining and guiding the destiny of man. (Webster Collegiate Dictionary, 1981)

Simply put "God's provision for you by his all powerful hand."

Proverbs chapter 16 teaches us about the providence of God – Makes us ponder who's leading whom? Look at the following verses:

¹ The preparations of the heart *belong* to man, But the answer of the tongue *is* from the LORD.

⁹ A man's heart plans his way, But the LORD directs his steps.

³³ The lot is cast into the lap, But its every decision *is* from the LORD.

Proverbs 21:1

The king's heart *is* in the hand of the LORD, *Like* the rivers of water; He turns it wherever He wishes.

Isaiah 46:9 through Isaiah 46:10

Remember the former things of old, For I *am* God, and *there is* no other; *I am* God, and *there is* none like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times *things* that are not *yet* done, Saying, 'My counsel shall stand, And I will do all My pleasure,'

Jeremiah 10:23 - O LORD, I know the way of man *is* not in himself; *It is* not in man who walks to direct his own steps.

Significant Times

There were significant times in history that marked the official acceptance and stamp of approval of the canonization of the books of the Hebrew Bible from the Jewish People, from Rabbi's and from God. Daniel may have made mentioned of a collection of the Hebrew Bible books in 600 BC (Daniel 9:2). According to Jewish tradition, **Ezra**, a priest and scribe, collected and arranged some of the books of the Hebrew Bible, around 450 BC (and the Mishnah or Oral Tradition).

All the Hebrew Bible books were written by 400 BC. The period between the Old and the New Testaments, 400 BC to the time of Christ, is called the "four hundred silent years" but they weren't that silent as far as history goes.

If you want to read a great little synopsis of these years from a Christian perspective you may want to pick up the book, "The Four Hundred Silent Years" by H. A. Ironsides.

The first significant event was the formation of the **Septuagint in about 250 BC**. Ptolemy the ruler of Egypt between 285-247 BC wanted to establish a Royal Library. One tradition tells us that he gathered 72 Jewish Scribes, 6 from each tribe of Israel to compile what the Jews would consider their official scripture. They were sent to an island and were given all the Hebrew

literature that was considered holy writings.¹¹ The literature to be evaluated was much more than what we consider the Hebrew Bible today. Each Scribe was put in separate rooms to study and pray over what should be accepted as Scripture. Supposedly within 72 days, all the scribes came out of the rooms with what they felt was the Hebrew Bible Canon and miraculously all had the same documents. (Proverbs 16?)

Actually, what first made up the Septuagint were only the first five books of the Hebrew Bible called the Pentateuch. These Hebrew books were first translated into Greek, which was the major tongue of the day. The rest of the Hebrew Old Testament was slowly added along with the Apocrypha during the next 200 years. By the time Christ was born the Septuagint was the accepted Hebrew Bible. The Jews embraced the Septuagint until 70 AD and Jesus quoted from the Septuagint whenever he referred to the Hebrew Bible Scriptures.

Another significant time in history was in 164 BC when Judas Maccabaeus and his associates ousted Antiochus Epiphanes from the temple and Jerusalem. Judas declared the books we have today as the accepted Old Testament Canon excluding the apocryphal books. (II Macabees 2:13)

Christ gave witness to the Old Testament Canon. We can see a chronological picture he gave in Matthew 23:35; where Jesus said,

“that on you may come all the righteous blood shed on the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah, son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar”

¹¹ Like the American Library of Congress or the British Library who's goal are to be national libraries housing a copy of every single piece of literature.

Also Luke 11:51, verifies the canonical books from Abel (Gen 4:8) to Zechariah (II Chronicles 24:21). Remember, in the Hebrew Canon –Malachi was the last book written, but Chronicles is last in the order of the Hebrew Canon.

An additional significant point in history came in 70 AD when Titus squashed a major Jewish rebellion. Jerusalem and the Temple were destroyed along with all the Jewish Libraries that contained the scriptures, genealogies and the history of the Jews. Josephus, a Jewish historian alive at the time, tells us that over one million Jews lost their lives. This revolt had many serious and long lasting repercussions, especially for a community of people called the Essenes. There were two significant points of interest concerning the confirmation of the Hebrew Canon in 70 AD. First, the destruction of Jerusalem caused the Jews to be scattered and their literature was lost. The tribulation of this event drove the Jews to the scriptures for hope and help. The Rabbi's began to regroup and started to reproduce their scriptures leaving out the apocryphal books as part as the accepted canon of the Old Testament.

Secondly, as mentioned above, the Septuagint was in Greek. By 70 AD, the Christian church had begun to take strong root in society. Though the church started out as mostly converted Jewish believers, the church now, was significantly made up of Gentile believers. These Gentiles claimed that the Septuagint was the Word of God as well as the Jews. Obviously, the Jews had a problem with Jesus Christ being the Messiah. They also had a problem with the Christians who believed this and were using the Septuagint as the Word of God. So the Jewish Rabbi's decided that they wanted no part of the

Septuagint, (which was after all a gentile translation) and decided to translate the scriptures back into Hebrew, which was their native language, separating themselves from any association with the gentile's Christian religion.

The last significant event in the confirmation of the canonization of the Old Testament Scriptures was the **counsel of Jamnia in 90 AD**. The Rabbis asked the Romans for permission to have a council to discuss and debate if the any of the already accepted Hebrew books should be rejected. Jonah, Ezekiel, and some of the writings were of the books in question. Once again, the Jews wanted to reestablish the accepted scriptures and preserve the Hebrew translation. All in question above were eventually approved once again.

Old Testament Apocrypha

As mentioned, the Jews and Protestants recognize the same books, while the Catholics recognize fourteen additional books called the Apocrypha, which means, “Hidden.” In some religious circles it was believed these were the more mysterious books from God and only the “enlightened ones” could really understand their meaning. Sometimes the Apocrypha will be referred to as the Pseudepigrapha. The Pseudepigrapha are additional books that some Jews held as holy writings that were outside of the list of the Hebrew Bible and the Apocrypha.

These books were written between 200 BC to 100 AD. Although the Catholic Church endorsed the Apocrypha, they did not canonize it until 1546 at the Counter Reformation Council at Trent. However, some Catholic scholars rejected the Apocrypha through the influence of the reformation. (Jerome termed the word Apocrypha in 300 AD while commissioned by the Catholic Church to translate the Bible into the Latin vulgate. Though Jerome translated the Apocrypha he resisted calling it Scripture.)

The Apocrypha was generally scattered throughout the books of the Hebrew Bible (Old Testament), up to the time of Martin Luther who separated it out and listed it as a separate section of the Bible. Around 1590 the Geneva Bible (the Pilgrim’s Bible) began to shed the Apocrypha, and other translations slowly followed suit. However, just fifty years ago, you would find the Apocrypha still apart of many protestant Bible translations.

Here is a brief list of the fourteen writings that are generally referred to as the Apocrypha:

First Esdras	The Wisdom of Solomon	The Song of the Three -
Second Esdras	Ecclesiasticus	Hebrew Children
Tobit	Baruch	Prayer of Manasseh
Judith	Song of Susanna	First Maccabees
Additions to Esther	Bel and the Dragon	Second Maccabees

According to Unger's Bible Dictionary – Moody Press 1966, the following are some of the reasons the **Apocryphal literature** did not meet the requirements for the Bible:

1. They abound in historical and geographical **inaccuracies** and **anachronisms**. (Errors in chronology)
2. They teach doctrines, which are **false** and foster practices, which are not in agreement with inspired scripture.
3. They resort to literary types and display an artificiality of subject matter and styling out of keeping with inspired scripture (too allegorical or metaphorical).
4. They lack the distinctive elements, which give genuine scripture their divine character, such as **prophetic power** and poetic and religious feeling.

(Power Point Slide) Quote taken from Ralph Earle – “How We Got Our Bible”, Beacon Hill Press – 1971 (pages 37-40)

“What should our attitude be toward the Apocrypha? In the first place, we must recognize there is much material of historical and religious value. But we agree with sound Protestant opinion of 400 years: These books are not part of the inspired, authoritative Word of God. As such we believe they have no place in the Bible but should be studied separately.”

(See Supplement Three for a brief description of the Apocryphal books-Page 11-13 in Student’s Workbook)

Supplement Three

Ralph Earle Qouote – Beacon Hill Press – 1971 (pages 37-40)

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Since most Protestants are not familiar with the Apocrypha, a brief overview of each book may be in order. Since the Roman Catholic Church officially holds these books to be part of the inspired, authoritative Bible, we need to know more about them.”

First Esdras (about 150 B.C.) tells of the restoration of the Jews to Palestine after the Babylonian exile. It draws much from Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. In addition, the author has added much legendary material.

The most interesting item is the Story of the Three Guardsmen. They were debating what was the strongest thing in the world. One said, “Wine”; another, “the King”; the third, “Woman and Truth.” They put these three answers under the king’s pillow. When he awoke he required the three men to defend their answers. The unanimous decision was: “Truth is greatly and supremely strong.” Because Zerubbabel had given this answer he was allowed, as a reward, to rebuild the Temple at Jerusalem.

Second Esdras (A.D. 100) is apocalyptic work containing seven visions. Martin Luther was so confused by these visions that he is said to have thrown the book into the Elbe River.

Tobit (early second century B.C.) is a short novel. Strongly Pharisaic in tone, it emphasizes the Law, clean foods, ceremonial washings, charity, fastings, and prayer. It is clearly unscriptural in its statement that almsgiving atones for sin.

Judith (about the middle of second century B.C.) is also fictitious and Pharisaic. The heroine of this novel is Judith, a beautiful Jewish widow. When her city was besieged she took her maid, together with clean Jewish food, and went out to the tent of the attacking general. He was taken by her beauty and gave her a place in his tent. Fortunately, he had imbibed too freely and sank into a drunken stupor. Judith took his sword and cut off his head. Then she and her maid left the camp, taking his head in their provisions bag. It was hung on the wall of a nearby city, and the leader-less Assyrian army was defeated.

Additions to Esther (about 100 B.C.). Esther stands alone among the books of the Old Testament in having no mention of God. We are told that Esther and Mordecai fasted. No mention of prayer, however, is made. To compensate for this lack, the Additions have long prayers attributed to these two. Several letters supposedly written by Artaxerxes are also included.

The Wisdom of Solomon (about A.D. 40) was written to keep the Jews from falling into skepticism, materialism, and idolatry. As in Proverbs, Wisdom is personified. There are many noble sentiments expressed in this book.

Ecclesiasticus, or *Wisdom of Sirach* (about 180 B.C.), shows a high level of religious wisdom, somewhat like the canonical Book of Proverbs. It also contains much practice advice. For instance, on the subject of after-dinner speeches it says”

“Speak concisely; say much in few words;
Act like a man who knows more than he says” (32:8)
And again:
“Prepare what you have to say,
And then you will be listened to” (33:4).

In his sermons John Wesley quotes several times from the Book of Ecclesiasticus. It is still widely used in Anglican circles.

Baruch (about A.D. 100) was reportedly written by Baruch, the scribe of Jeremiah, in 582 B.C. It apparently attempts to interpret the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. The book urges the Jews not to revolt again and to submit to the emperor. In spite of this the Bar-Cochba revolution against Roman rule took place soon after, in A.D. 132 to 135. The sixth chapter of Baruch contains the so-called Letter of Jeremiah, with its strong warning against idolatry – probably addressed to Jews in Alexandria, Egypt.

The History of Susanna (about 100 B.C.) Our Book of Daniel contains 12 chapters. In the first century before Christ a 13th chapter was added, the story of Susanna. She was the beautiful wife of a leading Jew in Babylon, to whose house the Jewish elders and judges frequently came. Two of these men tried to seduce her. When she cried out, the two elders said they found her in the arms of a young man. She was brought to trial. Since there were two witnesses who agreed in their testimony, she was convicted and sentenced to death.

A young man named Daniel interrupted the proceedings and began to cross-examine the witnesses. He asked each one separately under which tree in the garden they found Susanna with a lover. When they gave different answers they were put to death and Susanna was saved.

Bel and the Dragon was added at about the same time and called chapter 14 of Daniel. Its main purpose was to show the folly of idolatry. It really contains two stories.

In the first, King Cyrus asked Daniel why he did not worship Bel, since that deity showed his greatness by daily consuming much flour and oil and many sheep. Daniel scattered ashes on the floor of the Temple where food had been placed that evening. In the morning the king took Daniel in to show him that Bel had eaten all the food during the night. Daniel showed the king the footprints of the priests and their families who had entered secretly under the table. The priests were slain and the temple destroyed. The second, the story of the Dragon, is just as obviously legendary in character. Along with Tobit, Judith, and Susanna, these stories may be classified as Jewish fiction. They have little if any religious value.

The *Song of the Three Hebrew Children* follows Dan 3:23 in the Septuagint and the Vulgate. Borrowing heavily from Psalm 148, it is antiphonal (a psalm, anthem, or verse sung responsively) like Psalm 136. The refrain: “Sing praise to him and greatly exalt him forever,” appears 32 times.

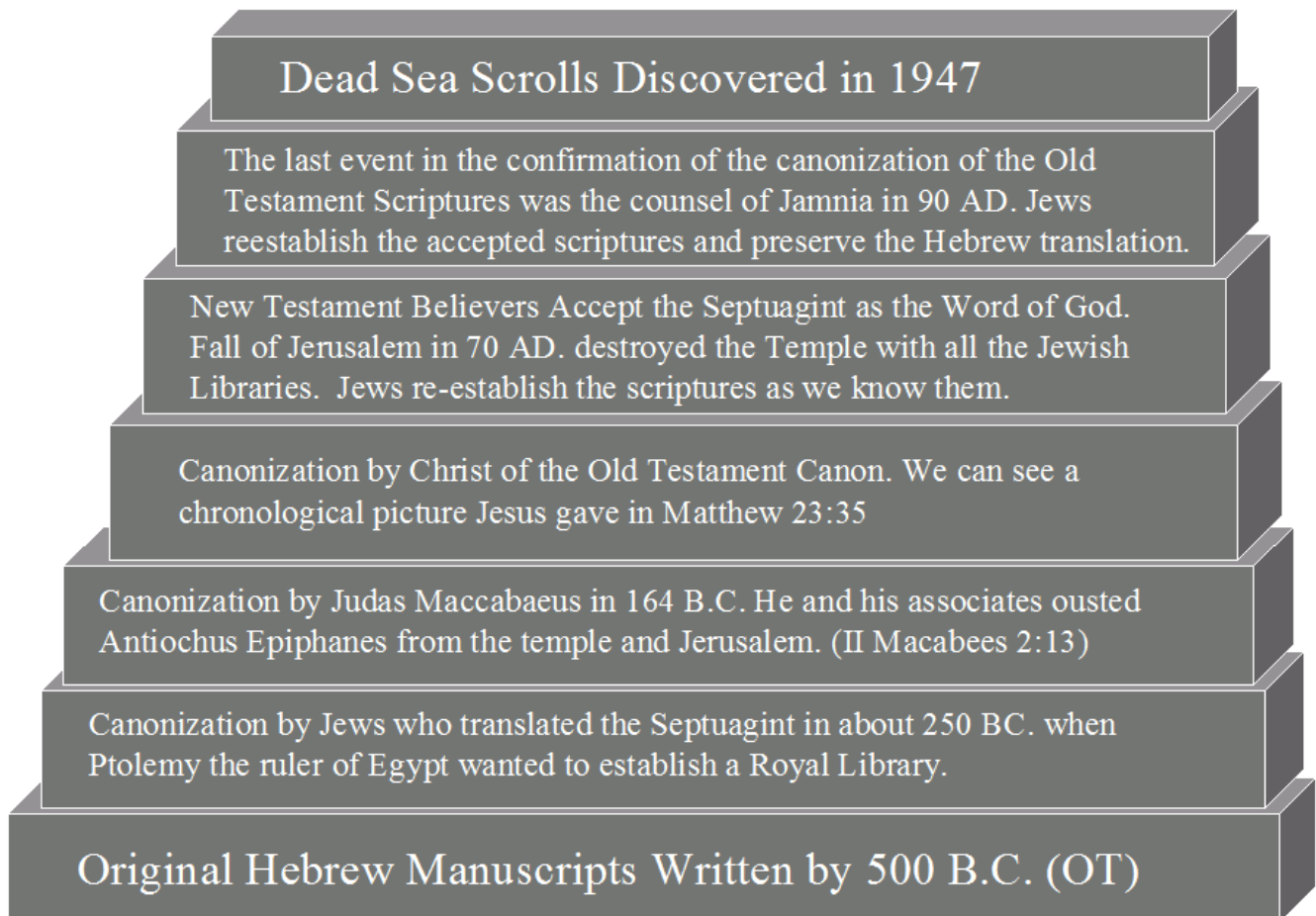
The *Prayer of Manasseh* was composed in Maccabean times (second century B.C.) as the supposed prayer of Manasseh, the wicked king of Judah. It was obviously suggested by the statement in 2 Chron. 33:19 – “His prayer and how God was moved by his entreaty, ...all are written in the records of the seers.” Since this prayer is not found in the Bible, it obviously is legendary.

First Maccabees (first century B.C.) is perhaps the most valuable book in the Apocrypha. It describes the exploits of the three Maccabean brothers – Judas, Jonathon, and Simon. Along with Josephus, it is our most important source for this crucial, exciting period in Jewish history.

Second Maccabees (same time) is not a sequel to 1 Maccabees. It is a parallel account, treating only the victories of Judas Maccabaeus. It is generally thought to be more legendary than 1 Maccabees.

Now let's take a look at the foundation of the Old Testament with a **Power Point slide I** put together. (Page 14 of the Student's Workbook)

Supplement Four



New Testament Witnesses to the Old Testament Canon

Among others who documented the Old Testament canon as we have it are: Josephus, a Jewish historian writing in 100 AD and Melito, Bishop of Sardis in 170 AD.

For more New Testament references to the Old Testament scripture see:

Matthew 21:42; 22:29; 26:24; 56

Luke 24

John 2:22-26; 5:39; 10:35

Acts 17:2; 11; 18:28

Romans 1:2; 4:3; 9:17; 10:11; 11:2; 14:4; 16:26

I Corinthians 15:3-4

Galatians 3:8; 3:22; 4:30

I Timothy 5:18

II Timothy 3:16

II Peter 1:20-21; 3:16

(Chapter 3 section 5c of “Evidence that Demands a Verdict”)

Conclusion

As mentioned earlier, Paul tells us in Romans that one of Gods purposes in blessing and preserving the Jews was because he wanted the Jews to preserve the Old Testament scriptures.

In Romans 3:1-2, Paul writes,

“What advantage then has the Jew, or what is the profit of circumcision? Much in every way! Chiefly because to them were committed the oracles of God.

Which the Jews did meticulously and we will fully discuss this when we take a look at the Talmudists and the Massorettes Jews when we get into Part Two, How We Got the New Testament.

Thus after looking at all this material, we can have confidence that we have the Old Testament Scriptures as God intended.

Secondary Inspiration

Can there be something inspired by God today such as a book, a song, a teaching or a prophecy? (Yes) But it cannot be considered Plenary or Primary Inspiration as like the words that make up the Bible. However, we can still be inspired by God today to write inspirational words that I call “Secondary Inspiration.” Examples of this secondary inspiration today are worship songs, sermons and books that have been written that carry an inspirational teaching. One of the current examples of this could be Rick Warren’s book, “Purpose Driven Life” which has sold to date 20 million copies. Think what you will of the book, but it has influenced millions of people’s lives towards the gospel.

In conclusion, the following 3 statements can be the 3 legged stool of providence that we can rest on:

1. *The phenomenon of the preservation of the scripture that we have observed historically.* (Past)
2. *The supernatural witness the Spirit of God gives to us in our own hearts.* (Present)
3. *The constant witness of truth as revealed by archaeology and fulfilled prophesy.* (Future)

So by 70 AD the Church and the Jews believed they had the Hebrew Old Testament “Word of God.” The New Testament was yet to be fully written and accepted.

The Bible still is the #1 best seller in the world

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The Old Testament recognizes that it is the Holy Spirit who speaks through its writers (2 Samuel 23:2-3).

Indeed, many Old Testament passages quoted in the New Testament are said to have the Holy Spirit as their author, even though a human prophet actually spoke the words in the Old Testament (see Mark 12:36; Acts 1:16; 28:25; Hebrews 3:7; 10:15-16).

Old Testament Designation/New Testament Designation

The psalmist said (Psalm 95:7)/The Holy Spirit said (Hebrews 3:7)

The psalmist said (Psalm 45:6)/God said (Hebrews 1:8)

The psalmist said (Psalm 102:25,27)/God said (Hebrews 1:10-12)

Isaiah said (Isaiah 7:14)/The Lord spoke by the prophet (Matthew 1:22-23)

Hosea said (Hosea 11:1)/The Lord spoke by the prophet (Matthew 2:1).

Eliphaz's words (Job 5:13)/God's Word (1 Corinthians 3:19)

God's Words in the Mouths of the Prophets

In 2 Samuel 23:2 we read the following words from the mouth of David: "The Spirit of the lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." Here is a clear reference to a human being used as a mouthpiece for the spirit of God.

Similarly, we read in Isaiah 59:21, "As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the lord; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth..." (emphasis added). Though God used human beings in the process of communicating His words, it is clear that the Holy Spirit was in charge of the process so that no human error or opinion entered into the picture.

Turning to Jeremiah 1:9 we read, "Then the lord put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the lord said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth." Again, we see that God is in control of the process of communicating His word to man.

Speaking of the Old Testament prophets in general, we read in Zechariah 7:12, "Yea, they made their hearts as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which the lord of hosts hath sent in his spirit by the former prophets: therefore came a great wrath from the lord of hosts" (emphasis added).

<http://home.earthlink.net/~ronrhodes/Inspiration.html>