

# APOKRIEWE BOEKE

## 1. Inleiding

Die woord **apokrief** kom van 'n ou Griekse woord **apokruptos** af wat letterlik verborge beteken. Die woord was ook gebruik om die geheime geskrifte van byvoorbeeld towenaars aan te toon.

Die Rooms-Katolieke wêreld gebruik die naam **apokriewe boeke**, terwyl die Protestantse wêreld die term **pseudepigrafiëse geskrifte** genoem word (leuengeskrifte/valse geskrifte!).

Die woord het deur die eeue 'n “kerklike” betekenis gekry, omdat boeke/geskrifte wat deur die gelowiges geskryf is wat nie dieselfde standaard gehad het as die boeke wat deur die Heilige Gees geïnspireer is nie, ook hierdie naam gekry het, met ander woorde daar het twee stellingeloofsboeke ontstaan:

- Die een groep was as gesagvol beskou omdat dit God se openbaring is. Hierdie boeke is **kanoniek** (kanon = lineaal/meetstok/maatstaf) genoem.
- Die tweede groep was as waar (of ten minste gedeeltelik waar) beskou, maar beslis nie vir ons geloof op dieselfde standaard as die kanonieke boeke nie. Hulle is **apokriewe geskrifte** genoem.

Dit is waarom ons geloofsbelydenis in Artikel 4 van die NGB 'n volledige lys gee van die kanonieke boeke. En dan later in artikel 6 ook 'n lys gee van die apokriewe boeke en ook wat hulle waarde vir ons is.

Artikel 6 NGB:

### **Onderskeid tussen die kanonieke en apokriewe boeke**

*Ons onderskei hierdie heilige boeke van die apokriewe boeke: die derde en vierde boek van Esra, die boek van Tobias, Judit, die Wysheid, Jesus Sirag, Barug, die byvoegsel by die geskiedenis van Ester, die Gebed van die drie manne in die vuur, die Geskiedenis van Susanna, die Beeld van Bel en die Draak, die Gebed van Manasse en die twee boeke van die Makkabeërs.*

*Die kerk mag hierdie boeke wel lees en daaruit lering trek vir sover hulle met die kanonieke boeke ooreenstem.*

*Hulle het egter geensins sodanige krag of gesag dat iemand deur hulle getuënis enigiets van die geloof of van die Christelike godsdiens sou kan bevestig nie. Hulle mag nie in die minste aan die gesag van ander, die heilige boeke, afbreuk doen nie.*

## 2. Wie het besluit dat hierdie boeke uit die kanon uitgesluit moet wees?

Die antwoord is natuurlik eenvoudig: Die kerk het dit besluit. Die kerk van die Here het bewustelik deur, onder andere, sinodes besluit dat hierdie geskrifte nie deel van die kanon moet wees nie.

Daar is sulke boeke in sowel die Ou- as die Nuwe-Testamentiese bedeling.

## 3. Wanneer is die eerste apokriewe al uit die kanon uitgeskuif?

Ons moet hier onderskei tussen twee groepe (bewegings) onder die ou Jode. Eerstens was daar die Palestynse Jode: Dis nou dié wat in Palestina gewoon het en wat bande met Palestina gehad het.

In Jesus se tyd het die Palestynse Jodendom reeds die Ou-Testamentiese boeke wat ons in ons kanon het, as hulle kanonieke boeke aanvaar.

Dan was daar die Alexandrynse Jode. Dis Jode wat baie sterk deur die Griekse filosofie beïnvloed was en wat in Alexandrië in Noord-Afrika gebly het. Dis hierdie groep wat die Ou Testament in Grieks vertaal het (= die Septuaginta).

Hulle het geen beswaar gehad om 'n hele klomp toevoegings by die boeke van die Ou Testament te voeg nie, want hulle het 'n baie ruimer siening gehad van wat die inspirasie deur die Heilige Gees sou wees!

Ons moet onthou dat daar in die vroeë tye nie baie geleerde mense was wat Hebreeus kon lees en skryf nie. Daarom was feitlik al die eerste Christene en kerkvaders op die Septuaginta aangewys as hulle uit die Ou Testament wou lees – omdat dit in Grieks geskryf was! Sodoende het hulle gewoon geraak aan die “ekstra” boeke wat by die Ou Testament bygevoeg was.

Daar was van die vroeë Christelike tyd af twee standpunte oor die apokriewe:

- Die kerkvader Athanasius (293 – 373 n.C.) en veral ook Hieronymus (345 – 420 n.C.) het hulle by die Palestynse kanon geskaar en die apokriewe nie as deel van die kanon erken nie. Hulle standpunt was dat die Heilige Gees nie hierdie boeke geïnspireer het nie.
- Teenoor hulle was die kerkvader Augustinus (uit Noord-Afrika!) wat die sinodes van Hippos (393 n.C.) en Carthago (397 n.C.) beïnvloed het om die Septuaginta se lysie van boeke te aanvaar as die kanon. Hierby was die apokriewe boeke dus ingesluit!

Ter wille van die balans moet darem genoem word dat daar tot diep in die middeleeue altyddeur stemme van protes was wat gesê het dat hierdie besluite verkeerd was, maar hulle standpunte is altyd doodgesmoor.

***In die tyd van die Hervorming het die kerke van die Reformasie hulle by die standpunt van Hieronymus aangesluit en teruggekeer na die Hebreeuse kanon.***

Teenoor hierdie standpunt het die Rooms-Katolieke Kerk by die besluite van die Sinodes van Hippos en Carthago gebly en die apokriewe as deel van die kanon en daarom as die kenbron van die waarheid gehandhaaf.

#### **4. Wat is ons standpunt oor die apokriewe?**

Martin Luther het die saak min of meer reg en volledig opgesom: Die apokriewe is boeke wat nie met die Heilige Skrif gelykgestel word nie, maar wat nogtans nuttig en goed is om te lees.

Calvyn se standpunt was dat die apokriewe privaat geskryfte is wat nie gesag het nie. Die kerk mag wel hierdie boeke lees en hulle gebruik vir onderrig in sake waarmee hulle ooreenstem met die kanonieke boeke. Hulle het egter geensins sodanige krag of gesag dat iemand deur hulle getuigenis enigiets van die geloof of van die Christelike godsdiens sou kan bevestig nie. Hulle mag nie in die minste aan die gesag van ander, die heilige boeke, afbreuk doen nie.

Opsommend kan ons dit dus so saamvat:

- Die apokriewe kan nie op een lyn met die kanonieke boeke gestel word nie.
  - Hulle het geen goddelike gesag nie.
- Ons mag dit lees en gebruik met dien verstande dat die inhoud daarvan onderwerp word aan die norm/maatstaf van die kanonieke boeke van die Ou en Nuwe Testament.

Verally die apokriewe van die Ou Testament is van groot belang, bv. die een boek van die Makkabeërs wat baie historiese feite bevat wat nie in enige ander geskrif gekry word nie. Dit gee ook 'n duidelike beeld van hoe daar mense was wat baie vroom gelewe het. Net so beskryf dit mooi belydenisse en treffende gebede wat mense onder bepaalde omstandighede gedoen het.

Die apokriewe boeke beteken nie almal ewe veel nie. Van die Ou-Testamentiese apokriewe is feitlik net die Eerste boek van die Makkabeërs waardevol. In die ander apokriewe is die historiese gegewens oor die algemeen baie verkeerd/onbetroubaar. Die boek Wysheid van Salomo is deurspek met twyfelagtige filosofiese spekulاسies.

Wat die Nuwe-Testamentiese apokriewe betref is daar dele wat baie ooreenstem met wat in die evangelies beskryf word. Maar daar is ook dinge, bv. die Evangelie van Nikodemus 3, wat selfs in stryd kom met dinge wat die Bybel op ander plekke openbaar.

## **5. Enkele artikels vir diegene wat van lees hou:**

### **5.1 Article by Mike Scott, Minister**

#### **Q. Why are the Apocryphal books not included in most versions of the Bible?**

First of all, let's identify that the word apocrypha is a Greek word meaning "hidden". This identifies that the origin of the Apocryphal books is unknown, or doubtful.

The Old Testament Apocrypha include either 14 or 15 books, depending on the method of counting, which were written in the period of 200 B.C. to 100 A.D. Catholic versions of the Bible include 12 of these, but do not consider 1st & 2nd Esdras and the Prayer of Manasseh to be canonical, which is interesting. The Church of England accepts the Apocrypha as "semi-canonical".

Some of the books of the Apocrypha, such as 1st Macabees and Ecclesiasticus, are truly interesting, but that does not mean that they are inspired. There are many valid reasons why the Apocrypha cannot be accepted as Scripture.

1. These books were never included in the Hebrew canon of the Old Testament. Josephus expressly limited the Hebrew canon to the same books of our Old Testament. Josephus knew of other Jewish writings down to his time, but he did not regard them as having equal authority with the canonical books.
2. These books, as far as the evidence goes, were never accepted as canonical by Jesus and His apostles.
3. These books were not accepted as Scripture by such Jewish writers as Philo, Josephus, and others, as well as the early church fathers.
4. These books do not evidence intrinsic qualities of inspiration. Great portions of these books are obviously legendary and fictitious. They often contain historical, chronological and geographical errors.

The apocryphal books are rightfully rejected from our Bible.

### **5.2 The "Scholars' Translation" of the Gospel of Thomas by Stephen Patterson and Marvin Meyer**

These are the secret sayings that the living Jesus spoke and Didymos Judas Thomas recorded.

1. And he said, "Whoever discovers the interpretation of these sayings will not taste death."
2. Jesus said, "Those who seek should not stop seeking until they find. When they find, they will be disturbed. When they are disturbed, they will marvel, and will reign over all. [And after they have reigned they will rest.]"
3. Jesus said, "If your leaders say to you, 'Look, the (Father's) kingdom is in the sky,' then the birds of the sky will precede you. If they say to you, 'It is in the sea,' then the fish will precede you. Rather, the kingdom is within you and it is outside you. When you know yourselves, then you will

- be known, and you will understand that you are children of the living Father. But if you do not know yourselves, then you live in poverty, and you are the poverty.”
4. Jesus said, “The person old in days won’t hesitate to ask a little child seven days old about the place of life, and that person will live. For many of the first will be last, and will become a single one.”
  5. Jesus said, “Know what is in front of your face, and what is hidden from you will be disclosed to you. For there is nothing hidden that will not be revealed. [And there is nothing buried that will not be raised.]”
  6. His disciples asked him and said to him, “Do you want us to fast? How should we pray? Should we give to charity? What diet should we observe?” Jesus said, “Don’t lie, and don’t do what you hate, because all things are disclosed before heaven. After all, there is nothing hidden that will not be revealed, and there is nothing covered up that will remain undisclosed.”
  7. Jesus said, “Lucky is the lion that the human will eat, so that the lion becomes human. And foul is the human that the lion will eat, and the lion still will become human.”
  8. And he said, The person is like a wise fisherman who cast his net into the sea and drew it up from the sea full of little fish. Among them the wise fisherman discovered a fine large fish. He threw all the little fish back into the sea, and easily chose the large fish. Anyone here with two good ears had better listen!
  9. Jesus said, Look, the sower went out, took a handful (of seeds), and scattered (them). Some fell on the road, and the birds came and gathered them. Others fell on rock, and they didn’t take root in the soil and didn’t produce heads of grain. Others fell on thorns, and they choked the seeds and worms ate them. And others fell on good soil, and it produced a good crop: it yielded sixty per measure and one hundred twenty per measure.
  10. Jesus said, “I have cast fire upon the world, and look, I’m guarding it until it blazes.”
  11. Jesus said, “This heaven will pass away, and the one above it will pass away. The dead are not alive, and the living will not die. During the days when you ate what is dead, you made it come alive. When you are in the light, what will you do? On the day when you were one, you became two. But when you become two, what will you do?”
  12. The disciples said to Jesus, “We know that you are going to leave us. Who will be our leader?” Jesus said to them, “No matter where you are you are to go to James the Just, for whose sake heaven and earth came into being.”
  13. Jesus said to his disciples, “Compare me to something and tell me what I am like.” Simon Peter said to him, “You are like a just messenger.” Matthew said to him, “You are like a wise philosopher.” Thomas said to him, “Teacher, my mouth is utterly unable to say what you are like.” Jesus said, “I am not your teacher. Because you have drunk, you have become intoxicated from the bubbling spring that I have tended.” And he took him, and withdrew, and spoke three sayings to him. When Thomas came back to his friends they asked him, “What did Jesus say to you?” Thomas said to them, “If I tell you one of the sayings he spoke to me, you will pick up rocks and stone me, and fire will come from the rocks and devour you.”
  14. Jesus said to them, “If you fast, you will bring sin upon yourselves, and if you pray, you will be condemned, and if you give to charity, you will harm your spirits. When you go into any region and walk about in the countryside, when people take you in, eat what they serve you and heal the sick among them. After all, what goes into your mouth will not defile you; rather, it’s what comes out of your mouth that will defile you.”
  15. Jesus said, “When you see one who was not born of woman, fall on your faces and worship. That one is your Father.”
  16. Jesus said, “Perhaps people think that I have come to cause peace upon the world. They do not know that I have come to cast conflicts upon the earth: fire, sword, war. For there will be five in a house: there’ll be three against two and two against three, father against son and son against father, and they will stand alone.
  17. Jesus said, “I will give you what no eye has seen, what no ear has heard, what no hand has touched, what has not arisen in the human heart.”
  18. The disciples said to Jesus, “Tell us, how will our end come?” Jesus said, “Have you found the beginning, then, that you are looking for the end? You see, the end will be where the beginning is.

- Congratulations to the one who stands at the beginning: that one will know the end and will not taste death.”
19. Jesus said, “Congratulations to the one who came into being before coming into being. If you become my disciples and pay attention to my sayings, these stones will serve you. For there are five trees in Paradise for you; they do not change, summer or winter, and their leaves do not fall. Whoever knows them will not taste death.”
  20. The disciples said to Jesus, “Tell us what Heaven’s kingdom is like.” He said to them, It’s like a mustard seed, the smallest of all seeds, but when it falls on prepared soil, it produces a large plant and becomes a shelter for birds of the sky.
  21. Mary said to Jesus, “What are your disciples like?” He said, They are like little children living in a field that is not theirs. When the owners of the field come, they will say, “Give us back our field.” They take off their clothes in front of them in order to give it back to them, and they return their field to them. For this reason I say, if the owners of a house know that a thief is coming, they will be on guard before the thief arrives and will not let the thief break into their house (their domain) and steal their possessions. As for you, then, be on guard against the world. Prepare yourselves with great strength, so the robbers can’t find a way to get to you, for the trouble you expect will come. Let there be among you a person who understands. When the crop ripened, he came quickly carrying a sickle and harvested it. Anyone here with two good ears had better listen!
  22. Jesus saw some babies nursing. He said to his disciples, “These nursing babies are like those who enter the kingdom.” They said to him, “Then shall we enter the kingdom as babies?” Jesus said to them, “When you make the two into one, and when you make the inner like the outer and the outer like the inner, and the upper like the lower, and when you make male and female into a single one, so that the male will not be male nor the female be female, when you make eyes in place of an eye, a hand in place of a hand, a foot in place of a foot, an image in place of an image, then you will enter [the kingdom].”
  23. Jesus said, “I shall choose you, one from a thousand and two from ten thousand, and they will stand as a single one.”
  24. His disciples said, “Show us the place where you are, for we must seek it.” He said to them, “Anyone here with two ears had better listen! There is light within a person of light, and it shines on the whole world. If it does not shine, it is dark.”
  25. Jesus said, “Love your friends like your own soul, protect them like the pupil of your eye.”

### **5.3. The Gospel According to Mary Magdalene Chapter 4**

(Pages 1 to 6 of the manuscript, containing chapters 1 – 3, are lost. The extant text starts on page 7. . .)

. . . Will matter then be destroyed or not?

22. The Savior said, All nature, all formations, all creatures exist in and with one another, and they will be resolved again into their own roots.
23. For the nature of matter is resolved into the roots of its own nature alone.
24. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.
25. Peter said to him, Since you have explained everything to us, tell us this also: What is the sin of the world?
26. The Savior said, There is no sin, but it is you who make sin when you do the things that are like the nature of adultery, which is called sin.
27. That is why the Good came into your midst, to the essence of every nature in order to restore it to its root.
28. Then He continued and said, That is why you become sick and die, for you are deprived of the one who can heal you.
29. He who has a mind to understand, let him understand.
30. Matter gave birth to a passion that has no equal, which proceeded from something contrary to nature. Then there arises a disturbance in its whole body.
31. That is why I said to you, Be of good courage, and if you are discouraged be encouraged in the

- presence of the different forms of nature.
32. He who has ears to hear, let him hear.
  33. When the Blessed One had said this, He greeted them all, saying, Peace be with you. Receive my peace unto yourselves.
  34. Beware that no one lead you astray saying Lo here or lo there! For the Son of Man is within you.
  35. Follow after Him!
  36. Those who seek Him will find Him.
  37. Go then and preach the gospel of the Kingdom.
  38. Do not lay down any rules beyond what I appointed you, and do not give a law like the lawgiver lest you be constrained by it.
  39. When He said this He departed.

#### **5.4. The Apocryphal Books – by David Cloud**

This article is posted with permission, from Way Of Life Literature . This article is from the O' Timothy Computer Library by David Cloud. It is an excellent resource for Christians who are taking a faithful stand and contending for the faith. I have found the O' Timothy Computer Library and the Way of Life Encyclopedia of the Bible and Christianity, based upon the King James Version and written from an uncompromising, Bible believing position, to be invaluable tools for study, apologetics and helping others in these confusing times. The following report is from O Timothy magazine, Volume 10, Issue 3, 1993. David W. Cloud, Editor. All rights are reserved by the author. O' Timothy is a monthly magazine. Annual subscription is US\$20 FOR THE UNITED STATES. Send to Way of Life Literature, Bible Baptist Church, 1701 Harns Rd., Oak Harbor, Washington 98277. Phone 360-675-8311. FOR CANADA the subscription is \$20 Canadian. Send to Bethel Baptist Church, P.O. Box 9075, London, Ontario N6E 1V0.

The word apocrypha is derived from the Latin *abscondita*, which historically identified writings which had an obscure origin or which were heretical. In the Talmud the Jewish rabbis used this word to describe works which were not canonical Scripture. The term has come to be applied particularly to the 15 books added to the Roman Catholic Bible but ordinarily rejected by non-Catholics. These were written during the two hundred years preceding and one hundred years following Christ's birth. The Roman Catholic Church considers most of these writings to be part of the inspired Scripture. In 1546 the Council of Trent decreed that the canon of the O.T. should include them (except the Prayer of Manasseh and I and II Esdras) . . . the decree pronounces an anathema upon anyone who "does not accept as sacred and canonical the aforesaid books in their entirety and with all their parts" (The Oxford Annotated Apocrypha, pp. x, xv).

The Council of Trent was an attempt by the Catholic Church to counteract the Protestant Reformation with its battle cry of "faith alone" and "Scripture alone". By adding the Apocrypha to the canon of Scripture, the Catholic Church, in effect, rendered the rest of the Bible impotent. "The books named in the decree [of Trent] include the apocryphal Old Testament books, and placed unwritten traditions of the church upon an equal footing with Holy Scriptures as approved of Christ or of the Holy Spirit. Any appeal to Holy Scripture as expressing the supreme will of God was thereafter useless in the Latin Church" (Edwin W. Rice, *Our Sixty-six Sacred Books*, p. 112).

The Apocrypha have a variety of content. Some are histories of events concerning the Jews. Some are short sayings similar to the Proverbs. Some are sermons; others are like novels. One purports to be symbolical prophecy.

#### **Why reject the Apocrypha**

It is important that God's people understand why the Apocryphal books (also called the Deuterocanonical Books) are rejected from the canon of inspired Scripture. Because of ecumenical activities involving the Roman Catholic Church, there is an increasing tendency for publishers to include the Apocryphal writings with the Bible. This is being done by the United Bible Societies in many languages. By 1981, for

example, the American Bible Society had published over 500,000 copies of the Today's English Version with the Apocryphal books included. In the mid-1980s I visited the Bible Society book depot in Calcutta, India, and was shown massive stacks of Revised Standard Version Bibles containing the Apocrypha. These had been published by the American Bible Society and shipped to India for distribution. The 1992-93 American Bible Society catalog of Scripture Resources lists at least nine different Bibles containing the Apocrypha.

Following are the reasons the Apocrypha are rejected by Bible believers:

1. They are not included in the original Hebrew O.T. preserved by the Jews. Rom. 3:1-2 states that God used the Jews to preserve His Word; therefore, we know that He guided them in the rejection of the Apocryphal books from the canon of Scripture.
2. They were not received as inspired Scripture by the churches during the first four centuries after Christ.
3. They were not written in the Hebrew language, which was alone used by the inspired historians and prophets of the O.T.
4. They do not claim to be the inspired Word of God. Unlike the inspired Scriptures, the Apocryphal books contain no statements such as "thus saith the Lord" or "these are the words of God."
5. They contain teachings contrary to the biblical books. II Maccabees teaches praying to the dead and making offerings to atone for the sins of the dead. Consider this quote from II Maccabees 12:43-45: "He also took up a collection . . . and sent it to Jerusalem to provide for a sin offering. . . . For if he were not expecting that those who had fallen asleep would arise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead . . . Therefore he made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin." The Bible, though, says there is only one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (1 Ti. 2:5-6). Also Heb. 10:10-14 says believers have been perfected forever through Christ's one sacrifice. Thus, the dead in Christ need no human, earthly prayers or offerings. At death the lost go immediately to a place of torment; thus there is no purpose in praying for them (Lk. 16:22-23). II Maccabees also contains the heresy that deceased saints are interceding in heaven for those on earth (15:11-14). The Bible teaches that it is the Lord Jesus Christ, our great High Priest, who is interceding for us in Heaven – not deceased saints (Heb. 4:14-16; 8:1-2; 1 Jn. 2:1-2).
6. In quality and style, the Apocryphal books are not on the level of Bible writings. Even a hurried reading of the Apocryphal books reveals the fact that here we are touching the uninspired writings of men apart from divine inspiration. These writings are not "God breathed," as 2 Tim. 3:16 says all Scripture is. There is not in the Apocryphal books the supernatural depth and breadth of thought, the rich complexity yet simplicity of language, which goes beyond mere writings of men.
7. The Apocryphal writings are not quoted by the Lord Jesus or the Apostles, while every part of the O.T. Scriptures are quoted. This is a very important point. Though some claim to find allusions to the Apocrypha in certain N.T. passages (Mt. 7:12; 27:43-54; Rom. 9:21; Eph. 6:13-17; Heb. 1:3; Jam. 1:6,19; 5:6), this is not a proven fact. While it is possible that the N.T. writers were familiar with the Apocrypha, it is plain that they did not directly quote from these books. The supposed allusions to the Apocrypha in the N.T. could just as easily be allusions to other O.T. histories or to facts given directly by revelation. We must remember that the N.T. Scriptures are not the product of man, but of God.
8. Some Apocryphal books, though written as history, are actually fiction. This is a form of deception not found in divinely inspired books of the Bible. "Ostensibly historical but actually quite imaginative are the books of Tobit, Judith, Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon, which may be called moralistic novels" (Oxford Annotated Apocrypha, p. xi). Noteworthy examples of ancient fiction they might be, but such books have absolutely no place among the seven-times purified Word of God (Ps. 12:6-7).
9. The Apocryphal books were rejected from the canon of Scripture by the early church leaders. "It is a significant fact that the best of the early Fathers adopted the Hebrew canon as giving the authoritative Scriptures of the O.T." (Analytical, p. 1083).
10. The book of Tobit contains many false things.

11. First, there is the account of a supposed high and good angel of God who lies and teaches the use of magic! In Tobit 5:4 we are told that the angel's name is "Raphael," but later he lies to Tobit, claiming to be "Azarias the son of the great Ananias, one of your relatives" (Tobit 5:12). This angel professes to be "one of the seven holy angels who present the prayers of the saints and enter into the presence of the glory of the Holy One" (Tobit 12:15). Yet he not only lies about his name, but teaches magic. "Then the angel said to him, 'Cut open the fish and take the heart and liver and gall and put them away safely.' . . . Then the young man said to the angel, 'Brother Azarias, of what use is the liver and heart and gall of the fish?' He replied, 'As for the heart and the liver, if a demon or evil spirit gives trouble to any one, you make a smoke from these before the man or woman, and that person will never be troubled again. And as for the gall, anoint with it a man who has white films in his eyes, and he will be cured'" (Tobit 6:4,6-8). The Bible clearly condemns magical practices such as this (consider De. 18:10-12; Le. 19:26,31; Je. 27:9; Mal. 3:5).
12. Second, the false doctrine of salvation through works is taught in the book of Tobit. "For almsgiving delivers from death, and it will purge away every sin" (Tobit 12:9). "So now, my children, consider what almsgiving accomplishes and how righteousness delivers" (Tobit 14:11). These false teachings must be contrasted with Lev. 17:11, which says "it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul," and with Tit. 3:5 which says, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit."
13. Third, Tobit taught that help is only to be given to the deserving. "Place your bread on the grave of the righteous, but give none to sinners" (Tobit 4:17). Contrariwise, in Ex. 23:4-5 God taught even in O.T. times that His people were to do good to their enemies and not only toward the righteous.
14. The book of Judith contains the account of how a supposedly godly widow destroyed one of Nebuchadnezzar's generals through deceit and sexual offers. It is also important to note that Judith's counsel regarding resisting Nebuchadnezzar was contrary to that given by God's prophet Jeremiah (Jer. 38:1-4). God warned the Israelites to submit to Nebuchadnezzar rather than to resist, because the Babylonian captivity and destruction of Israel was a judgment from God upon the Jew's rebellion and idolatry.

### **The King James Bible and the Apocrypha**

It is true that early editions of the KJV (as well as many other Reformation Bibles, including the German Luther Bible) contained the Apocrypha, but these books were included for historical reference only, not as additions to the canon of Scripture. Alexander McClure, a biographer of the KJV translators, says: ". . . the Apocryphal books in those times were more read and accounted of than now, though by no means placed on a level with the canonical books of Scripture" (McClure, *Translators Revived*, p. 185). He then lists seven reasons assigned by the KJV translators for rejecting the Apocrypha as inspired. The Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England clearly states that the Apocrypha have no scriptural authority.

". . . [the Church of England] doth not apply to them to establish any doctrine. The Westminster Confession says, "The books commonly called Apocrypha, not being of divine inspiration, are no part of the canon of the Scripture; and therefore are of no authority in the Church of God, nor to be any otherwise approved, or made use of, than other human writings. "Luther included a note on the Apocrypha which stated, "These are books not to be held in equal esteem with those of Holy Scripture. . ."

It is important to note that in the early King James Bibles the Apocryphal books were placed between the Old and New Testaments rather than intermingled within the O.T. itself as is done in Catholic Bibles. In the Jerusalem Bible (a Catholic Bible), for example, Tobit, Judith, and the Maccabees follow Nehemiah; the Book of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus follow Ecclesiastes; Baruch follows Lamentations; etc.

### **Conclusion**

Though some of the Apocryphal books do have historical value, giving information regarding the inter-

testament “quiet years” prior to the coming of Christ, there is no justification for giving these a place in the Holy Scripture. Their proper place is on the same level as (if not lower than) the writings of the historian Josephus or of some other uninspired writer of that period.