

The 66 Books of the Bible

Categorized and sectioned for easier memorization, with short summations.

*Note: all theological classifications herein and summations and commentary are given by men as teaching aids. It is by the wholly inspired Scriptures (2Tim. 3:16) that all such are to be tested by. **To GOD be the glory.** Notes: **Dates** of composition are only **approximate estimates** and may be disputed. Underlined words are links. Press F11 for full screen in PCs. Best viewed in Firefox. See here for download versions (best for printing). New Testament books with commentary is offered here. To listen or download the audio New Testament, see here. Home Page is here. Thanks be to GOD.*

THE OLD TESTAMENT (*The "Preparation"*)
The TORAH Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy;
Historical Books Joshua, Judges, Ruth; 1st + 2nd Samuel, 1st + 2nd, Kings, 1st+ 2nd Chronicles; Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther;
Wisdom Books Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Songs of Solomon;
The Prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.
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THE NEW TESTAMENT
The Gospels (*The "Presentation"*) Matthew, Mark, Luke, John;
The Book of Acts (*The "Propagation"*)
Letters and Epistles (*The "Explanation"*) Romans, 1st + 2nd Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1st + 2nd Thessalonians, 1st + 2nd Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1st+ 2nd Peter, 1st+ 2nd + 3rd John, Jude,
Revelation (*The "Consummation"*)
 For the Apocrypha see here

Section and Titles	Principle themes and persons (mostly from Halley's Bible Handbook). ^	Section and Titles	Principle themes and souls. For more info I would recommend the free E-Sword Bible program (commentaries).
THE TORAH (Est. composition: 1445 - 1405 B.C., mostly by <u>Moses</u>) Five Books: Creation, Giving of the Law, + Journeys.		Gospels 4 Books. The story of Christ from four aspects.	
1. Genesis	The Book of Beginnings: Creation to beginning of the Hebrew Nation (Israel; Noah, Abraham, Joseph).	^ 1. Matthew (Est. 60's)	Matthew — Jesus, the Promised Jewish Messiah, of the seed of David. Emphasis upon Jesus fulfilling prophecy. Common word, "spoken by".
2. Exodus	Deliverance of the Hebrew Nation from Egypt to Wilderness Chastisement; Giving of The Law and Covenant; Instructions for the Temple (Moses). Made be seen to correspond in part to the Book of Acts in N.T.	^ 2. Mark (Est. late 50's - early 60's)	Jesus, the Son of God and perfect servant. Shortest gospel: thought to be best suited for slaves, which made up a large portion of the church (and had less free time). Common word, "straightway" (KJV), as Jesus was prompt as needed, and slaves were also often to do things immediately.
3. Leviticus	Laws for Israel, Ordinances for Temple Service and for Aaronic Priesthood (Moses, Aaron). Key word: = holiness (87 times).	^ 3. Luke (Est. 60)	Jesus, the Son of Man. More emphasis upon humanity of Christ, the perfect man, yet Son of God. Shows Jesus prayed more than other accounts. This is the 1st treatise, the 2nd being Acts (Acts 1:1), penned by Luke (Lucas), apparently a Jewish proselyte, "the beloved Physician" (Col. 4:14).
4. Numbers	Numbering of Israel and Journey to the Promised Land and its trials, and Moses leadership.		
5. Deuteronomy	Laws for Hebrew Nation, reiterated and expanded; Warnings of Chastisement if not obeyed (Moses + Aaron).	^ 4. John (Est. late 80's - early 90's)	Jesus, the Son of God. Reveals the Deity of Christ more than other gospels. See Jn. 1:1-3; 12:34b-50; 20:28, etc., and HERE.
The Historical Books Nine books. The History of Israel from the conquest of Canaan (most) to the establishment of the Kingdom, it's division, and the captivity.		^ 5. Acts (Est. 61)	Principally the Acts of the apostles. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit and birth (as some mark it) and history of early church.
6. Joshua (Est. 1404-1390 B.C.)	Conquest of the promised land of of Canaan under Joshua, the prior inhabitant being wicked.	^ Church Epistles and Letters	The gospel and salvation explained, and ecclesiastical matters dealt with, and heart expressed.
7. Judges (Est. 1374-1129 B.C.)	Death of Joshua and Backsliding of Israel and effects (various Judges; Gideon, Samson)	^ 6. Romans (Est. 55)	Foundational doctrines on justification, election, and application. Very important doctrinal book. Link.
8. Ruth (Est. 1150? B.C.)	Story God's mercy outside Israel. Beginning of Messianic Line (Ruth, Naomi Boaz).	^ 7. First Corinthians (Est. 54)	church discipline and order. Paul's patience, love, and teaching toward the immature Corinthians, with various disorders. Rapture of believers.
9. First	Birth and life of Samuel (the	^ 8. Second	Paul's heartfelt love, exhortations,

Samuel (Est. 1043-1011 B.C.)	last judge); Israel's choice of a King and establishment of the Kingdom (Samuel, Saul, David, Jonathan, Goliath)	Corinthians (Est. 55)	entreaty and warning to the carnal church at Corinth. The exchanged life, and power, and travails of the apostle Paul and company.
10. Second Samuel (Est. 1011-1004 B.C.)	Establishment of Davidic Kingdom centered in Jerusalem (David, Joab, Absalom).	9. Galatians (Est. 49)	Paul's correction and exhortations to the Galatian church. Emphasis is upon salvation by grace, not by the law, contrary to "Judaizers."
11. First Kings (Est. 971-852 B.C.)	Reign of Solomon, the building of the Temple. The Kingdom Divided after his death into North (Israel/Ephraim) and South (Judah). (Adonijah, Solomon, Rehoboam, Jeroboam, Elijah, Ahab, Asa, Jehoram, Ahaziah).	10. Ephesians (Est. 60)	The first of the "Prison Epistles" by Paul. The richness of the grace of God in Christ. The mystery and unity of the church, with Jews and Gentiles constituting the "one new man". The believers blessed position and empowerment in Christ revealed, with commands, exhortations to live it out.
12. Second Kings (Est. 852-587 B.C.)	History of Divided Kingdom; Various Kings over Israel and Judah, respectively (Elisha, Athaliah, Jehoash, Jehoahaz, Joash, Hezekiah).	11. Philippians (Est. 61)	2 nd "Prison Epistle. Letter to a stable church, exhortations to greater unity and maturity. "Press toward the mark ..."
13. First Chronicles (Est. 450 - 425 B.C.)	Death of Saul and history of the Reign of King David to his death; Preparation for the building of the Temple.	12. Colossians (Est. 60)	3 rd Prison Epistle. Warning against gnosticism; exhortations to live out the faith. The Deity of Christ declared.
14. Second Chronicles (Est. 450 - 425 B.C.)	Reign of Solomon, his building of the Temple and his death: Israel's spiritual declension, the Kingdom Divided; History of the Southern Kingdom to the Captivity (Solomon, Asa, Jehoshaphat, Joash, Hezekiah, Josiah).	Beginning of 5 "T" books	
		13. First Thessalonians (Est. 50 - 51)	Commendations and exhortations to the holy and evangelistic church at Thessalonica. The Lord's 2 nd coming foretold and described.
		14. Second Thessalonians (Est. 50 - 51)	More of the above. Faith and Patience in Persecutions.
Post – captivity historical books (see also post – captivity prophets Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi)		15. First Timothy (Est. 62)	Paul's instructions to young pastor Timothy, and to all who would follow. Give attendance to doctrine...
15. Ezra (Est. 538-520 B.C.)	Temple rebuilt in Jerusalem by a Remnant and dedicated; Prayer and repentance	16. Second Timothy (Est. 63)	More instructions + exhortations to young pastor Timothy, Paul's "dearly beloved son." Soldiering, enduring all. Rebuke, reprove, exhort...
16. Nehemiah (Est. 445 - 425 B.C.)	Rebuilding of the Walls of Jerusalem and est. of civil authority; Perseverance over Persecution by Sanballat, and Tobiah and company. Wise Leadership. Repentance, Revival according to Truth and discipline.	17. Titus (Est. 62)	Paul's instructions to pastor Titus, over the churches of Crete. Ordain elders. Similar to 1Timothy.
		18. Philemon (Est. 60)	Paul's intercession for a converted runaway slave, Onesimus,. Entreats/requires Philemon to receive Onesimus back as a brother, even as Paul himself.
17. Esther (Est. after 464 B.C.)	Fasting and Prayer, Deliverance from extermination (Virtuous Vashti, Enduring Esther, Moral Mordecai).	19. Hebrews (Est. 60's)	After Romans, the 2nd important doctrinal book. Christ, His Deity + our great high priest, the new + superior Covenant declared. Key word: "better".
The Wisdom Books 5 Books. Trials, Heart Experience, Observation and Discernment, Folly, and Love (cf. Rm. 5:1-5) .		20. James (Est. 50's)	The Proverbs of the New Testament. Faith without works is not saving faith; Exhortations to repentance, prayer, humility, etc.
18. Job (Est. 2150 B.C.)	Story of affliction and deliverance of just Job, and God's compassion. The Problem of Suffering, and need of Patience.	"P+J" books.	
		21. 1 Peter (Est. 63)	Exhortations to a persecuted church.
19. Psalms (Est. 965-1000 B.C.)	Hymn (150) Book of Israel.	22. 2 Peter (Est. 63 - 64)	Prediction of apostasy, and description of the Day of the Lord to come. Exhortations to holiness.
20. Proverbs (Est. 950-700 B.C.)	The God - given Wisdom of Solomon.		
21. Ecclesiastes (Est. around 935)	Solomon's folly: The vanity of material wealth, and reasoning of the natural man.	23. 1 John (Est. late 80's - early 90's)	Heart and Works of True Christian Faith delineated. Holiness and Love in the faith.

B.C.)		24. 2 John (Est. late 80's - early 90's)	Caution against false teachers.
22. Song of Solomon (Est. before 965 B.C.)	The Glory of Wedded love - between a Man and a Women (not man with man).	25. 3 John (Est. late 80's - early 90's)	Helping Christian laborers.
		26. Jude (Est. 60's or 70's)	Warnings and examples of False Teachers/Prophets and their end, and of Imminent Apostasy.
The Prophetic Books: The Major Prophets.	Five Books. Propheying to the Northern or Southern Kingdoms, sometimes to both or to heathen nations, they also warn all mankind of the blessings lost and ruin gained by transgressing the just laws of God, + call all to repentance.	27. Revelation: <i>The "Consummation."</i> Est. late 80's - early 90's)	The Ultimate Triumph of Christ, and the redemption of His elect. Exaltation of "Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." Armageddon, Submission and Judgment of the Wicked. Rest and Reward of the righteous Redeemed, to God's glory. The last book of the Bible, nothing to be subtracted from or added to.
23. Isaiah (Est. 740 - 680 B.C.)	Prophet to Judah. The "Gospel according to Isaiah." The reproof of the Jews for idolatry and empty ritualism. Forecasts of Judgments, as well as the Foretelling of the Messiah, the Suffering Servant. Key chapter: 53. Future restoration of Israel to faith and redemption.	Extras "Sacred Contents" (Writer unknown, to men) "The Bible contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are unchangeable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy.	
24. Jeremiah (Est. 627 - 585 B.C.)	The "Weeping Prophet" warning Judah The last effort to save Jerusalem before going into captivity.	It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveler's map, the pilgrim's staff, the pilot's compass, the soldier's sword, and the Christian's charter.	
25. Lamentations (Est. 586 B.C.)	A poetic dirge over the loss of Jerusalem + the Temple.	Here Paradise is restored, Heaven opened, and the gates of hell disclosed.	
26. Ezekiel (Est. 593-560 B.C.)	Declaring the sins of "the whole house of Israel," as well as future restoration and rebuilt Temple. "They shall know that I am the LORD."	Christ is its grand subject, our good the design, and God's glory its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully.	
27. Daniel (Est. 605-536 B.C.)	The prophet at Babylon, foretelling the course of Gentile world-rule to its judgment, and establishment of of the Messianic kingdom.	It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened at the judgment, and will be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, will reward the greatest labor, and will condemn all who trifle with its sacred contents."	
28. Hosea (Est. 710 B.C.)	A prophet of the N. Kingdom. The apostasy of Israel likened to the adulterous wife of a faithful husband.	SUMMARY OF KING JAMES BIBLE STATISTICS: Total Books in the King James Bible = 66 Total Chapters in the King James Bible = 1,189 Total verses in the King James Bible = 31,102 Total words in the 31,102 verses = 788,258* (not including the Hebrew Alphabet in Psalm 119 or the superscriptions listed in some of the Psalms)	
29. Joel (Est. 835 B.C.)	A prophet of Judah, Prediction of the Holy Spirit age and the coming of the Day of the LORD.	Total Books in the Old Testament = 39 Total Chapters in the Old Testament = 929 Total verses in the Old Testament = 23,145	
30. Amos (Est. 755 B.C.)	A prophet of Judah to the N. Kingdom. Ultimate, universal reign of Messiah.	Total Books in the New Testament = 27 Total Chapters in the New Testament = 260 Total verses in the New Testament = 7,957	
31. Obadiah (Est. 840 or 586 B.C.)	Doom of Edom, Israel's enemy of old.	Middle Book in the King James Bible = There are 2 – Micah & Nahum Longest Book in the King James Bible = Psalms Shortest Book in the King James Bible = 2 John (verses) & 3 John (words)	
32. Jonah (Est. 760 B.C.)	Call of God to Jonah to call Nineveh to repent; Jonah's rebellion, and Nineveh's obedience; God's mercy.	Middle Chapter in the King James Bible = Psalm 117 Longest Chapter in the King James Bible = Psalm 119 Shortest Chapter in the King James Bible = Psalm 117	
33. Micah (Est. 700 B.C.)	A prophet in Judah. The soon fall of Israel and Judah, and future birth of the Messiah in Bethlehem.	Middle verse in the King James Bible = There are 2 – Psalm 103:1 & Psalm 103:2	
34. Nahum (Est. 663 - 612 B.C.)	The destruction of Nineveh.	Longest verse in the King James Bible = Esther 8:9	
35. Habakkuk (Est. 607 B.C.)	In Judah. The holiness of God,		

	coming judgment though it carries. "The just shall live by faith."	Shortest verse in the King James Bible = John 11:35 *Count can vary due to stated and other aspects . The above KJV statistics were from http://www.biblebelievers.com/believers-org/kjv-stats.htm See note on links .
36. Zephaniah (Est. 625 B.C.)	Of Judah. The coming Day of the Lord upon Judah, other nations, and the coming of a "pure language."	Misc. data: Number of existing Bible manuscripts: 5,300 Greek manuscripts of the New Testament, 10,000 Latin Vulgates, and 9,300 other early versions = more than 24,000 manuscript copies of portions of the New Testament. In contrast to the nearly 800,000 words in the Bible (and over <u>180,000</u> in the New), the number of Arabic Words in the Quran is 77,439 (reported by Al-Fadl bin Shadhan as said by 'Ata bin Yasar). [77,473 in English] Other sources provided somewhat different numbers. The Bible can be read aloud in 70 hours. A number of verses in the Bible (KJV) contain all but A number of verses in the Bible (KJV) contain all but 1 letter of the alphabet: Ezra 7:21 contains all but the letter j; Joshua 7:24, 1 Kings 1:9, 1 Chronicles 12:40, 2 Chronicles 36:10, Ezekiel 28:13, Daniel 4:37, and Haggai 1:1 contain all but q; 2 Kings 16:15 and 1 Chronicles 4:10 contain all but z; and Galatians 1:14 contains all but k. (http://www.artbible.info/concordance) Stephen Cardinal Langton (c. 1150 – 9 July 1228), an Archbishop of Canterbury, is credited with having divided the Bible into the standard modern arrangement of books and chapters used today. Frenchman Robert Estienne (1503-1559), also referred to as Robert Stephens, a Catholic who became a Protestant late in his life, is credited with being the first to print the Bible divided into standard numbered verses.
37. Haggai (Est. 520 B.C.)	Rebuke, reproofs, and exhortation regarding the rebuilding the temple.	
38. Zechariah (Est. 520 - 518 B.C.)	Judgments and Messianic Prophecies.	
39. Malachi (Est. 450 - 600 B.C.)	Last O.T. message to a disobedient people. The coming of the Day of the Lord.	
Old Testament memory list by color: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy; Joshua, Judges, Ruth; 1 st +2 nd Samuel, 1 st + 2 nd Kings, 1 st +2 nd Chronicles; Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther; Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Songs of Solomon; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel; Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah; Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk; Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi.		
New Testament memory list by color: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John; Acts, Romans, 1 st and 2 nd Corinthians; Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians; 1 st and 2 nd Thessalonians, 1 st and 2 nd Timothy, Titus; Philemon, Hebrews, James; 1 st and 2 nd Peter, 1 st and 2 nd and 3 rd John, Jude, Revelation		

As indicated above, here is the way I memorize the names of the 66 books of the Bible:

OLD TESTAMENT

Section: TORAH (The Law)	Section: Historical			Section: Wisdom	Section: Prophetic: Major Prophets	Section: Prophetic: Minor Prophets		
Genesis Exodus Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	Joshua Judges Ruth	1 st and 2 nd Samuel 1 st + 2 nd Kings 1 st + 2 nd Chronicles	Ezra Nehemiah Esther	Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Songs of Solomon	Isaiah Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel	Hosea Joel Amos Obadiah	Jonah Micah Nahum Habakkuk	Zephaniah Haggai Zechariah Malachi

NEW TESTAMENT

Section: Gospels	Sections: Acts (history) then Church Epistles		Church Epistles continued, and letters + Revelation			
Matthew Mark Luke John	Acts Romans 1 st + 2 nd Corinthians	Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians	1 st + 2 nd Thessalonians 1 st + 2 nd Timothy Titus	Philemon Hebrews James	1 st and 2 nd Peter 1 st and 2 nd and 3 rd John Jude	Revelation

The Apocrypha

Note, this is a short version on the apocrypha, referred to as deuterocanonical books by Catholics, and for the fuller version, including Luther and the canon and the apocrypha, see [here](#).

The Apocrypha refers to extra books included in Roman Catholic and Orthodox Bibles, though their lists are not quite the same, but which are not contained in the Protestant (and most popular) canon of inspired Scripture, as they are manifested to be of an inferior quality, although for most of Protestant history they were typically printed in a separate section of their Bibles. The Roman Catholic books are: Tobit; Judith; Additions to Esther (Vulgate: Esther 10:4-16:24); Wisdom; Sirach (also called Ben Sira or Ecclesiasticus); Baruch, including the Letter of Jeremiah (additions to Jeremiah in the Septuagint); Additions to Daniel, which are the Prayer of Azariah and Song of the Three Holy Children (which in the Vulgate was Daniel 3:24-90) and Susanna (Vulgate: Daniel 13, Septuagint: prologue) as well as Bel and the Dragon (Vulgate: Daniel 14, Septuagint: epilogue); 1 Maccabees; 2 Maccabees. The Greek Orthodox adds 1 Esdras, 3 +4 Maccabees and Psalm 151.

While Roman Catholic apologists infer or assert that the canon was indisputably settled from the 4th century onward until Luther excluded them from his Bible, and that this is why the Protestant canon only has 66 books, this is due to ignorance or deception.

Luther was not alone in questioning or rejecting certain books, and the Protestant canon of inspired Scripture is not the same as that of Luther's canon of inspired books, although he contained the disputed books, including the apocrypha, in his Bible, but separately and with notes explaining his conclusion on their Divine inspiration, which was a historical practice. The 66 book Protestant canon is more ancient than that of Rome's, as its 39 book O.T. canon is seen as being held by Palestinian Jews around the time of Christ, while it contains the 27 book N.T. canon which was overall settled very early in church history. However, within Roman Catholicism substantial dissent existed among scholars through the centuries and right into Trent over the apocryphal books, and a few N.T.

books. (Hubert Jedin, *Papal Legate At The Council Of Trent: St Louis: B. Herder Book Co., 1947; pp. 278, 281-282. [More](#)*)

Despite decrees by early councils such as Hippo, Carthage and Florence, the decision of Trent in 1546 was the first "infallible" and final definition of the Roman Catholic canon, (*New Catholic Encyclopedia, Vol. II, Bible, III (Canon), p. 390; The Canons and Decrees*

of the Council of Trent : Rockford: Tan, 1978), Fourth Session, Footnote #4, p. 17) apparently after an informal vote of 24 yea, 15 nay, with 16 abstaining (44%, 27%, 29%) as to whether to affirm it as an article of faith with its anathemas on those who dissent from it. This definition, coming over 1400 hundreds years after the last book was written, was issued in reaction to Martin Luther and the Reformation. And in so doing, it went against a tradition of substantial weight in pronouncing the apocryphal books to be *uninspired*, while there is confusion over whether canon of Trent is exactly the same as that of Carthage and Hippo. In addition, Roman Catholic liberal scholarship impugns the integrity of the Word of God by its adherence to the discredited JEDP theory, and relegates* numerous historical accounts in the Bible to being fables or folk tales. (*as seen in *St. Joseph's medium size, NAB, Catholic publishing co., copyright 1970; in "Literary Genres," etc.*)

Some reasons for exclusion: The best evidence shows these apocryphal books were not included in the Jewish Canon of Jesus day. Although some apocryphal books contain a few texts which correspond to New Testament ones, this is also true of some works which are found outside the apocrypha, which the Bible sometimes quotes from. (Acts 17:28; Jude 1:14) Texts from the apocrypha were occasionally quoted in early church writings, and were considered worthy reading even if not included as Scripture, but the apocrypha was not accepted in such early O.T. lists as that of Melito (AD 170, and minus Esther). Some, such as Origen in the 2nd century, and St. Hilary of Poitiers and Rufinus, formally rejected the apocrypha, but used them or parts thereof in practice. The preeminent 3rd century scholar Jerome rejected the Apocrypha, as they did not have the sanction of Jewish antiquity, and were not received by all, and did not generally work toward "confirmation of the doctrine of the Church." The ancient 1st century Jewish historian Josephus only numbered 22 books of Scripture, likely reflecting the Jewish canon at the time of Jesus. Anastasius of Antioch in the 4th century, John of Damascus in the 8th century, and Nicephorus, patriarch of Constantinople in the 9th century and others also rejected the apocrypha in part or in whole. Some of those who affirmed the apocrypha also did so in part. The 19th century Protestant scholar B.F. Westcott, who is charged by some with being pro-Catholic, commented regarding the decree of Trent:

"This fatal decree, in which the Council...gave a new aspect to the whole question of, the Canon, was ratified by fifty-three prelates, among whom there was not one German, not one scholar distinguished for historical learning, not one who was fitted by special study for the examination of a subject in which the truth could only be determined by the voice of antiquity. How completely the decision was opposed to the spirit and letter of the original judgments of the Greek and Latin Churches, how far in the doctrinal equalization of the disputed and acknowledged books of the Old Testament it was at variance with the traditional opinion of the West, how absolutely unprecedented was the conversion of an ecclesiastical usage into an article of belief, will be seen from the evidence which has already been adduced." (B.F. Westcott, A General Survey of the History of the Canon of the New Testament (London: Macmillan, 1889), p. 478.)

It is true that apocryphal books were referenced by some church fathers, but so were books which Trent rejected as Scripture. In addition, prior to Trent even those who rejected the apocryphal books as canonical could treat them like Scripture in some ways, while excluding them as doctrinally authoritative. As Jerome explains, in his famous 'Prologus Galeatus', or Preface to his translation of Samuel and Kings, "he declares that everything not Hebrew should be classed with the apocrypha, and explicitly says that Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Tobias, and Judith are not in the Canon. These books, he adds, are read in the churches for the edification of the people, and not for the confirmation of revealed doctrine." (Catholic Encyclopedia, Canon of the Old Testament)

The distinction then is that while "good," they were not for doctrinal use. As the above source states regarding St. Athanasius, "Following the precedent of Origen and the Alexandrian tradition, the saintly doctor recognized no other formal canon of the Old Testament than the Hebrew one; but also, faithful to the same tradition, he practically admitted the deutero books to a Scriptural dignity, as is evident from his general usage.

An excerpt from the Prologue to the "Glossa ordinaria;," an assembly of glosses (brief notations of the meaning of a word or wording in the margins of the Vulgate Bible) expresses this distinction:

The canonical books have been brought about through the dictation of the Holy Spirit. It is not known, however, at which time or by which authors the non-canonical or apocryphal books were produced. Since, nevertheless, they are very good and useful, and nothing is found in them which contradicts the canonical books, the church reads them and permits them to be read by the faithful for devotion and edification. Their authority, however, is not considered adequate for proving those things which come into doubt or contention, or for confirming the authority of ecclesiastical dogma, as blessed Jerome states in his prologue to Judith and to the books of Solomon. But the canonical books are of such authority that whatever is contained therein is held to be true firmly and indisputably, and likewise that which is clearly demonstrated from them. (note 124, written in AD 1498, also found in a work attributed to Walafrid Strabo in the tenth century, in Latin here: <http://www.christiantruth.com/articles/Apocryphaendnotes3.html>)

It likewise states in an introduction to apocryphal books, 'Here begins the book of Tobit which is not in the canon; here begins the book of Judith which is not in the canon' and so forth for Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom, and Maccabees...' (<http://www.christiantruth.com/articles/sippocanon.html>)

Among other authorities, different canons were sanctioned by the Council in Trullo (Quinisext Council) in 692 and the seventh Ecumenical Council (787) and in the aforementioned disagreement within Roman Catholicism in Luther's time, the Catholic theologian Cardinal Cajetan stated,

"Here we close our commentaries on the historical books of the Old Testament. For the rest (that is, Judith, Tobit, and the books of Maccabees) are counted by St. Jerome out of the canonical books, and are placed amongst the apocrypha, along with Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, as is plain from the Prologus Galeatus. Nor be thou disturbed, like a raw scholar, if thou shouldst find anywhere, either in the 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." Cardinal Cajetan, "Commentary on all the Authentic Historical Books of the Old Testament," Bruce Metzger, An Introduction to the Apocrypha (New York: Oxford, 1957), p. 180.)

Just prior to Trent, the Polyglot Bible (1514) of Cardinal Ximenes separated the Apocrypha from the canon of the Old Testament and soon received papal sanction.

Ecclesiastical decrees themselves are not what established writings as Scripture, much less can ecclesiastics declare they are assuredly infallible (when speaking in accordance with their infallibly defined formula, which self-proclamation is the basis for R.C. claims), but as with true men of God, writings which were wholly inspired of Him became established as such due to their unique enduring heavenly qualities and effects, and the supernatural Divine attestation which often is given it. The apocryphal books lack the power of the 66 inspired books, which over time most consistently made discerning saint's (1 Cor. 2:15) "best seller list," while the apocryphal books remain relatively obscure to this day. Moreover, certain apocryphal writings contain (and thus can promote) serious doctrinal error (such as praying for dead idolaters: 2 Maccabees 12:39-45).

For more on the dissent on the canon which existed right into Trent, and on Luther and his exclusions, see [here](#) by God's grace.

Besides [here](#), the sources below provide more on why such books are not included in the Protestant canon of inspired Scripture:

<http://bible.org/article/how-many-books-are-bible>

<http://www.christiantruth.com/apocryphainroduction.html>

<http://www.biblequery.org/apoc.htm>

http://www.truthnet.org/Bible-Origins/6_The_Apocrypha_The_Septugint/index.htm,

<http://www.christiancourier.com/articles/111-the-apocrypha-inspired-of-god>,

<http://www.xenos.org/essays/canon.htm>

<http://www.apuritansmind.com/apologetics/apocryphainpage/>

(NOTE: SUCH SITES HAVE MANY GOOD ARTICLES, BUT PROVIDING SUCH REFERENCES CAN NOT IMPLY THAT I AGREE WITH EVERYTHING THAT MAY BE OFFERED.)

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O give thanks unto the Lord for He is good; for His mercy [endureth] for ever" (Ps. 107:1)