

Who has the correct number books of the Bible?

Christians do not have the same number of books in their Bible, especially that of Old Testament. Protestants have thirty-nine books in their Old Testament which correspond to (with different order and grouping) twenty-four books of Jewish Scripture or Tanakh¹. Catholic Old Testament has seven more books: Judith, Tobit, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Baruch (with Letter of Jeremiah), Wisdom and Sirach (or Ecclesiasticus) and some more chapters in Esther and in Daniel (Prayer of Azariah, Song of Three Young Men, Susanna, Bel and Dragon). Eastern Orthodox Old Testament, translated from LXX², includes all those books and 151st chapter of Psalms, 3 Maccabees and 1 Esdras³. That of Ethiopian Orthodox Church has Enoch, Jubilee and other books⁴. Their New Testament has more books than twenty-seven books in Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Protestant' New Testament. Understandably Protestants (and "Bible only" Christians) try hard to prove that their Bible has the correct number of books, i.e. the canon (list of inspired books) of the Bible is their sixty-six books. Below are the seven reasons they usually bring up against the inclusion of deuterocanonical⁵ (or apocryphal⁶ in their terminology) books in the Bible.

1. The Council of Trent added those apocryphal books in sixteenth century.
2. We should trust the Jews to determine which books belong to Old Testament because they were given oracles of God (Roman 3:2).
3. New Testament never quotes from any apocryphal books.
4. None of apocryphal books claims inspiration.
5. Apocryphal books were written after the death of the last prophets of Israel.
6. Christ approved books belonging to Jewish Scripture (which is equal to Protestant Old Testament), when He said in Luke 11:51: "from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah".
7. Apocryphal books cannot be inspired because they contain many errors as well as contradictions with sixty-six books of Protestant Bible.

1. The Council of Trent added those apocryphal books in sixteenth century

Before one can accuse Council of Trent (or other) of adding those books, the person should answer this question: how do we know that that are only thirty-nine books in Old Testament and only twenty-seven books in New Testament? There is no single verse in the entire Bible, whether that of Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Ethiopian Orthodox and Protestant, states which books belong to the Bible. This should pose a serious problem to Protestants and "Bible only" Christians who declare that (their) Bible is the only and highest authority. Unknowingly to them, the number of books of their Bible depends on their church statement of faith, or on their presumption, or their church councils, or, perhaps, "because my pastor told me so". In other words they depend on authority outside the Bible to determine which books belong to the Bible. Then they make the Bible, with those predetermined books, the only and highest authority. This should imply we cannot have authority outside the Bible to determine which books belong to the Bible! This is a self-contradicting circular argument! Well, do Catholics have the same reason to know which books belong to the Bible, i.e. they were decided by the Catholic Church?

The birthday of the Church was the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended, as recorded in the book of Acts (Acts 2:1-4), which *was not written* in that time. We cannot know for sure when each book of New Testament was written. According to scholars the first one (2 Thessalonians) was written, perhaps, in c. 50 or 51 AD and the first Gospel was written after 70AD. This means the Church had been in existence for around two decades before we had the first written New Testament book; and around four decades before the first Gospel was written and, as we will see later, before the Jews closed the canon of their Scripture.

Christ' words were first circulated orally and later, some were put in written form in the Gospels. Thus from the Gospel according to Matthew we know that Christ intended to give His apostles authority over His Church. He gave Peter (Matthew 16:19) and later all apostles (Matthew 18:18) the authority to bind and to loose. Whatever they bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatever they loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. In Greek "bound and loosed in heaven" is in (passive) *perfect* tense, while "bind and loose on earth" is in (active) *aorist* tense. Unlike that of English, Greek perfect tense indicates continuity of completed past

action. This means what Peter and the apostles bind or loose shall follow the ones that have already been bound or loosed in heaven, obviously by God – it is not in reverse as some might think.

Catholics believe that the apostles passed the same authority to their successors, the bishops – the so called apostolic succession. Both (Western) Catholic and (Eastern) Orthodox Churches claim apostolic succession. Apostolic succession belongs to what is known as Tradition (with capital T) – you cannot find it in the Bible. But we know Christ promised His apostles to be with them to the end of age (Matthew 28:20), to send the Holy Spirit to be with them forever (John 14:16), to teach them all things and to remind them whatsoever He said to them (John 14:26); and that the gates of Hades shall not prevail against His Church (Matthew 16:18). New Testament nowhere says those divine promises are valid only in the first three hundred years, i.e. until Roman emperor Constantine legalized Christianity in 313 AD or in the first fifteen centuries, i.e. until Reformation. Having the same authority, the Pope and the bishops (in union with Him) have the power to bind and to loose and whatever they bind or loose does not come from themselves but it has been already bound and loosed in heaven. No wonder Paul referred the Church as the pillar and bulwark of truth (1 Timothy 3:15) – certainly he was not writing about church (or churches) that came into existence in sixteenth century or later. This is the reason why Catholics believe it is the Church with the apostolic origin has the power to determine which books belong to the Bible. The Church is not above the Bible but is under the guidance of Holy Spirit promised by Christ Himself!

Why it took the Church sixteen centuries to promulgate Canon (list of inspired books) of the Bible? The same canon was declared in provincial council in Hippo, North Africa in 393 AD, reaffirmed at Councils of Carthage, also in North Africa, in 397 AD and in 419 AD. Christians in the first three centuries did not have closed canon – they disagree with each other on which books belong to the Bible, both Old and New Testaments. The so-called disputed books of Old Testament were Esther and deuterocanonical books while those of New Testament were Hebrews, James, Jude, 2 Peter, 2 John, 3 John and Revelation. The earliest list with the same twenty-seven books as in present day Catholic, Eastern Orthodox and Protestant' New Testament appeared in 367 AD⁷. List of Old Testament books which agrees with Catholic Bible appeared in 382 AD⁸ while the one that agrees with Protestant Old Testament appeared in 391 AD⁹. Council of Trent in 1546 is the ecumenical council that explicitly promulgated canonicity of seventy-three books of Catholic Bible, though the same list of Old Testament books also appeared in ecumenical council of Basel-Ferrara-Florence-Rome (Session 11 on 4 February 1442). The Eastern Orthodox Church declared their canon of Bible in their synod held at Jerusalem in 1672. For Protestants who belong to Reformed Church, Belgic Confession Article 4 (in 1561) and Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter 1 (in 1647), declared canonicity of sixty-six books of their Bible.

2. We should trust the Jews to determine which books belong to Old Testament because they were given oracles of God (Roman 3:2).

When did the Jews close their canon of Scripture, i.e. the Old Testament? Protestants and “Bible only” Christians would say before the time of Christ because that will bolster their claim based on Romans 3:2. Unfortunately this claim is neither supported by Bible nor by Jewish reliable sources. If canon of Jewish Scripture was closed before Christ' time, we would expect He and His apostles only quoted from that closed canon, which is not the case, as we will see later. According to Encyclopedia Judaica the third part of Jewish Scripture (Ketuvim or the Writings) was closed in second century AD¹⁰. Sirach or Ecclesiasticus was quoted as Scripture in Jewish *Talmud*¹¹, composed after second century AD. How about *Jamnia* (or Javneh) council in 90 AD that purportedly closed canon of Jewish Scripture? *Jamnia council hypothesis* was created based on Jewish *Misnah* that only discusses canonical status of Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes. All the above mentioned sources indicate that Jewish canon was closed after Christ crucifixion. Christians are not obliged to follow Jewish decision made after Christ crucifixion, considering what He taught through His parable of the vineyard's tenants in Matthew 21:33-41 – *let out the vineyards to other tenants* (verse 41). Note that the existence of Scripture or even all Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16) in Christ and apostolic time does not automatically imply existence of closed canon. Daniel read Jeremiah as Scripture in the *first* year of Darius (the Mede) reign (Daniel 9:1-2) before prophets Haggai and Zechariah received the words of the Lord in the *second* year of Darius reign and wrote them.

3. New Testament never quotes from any apocryphal books.

If being quoted in New Testament is the requirement to enter the canon, then New Testament does not quote from Esther, Song of Songs and Ecclesiastes either. New Testament also quoted from outside both Catholic and Protestant' Old Testament. Jerome saw a manuscript of apocryphal work (now lost) attributed to Jeremiah that had the exact words quoted in Matthew 27:9¹². What Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 2:9, preceded with the phrase "it is written", resembles but not equal to Isaiah 64:4. According to *Ambrosiaster*¹³ (c. 4th century AD) it is quotation from apocryphal *Apocalypse of Elijah*. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:4 about the spiritual rock that followed the Israelites during Exodus and he named two magicians who opposed Moses in 2 Timothy 3:8 - both are not found in the book of Exodus. In 2 Peter 2:22, Proverbs 26:11 is placed *in par* with a proverb from outside the Bible. Jude 9 quotes from the *Ascension of Moses*¹⁴ and Jude 14-16 quotes from the *1 Enoch 1:9*. The standard reply for the above non-scriptural quotation is they are not quoted as scripture, like quotation from Cretan poet *Epimenides* in Acts 17:28 and Titus 1:12. However quotation from non-Jewish works was obviously non-scriptural to the Jews (though as we will see later, God's word may come through non-Jews). 1 Enoch is cited in the same way Matthew 15:7-9 cite Isaiah 29:13 (of LXX). We also have quotation from unknown scripture in John 7:38 and James 4:5, both preceded with the phrase "scripture says". To conclude being quoted in New Testament is not the criteria of canonicity and not being quoted in New Testament is not the criteria for non-canonical either.

4. None of Apocryphal claims inspiration.

Most of Protestant's sixty-six book Bible do not explicitly claim inspiration either. Those who insist they do should be able to produce at least one verse from each book that explicitly claims inspiration. Esther, without LXX chapters, as in Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Old Testament, does not even mention God¹⁵ and not quoted in New Testament. 1 Enoch, on the other hand, mentions God and quoted once in New Testament (Jude 4:16) but only Ethiopian Orthodox Church considers it to be inspired. Paul stated what he wrote in 1 Corinthians 7:12 was not from Christ, but from himself – yet we still consider it inspired.

5. Apocryphal books were written after the death of the last prophets of Israel.

According to Jewish historian Josephus who lived in first century AD, books of Jewish Scripture were written between Moses and reign of Persian king, *Artaxerxes*¹⁶. Without naming them, Josephus counted twenty-two books comprising five books of Law, thirteen books of prophets and four books of hymns and conducts of life. Protestants cite Josephus statement and that of 1 Maccabees 9:27 (the prophets ceased to appear among Israelites), both outside their Bible, as proof of canonicity of their thirty-nine books of Old Testament. The last Jewish prophets were Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi but where does the Bible say the words of God given only through prophets? The words uttered by Balaam (Numbers 22:7-10, 18-24 and Numbers 24:2-9) came from God, even though Balaam was not prophet, not even a Jew. Similarly, according to 2 Chronicles 35:22 God spoke through Necho, king of Egypt and in John 11:51 Caiaphas prophesied. From Christ Himself we know that the Law and the Prophets are prophesied until John the Baptist (Matthew 11:13), i.e. there was no silent period between Jewish last prophets and John the Baptist. We do have prophecy of Christ in Wisdom 2:12-20.

6. Christ approved books belonging to Jewish Scripture (which is equal to Protestant Old Testament), when He said in Luke 11:51: "from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah".

Since we can find Able in the book of Genesis (Chapter 4) and Zechariah in the book of Chronicles (2 Chronicles 24:20-21) – those two are the first and the last books in Jewish Scripture, then does it show that Old Testament approved by Christ is the Jewish Scripture? There are two problems with this argument. First, the order of books in Jewish Scripture is not static. Chronicles is the last book of the *current* Jewish Scripture but it was not always so. Jewish Scripture has three parts: the Law (five books), the Prophets (eight books) and the Writings (eleven books). Encyclopedia Judaica¹⁷ shows eight different orders of books of the Writings, of which three Chronicles is the first book. Those who rely on Josephus testimony should know that Chronicles cannot be the last book because the last five books according to Josephus are books of hymns and conduct of life. Second, Zechariah of Chronicles (who was priest, not prophet) was son of *Jehoiada*, while parallel verse in Matthew 23:35 identifies him to be son of *Barachiah*. Most likely Christ referred to Prophet Zechariah, son of Berechiah (Zechariah 1:1, Ezra 5:1), who together with Haggai and Malachi were the last Jewish prophets.

7. Apocryphal books cannot be inspired because they contain many errors as well as contradictions with sixty-six books of Protestant Bible.

Unfortunately the same applies to sixty-six books of Protestant Bible, though for obvious reason they don't call them as errors and contradictions, but as *difficulties* or *discrepancies*. Geisler & Howe wrote over 500-page *The Big Book of Bible Difficulties*, published by Baker books in 1992, dealing with those difficulties, from Genesis to Revelation (all sixty-six books). Another work by Haley, *Alleged Discrepancies of the Bible*, is a classic (first written in 1874); its 400+ pages deal with discrepancies which he grouped into three: *doctrinal*, *ethical* and *historical* discrepancies. Those books were written to offer solution to those difficulties and number of pages tells us they are not a few in numbers. This is understandable – Catholics and Protestants (and “Bible only” Christians) believe in inerrancy of Scripture. Non-Christians may not accept the solution – once a person pre-decided not to accept inspiration of those sixty-six books, no amount of explanation will satisfy him/her. In the same way Catholics are aware of difficulties in deuterocanonical books and we also offer solution. Protestants and “Bible only” Christians are entitled not to accept the solution – they behave just like non-Christians. Once they pre-decided, without any Scriptural support, that the Bible comprises only sixty-six books, no amount of explanation will satisfy them.

Let's first examine a few difficulties or discrepancies in sixty-six books of Protestant Scripture (which are also part of Catholics Bible) and their proposed solution, condensed from Haley or Geisler & Howe or both, if any.

1. In 2 Samuel 24:1 God moved David to number Israel but parallel verse in 1 Chronicles 21:1 says it was Satan (the Devil) who did so. Solution proposed by Geisler and Howe (page 177) is God permitted Satan to incite David to number the Israelites.
2. Psalms 5:4 and Jeremiah 29:11 say that God is not the source of evil but Isaiah 45:7, Jeremiah 18:11, Lamentation 3:38 and Amos 3:6 attribute evil to God. The word “evil” in those verses is translated from the same Hebrews word. According to Haley (page 77), the word evil in Isaiah 45:7, Jeremiah 18:11, Lamentation 3:38 and Amos 3:6 means natural evil (like volcano, war, plague, earthquake, fire), not moral evil or sin as in Psalms 5:4 and Jeremiah 29:11.
3. Exodus 21:7-11 allows a Jewish man to sell his daughter as slave. The owner cannot resell her to non-Jews. Exodus 21:20-21 allows slave owner to strike his slave, either male or female and he will be punished only if he/she dies. The slave must be set free if he/she loses his/her eye or tooth (Exodus 21:26-27). In contrast Colossians 4:1 says that the owner must treat them justly and fairly. Neither Haley nor Geisler & Howe mention this difficulty in their books, though the latter wrote one page (pages 509 – 510) of slavery condemnation using verses from the Bible. For example they wrote servants must be treated with respect and relied on Exodus 21:20, 26 to support their statement!
4. “You shall not kill” (Exodus 20:13) is the Commandment from God but in 1 Samuel 15:3 He ordered Saul to annihilate the entire Amalek, including women and babies. In Psalms 137:9 the Psalmist rejoiced over those who took babies (of daughter of Babylon) and dashed them against the rock! Geisler & Howe (page 161) argued that the Amalekites were sinful and deserved that severe punishment. This includes their children lest they later might rise to resume their hateful act towards God's people and plan. In addition they wrote that children who die before the age of accountability are saved. As for Psalms 137:8 Geisler & Howe wrote (page 243) that the Psalmist rejoiced not over smashing babies against the rock but over the retributive justice of God that would ultimately return the cruelty of the Babylonians upon them as a just punishment for their crime.
5. In Mark 2:26 Christ named Abiathar as the High Priest when David and his men ate bread of the Presence. But 1 Samuel 21:1-6 says the high priest was, then, Ahimelech, father of Abiathar. Solution proposed by Haley (page 320) is Abiathar was acting as his father substitute. According to Geisler & Howe (page 370) the phrase “in the days of Abiathar” does not necessarily imply that he was high priest at the time David ate the bread. Thus, it was during the *time* of Abiathar, but not during his *tenure* in office.
6. According to Daniel 5:30 Babylonian was defeated by Darius the Mede, who reigned before Cyrus (Daniel 6:28). Darius the Mede was fictitious figure who did not exist in history. He was modeled after Darius I, second successor of Cyrus. Solution proposed by Geisler and Howe (page 295) is Darius the Mede was Gubaru whom Cyrus appointed to be governor over all Babylonia.

7. Esther had sexual relation outside marriage with king Ahasuerus, what we now call as “one night stand” – breaking Exodus 20:14: *You shall not commit adultery*. Though the king later made her queen, marriage between Jews (both males and females) and non-Jews (or gentile) were forbidden in Nehemiah 10:30 (while Moses, Boaz and some others married non-Jews). Geisler and Howe argued (page 220) that Esther had no choice because she was taken to the king’s palace and insisted she did not do anything explicitly immoral.
8. In John 8:14 Christ said: “Even if I do bear witness to myself, my testimony is true” but in John 5:31 He said: “If I bear witness to myself, my testimony is *not* true.” Solution proposed by Geisler & Howe (page 410) is everything Jesus said was *actually* true, but *officially* it was only considered true if it was verified by two or three witnesses as stated in Deuteronomy 19:15.
9. After his Damascus conversion Paul wrote that he did not go to Jerusalem but went to Arabia, returned to Damascus and only after three years he went to Jerusalem where he only met Cephas (Peter) and James (Galatians 1:17-20). In verse 20 he wrote that he did not lie. But Acts 9:23-27 indicates that he went to Jerusalem from Damascus where Barnabas brought him to meet the apostles, not just Peter and James. Both Haley and Geisler & Howe missed this difficulty in their books.
10. Paul wrote that Abraham was justified by faith (Romans 4:1-4) but James 2:21 say he was justified by works. This, of course, has been Protestant problem since Reformation, when the Reformers insisted that justification is *one time event* and *by faith alone*. Geisler and Howe (pages 527 – 528) wrote that Paul and James talk about different justification. Paul wrote about *root* of justification while James wrote about *fruit* of justification. Justification of Paul is justification *before God* while that of James is Justification *before men*. Catholics, who believe justification is *on-going process* and *not by faith alone*, find no contradiction between Paul and James - both talk about the *same* justification.

Now let’s look at some commonly raised problems in deuterocanonical or apocryphal books and their solutions.

1. Historical problem in the book of Judith where king of Babylonia Nebuchadnezzar was made king of Assyria.
There are two solutions for this difficulty. The first one considers Judith as theological novel or parable or allegory to convey a message. By stating Nebuchadnezzar as king of Assyria the writer produced composite conqueror of both Northern (Israel) and Southern (Judah) kingdoms. The Assyrian kingdom brought down Northern kingdom or Israel in c. 722 BC while (Neo) Babylonian empire did the same to the Southern kingdom in c. 586 BC. The second solution considers Judith to be historical narrative where Nebuchadnezzar was other name of one Assyrian king, just like Darius the Mede in Daniel 5:30 was Cyrus general by the name Gobiru (who was not a Mede).
2. Ethical problem in the book of Judith, i.e. she lied to Holofernes about her true mission and through her beauty lured him to death. The angel Raphael in the book of Tobit (Tobit 5:12) also impersonated a person named Azariah.
In 1 Samuel 16:1 God asked Samuel to go to Bethlehem to anoint the next king of Israel but he worried Saul would kill him. For sure God was able to protect Samuel from Saul but He told him to say, if asked, he went there to offer sacrifice, i.e. concealing his true mission. In the same way Judith concealed her true mission to Holofernes. While she did lure him to his death through her beauty, she, unlike Esther, did not have sexual relation with him. As for the angel Raphael impersonating a human, according to Hebrews 13:2 by showing hospitality to strangers, some might entertain angels unaware, i.e. those angels do not reveal their identity and that is exactly what angel Raphael did.
3. The Catholic Church declared apocryphal books to be inspired because they support Catholic unbiblical teaching like prayer to the dead (2 Maccabees 12:38-46) and salvation by works in giving almsgiving for deliverance from death and purging sins (Tobit 12:9).
Prayer to the dead is closely related to purgatory. The saints in heaven no longer need prayer from saints on earth (who are encouraged to pray for one another) and there is no point praying for those in hell. Hence there is a third place which Catholics refer as Purgatory where those who died with venial sins have their sins cleansed. Catholic teaching on purgatory is understandably hard for Protestants (and “Bible

only” Christians) to accept. Yet it does not rely on 2 Maccabees 12:38-46 alone. The Bible refers God as refiner’s fire (Malachi 3:2) who refines some as one refines silver (Zechariah 13:8-9).

What is written in Tobit 12:9 is related to rewards for our good works. No one can deny that God rewards us for our good works (Proverbs 13:13, Psalms 18:20, 2 John 8, Revelation 22:12 etc.) and He even rewards us with eternal life (John 5:28-29, Romans 2:6-7). Catholics understand those rewards as gift from God – they are NOT something we deserve like we deserve our wages and there is no such thing as salvation by works in Catholicism. Thus Tobit 12:9 talks about rewards of our good works just like 1 Peter 4:8 say charity covers multitude of sins. Likewise James 5:20 says whoever brings back a sinner from the error of his way *will save his soul and will cover multitude of sins*. Does it sound similar to Tobit 12:9 if we replace “almsgiving” with “bringing back a sinner from the error of his way”? No Protestants will say that James 5:20 contradict other verses that say Christ is the only Saviour like Acts 4:12.

4. Tobit encourages superstitious practice in Tobit 6:16-17 where smoke produced from burning heart and liver of fish was used to scare demon.

Protestants and “Bible only” Christians obviously have problem with Catholic sacramental system. This is why they reject Catholic practices which to them are superstitious like the one stated in Tobit 6:16-17, veneration of relics, wearing scapular and even seven Sacraments. Sacramental system is the belief that God could channel His Grace and help through material or visible symbol. Keep in mind that God can give His Grace and help directly – He is not restricted by the use of material or visible symbol but in some cases He prefers to do so and there are many examples from the Bible, not only in Tobit 6:16-17.

God asked Moses to make bronze serpent and to set it on a pole and whoever looked at it after being bitten by real snake will live. Prophet Elisha asked Naaman to wash in Jordan River to cure his leprosy (2 Kings 5:10-14). According to 2 Kings 13:21 bones of Prophet Elisha were able to bring back to life a dead man. Christ could heal blind men directly (Mark 10:52, Luke 18:42-43) but in John 9:6 He preferred to use soil mixed with His saliva. Likewise many were healed by touching fringe or hem¹⁸ of His garment (Matthew 9:20, 14:36). Handkerchiefs or aprons after touching Apostle Paul’s body were able to heal the sick and to cast away evil spirit (Acts 19:12).

End Notes:

¹ the acronym of Torah (the Law or in Greek, Pentateuch), Nevim (the Prophets) and Ketuvim (the Writings or in Greek, Hagiographa or Holy Writings)

² LXX or Septuagint is collection of Old Testament books written in Greek. Most quotations in New Testament are taken from LXX. Catholic and Protestant’s Old Testament are translated from Masoretic text (in Hebrews), though grouping of books follow that of LXX.

³ As listed in Orthodox Study Bible. 4 Maccabees and Prayer of Manasseh are in the Appendix according to [http://orthodoxwiki.org/Old Testament Canon](http://orthodoxwiki.org/Old_Testament_Canon).

⁴ <http://ethiopianorthodox.org/english/canonical/books.html>

⁵ Deuterocanonical and protocanonical books, meaning second and first canons were coined by Sixtus of Sienna (1520 to 1569)

⁶ Apocrypha means hidden, which since the time of Jerome (died c. 420 AD) was commonly used to label books that can be found in LXX but not in Hebrew Bible.

⁷ Athanasius: *39th Festal Letter*

⁸ Pope Damasus (died 384 AD): *Decretal of Gelasius*

⁹ Jerome: *Prefaces of the Books of the Vulgate version of the Old Testament*. Jerome still included (and referred them as) apocryphal books in Vulgate.

¹⁰ *On the other hand, there is plenty of evidence to show that the collection of the Ketuvim as a whole, as well as some individual books within it, was not accepted as being finally closed until well into the second century c.e. [common era = AD]*

As noted above, the practice of calling the entire Scriptures the "Torah and Prophets" presupposes a considerable lapse of time between the canonization of the second and third parts of the Bible. The fact that the last division had no fixed name points in the same direction. Even the finally adopted designation

"Ketuvim" is indeterminate, since it is also used in Rabbinic Hebrew in the two senses of the Scriptures in general and in individual texts in particular.

Encyclopaedia Judaica, Vol. 4 page 824

- ¹¹ Raba [again] said to Rabbah b. Mari: whence can be derived the popular saying, 'A bad palm will usually make its way to a grove of barren trees'? – He replied: This matter was written in the Pentateuch, repeated in the Prophets, mentioned a third time in the Hagiographa, and also learnt in a Mishnah and taught in a baraita: It is stated in the Pentateuch as written, So Esau went unto Ishmael [Genesis 28:9], repeated in the prophets, as written, And there gathered themselves to Jephthah idle men and they went out with him [Judges 11:3], mentioned a third time in the Hagiographa, as written: Every fowl dwells near its kind and man near his equal [Sirach 13:15];

Babylonian Talmud, Seder Nazikin, Baba Kamma 92b

Translated by E.W. Kirzner, Soncino Press (1961)

.....And R Aha b. Jacob said: There is still another Heaven above the heads of the living creatures, for it is written: And over the heads of the living creature there was a likeness of a firmament, like the colour of the terrible ice, stretched forth over their heads above [Ezekiel 1:22]. Thus far you have permission to speak, thenceforward you have not permission to speak, for so it is written in the Book of Ben Sira: Seek not things that are too hard for thee, and search not out things that are hidden from thee. The things that have been permitted thee, think thereupon; thou hast no business with the things that are secret [Sirach 3:21-22]

Babylonian Talmud, Seder Mo'ed, Hagigah 13a,

Translated by Israel Abrahams, Soncino Press (1961)

- ¹² Jerome, *Commentary on Matthew*, 4.27.10, in *Ancient Christian Commentary of Scripture*, New Testament, Vol. 1b, Inter Varsity Press, 2002, page 275.
- ¹³ Ambrosiaster, *Commentary on 1 Corinthians*, in *Ancient Christian Commentary of Scripture*, New Testament, Vol. 7, Inter Varsity Press, 2002, page 23. Ambrosiaster (pseudo Ambrose) was the name given by Dutch theologian Erasmus (1466 to 1536) to otherwise anonymous 4th century author who wrote commentary of all Paul's epistles.
- ¹⁴ According to Origen (died c. 251 AD): *de Principiis* 3.2. No manuscript of Ascension of Moses survived today.
- ¹⁵ According to Geisler & Howe the name of God is found in the book of Esther in *acrostic* form, at four crucial points in the story (Esther 1:20, 5:4, 5:13, 7:7), twice forward and twice backward (Geisler & Howe: *The Big Book of Bible Difficulties*, page 219)
- ¹⁶ Josephus, *Against Apion* 1:8 (38-40)
- ¹⁷ *Encyclopaedia Judaica*, Vol. 4, pages 829-830
- ¹⁸ Kraspedon in In Greek, which refer to *tassels*, appendages attached to mantles to remind the Jews of the Law