

GREETING Include the title “The Apocrypha, Sex, lies, courtroom drama, dragons, terrorists and more, Catholics have them Protestants don’t. It’s really protestant don’t consider them as part of their canonical scriptures.

OPENING PRAYER

TO BEGIN we need to set the stage, how did Christianity get to have this apocrypha, how did it come to be. The works we are going to discuss tonight occur in the old or first testament. I may refer to the Old Testament as the first testament. For our Jewish friends it is not “old” it is the only testament. Thus the New Testament becomes a second testament.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO READ THE OLD OR FIRST TESTAMENT

So often as Christians we spend a lot of our time reading the New or Second testament. We want to know the lessons from the writings of Paul and the other writers of the epistles. We want to know Jesus, we want to know his teachings, and we want to deepen our relationship with Jesus. But what was it that influenced Jesus’ teachings? That answer lies in understanding that Jesus grew up reading and learning the first testament, it was the Bible that Jesus read used and loved. It is God’s biography of his relationship with God’s people, and it sets the stage for the coming of Jesus. That bible, Jesus’ Bible looked very much like our first testament. Some speculate that it was the Greek translation that Jesus would have

read which would have included the apocryphal works. At the very least it would have been the Hebrew version and although not part of the Bible Jesus probably would have been familiar with these apocryphal works. To get an understanding of how these books came to be in the bible lets look at a bit of history.

There are major events that effect the history of the Jewish nation thus effecting the writings of scripture:

1) After King Solomon dies his son Rehoboam becomes king. There is tension in the kingdom and in 933 B.C.E. the kingdom divides. Ten of the tribes become the Northern Kingdom under King Jeroboam and the remaining two tribes Judah and Benjamin remain under Rehoboam to form the Southern Kingdom. It is around this same time that many of the oral traditions become the early compositions of first eleven books of the bible are written around this time.

2) Around 721 B.C.E. the Northern kingdom is defeated by the Assyrians, the people disperse, some escape to the Southern Kingdom, most are never heard from again. This is often referred to as the Diaspora. Those early books of the bible are still being edited during this time. Many of the prophetic books of the Bible are written between 760 and 520 B.C.E.

3) In 586 B.C.E. what is left of Israel is defeated by Babylon. Many are marched off into exile; Jerusalem and the temple are destroyed. About 50 years later, around 538 B.C.E. King Cyrus allows those who wish to return to their homeland to do so. However many have settled in and remain in Babylon, but a number

make the trek back. It is during the Babylonian exile that those first books take their final form. Several books including the book of Job are written during the exile.

4) A critical event occurs around 333 B.C.E. The Greeks conquer Palestine which forever changes Jewish life including thoughts and writings. This Hellenistic influence continues even into the Roman rule. It was under this Greek influence and Roman rule that Jesus lived. Let's look at the version, Jesus might have read.

SEPTUAGINT is the term for the Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures.

The term means seventy, and you will see it often in your Bible's footnotes as "LXX." History tells us that there were actually seventy-two translators that produced this version of Scripture around 285-246 B.C.E. The story goes this translation was due to Ptolemy II Philadelphus's, the Grandson of Cleopatra and Mark Anthony (309 to 246 B.C.E.) who desired to have in his library the world's best literature. His librarian told him about the Hebrew Scriptures and their worth relative to law and wisdom. Ptolemy sent ambassadors to Eleazar the High Priest loaded with gold and jewels requesting a copy of the Hebrew Scriptures and learned men who could translate the work into Greek. Eleazar sent six men from each of the twelve tribes. Once in Alexandria they would each translate a portion of the scriptures and then gather to review to reach an agreement. The agreed upon version was then copied and presented to the local Jewish leaders, for approval as

an accurate rendering. Oddly enough it is reported that they completed the task in seventy-two days!

Great story, but the real motive for the translation has nothing to do with Ptolemy, it rose from the liturgical and educational needs of the growing Jewish community in Alexandria who over time only knew the common Greek language and had forgotten the Hebrew language or were very rusty at it.

Keep in mind this is a translation that some Hebrew text did not have an exact translation in Greek so they had to take literary license to best maintain the context of the original writing, AND they had to agree on the translation. Oddly the works of the Septuagint differ from the Hebrew in the number and order of the books. In the Hebrew scripture the works are arranged by the law, the prophets and then the writings. In the Septuagint they are arranged by the Pentateuch and historical books, poetical books and the prophetic books. Some of the books not in the Hebrew Scripture but are in the Greek include Tobit, 1 Maccabees, Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach) taken from Hebrew original writings. There are others of Greek composition, Wisdom of Solomon, 2, 3, and 4 Maccabees. It also contained additional material. The Hebrew form of the Book of Ester contains only 167 verses while the Greek form contains an additional 107 verses. The book of Daniel contains three supplements, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon and the Song of Three Children. On the other hand the book of Job is about one-sixth shorter

and the book of Jeremiah is about an eighth shorter. What's important here is this Septuagint became the Bible of the early Christian Church and when the Scripture is quoted in the New or Second Testament it is almost always this Septuagint version. The additional works eventually become known as the apocryphal or deuterocanonical books.

To help you better understand let's define three terms:

DEUTEROCANONICAL of, relating to, or constituting the books of Scripture contained in the Septuagint but not in the Hebrew canon.

APOCRYPHA books included in the Septuagint and Vulgate but excluded from the Jewish and Protestant canons of the Old Testament.

PSEUDEPIGRAPHA are literature not accepted into the Christian or Hebrew Canon. They are often attributed to a hero of faith. Works attributed to Moses or Adam would fall into this category. Maccabees 3 and 4 as well as 2 Esdras would fall into this category.

Around 200 C.E. the Jewish faith returns to the original Hebrew Testament thus abandoning the Septuagint and these works.

VULGATE Fast forward to the year 383 C. E., Pope Damasus asks Jerome to produce a uniform copy of the Bible in Latin, combining all of the various versions that have come into existence, such as Cyprian's African version, Irenaeus' European version and Augustine's Italian version to name a few as well as the Hebrew and Septuagint texts. The Vulgate also included those "extra books" from the Septuagint. For the Christian Church, the Vulgate became the recognized Scripture text for nearly the next thousand years.

MARTIN LUTHER began looking at what he saw as errors in the Church, and truly there were errors. One of the errors he saw was the inclusion of the works not found in Hebrew scripture.

FIRST ENGLISH TRANSLATION The efforts of John Wycliffe produce the first English version of the Bible around 1382-1388. It was sort of a literal translation of the Vulgate and included the apocryphal books. However it was an unauthorized translation and eventually condemned by the Catholic Church and burned, as were the remains of Wycliffe.

COVERDALE BIBLE In 1535 Miles Coverdale, a Protestant by conviction, produces the first printed Bible in English and for the first time the apocryphal books are separated from the First Testament and printed in a separate section. This became the precedent for all Protestant Bibles. Eventually some completely

eliminated the apocryphal works. In short Coverdale took anything that was not in the Hebrew Scripture out of the First Testament. In 1546 the Council of Trent reconfirmed the canon to include the apocryphal works. Today many Protestant bibles follow the Coverdale bible by having these “extra books” in a separate section called an apocrypha.

There are **seventy-three** books in the Catholic Bible.

So by the 1st Century we have agreement on the OT and Gospels are circulating together. In the 2nd Century we have the four gospels, 10 of Paul’s letters, Acts Peter and 1st John comprising the NT. By the 4th Century now have 22 books / writings. The first time we have the 27 books of the NT is 367 CE

Fragments of all the First Testament works have been found at Qumran (Dead Sea Scrolls) including several of the apocryphal works, except for the Book of Esther.

Let’s look at each of these works and see what they have to offer.

THE BOOK OF TOBIT Tobit takes place during the Diaspora of the Northern Kingdom by Assyria. Tobit is a devote Israelite who lives around the time of the exile and is deported to Nineveh with his family. While in captivity many things

befall him. As a devote Jew he would follow the laws related to worship and tithing including trips to Jerusalem, now in exile he can no longer do these things. His family has taken to eating the local “food of the heathens,” but he has not. Tobit has large sums of money deposited with his kinsman Gabael in Media, but it is now unsafe to travel there. As a devote Jew Tobit took it upon himself to bury the dead upholding the Jewish custom, even to the extent of risking his own life to do so, until he was ratted out by a Ninevite. To prevent persecution Tobit has to go into hiding. His property is confiscated. Shortly thereafter the king is assassinated. The new king appoints Tobit’s nephew as an administrator, so Tobit is able to come out of hiding and return to Nineveh. He returns to burying the dead at the derision of his neighbors. Tobit falls asleep outside and is then blinded by bird droppings that fall into his eyes. To add to his misery Tobit’s wife has to work. She is paid in part with a goat that Tobit believes is stolen and he forces her to return it. She becomes angry with him to the point where he prays for death.

Meanwhile in Media, Sarah the daughter of Raguel is being falsely accused by one of her father’s maids of killing off her SEVEN husbands before they consummate their marriages. It’s really the wicked demon Asmodeus who’s really doing the killing! Sarah is deeply depressed and like Tobit she prays for death. God hears their prayers and send Raphael to the rescue!! Back in Nineveh, Tobit remembers the money in Media and plans to send his son Tobiah to Media to retrieve it, but first he instructs Tobiah to be good to his Mother, do not sin, give alms, be on

guard against immorality, don't hold back wages, give to the poor, and seek good counsel. Tobiah says he will do all those things and begins to look for someone to go with him as a guide to Media, and he finds Raphael, but he didn't know he is an Angel (reminds me of that old series on TV, Touched by an Angel.) So off they go. About a day's journey they camp near the Tigris River. While washing in the river a fish tries to eat Tobiah's foot. Raphael tells him to hold on to the fish as parts are good for medicine. They keep the gall, heart and liver and eat the rest for dinner. Tobiah questions Raphael and in reply Raphael tells Tobiah in reply to his question that if you burn the heart and liver the smoke will keep evil spirits away and the gall is good for cataracts which is Tobit's problem. At Media, Raphael arranges for Tobiah to meet Sarah and proposes they marry. Tobiah has already heard of her black widow history, and is not keen on this idea but he agrees. Well Tobiah marries Sarah, they pray together and as Raphael said they burn the fish parts, the smoke drives Asmodeus away, and they consummate their marriage. Meanwhile Sarah's father doesn't have much hope for success and is already digging a grave for Tobiah. They are greatly relieved when they find Tobiah alive in the morning. They celebrate, they get Tobit's money from Gabael and Tobiah, Sarah and Raphael head back to Nineveh. Now it's been a couple of weeks but the fish gall is still good, they rub it on Tobit's eyes and his sight returns, Tobit praises God. Raphael reveals his true identity, Tobit sings a song of praise. In a prediction Tobiah and Sarah are told to leave Nineveh after the death of Tobit and his wife Anna. Tobiah and Anna pass on, so Tobiah and Sarah head back to Media, where

they hear about the destruction of Nineveh. Before Tobiah dies he praises God for the destruction of Nineveh, and he blesses the Lord. The lessons from the story we learn fidelity to the law, reverence for the dead, the value of prayer and fasting, intercession of angels, piety toward parents and purity of marriage. The story itself was composed around third or fourth century B.C.E.

JUDITH is a story of a Jewish heroine who tricked the commander of the Assyrian army Holofernes, decapitated him, and thus saves Israel from defeat. Judith is an extremely beautiful God-fearing woman, she is the widow of Manasseh. She lays aside her widow garb and makes herself enticing to the men who see her, Holofernes invites her to his tent planning to have sex with her. He has too much to drink, loses his head, literally. She leaves the camp for the Israelites with the head in a sack. The Israelites then hoist the head upon their wall. Back in the Assyrian camp the headless body is found and confusion takes over giving victory to the Israelites. The lessons of this story, it teaches the serving of only one God, to trust in God without reservation. For more details, read the book!! Probably written in the late second or early first century B.C.E.

ADDITIONS TO THE BOOK OF ESTHER It is believed by some that the additions were made to address the sensibilities of some Jews. In the Hebrew version there is no mention of God, also Esther does not follow the Torah which

defines Judaism, and the Jewish retaliation is excessive. As in the story of Judith the hero in this story is a woman.

In the first addition to the story God become present in the dreams of Mordecai, Esther uncle. Mordecai learns of a plot against the king (Artaxerxes) which he reports, the plot is thwarted and Mordecai is rewarded with a place in the king's court. The Hebrew version starts with the King having a great banquet which includes a six day drinking party. While the King is having his party the Queen (Vashti) also has her own drinking party. On the seventh day the king wants to show off his queen but she refuses to come out. The king removes her from the position of queen and then a selection process begins to find a replacement. Esther is brought into this selection process and she hides the fact that she is Jewish. The King chooses Esther, makes her queen and throws another great party, and declares a remission of taxes for all under his rule. Haman a friend of the King is placed over all the king's friends and all are to pay him homage. Mordecai refuses and this angers Haman who plots to destroy all the Jews of the kingdom.

In the second addition Haman has the king decree that all Jews are to be put to death. In the Hebrew version Mordecai finds out about Haman's plan and seeks Esther's aid.

In the third addition we find a prayer by Mordecai asking for deliverance. Esther also prays for strength to go before the king to plea for her own life and the lives of her people.

In the fourth addition Esther approaches the king and wins his favor. Back to the original form Esther invites the king and Haman to a special dinner she has prepared. Haman is pleased with this special treatment but sees Mordecai and becomes angry. Haman's wife suggests that a gallows be built and that Haman should ask the king to hang Mordecai. Meanwhile the king is reviewing records and finds he has not rewarded Mordecai for discovering the plot against him.

Haman shows up and the king asks Haman what should he do for a favored friend of the king. Haman, thinking the king is talking about him, describes many gifts. And so the king orders these things for Mordecai. The disgruntled Haman goes home. In response to Esther's request to the king for a second banquet Haman is brought to the banquet. Esther asks the King that her life and the life of all the Jews be spared and the plot of Haman is revealed. Haman is then hanged on the gallows he prepared for Mordecai. The king then elevated Mordecai to Haman's position once Esther reveals their relationship. The decree against the Jews is lifted.

The fifth addition expands on this decree. In the Hebrew version the Jews take revenge on their enemies. A festival is declared, the festival of Purim.

In the sixth addition Mordecai's dreams from the beginning of the story are fulfilled.

The story about the time of the Assyrian Diaspora was written around 170 B.C.E.

The story tells of good vs. evil; the power of prayer and God's love for his people.

THE BOOK OF SUSANNA The book of Susanna is known in the Catholic Bible as Chapter thirteen of the book of Daniel. Susanna is the wife of Joakim. Susanna is very beautiful and devote, Joakim is very rich and a leader in the community. As the story goes there were these two old judges who become peeping Tom's lusting for Susanna. One day while they were watching her from in hiding in her husband's garden, she decides to bathe and once ready, she sends her maids away. As soon as the maids leave these two old judges approach Susanna and demand she have relations with them or they will say they saw her alone with a young man. Susanna decides it is better to maintain her virtue then consent, so she screams for help. As people come the old men make their accusations.

The next day a trial is held where she is formally accused and the men give detailed testimony lying about Susanna having relations with a young man, a man they couldn't hold. Of course the punishment for adultery is death. Susanna prays to God for vindication and God responds by having Daniel speak up at the

hearing. Daniel claims that Susanna because of her prior good reputation needs defended against the charges. Daniel asks that the two accusers be separated for questioning. Daniel asks the first man under what kind of tree did he find her cavorting with the unknown young man, and the old man answered a mastic tree, which is a small tree. The second man is brought in and Daniel then asks the second the same question but he answers an oak tree which is a large tree. Daniel accuses them of their lies and the assembly rises up and puts them to death. Susanna and her family praise God for her being found innocent.

Daniel is reported to have lived around 538 B.C.E. during the Babylonian captivity. The Book of Daniel was written around 167-164 B.C.E. during the persecutions of Antiochus IV Epiphanes during the Greek occupation, to strengthen and comfort the Jewish people during their ordeal. The moral is people of faith can resist temptation and conquer adversity. So here we have courtroom drama and the first detective story!!

BEL AND THE DRAGON I promised you a dragon. Bel and the Dragon become for us chapter fourteen of the Book of Daniel. The story starts with King Cyrus and his friend Daniel. Cyrus goes daily to worship the idol Bel. Cyrus and Daniel get into a discussion concerning worshiping idols and Cyrus is convinced that the offerings left are consumed by the idol. Daniel says it is not so which upsets Cyrus. Cyrus demands that unless his priests can prove that the idol

consumes the offerings they shall die, but if the idol consumes them, Daniel shall die. However unbeknownst to Cyrus and Daniel there is a secret passage by which the priests come and consume the offerings. At the temple the offerings are set out and the door sealed by the king's ring. But before they leave Daniel has spread ashes on the floor so when they opened the door in the morning Daniel is able to show the king the footprints of the priests and their families. Immediately Cyrus has them killed and Daniel destroys the idol.

Cyrus then challenges Daniel with the Babylonian dragon which Daniel destroys by feeding it a mixture of pitch, fat and hair. The dragon explodes! The people now accuse Cyrus of becoming a Jew. Cyrus is forced to hand over Daniel, who is to be fed to the Lions. Daniel is in the den for six days.

Enter the prophet Habakkuk, who prophesies the Babylonian captivity; whom God brings to Daniel literally by his hair. Habakkuk brings Daniel some bread and stew to strengthen him. On the seventh day Cyrus comes to mourn Daniel thinking him dead, but finds him alive! Cyrus removes Daniel from the den and puts in Daniel's accusers who are immediately eaten. Did you notice the play on the time frame, the seventh day, which is a holy number in Judaism. The lesson from the story are good versus evil, real God versus idols, God's intercession between Daniel and the lions and bringing of Habakkuk to Daniel to refresh his body and spirit.

Cyrus is the Babylonian King who sets the Babylonian captives free to return to Judah. He had a habit of worshipping ALL of the Gods of the nations he captured.

THE PRAYER OF AZARIAH AND THE SONG OF THE THREE JEWS

these are verses found in Chapter three of the book of Daniel in the Catholic Bible forming verses 24 through 90. They contain the prayer of Azariah who we know more by the name Abednego (Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego) as he walks in the furnace. The Song of the three Jews are the praises and blessings offered to God by the three from the fiery furnace.

BARUCH is the prophet Jeremiah's secretary who writes a reflection on the exile from both the perspective of penitence and of hope. This letter written in Babylon is sent to the people of Jerusalem. The 6th chapter is often called the Letter of Jeremiah. It is a composition by Jeremiah to the people in exile in Babylon. It is a series of ten warnings concerning the idol worship. IT is written between 165 and 60 B.C.E. this is really a best guess on the dates.

MACCABEES There are four books of Maccabees but only books one and two make the Catholic Bible. Book one tells of the revolt by the family of the Priest

Mattathias. Judas Maccabeus is his third son, but eventually Maccabeus or Maccabees becomes sort of the family name. Judas and his four brothers and the grandson of his brother Simon are the main characters.

The story shows how God uses this family to purge foreign oppression from Judea and how the high-priesthood is given to this family. Antiochus IV Epiphanes a ruler during the Greek or Hellenistic period, forces many to adopt his customs, profaned the temple, stopped Jewish customs and forces devote Israelites into hiding. In Dec of 167 BCE Antiochus outlaws Judaism, Dec 15 he sets up a statue and sacrifices a pig in the temple. He is going to force them to eat pork. After several attacks on the devote, Mattathias and his friends organize and counter-attack! It is better to die than to break Gods law, it is better to kill than to let others break the law. Mattathias kills to prevent eating of pork. Becomes the beginning of the Maccabean (means hammer) revolt (lasts around 53 years). His son Judas Hasmoneans (their last name) is a good leader (today would be thought of as a terrorist). They torn down pagan altars, circumcised the uncircumcised, and work to reestablish Judaism. They were often victorious. In three years they take the temple back militarily. After recapturing the temple they remove all that is profane and build a new altar of sacrifice. On December 14, 164 B.C.E. they rededicate the Temple and celebrate for eight days. This rededication is known as Hanukkah, which is still celebrated. It is interesting to note that the scripture that constitutes the high holy day of Hanukkah is NOT in the Hebrew or Protestant

Bibles!! The festival begins on the 25th day of Kislev. In the western calendar Hanukkah is celebrated in November or December. The word Hanukkah means rededication and commemorates the Jews' struggle for religious freedom.

There is a Jewish Story regarding Hanukkah.

The festival marks the phenomenal victory of a group of Jews called the Maccabees over the Syrian Greeks, the most powerful army of the ancient world. At the end of the three-year war, the Maccabees recaptured Jerusalem and rededicated the temple. When the Maccabees rededicated the temple, they discovered a single cruise of oil with the seal of the High Priest still intact. When they came to light the eight-branched temple candelabrum, the menorah, they had enough oil to last only a day. But the menorah miraculously stayed alight for eight days. This became known as the miracle of the oil.

This group of Palestinian terrorist have taken back the county! Book one ends with John Hyrcanus the son of Simon (Judas's Brother) becomes high priest. They take over as independent rulers in Judea. Daniel is a prediction of the success of the Maccabeans.

Book two provides information about the events that lead up to the revolt and then concentrates on three attacks on the Temple and the subsequent defeat of Israel's enemies by Divine intervention or by Judas Maccabeus. One of the most famous

parts of second Maccabees is the story of the seven brothers and their mother. The king had ordered them to eat pig which they refused. As punishment and an attempt to get them to eat the pig each brother in turn had his tongue cut out, was scalped, dismembered and then roasted alive. They encouraged each other to remain faithful, remembering that God is more powerful than the king, that God would raise them to eternal life and bodily resurrection. The mother is also put to death. The book ends with the city remaining in the hands of the Hebrews.

First Maccabees covers the period from 175 B.C.E. to 134 B.C.E. while Second Maccabees covers from 180 B.C.E. to 161 B.C.E.. I mentioned 3 and 4 Maccabees. 3 Maccabees is accepted by Eastern Orthodox Churches as Deuterocanonical. The title is actually incorrect as it has nothing to do with the Maccabees. It simply followed one and two in the original book. This book deals with three stories related to Ptolemy. There is an assassination attempt thwarted by an apostate Jew; Ptolemy's attempt to enter the Jerusalem temple and Ptolemy's persecution of Egyptian Jews. The book was written around 30 B.C.E. to 70 C.E. Four Maccabees was written between middle first to early second century B.C.E.. It talks of religious reasoning and Mosaic law. It relies very heavily on two Maccabees and includes the story of the seven brothers, although the specific details vary and this version is much more in depth. No one considers it deuterocanonical.

ECCLESIASTICUS or the wisdom of Jesus son of Sirach(Yeshu'a in Hebrew.)

Most commonly it is called the book of Sirach. It is a further collection of proverbs and teachings. It covers a range of subjects such as the individual, family and community in their relations to one another and to God. It talks of friendship, worship, and many matters reflecting on the religious and social customs of the time. The first part of the book is filled with moral teachings and it concludes with comments on hero's and patriarchs. You can probably find a title or sub-title of a chapter for nearly every common concern. Sirach was trying to put into writing teachings in defense against two things threatening Jewish social order, the rule of foreign kings and the intrusion of foreign culture, Hellenism. It was written around 200 to 175 B.C.E.

WISDOM OF SOLOMON it is also known as the book of Wisdom. The author wrote to strengthen his fellow Jews from the suffering and oppression against them by Jews who had left the faith. He used religious themes and often referred to himself as Solomon. He wrote of Divine wisdom and the folly of idolatry, God's justice and mercy. The first ten chapters are a precursor for the teachings of Christ and the church. Wisdom is personified in Sophia and Solomon pursues Wisdom as one might pursue a soul mate. Although the author speaks as if he were Solomon, the actual writing took place sometime around 100 B.C.E. Solomon lived around 1,000 to 930 B.C.E.

In addition to these books there are in the Greek Bible Psalm 151. It is a very short Psalm in which David describes himself in relation to his brothers, as being the chosen one of God and his defeat of Goliath. There are also the books of Esdras. Esdras is Greek for Ezra. Ezra is the priest and Nehemiah the governor, these are the first two appointed after the end of the Babylonian captivity. First Esdras narrates important religious events in the history. The book draws on a lot of parallel texts from other writings particularly the book of Ezra, second Chronicles and Nehemiah. Second Esdras was written in part in the first century C.E. after the destruction of the temple to aide those dealing with the aftermath of the destruction, and in part in the second century C.E. by a Christian author whose intent was to encourage early Christians during the a time of oppression.

There are other apocryphal works not included in anyone's canon, works such as the Assumption of Moses, the book of Henoch and the Secrets of Henoch, 4 Esdras, the apocalypse of Baruch and the apocalypse of Abraham and many more.

There are no apocryphal works in the second testament. Catholics and Protestants have the same 27 books. But like in the first testament era there are apocryphal works not included in anyone's canon, works such as the Infancy Gospel of James, the Gospels of St. Matthew, Gamaliel, the Egyptians, St. Peter, St. Phillip, St. Thomas, the Apocryphon of James, Acts of Pilate, and the list goes on and on.

What's in them you ask? Well for example

Gospel of Thomas – 114 sayings attributed to Jesus

Apocryphon of James – is a dialogue between the risen Jesus, Peter and James, concerning governing the Christian community.

Infancy Gospel of Thomas – the works of the magician-hero Jesus prior to age 12.

Infancy Gospel of James – account of the birth and dedication of Mary, claims to precede the canonical gospels.

Acts of Pilate – a detailed account of Jesus' trial, execution, burial and resurrection.

I hope you have found this time useful, maybe gained some knowledge of the apocryphal works, and hopefully created enough curiosity in you that you will read these first testament works and not only these but the other books that make up the bible that Jesus would have read.

Any questions?

Thank you for giving me your time and attention. May God's blessings be upon you all as you go forth from this place.

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Some of the source works to name a few include:

Holman Bible Dictionary, Holman Bible publisher's, Nashville, 1991

Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, tenth edition, Merriam-Webster, Inc.
Springfield, Massachusetts, 2002

HarperCollins Study Bible, NRSV, HarperCollins Publishers, San Francisco,
1993

The New American Bible, Catholic Bible Press, Thomas Nelson Publishers,
Nashville, 1987

How the Bible Came to Be, John Barton, Westminster John Knox Press,
Louisville, 1997

The Bible Jesus Read, Phillip Yancey, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 1999

The Bible in Translation, Bruce M. Metzger, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids,
2001

