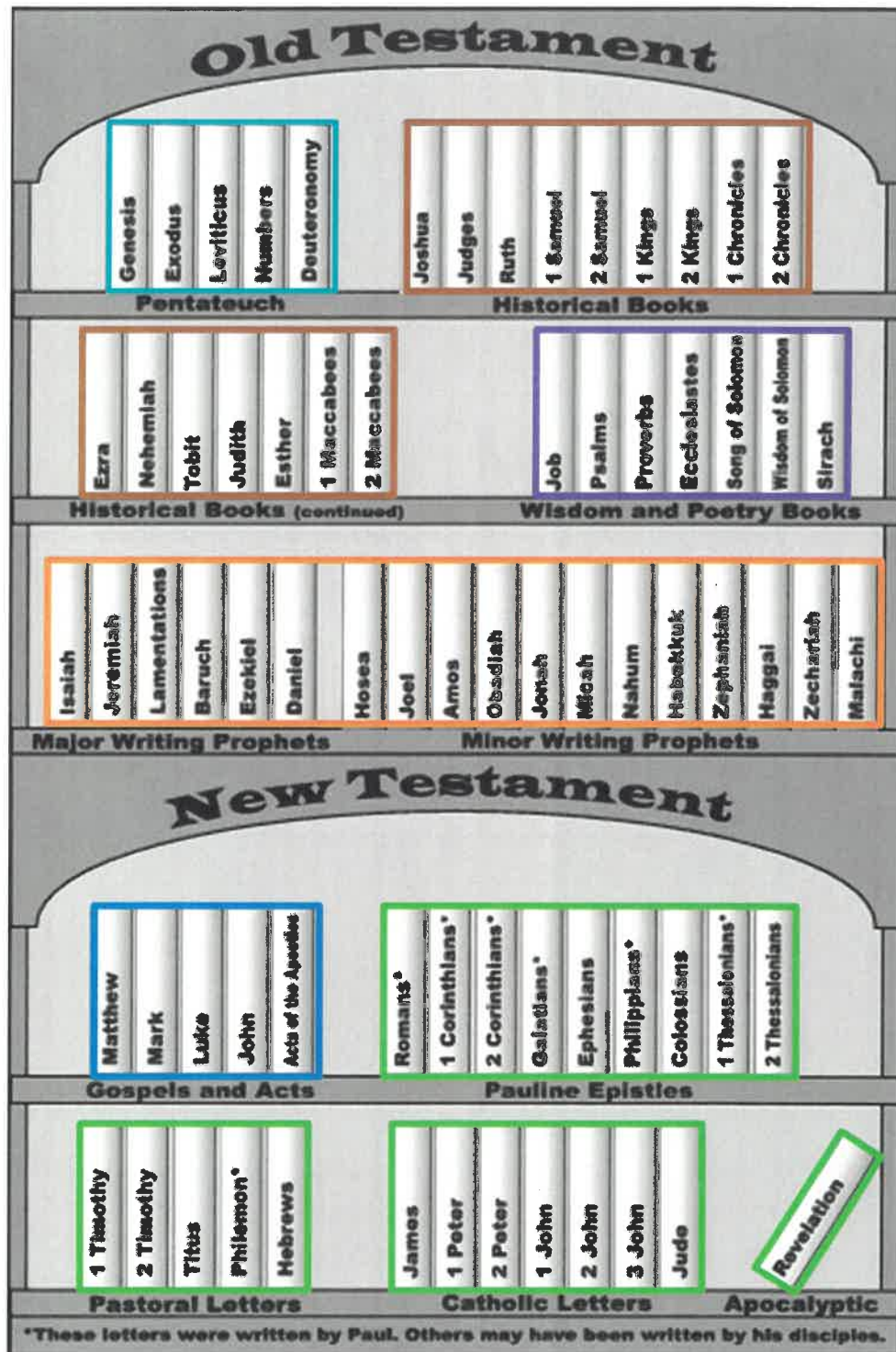


Bookshelf Outline of Biblical Books

(Catholic Canon*)



* The seven (7) books of the Bible included in the Catholic Canon *which were removed* by Martin Luther from the Old Testament at the time of the Protestant Reformation are Tobit, Judith, 1&2 Maccabees, Wisdom (of Solomon), Baruch and Sirach (Think: “T J Maxx With Big Sales”)

73 Catholic vs. 66 Protestant Books of the Bible

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EWTN Catholic Q&A

The 7 books removed by Martin Luther.

Question from Rhonda Kaiser on 05-01-2005:

Please explain why Martin Luther removed these 7 books of the Old Testament: Tobit, Judith, 1st & 2nd Maccabees, Wisdom, Sirach & Baruch. I understand he wanted to remove James & Revelation also. I know he had a problem with James 2:14-26 but what was the issue with Revelation & the rest of the books? God bless you & Thank you for your answer. Rhonda

Answer by Rev. Mark J. Gantley, JCL on 05-01-2005:

The canon of Scripture is the list of 73 books that belong to the Bible. (The word "Bible" means "the Book.") The earliest writings of the Bible were likely composed in the 10th century B.C. The writing of Scripture continued until the first century A.D., when Revelation was complete.

Seven books of the Bible, all in the Old Testament, are accepted by Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox, but are not accepted by Jews or Protestants. These include 1 and 2 Maccabees, Judith, Tobit, Baruch, Sirach, and Wisdom, and additions to the books of Esther and Daniel. These books are called Deuterocanonical by Catholics and Orthodox and Apocryphal by Jews and Protestants. These were the last books of the Old Testament written, composed in the last two centuries B.C. Their omission in Protestant Bibles leaves a chronological gap in salvation history.

The version of the Bible in use at the time of Jesus was the Septuagint (abbreviated LXX, for the 70 men who translated it from Hebrew into Greek by the beginning of the first century B.C.). This version of the Bible included the seven Deuterocanonical books. This was the version of the Old Testament used by the New Testament authors and by Christians during the first century A.D.

With the destruction of the temple in Jerusalem by the Romans in the year 70 A.D. and because the Christians were seen as a threat, the Jewish leaders saw a need to get their house in order. One thing that they did was to decide officially the list of books that were to compose their Scriptures. They did this at the Council of Jamnia (about 100 A.D.), at which they rejected the seven Deuterocanonical books because they believed that they were not written in Hebrew. (In 1947, however, fragments in Hebrew of Tobit and Sirach were discovered among the Dead Sea Scrolls. In addition, most Scripture scholars believe that 1 Maccabees, Judith, Baruch and parts of Wisdom were also originally written in Hebrew.) The early Church did not require all Scripture to be written in Hebrew, and the New Testament books were written in Greek.

The early Church continued to accept the books of the LXX version, although some debate about these books continued through the 5th century. This list, as accepted by the Catholic Church, was affirmed by the Council of Hippo in 393 A.D., by the Council of Carthage in 397 A.D., and by Pope Innocent I in 405 A.D. At the Ecumenical Council of Florence in 1442, the Catholic list was again restated, against those who wanted to include even more books.

In the 16th century, Martin Luther adopted the Jewish list, putting the Deuterocanonical books in an appendix. He also put the letter of James, the letter to the Hebrews, the letters of John, and the book of Revelation from the New Testament in an appendix. He did this

for doctrinal reasons (for example: 2 Maccabees 12:43-46 supports the doctrine of purgatory, Hebrews supports the existence of the priesthood, and James 2:24 supports the Catholic doctrine on merit). Later Lutherans followed Luther's Old Testament list and rejected the Deuterocanonical books, but they did not follow his rejection of the New Testament books.

Finally, in 1546, the Council of Trent reaffirmed the traditional list of the Catholic Church.

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