

Here is a recent question I have received about the “Old Testament Apocrypha.”

QUESTION

Bart, I hope you won't mind me asking a totally unrelated question: At the beginning of the Christian Era - how many books of the Hebrew Old Testament did the Greek Septuagint translation contain?

RESPONSE:

This is indeed an important topic, one usually overlooked completely by Protestant readers of the Bible. Here is what I say about the apocrypha in my textbook on the Bible:

In addition to the canonical books we have examined so far, there was other literature written by Jewish authors that cannot be found in the Hebrew Bible but that is of great importance for anyone interested in it. Of these other Jewish books, none is of greater historical significance than a collection of writings that can be found in some Christian versions of the Old Testament. These are the deuterocanonical writings, as they are called in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox traditions; Protestants typically designate them as the Apocrypha. The term “apocrypha” may not be altogether appropriate, as it is a word that means ...

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