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# The Apocrypha

The Intertestamental books that are appealed to by the Roman Catholic church as inspired Scripture. Protestants reject this as false for obvious reasons.

***The Apocrypha is not Scripture***  
***A Compilation of Testimony Against Roman Catholic Teaching***  
***Concerning the Authority of these non-canonical books***  
by C. Matthew McMahon, et. al.

The Apocrypha is easily provable to be inconsistent with itself, and contradictory to the Holy Scriptures. In this short series of articles, I am simply being a parrot after which so many have often done in the past, especially the most notable puritan divines of old - in which their treatises still await some able rebuttal still unknown and unwritten. These treatises of old have gone unanswered even by such Roman champions as Bellarmine.

I desire to lay down my outline and a comment concerning it. I hope to show in a meager and basic fashion why I believe, and will prove by both Roman Catholic and Protestant sources, that the Apocrypha is not, never was, and cannot be inspired of God, nor accepted as on the same and equal authority as the divine Scriptures, not even by the Roman Catholic Church – and I will show that the Roman Catholic Church believes this to be so. However, before presenting my outline, I would like to give one particular comment concerning the importance of the subject. Since now God has spoken through His Son in these last days, the danger of adding or subtracting to the Scriptures entails the eternal condemnation of God upon a soul. If the Roman Catholics be right, then the Protestants are all damned for taking away the Scriptures. If the Protestants are right, then all the Roman Catholics are damned for adding to the Scriptures. In either case, whoever is right, the other is necessarily damned since they overthrow the office of Christ as Prophet – He alone who has the right to teach His church the truth. It is a very grave and sober subject I am dealing with. Though it is not WW III, it may as well be since the eternal plight of never-dying souls are at stake depending on where we land concerning the addition or subtraction of the Apocrypha to the canon of God's revealed, or perceptive will, to man. Even if some were to disagree with my view in the above paragraph, the Scriptures abound with warnings and exhortations not to take away nor add to the revelation of God, which is only allowable by those who are prophets of God – The Son being the Prophet, Priest King sent by God for all time; which will be the view I hold most earnestly, He being the foundation on which I stand.

I do not desire not to overwhelm the inquirer with great amounts of reading, nor overwhelm myself with great amounts of writing on this subject. There are far better treatments of this topic by much abler men than I, and if my simpleton arguments are not enough to convince, I will direct you to them for a more complete look at the topic. My arguments will attempt to be as concise as possible and it may require your own reflection to fill in those gaps necessary to understand certain flows of thought. Otherwise, the few one or two pages I have written here could easily be turned into hundreds of pages of quotes, citations and the like (though I will add some.)

There are a variety of sources which I have consulted, and a most of the early fathers which I have read personally. Though it is expected that bibliographic notations accompany a work like this, I thought it would be easier for those Roman readers to simply deal with the arguments themselves instead of lengthy footnotes. At any time I welcome those emails that desire the



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bibliographic sources for the ensuing discourse, and will provide a hearty book list if occasion warrants.

I will be guided by the following outline:

1) Many heretics have often perverted the acceptance or rejection of certain Biblical books (such as the Sadducees (who only accepted the Pentateuch), The Manichees, Saturninus and Cerdonians (rejected the whole OT), Marcion (who only held only to some NT books), the Albigenses (condemning the resurrection of the flesh and the OT), the Ptolemaens (who condemned the Pentateuch), The Nicolations and Gnostics (who ejected the book of Psalms), the Valentinians (who rejected the Gospel of John – which many RC's charge Luther with which is ridiculous), The Ebionites (who received only Matthew, and rejected Paul as an apostate), the Severians (who rejected Acts), the Marcionites (who rejected the Pastoral epistles, and Hebrews), and others not needing mention) I will by pass wearying you of the plight of these heretics. However, this is an important note. Adding or subtracting to the Biblical record condemns the souls, and overthrows the authority of the Scriptures. Augustine said "If any, even the smallest lie be admitted in the Scriptures, the whole authority of Scripture is presently invalidated and destroyed." [Epistle xix. Tom. II. P. 14] I agree. I hope you, the reader, do as well. And here we will immediately find the apocryphal to fail miserably. This first point is simply a note.

2) Wherein the argument for accepting the Apocrypha as canonical in the strict sense is composed by the Roman Church, and what councils, if any notable, are those who accept or reject the Apocrypha, showing the authority of the books, or their deniability.

3) The claims made of the apocrypha, especially seen in light of the RC (Roman Catholic) theologians, councils and popes who prove them to be uncannical, but at best, used in the edification of the saint, though not for the binding of the Christian faith. And distinguishing between the senses of canonicity. Ultimately to prove that they are deemed, even by the RCC as not inspired though they may be helpful with a discerning eye, as any good book may be.

4) To show that the apocryphal books were not written by prophets, and only prophets are the admissible spokesmen for God.

5) To show that councils, fathers, and other early writers testify to the apocrypha as not canon for faith, though they deem them as moral aids, as any other good book.

6) The Apocryphal books of Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus and the 2 books of Maccabees will be examined for consistency and truth; as well as the additions to Daniel and Esther, with Baruch.

7) Then to show the inconsistency of Rome in accepting some apocryphal books, even against their own council's testimony, and the unlawful and unwarranted rejection of other apocryphal books which they do indeed reject. (Esdras, 3 Maccabees, etc.)

These would obviously lead us into a discussion on authority, interpretation, perspicuity, questions on translation, the vulgate and the like. For once the apocryphal books are proven to be noncanonical in the strict sense, the authority and reliability of the RCC church falls to the ground. In light of this, it

is a most serious and grave subject for all those who hold the RCC as the true church.

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# Apocrypha Article 1

The Apocrypha should not be added into the canon of the Holy Scriptures because the church fathers say so, or councils that contradict one another say so.

## ***Why I believe the Apocrypha ought not to be included in the Canon of Holy Scripture.***

by C. Matthew McMahon

The RCC has but one real argument for the inclusion of the apocryphal books into Holy Scripture, which is derived from certain councils and fathers. They allege the 3<sup>rd</sup> Council of Carthage (in which Augustine attended) canon 47.4, where it is shown that all these apocryphal books are seen as canonical. Though many object that this council is provincial, the RCC deems it general for all. They base this by Pope Leo IV. Confirmation (Dist. 20. C. de Libellis), and also by the 6<sup>th</sup> general council held by Constantinople, which is called Trullan, (canon 2.) They say, though Carthage may not be, of itself, strong enough to assert the books canonical, the Pope and council mentioned prove the point to be true nonetheless. They also adduce the council of Florence under Eugenius IV. (see Epistol. Ad Armenos), that of Trent under Paul III. (session 4), and pope Gelasius with a council of seventy bishops (Vide infra, T. VIII p. 146). Of fathers they cite Innocent I, Augustine (Lib. II. C. 8. De Doctrina Christiana), Isidore of Seville (Etymolog., Lib. VI. C. 1.). So the RCC argument is this: these councils and these fathers affirm these books to belong to the sacred canon, therefore these books are canonical. This has been the official position since Trent's dogmas.

In order to make this argument valid, we must use this proposition: whatsoever these councils and fathers determine is to be received is without dispute. Otherwise the very foundation of the argument the RCC has for the apocryphal books is invalid immediately, and they recognize this since we could then dispute them. We may then add to this proposition: But these councils and these fathers receive these books as canonical; therefore these books are truly canonical and divine. (Otherwise the entire proposition in the start does not make sense and the RCC has nothing to say on these things.)

I deny the whole of the major premise by the RCC for a variety of reasons.

- 1) We must never state that fathers and councils speak the truth simply based on what they deem to be true since the Scriptures themselves must stand the test in and of themselves and account for their own veracity (which the Apocrypha will never pass as a test based on its veracity alone)
- 2) Trent was no general council, though the RCC esteems it as such. However, Akanus Copus (in Dialog Quint. C. 16.) states that there were fewer bishops at this council than at any other. And the total of those in attendance was less than fifty. If this is a provincial council, fine. But a general ecclesiastical council I in no way accept, nor do many RCC fathers.
- 3) The council of Carthage was provincial and composed of a few bishops; there is no authority in them, by themselves, to make a judgment of this kind having been provincial and not general. Even in their own canons at that



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council (canon 26.2) states “the bishop of the chief see shall not be called high priest, or chief of the priests, or by any such title.” They cannot bind those by the authority they refuse upon themselves.

4) The RCC says the Trullan council of Constantinople (which was a general council) approved the Carthaginian council. But if the decree of the number of canonical books was legitimately approved, then that also concerning the title of high priest was confirmed by the same sanction, which they will never concede, and shows their authority to be false. How will they divide these things? I acknowledge the Trullan council as ecumenical, but the RCC themselves doubt what should be determined of the authority of the canons which are attributed to the council (as I agree with Whitaker). Pighius, in his own writing calls this council “spurious, and by no means genuine.” Melchior Canus too (Lib. V. cap. Ult.) declares the council to have no ecclesiastical authority. There are some things in the canons which they do not approve of - that the bishop of Constantinople is equal with the Roman, canon 36; that priests and deacons are not to be separated from their wives, canon 13, etc. It is a strong objection to the credit and authority of these canons, that the 85 canons of the apostles are approved and received in them (canon 2) – but Pope Gelasius (Gratian, Dist. 15. C. Romana Ecclesia) declares the book of the apostolic canons apocryphal. And Gratian (Dist. 16.5) says, that there are only 50 canons of the apostles, and they are apocryphal, upon the authority of Isidore who says they were composed by heretics under the name of the apostles (and he said there were only 60). More this can be cited, but I stop at wearying you to show you the point that their inconsistencies within the councils are numerous and contradictory to one another, for: If these are true and genuine canons of the apostles, then the RCC is refuted in their opinion of the number of canonical books of the OT and NT by the authority of the canons of the apostles. If they be not, as it is plain that they are not, then the synod of Constantinople erred, when it approved them as apostolical. Yet the RCC denies that a general council can err in its decrees respecting matters of faith. How will the RCC reconcile this except by denial and side stepping?

5) Thus, I can judge what force and authority is to be allowed to the canon of this council of Constantinople; and what sort of persons the RCC are to deal with, who both deny that these canons have any legitimate authority, and yet confirm the sentence of the Council of Carthage by the authority of these very canons. Canus (Lib. II. Cap. 9) proves the authority of the council of Carthage, in enumerating the number of books because of Trullan, yet the same man in Lib. V. cap. 6. ad argument. 6., makes light of the authority of these canons, and brings many arguments to break them down. Consistency?

6) Gelasius in his council with 70 bishops receive 1<sup>st</sup> Maccabees, and one Esdras, rejecting 2<sup>nd</sup> Maccabees (which is apocryphal) and Nehemiah, which is canonical.

7) Before the RCC can press all men with the authority of these councils, they should themselves determine, as Whitaker says, whether it is at all in the power of any council to determine what books should or should not be received (which they have not done consistently). For this is doubted among many RCs, as Canus confesses in Lib. II. C. 8. The major premise stated as the RCC proposition does not hold.

In minor premise I will agree that Carthage, Gelasius and his 70 bishops, Innocent, Augustine, and Isidore call these books canonical. But I hope to show you that their meaning was not to place the apocrypha upon the same grounds as Holy Scripture accepted in the protestant Bible. I will show this to

be true by Augustine's own words, from antiquity, and from the RCCs themselves.

8) If the books were to be widely accepted, the RCC and their theologians, fathers and councils would not have dissented by their inclusion of the canon; but dissent they did, and in great numbers, which will be seen later. There is no ground to say that the Church publicly and widely received them as Scripture; both Eastern and Western Churches.

9) Secondly, Augustine plainly indicates that he did not consider them as equal with the Scriptures. "Now with respect to the canonical Scriptures, let him follow the greater number of catholic churches' amongst which those indeed are to be found with merited to possess the chairs of the apostles, and to receive epistles from them. He will hold this, therefore, as a rule in dealing with the canonical scriptures, to prefer those which are received by all catholic churches to those which only some receive. But, with respect to those which are not received by all, he will prefer such as the more and more dignified churches receive, to such as are held by fewer churches, or churches of less authority." Then he says, "Now the whole canon of scripture, in which we hath consideration....etc." He does not include the lesser received but rather, the whole canon. Jerome, and many other fathers deny the apocryphal books as canonical. Do they differ in opinion – no. Why? Jerome takes their word "canonical" in one sense while Augustine, Innocent and the fathers of Carthage as another. Jerome calls only those books canonical, which the church always held for canonical, the rest of the apocrypha he banishes from the canon. Augustine classifies the books, and uses various ideologies within the word "canon." He prefers some to others, makes distribution of them in this sense and classifies them. If he thought they were all equal, as with the Scriptures, he would never have done this. Augustine himself says less reliance should be placed on anything not included in the canon of the Hebrew OT which did not include the apocryphal books (which will be belabored in another email.) (de Civit. Dei, Lib. XVII. C. 20.) (He says literally *Sed adversus contradictores non tanta firmitate roferuntur quae scripta non sunt in canone Judaeorum* (Aug. Opp. T. VII. 766. A.))

10) Let it also be noted that Carthage deemed 5 books of Solomon where only 3 are Solomon's. Augustine once thought the book of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus was Solomon but later retracted this. "Learned men have no doubt that they are not Solomon's; (Ubi supra, 765.) He also testifies they were not received in all the churches (De Civit. Dei. Lib. XVII. C. 20.)

11) The RCC should understand that if so many agreed, then Augustine would never have disagreed with their inclusion after the councils were held, which he did.

12) Cajetan, the Jesuit, a champion of the RCC who was sent to rebuff Luther, says, "Here we close our commentaries on the historical books of the OT. For the rest (that is Judith Tobit, and the books of Macabees) are counted by St Jerome out of the canonical books, and are placed among the Apocrypha, along with Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, as is plain from the Pologus Galeatus. Not be thou disturbed, like a raw scholar, if thou shouldst find any where, either in sacred councils or the sacred doctors, these books reckoned as canonical. For the words as well of councils as of doctors are to be reduced to the correction of Jerome. According to his judgment...these books (and any other like books in the canon of the Bible) are not canonical, that is, not in the nature of a rule for confirming matters of faith." (See his commentary on the History of the OT)

13) See from Cajetan himself that Jerome is the final word on these books, and Jerome counted them as apocryphal and not Scriptural. (Which will be seen in greater depth in another email)

14) There are two kinds of “canonical” books – some contain both the rule of faith and morals; these are properly called Scripture – canonical in the strict sense. Others are helpful by way of moral alone, but no rules. Any book I read which spiritually edifies my soul is helpful as far as morality is concerned, but does not bind my conscience. The Scripture is Porto-canonical, the apocrypha may be deemed Deutero canonical because they do not combine both a bind upon faith and morals. Here Jerome stands, as well a Cajetan. The RCC is greatly angered by these men and their view – but they are Rome’s champions.

15) Thus, the arguments so far are weak at best, crumbling to the ground based on the history of the RCC alone, its contradictory councils and its own theologians.

I shall write next on why the apocryphal books cannot be included because they have not been written by any prophet, and show the importance of this.

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# Apocrypha Article 2

The Apocrypha should not be added into the canon of the Holy Scriptures because they were not written by prophets.

## ***The Apocryphal books were not written by the prophets.***

by C. Matthew McMahon

Syllogism: These apocryphal books were not written by the prophets, therefore they are not canonical. Entire syllogism: All canonical books of the OT were written by prophets: none of the apocryphal books were written by any prophets: therefore they are not canonical.

The Major premise rests on Scripture: Peter says the OT is the “prophetic word.” (2 Peter 1:19); Paul calls it the “scriptures of the prophets” (Romans 16:26); Zacharias the priest says “As he spake by the mouths of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began.” (Luke 1:70); “They have Moses and the Prophets” as Abraham said (Luke 18:39); Luke wrote, “Beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scripture the things concerning himself.” (Luke 24:24; cf. Rom. 1:2); Heb. 1:1, “God spake in divers manners by the prophets.”; the church is built upon the “apostles and prophets” (Eph. 2:20); “All things must be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me:” and it follows immediately, “And he opened their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures.” (Luke 24:44-45); Paul asks Agrippa, “Believest thou the prophets?” – that is the Scriptures. (Acts 26:27); When Paul dealt with the Jews at Rome he tried to convince them “out of the law of Moses and the prophets.” (Acts 28:23). From these we see that the major assertion is true, that the whole OT was given to us by God’s prophets. There is no part of the OT which was not given by the prophets.

The entire OT canonical Scriptures are deemed in the following way: 1) the prophets; 2) Moses and the prophets; 3) Moses, the prophets, and the psalms.

Augustine so shows this in his writings against Cresconius the grammarian: “Not without cause was the canon of the church framed with so salutary a vigilance, that certain books of the prophets and apostles should belong to it.” (Lib. 2. cap. 31); also “Let them shew us their church, not in the rumors of the Africans, but in the injunction of the Law, in the predictions of the prophets, in the songs of the Psalms; that is, in all the canonical authorities of the sacred books.” (De Unit. Eccles. C. 16.)

That the apocryphal books were not written by the prophets are clear and certain. All confess that Malachi was the last Jewish prophet. Between Malachi and John the Baptist, no other Jewish prophet arose, but the writers of the apocryphal books lived after Malachi. Even the RCC does not deny this.

They were written in another language (Greek – more on this later) rather than



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the prophetic tongue of Hebrew. The numerous quotations of the fathers affirm this, the RCC does not deny this.

Most importantly, if these books had been written by the prophets, Christ would have quoted them and used them as witness to himself, as he did with the others. Christ nor his apostles quoted the apocrypha. It is a useless case to strain the idea that they may have alluded to it. In the witness of Christ, or the apostles for Christ, they never quoted the apocryphal books (more on this later). As Augustine states of the book of Macabees, "The Jews do not esteem this scripture as the Law and prophets, to which the Lord bears testimony as his witness." (Contra Gaudent. Epist. Lib. II cap. 23.) Christ bears no testimony of these, thus they are not credible witness of Him. They would be if they were prophetic.

These apocryphal books were not received by the church of the Israelites; therefore they are non canonical. Syllogism would be as such: The ancient church of the Hebrews received and approved all the books of the OT; The church did not receive these books; therefore they are not canonical.

Major proposition is easy to show: If the church had removed such a large portion of the "Scriptures", they would have been thoroughly rebuked by Christ for doing so; or even by the apostles – which they were not. The Jews were blamed for putting wrong senses on the Scriptures (see Christ's repeated arguments with the Pharisees, Sadducees and Scribes), they would have received a greater and more stern condemning word for removing the "scriptures" altogether; which was never the case. Christ would be negligent not to rebuke and reprove them of this, being the eternal Word, which he never did.

Josephus attests to the care and strictness of the Jews who cared for the OT canon, without the inclusion of the apocrypha – see Eusebius, Lib. III. Cap. 10.2.) Augustine and all the fathers accept the truth of this. Also, if the Jews did err in this, not accepting the apocryphal books and excluding them from the canon, then the church erred, and the RCC would never accept that, since there is only one true church. For everyone understands and knows that these books were never included in the OT canon, no matter how familiar they may have been to anyone. Bellarmine tries to escape this problem by saying that the apostles warrant and approved the apocrypha. Where is this to be found? Where did they ever say this or write this? Nowhere.

These books are not written by the prophets, nor received by the Israelite church, and therefore are not a canonical, much less inspired.

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# Apocrypha Article 3

The church fathers and councils do not equate the Apocrypha with Scripture.

## ***The council and fathers of the church prove the apocrypha false as canonical in the strict sense.***

by C. Matthew McMahon

From the testimonies of the fathers and of church councils, the apocrypha is seen as non-canonical in the strict sense already laid forth. Though this be a human argument, it is worthy since the RCC bases their inclusion of these works *from* human argument.

The synod of Laodicea (canon 59.1) forbids the reading of any non-canonical books in the church, and allows only the “canonical books of the old and new Testaments” to be used for that purpose. Then those books are enumerated as canonical – which all protestant churches accept; not Tobit, not Judith, nor the rest. It is the judgment of the council that Tobit, Judith, Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom and the two books of Macabees are not canonical. The objection by the RCC is that at that time the canon was not yet settled. But who is going to settle the truth of the matter that the OT canon was already defined 400 years before Christ. The fathers during that time and council knew very well the books to include and exclude. (which will be shown shortly). Besides, the council of Carthage could not determine anything about the canon of Scripture since it was only *a provincial one*.

It will be said that the universal Trullan synod determined that these books should be included in the canon and defined by these authorities – namely Laodicea and Carthage. However in approving Carthage and Laodicea they fumble. If the canon, therefore, of the Trullan be genuine, the Laodicean and Cartaginian decrees concerning the canonical books do not contradict one another (they cannot since the church does not err). Consequently, although these books are called in some sense canonical in Carthage, they were deemed uncanonical by Laodicea. But if the judgments of these councils be contradictory, the Trullan synod failed in prudence when it approved the acts of both, which we see as the case.

The Trullan council was held 600 years after Christ. Now was the canon unknown until that time? Who in their right sense would affirm this? Not even the RCC will affirm this as we will see.

The fathers agree that the apocrypha is non-canonical and should not be included in the canon. Melito of Sardis, (Eusebius – Lib. IV. Cap. 26.) testifies he knew the OT canon. He took great pains in research, as we are told by Eusebius, and comes to the exact number of books as the protestants and Jews do. Origen (Eus. Lib. VI c. 25) acknowledges the same books as the protestants as canonical., and says that the number of them are two and twenty according to the Hebrew alphabet. (Remembering the combination of 1-2 Samuel, 1-2 Kings, etc.) Athanasius says “Our whole scripture is divinely inspired and hath books not infinite in number, but finite and comprehended in a certain canon.” There was, therefore a certain canon by the late 300’s. He then enumerates this, “The canonical books of the OT are two and twenty. Equal to the number as the Hebrew alphabet.” Then he says, “But besides these, there are also other non canonical books of the OT which are only read to the catechumens.” Then he lists the Wisdom of Solomon, Sirach, the



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fragments of Esther, Judith, Tobit and the like. "These" he says "are the non-canonical books of the OT." (Athanas. Opp. li. 126. sqq. Ed. Bened.) Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, says, "The law of the OT is considered as divided into twenty-two books, so as to correspond to the number of letters." Nazianzen fixes the same number. Cyril of Jerusalem, in his 4<sup>th</sup> catechetical discourse says much, "Do thou learn carefully from the church what are the books of the OT, Read the divine Scriptures, the two and twenty books. (Cyril. Hiersol. Catech. IV. 33. p. 67. ed Tuttei.) Epiphanius counts twenty seven, or by the Hebrew doubling, twenty two, "delivered by God to the Jews." And he says of the apocryphal books, "They are indeed useful books, but are not included in the canon, and were not deposited in the ark of the covenant." Ruffinus, in his exposition of the Apostle's Creed, says "But I should be known that there are other books also, which were called by the ancients not canonical but ecclesiastical, the Wisdom of Solomon and of Sirach, the book of Tobit, Judith, Macabees. These they would have to be read in the churches, but that nothing should be advanced from them for the confirming the authority of faith." (Symb. Apost. In Appendix ad Cyprian. Ed. Fell. P. 26). (As with any good book.) Jerome plainly rejects all the apocryphal books from the canon. In his Prologus Galeatus he says "As there are twenty and two letters, so there are counted twenty and two books. Therefore the Wisdom of Solomon, and Jesus, and Judith, and Tobit, are not in the canon." (See the introduction to the Vulgate in his own hand.) Gregory the Great, in his commentaries on Job, (Lib. XIX. Cap. 16.) expressly writes that the books of Macabees is not canonical, as well as the rest. Josephus also agrees. In his first book against Apion the grammarian "We have not innumerable books, inconsistent and conflicting with each other, but two and twenty books alone, containing the series of our whole history, and justly deemed worthy of our highest credit." (Contra Apion. L. I. C. 8.)

Two objections are brought by the RCC: 1) these fathers spoke of the Jewish not the Christian canon. 2) the canon was not yet fixed. Both of these are *nonsense*.

Of the first objection, the councils and father were speaking of the Christian canon, not just the Jewish. It is ludicrous to assume they would exclude the OT from the Christian's Bible. The synod of Laodicea prescribed the books which were to be accepted in the churches. Melito did not desire to find out what these books were for the Jew's sake, but his own. Athanasius said the apocrypha was read by the catechumens, meaning those raised up in the church – Christian catechumens. Cyril forbids reading the apocrypha saying that the apostles rejected them. Ruffinus is speaking concerning the church, saying those books are not canonical but ecclesiastical – proving he spoke of the church. Jerome, writing to Paulinus (a Christian Bishop), makes none others canonical than the protestants. He acknowledges no other canon than I do now. He writes in his preface to the book of Chronicles, "The church knows nothing of the apocryphal writings; we must therefore have recourse to the Hebrews, from whose text the Lord speaks, and his disciples chose their examples. What is not extant in them is to be flung away from us." (Preface to Ezra and Nehemiah) In his preface to the books of Solomon, "As therefore the church, while it reads Judith and Tobit and the book of Maccabees, yet receives them not among the canonical Scriptures; so she may read these two volumes (Wisdom and Sirach) for the edification of the people, not for affirming the authority of faith." They are absurd who imagine a double canon. Jerome calls the Pelagians heretics (rightly so) for citing testimonies of the Apocrypha while attempting to prove something of heaven.

What shall the RCC then produce? Trullan? Except the Trullan council, the RCC has nothing at all to stand on. And this Trullan does not precisely affirm the Apocrypha canonical, but attributes the sanction of Carthage, which is no consequence since they also sanctioned Laodicea. And the RCC denies all credit to the Trullan canons themselves. Thus they are left without defense on any side.

Isidore, who lived in those times almost, (Lib. Isad. De Eccl. Offic. Lib. 1. c. 12.) says that the OT was settled by Ezra in two and twenty books, "that the books might correspond by the number of the letters." John Damascus says (Lib. IV. C. 18) "It must be known that there are only two and twenty books of the OT, according to the alphabet of the Hebrew language." So also Nicephorus, "There are two and twenty books of the OT." Leotinus says in his book of Sects (act. 2.) that there are no more than twenty two canonical books as the

churches receive. Rabanus Maurus (De. Institutes. Cler. C. 54) says that the whole OT was distributed by Ezra in two and twenty books, "that there may be as many in the law as in the letters." Radalphus (Lib. XIV. in Lev. c. 1.), "Tobit, Judith and the Macabees, although they be read for instruction in the church, yet have they not authority." They are not canonical. Hugo S. Victoris (Prolog. Lib. I. De Sacram. C. 7.) says "that these books are read indeed, but not written in the body of the text or in the authoritative canon; that is, such as the book of Tobit, Judith, Macabees, the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus." And again in Didascal. Lib. IV. C. 8., "As there are twenty two alphabetic letters, by mean of which we write in Hebrew, and speak of what we have to say, and the compass of the human voice is included in their elementary sounds; so twenty-two books are reckoned, by means of which being the alphabets and doctrine of God..." Also the opinion of Richard de S. Victore (Exception. Lib. II. C. 9), Lyra (prolog. In Libros Aprocryph.) Dionysius Carthusianus (Comment in Gen. in Princip.) , Abulensis (in Matt. c. 1), Antonius (3 p. Tit. XVIII. C. 5.), Cardinal Hugo (Prologue to Joshua) says the apocryphal books are not a rule for faith. Cardinal Cajetan and Erasmus both declare the canon glossed by the apocryphal books being included in it in their time. (See Leo's Epistle "Dilecto Filio Erasmo Roterd." Prefixed to Erasmus' Greek NT, Basil, 1535). Even Arius Montanus, who was himself present in the synod at Trent, and published vast biblical work, and called by Gregory XIII his "son", in addition to the Hebrew Bible with an interlinear version declares that the orthodox church follows the canon of the Hebrews, and reckons apocryphal the books of the "OT" written in Greek: all those apocryphal books we have mentioned so far.

Thus, if these books either were canonical, or so declared and defined by any legitimate public judgment of the church, then these so numerous fathers, ancient and at the time of Trent, could not have been ignorant of it, nor would have dissented. However, they openly stated these books as apocryphal, and in no way included them in the canon. I reject these books in the same manner and in the same way. Satisfy my desire of retracting each and every one of these statements, reconcile the problems with the synod's own canons and statements. But how shall the RCC change history?

The next shall deal with each individual book of the apocrypha, their inconsistencies, contradictions, and absurdities, showing by their own testimony that they ought not to be included in the canon as the divinely inspired, perfect, inerrant, infallible and holy Word of God, as the other books of the true canon show.

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# Apocrypha Article 4

The Apocrypha demonstrates its own self-contradictory nature and its contradictions with true Scripture.



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### ***The Contradictions of the Apocrypha***

by C. Matthew McMahon

The following is a brief look at the contradictions, errors and inconsistencies of the Apocryphal books, showing that they could not be the inspired, inerrant, infallible Word of God. Words coming from a perfect and holy God must be without error, lest they prove themselves to be frauds, as the Apocrypha does:

I treat here some things, not in any way exhaustive:

1. The Book of Baruch: 4 arguments are given by the RCC to keep this book: 1) a quotation in 2 Maccabees chapter 2 of the book, 2) The councils of Florence and Trent place this books among the canonical Scriptures, 3) The church takes some lessons from the book during anniversary offices, 4) that many fathers produce testimony of the book to be canonical.
2. First, Maccabees is apocryphal (which will be further shown). One apocryphal book cannot inspire another to be canonical. This is no argument for the book. The citation of any passage does not of itself prove a book to be canonical, for then Aratus, Menander and Epimenides (quoted by Paul in Acts 17:28; 1 Cor. 15:33; Tit. 1:12) would be canonical.
3. It makes no difference to me what Trent or Florence says, since councils and popes have often (as we saw) contradicted themselves. The councils cannot make the book inspired, they may only discover if it is so or not. As we will see this will prove faulty. Plus, I refuse to be pressed by the Roman Catholic opinion. The RCC must prove its inspiration, not a council's opinion, which they cannot.
4. Just because the church reads the book, does not mean it is inspired. *Pilgrim's Progress* is the second most widely read book in all the world besides the Bible, but simply because the church reads it does not make it inspired.
5. The Jewish church, to which the oracles of God were committed (Rom. 3:2), never considered them as canonical, but held the same canon with us (as is admitted by Josephus, *Against Apion* 1.39-41 [Loeb, 1:178-79], Becanus, *Manuale controversiarum* 1.1 [1750], pp. 11-12) and Stapelton, "De Principiis fidei doctrinalibus controversia," *Cont.* 5.7\* in *Opera* [1620], 1:322-23).
6. I do concede that there is much in the book worth reading. But it is not apocryphal simply because some testimony, (and that thin at best, and certainly not of the heavy hitters of the RCC as I have already quoted in previous emails), says that it is canonical. (Nor the reverse) It must stand the test I am about to place it under. Some fathers thought this

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book part of Jeremiah. Athanasius cites the book in his debate against the Arians, but though he does this, he also cites from the 3<sup>rd</sup> book of Esdras which shows inconsistency on behalf of the RCC to pick his citation on the book of Baruch to prove its canonicity and not Esdras. (Much of this is the case.) Melchior Canus says, (Lib VII. C. 6.) "For as we have shown in the second book, the church hath not placed the book of Baruch in the number of the sacred writings, certainly and clearly..."

7. Who wrote it? Either Baruch or Jeremiah is cited, but neither could have – why? It was written in Greek, not in Hebrew, as Jerome tells us, and as the book itself shows. Jeremiah and Baruch spoke in Hebrew, and Baruch wrote down what came from Jeremiah's lips as Jeremiah 36:4 states. The style of the letter is in Greek, not in Hebrew diction. In Baruch, chapter 6, there is the epistle of Jeremiah which reads in verse 2, "Ye shall be there seven generations." This construction in Greek is foreign in Hebrew. The term "generation" is never used to designate a period of 10 years as Francis Junius has correctly observed. Whoever wrote this book wrote in Greek. Whoever wrote this book did not write it in Hebrew, and not in the holy language of the prophets (Hebrew, or its immediate derivation and closely linked brother Aramaic.) Greek would not have been used until some time later. Jeremiah nor Baruch could not have written it. It was not written by any prophet, and is deemed apocryphal, and not inspired. As with others, Josephus acknowledges that those things which were written by his people after the time of Artaxerxes were not equally credible and authoritative with those which preceded "on account of there not being an indisputable succession of prophets" (Against Apion 1.41 (Loeb, 1:178-79)).
8. The additions to Esther: In additions to the unwarranted arguments mentioned for Baruch, the RCC adds that Josephus (Antiq. Lib. X. cap. 6.2) mentions the epistles of Ahasuerus. The argument based on Josephus is inconclusive. What if Josephus was enlarging in his history with these citations? Must have Josephus, simply because he quoted them being in existence ascribe to them canonicity, which he never, anywhere, does? Sixtus Senesis (Lib 1.) approves of Lyra's view that they are not canonical. In dealing with the book, the additions are repetitious of the same information; and there is no reason to retell the same history twice in the same book; secondly, there are inconsistencies and incongruities: 1) chapter 12:2 Mordecai is said to have dreamed of 2 eunuchs who conspired against the king in the second year. But in the second chapter, which is canonical, verse 16, we read that the conspiracy took place in the seventh year of Ahasuerus. Next, the narrative in this apocryphal section is written after the death of Mordecai, naming Ptolemy and Cleopatra, who assured lived after the time of the prophets. (Nor can anyone well understand the meaning of that passage anyway.) Some then say that Lysimachus had taken the Hebrew and translated the document into Greek, which would then explain why this apocryphal section is in Greek and not in Hebrew. But Lysimachus only translated the epistle of Phurim, and nothing else. Also, who translated this section into Latin? Jerome found a certain Latin translation, and subjoined it to his version (knowing full well that Jerome did not translate the Apocrypha well, and cut and paste other parts of it upon extreme pressure to include it as a translation in his work which attests to.) Yet, this vulgar translation, which Jerome deemed utterly unfaithful, is in the highest sense canonical with the RCC against the testimony of the very translator. Thirdly, the author of this section tells us that Mordecai received a reward from the king for this information (12:5); but no reward was given in chapter 6:3 of the true history. (and more of this could be explained as to why Haman would have plotted against Mordecai after the king

rewarded him, etc...) Chapter 12:6 of the apocryphal account says Haman was incensed at Mordecai on account of the eunuch, but why would Haman favor the treason of the eunuchs? – which is not in the true history. He would then be hating the King not Mordecai. Fifthly, chapter 15:7 says that Queen Esther enraged the king upon her entrance. But 5:2 says that she found favor – a blatant contradiction. Sixthly, chapter 16:10 says Haman is called a Macedonian, but in 8:3 he is called an Agagite, from Amalek. Another blatant contradiction. And there is more...but I will not belabor the obvious. The chapters are not written in Hebrew. Jerome says he marked these chapters with an “obelus” to show their uncanonical nature. Beside others already quoted previously, Sixtus Senensis after Trent wrote in his bibliotheca that these works are apocryphal. Although Sixtus quarrels with his own men, the Jesuits, let them quarrel. It continues to show the inconsistencies.

9. The additions to Daniel: Jerome says “Daniel, as it stand in the Hebrew, text, has neither the history of Susanna, nor the Hymn of the three children, nor the fables of Bel and the Dragon; which we, considering that they are now dispersed over the whole world, subjoined with an obelus prefixed, and as it were, striking them through, lest the ignorant think they had cut a great portion of the volume.” Jerome says none of this is in Hebrew, he said they were apocryphal by his obelus, they are, though read everywhere, and he would have omitted them if not for the fear of calamity of certain people. Secondly, John Driedo (de Catal. Scripture. Lib. I. Cap. Ult.) does say that it is not to be despised, but is not canonical. Those, he says, who believe it to be inspired, fall into no pernicious error. They were not matters binding to faith. Thirdly, the Paranomasia, spoken of by Jerome in his preface to Daniel, shows it to be written in Greek and not in Hebrew. The Greek etymology here in this section which Jerome quotes (which I will not quote the Greek for you remembering you do not know it), is a play on Greek words and a Greek construction, and not Hebrew. Daniel could not have written it, nor any prophet. The RCC quotes Origen (of all people) as proof of the canonicity of it, and denies Jerome to be heard as he unequivocally denies its inspiration and inclusion and rebukes Origen in the same breath. (Hieronym. Opp. T. v. 619.) There is more but this suffices.
10. The book of Tobit: The RCC add Irenaeus, Cyprian, Hilary, and Ambrose to prove the canonicity of the book, since they mention it. But what makes these men deem it canonical without a general council? Jerome in Hieronym. Opp. T. IX. 1296 says the book is not part of the canon. As for problem with the book: Tobias makes the angel tell a falsehood. He says that he is Azariah, the son of Ananias (Tob. 5:12\*) and that he is Raphael, the angel of the Lord (12:15). The angel gives a magical direction for driving away the devil by the smoke of a fish's liver (Tob. 6:6), against that of Christ (Mt. 17:21). He arrogates to himself the oblation of prayers (Tob. 12:12), which belongs to the work of Christ alone.
11. The book of Judith: Jerome says this book is not canonical (Opt. T. X. p. 22) He shows this by stating that the Jews saw it as apocryphal (Opt. T. X. p. 22), and because it was written in Chaldean and copies of it grossly corrupted and depraved. Neither did Josephus, in his history of the Jews, say anything concerning this book which would be extremely strange if it were a part of their history. Problems with it: The book of Judith celebrates the seed of Simeon (Jud. 9:2), which Jacob cursed (Gen. 49:5-7); praises the deceits and lies of Judith (Jud. 11), which are not very consistent with true piety. Worse still, she even seeks the blessing of God upon them (Jud. 9:13). No mention is made of the city Bethulia in the Scriptures; nor does any trace of the deliverance mentioned there occur in Josephus or Philo, who wrote on Jewish

subjects. Nabuchodossor is called a Persian emperor, where no Persian emperor ever existed by that name. And problem with chronological and geographical history occur with him and Holofernes. The history of Kings, in which the acts of Manasseh are written, read nothing about Holofernes. We also see Judith living 105 years and more, and that while she lived there was peace. This peace, therefore lasted many years, at least 100. But Amon succeeded Manasseh, and reigned 2 years, Josiah succeeded Amon and reigned 31 years and after his death a great amount of war came to the people. This is contradictory. The multiple problems of this kind show the books to be apocryphal and uninspired.

12. The book of Wisdom: The RCC says that Paul alludes to this in Rom. 11:34 when he says "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counselor?" As well as Hebrews 1:3, "Who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person." Similar words proves nothing. They are not alluding to Wisdom, rather to Isaiah, which the NT quote everywhere. The sentiment is found in Isaiah 40:13, "Who hath directed the Spirit of the Lord, or who hath been His counselor, hath taught him?" Aquinas agrees with this (T. XVI. P. 37. 2. Opp. Venet. 1593.) The author of Wisdom falsely asserts that he was king in Israel (Wis. Sol. 9:7, 8) that he might be taken for Solomon. Yet he alludes to the athletic contests which in the time of Solomon had not been established among the Greeks (Wis. Sol. 4:2). Further, he introduces the Pythagorean metempsychosis (metempsychosin, Wis. Sol. 8:19, 20) and gives a false account of the origin of idolatry (14:15, 16). It is written in Greek which excludes it from the OT canon. Most determine it was written by Philo, who lived at the time of Christ. Christ said that the "law and the prophets were until John" not after which excludes Philo. Bellarmine tries to escape this by saying there must have been some other Jewish Philo, but this is nonsense, also rejected by Sixtus Senesis (Lib. VIII. C. 9) For if Philo was a true prophet, and sent of God, why then did he not receive the Lord Jesus Christ as the Messiah and only Savior? (Ouch!)
13. The book of Ecclesiasticus: just a few things to not weary: the writer asks for apologies in his preface in that the Hebrew cannot be rendered well into the Greek. He asks for pardon as if inadequate for the task. By this he proves himself to not be a prophet, nor endowed with a prophetic Spirit. For the prophets never do this. What is written in Chapter 49:4 concerning Samuel is nonsense, as Augustine states (Ad Simplicianum, Lib. II quaest. 3) and in Cura pro mortis cap. 15.) Augustine says it was not Samuel but a demonic spirit. Otherwise Samuel would have never said that Saul and his sons would be with him when they die, which if it were the prophet, would have been heaven; which is not so. Aquinas says this as well (I. p. 89. 4. 8.)
14. The Son of Sirach (Sir 46:20) attributes to Samuel what was done by the evil spirit raised by wicked devices (1 S. 28:11), falsely speaks of Elijah's bodily return (Sir. 48:10), and excuses his oversights in the prologue.
15. Maccabees' history is faulty in many places. The RCC holds these books under the authority of the apostolical canons, which also accept 3 Maccabees which the RCC does not. This is bias and shows lack of prudence to "listen to their authorities." Augustine said "The calculation of which times is not to be found in the sacred Scriptures which are called canonical, but in others, amongst which are also the books of Maccabees." So the RCC's attempt to use Augustine's quotes concerning their "sacredness" is destroyed by Augustine's own qualification of the books as other than canonical – which he never retracted. Also, Maccabees praises suicide. Augustine repudiates this when he says "Nor is it in vain that nowhere in the sacred canonical

scriptures do we find any precept or permission to take away our own lives." For in 1 Maccabees 6 Eleasar is praised for voluntary rushing upon death. And in 2 Maccabees 14, Razis is praised for laying hands on himself. These books teach what is contrary to the law of Christ and of God. Augustine also argues that Christ never mentions them as his witnesses and shows them as non-canonical. Jerome says Josephus is the author of these books (Cap. XIII. Opp. T. II. 837) Josephus is not prophet, did not accept Christ and lived after the prophets. The books are expressly stated by Gregory the Great as apocryphal, who was Pope of Rome (Morals. Lib. XIX. c. 16.) Eusebius says the same (Lib. De Temp.), as does Richard of S. Victor. (Except. Lib. II. c. 9.) and Occam (3 Part. Dial. Tract.. I. Lib. III c. 16) Will worship is seen in 2 Maccabees 12, where Judas Maccabees is praised for sacrificing to the dead, something God never commanded (See Leviticus 101-3). Judas is said to have been slain in 152 during the reign of Seleucide in Mac. 9:3; but 2 Mac. 1:10 he writes a letter to Aristobulus in the year 188, 36 years after his death (I wish I could do that!) So much more can be added, but I will add one more. Within the 2 Maccabean books, Antiochus is said to have died 3 different ways and in two different geographical locations. (See 1 Macc. 6:18, 16; 2 Macc. 1:16; 2 Macc 9, etc.) Josephus was not careful.

16. There are so many contradictions and absurdities in the additions to Esther and Daniel that Sixtus Senensis unhesitatingly rejects them. Baruch says that in the fifth year after the destruction of Jerusalem, he read his book to Jeconiah and to all the people of Babylon; but Jeconiah was in prison and Baruch had been taken away to Egypt after the death of Gedaliah (Jer. 43:7). He mentions an altar of the Lord (Bar. 1:10) when there was none, the temple being destroyed. The books of the Maccabees often contradict each other (compare 1 Mac. 1:16 with 9:5, 28 and chapter 10). The suicide (autocheiria) of Razis is praised (2 Mac. 14:42). Will-worship (ethelothreskeia) is commended (2 Mac. 12:42) in Judas's offering a sacrifice for the dead contrary to the law. The author apologizes for his youth and infirmity and complains of the painful labor of abridging the five books of Jason, the Cyrenian (2 Mac. 2:23\*, 24; 15:39). If you wish any more examples from these books, consult Rainold, Chamier, Molinaeus, Spanheim and others who have pursued this line of argument with fullness and strength. Do I need to go on?

Seeing then that from the testimony of the books themselves, they are contradictory, chronologically inaccurate, they introduce characters which are fables, they contradict not only themselves but also the Holy Scriptures. They are not inspired, and not included in the canon by most of the early fathers and no council approved them with any degree of prudence. These differences are irreconcilable.

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# Apocrypha Article 5

Closing remarks: the apocrypha is ill-suited to establish matters of faith and practice.



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## **A Closing remark** by C. Matthew McMahon

If the Apocryphal books are connected with canonical books, it does not follow that they are of equal authority, but only that they are useful in the formation of manners and a knowledge of history (where they do not err), ***not for establishing faith.***

Although some of the Apocryphal books are better and more correct than the others and contain various useful moral directions (as the book of Wisdom and the Son of Sirach), yet because they contain many other false and absurd things, they are ***deservedly*** excluded from the canon of faith, not being inspired by their own testimony under scrutiny.

And as Turretin says, "Although some have questioned the authenticity of a few books of the New Testament (i.e., the epistle of James, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John and Revelation, which afterwards were received by the church as canonical), it does not follow that the same can be done with the Apocryphal books because the relation of the books of the Old and New Testaments to this subject are not the same. For the books of the Old Testament were given to the Christian church, not at inter-vals of time and by parts, but she received at one and the same time from the Jews all the books belonging to her written in one codex after they had been stamped with an indubitable authority, confirmed by Christ and his apostles. But the books of the New Testament were published separately, in different times and places and gradually collected into one corpus. Hence it happened that some of the later books (which came to some of the churches more slowly, especially in remote places) were held in doubt by some until gradually their authenticity was made known to them. (2) Although in certain churches some of the epistles and Revelation were rejected, yet those who received them were always far more numerous than those who rejected them. Yet there was no dispute about the Apocryphal books because they were always rejected by the Jewish church."

The previous articles show valid proof why all should abandon the notion that the Apocryphal books ought to be included in the canon and deemed inspired, and that the RCC has no prudence in the way they handled receiving these books. If any are able to prove what I have written and compiled as caricatures, incorrectly quoted authors, or the like, *please recite the corrections and the included bibliographic material*, as I have done, in those corrections for me to reread. And please do not send me bibliographic information from Jewish Liberals or RCC liberals who have varied opinions today (I can do that myself). For they cannot even agree on many of the basic issues due to a need for modern novelty. Deal with the "fathers" (though they ought to be called "children" of the faith), Jerome, Augustine, the councils etc.

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