

FIFTH EDITION
FULLY REVISED AND EXPANDED

THE NEW OXFORD ANNOTATED APOCRYPHA

NEW REVISED
STANDARD VERSION

AN ECUMENICAL
STUDY BIBLE



THE NEW OXFORD ANNOTATED APOCRYPHA

New Revised Standard Version Bible Apocrypha

Fully Revised Fifth Edition

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New Revised Standard Version
Bible Apocrypha

An Ecumenical Study Edition

Michael D. Coogan, *Editor*

Marc Z. Brettler, Carol A. Newsom,
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used for the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books:

| | | | | | |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|---|------------------|------------------------|
| Tob. | Tobit | Song of Thr . . . | Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Jews | Pr Man | The Prayer of Manasseh |
| Jdt | Judith | Sus. | Susanna | Ps 151. | Psalms 151 |
| Add Esth. | Esther (Greek) | Bel | Bel and the Dragon | 3 Macc | 3 Maccabees |
| Wis | The Wisdom of Solomon | 1 Macc. | 1 Maccabees | 2 Esd | 2 Esdras |
| Sir | Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) | 2 Macc | 2 Maccabees | 4 Macc | 4 Maccabees |
| Bar | Baruch | 1 Esd | 1 Esdras | | |
| Let Jer | The Letter of Jeremiah | | | | |

In the textual notes to the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books, the following abbreviations are used:

| | |
|----------|--|
| Ant. | Josephus, <i>Antiquities of the Jews</i> |
| Aram | Aramaic |
| Ch, chs | Chapter, chapters |
| Cn | Correction; made where the text has suffered in transmission and the versions provide no satisfactory restoration but where the Standard Bible Committee agrees with the judgment of competent scholars as to the most probable reconstruction of the original text. |
| Gk | Septuagint, Greek version of the Old Testament |
| Heb | Hebrew of the consonantal Masoretic Text of the Old Testament |
| Josephus | Flavius Josephus (Jewish historian, about A.D. 37 to about 95) |
| Macc. | The book(s) of the Maccabees |
| Ms(s) | Manuscript(s) |
| MT | The Hebrew of the pointed Masoretic Text of the Old Testament |
| OL | Old Latin |
| Q Ms(s) | Manuscript(s) found at Qumran by the Dead Sea |
| Sam | Samaritan Hebrew text of the Old Testament |
| Syr | Syriac Version of the Old Testament |
| Syr H | Syriac Version of Origen's Hexapla |
| Tg | Targum |
| Vg | Vulgate, Latin Version of the Old Testament |

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations of additional ancient works are used in the introductions and annotations to the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books:

| | | | |
|------------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|
| <i>Ag. Ap.</i> | Josephus, <i>Against Apion</i> | Homer, <i>Od.</i> | Homer, <i>Odyssey</i> |
| <i>Apoc. Bar.</i> | <i>Apocalypse of Baruch</i> | HS | Holiness School |
| <i>Apoc. Zeph.</i> | <i>Apocalypse of Zephaniah</i> | Ignatius, <i>Philad.</i> | Ignatius, <i>Epistle to the Philadelphians</i> |
| Aristophanes, <i>Ran.</i> | Aristophanes, <i>Ranae</i> (Frogs) | Irenaeus, <i>Adv. Haer.</i> | Irenaeus, <i>Adversus omnes Haereses</i> |
| Aristotle, <i>Pol.</i> | Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> | JB | Jerusalem Bible |
| Aristotle, <i>Rh.</i> | Aristotle, <i>Rhetoric</i> | Jer. Sot. | Jerusalem Talmud, <i>Sotah</i> (see <i>y. Sot.</i>) |
| Aristotle, <i>Virt.</i> | Aristotle, <i>Virtues and Vices</i> | Josephus, <i>Ant.</i> | Josephus, <i>Jewish Antiquities</i> |
| 2 <i>Bar.</i> | 2 <i>Baruch</i> (another name for the <i>Apocalypse of Baruch</i>) | Josephus, <i>Ap.</i> | Josephus, <i>Against Apion</i> |
| <i>b. B. Bat.</i> | Babylonian Talmud, Tractate <i>Baba Bathra</i> | Josephus, <i>J.W.</i> | Josephus, <i>Jewish War</i> |
| <i>b. Ber.</i> | Babylonian Talmud, Tractate <i>Bera-kot</i> | <i>Jub.</i> | <i>Jubilees</i> |
| <i>b. Eruv.</i> | Babylonian Talmud, Tractate <i>Eruvim</i> | Juvenal, <i>Sat.</i> | Juvenal, <i>Satires</i> |
| <i>b. Git.</i> | Babylonian Talmud, Tractate <i>Gittin</i> | KJV | King James Version (1611) |
| <i>b. Meg.</i> | Babylonian Talmud, Tractate <i>Megillah</i> | l | liter |
| <i>b. Ned.</i> | Babylonian Talmud, Tractate <i>Nedarim</i> | <i>Lam. Rab.</i> | <i>Lamentations Rabbah</i> |
| <i>b. San.</i> | Babylonian Talmud, Tractate <i>Sanhedrin</i> | lit. | literally |
| <i>b. Shabb.</i> | Babylonian Talmud, Tractate <i>Shabbat</i> | LXX | the Septuagint |
| <i>b. Yoma</i> | Babylonian Talmud, Tractate <i>Yoma</i> | <i>m. Abot</i> | <i>Mishnah Abot</i> |
| CD | Cairo Genizah, Damascus Document | <i>m. Avoda Zara</i> | <i>Mishnah Avoda Zara</i> |
| Cicero, <i>Fin.</i> | Cicero, <i>De finibus</i> | <i>m. Ber.</i> | <i>Mishnah Berakot</i> |
| 1 <i>Clem</i> | 1 <i>Clement</i> (First Epistle of Clement) | <i>m. Ketub.</i> | <i>Mishnah Ketubim</i> |
| CoS | <i>The Context of Scripture: Canonical Compositions, Monumental Inscriptions, and Archival Documents from the Ancient World</i> , 3 vols. (ed. W.W. Hallo; Leiden: Brill, 1997-2002) | <i>m. Ned.</i> | <i>Mishnah Nedarim</i> |
| <i>Did.</i> | <i>Didache</i> | <i>m. Ohalot</i> | <i>Mishnah Ohalot</i> |
| Dio Chrys., <i>Or.</i> | Dio Chrysostom, <i>Orationes</i> | <i>Midr.</i> | <i>Midrash</i> |
| Diod. Sic. | Diodorus of Sicily (<i>Library of History</i>) | <i>Midr. Pss.</i> | <i>Midrash Psalms</i> |
| 1 <i>En.</i> | 1 <i>Enoch</i> | <i>Midr. Rab.</i> | <i>Midrash Rabbah</i> |
| <i>Ep. Arist.</i> | <i>Letter of Aristeas</i> | <i>m. Shabb.</i> | <i>Misnah Shabbat</i> |
| Euripides, <i>Tro.</i> | Euripides, <i>Trojan Women</i> | <i>m. Sot.</i> | <i>Mishnah Sotah</i> |
| Eusebius, <i>Hist. eccl.</i> | Eusebius, <i>Historia ecclesiastica</i> | NIV | New International Version |
| Eusebius, <i>Praep. Ev.</i> | Eusebius, <i>Praeparatio Evangelica</i> | NT | New Testament |
| <i>Gen. Rab.</i> | <i>Genesis Rabbah</i> | <i>P. Oxy.</i> | <i>Oxyrhynchus Papyri</i> |
| Gk | Greek | Philo, <i>De Conf.Ling.</i> | Philo, <i>De Confusione Linguarum</i> |
| Hermas, <i>Mand.</i> | <i>Shepherd of Hermas, Mandate</i> | Philo, <i>De spec. leg.</i> | Philo, <i>De specialibus Legibus</i> |
| Hermas, <i>Sim.</i> | <i>Shepherd of Hermas, Similitude</i> | Philo, <i>Flaccus</i> | Philo, <i>Against Flaccus</i> |
| <i>Hist.</i> | Herodotus, <i>Histories</i> | Philo, <i>Her.</i> | Philo, <i>Quis rerum divinarum heres sit</i> |
| | | Philo, <i>Leg. all.</i> | Philo, <i>Legum allegoriae</i> |
| | | Philo, <i>Leg. Gai.</i> | Philo, <i>Legatio ad Gaium</i> |
| | | Philo, <i>Migr.</i> | Philo, <i>De migratione Abrahami</i> |
| | | Philo, <i>Opif.</i> | Philo, <i>De opificio mundi</i> |
| | | Philo, <i>Quest. in Gen.</i> | Philo, <i>Quaestiones in Genesis</i> |
| | | Plato, <i>Cri.</i> | Plato, <i>Crito</i> |
| | | Plato, <i>Gorg.</i> | Plato, <i>Gorgias</i> |
| | | Plato, <i>Phaedr.</i> | Plato, <i>Phaedrus</i> |
| | | Plato, <i>Symp.</i> | Plato, <i>Symposium</i> |
| | | Pliny, <i>Nat. Hist.</i> | Pliny, <i>Naturalis Historia</i> |
| | | Plutarch, <i>Mor.</i> | Plutarch, <i>Moralia</i> |
| | | <i>Pro Rabirio</i> | Cicero, <i>Pro Rabirio Postuma</i> |
| | | <i>Pss. Sol.</i> | <i>Psalms of Solomon</i> |

| | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---|--|
| 11QTemple | The Temple Scroll from Qumran Cave 11 (11Q19) | <i>Sifre Num.</i> <i>Sib. Or.</i> | <i>Sifre Numbers</i> <i>Sibylline Oracles</i> |
| 1QH | Hodayot (Thanksgiving Hymns) from Qumran Cave 1 | Sophocles, <i>Ant.</i> <i>Strom.</i> | Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i> Clement of Alexandria, <i>Stromateis</i> |
| 1QM | Milhamah (War Scroll) from Qumran Cave 1 | Tacitus, <i>Hist.</i> <i>T. Abr.</i> | Tacitus, <i>Historiae</i> <i>Testament of Abraham</i> |
| 11QMelch | Melchizedek Scroll from Qumran Cave 11 (11Q13) | <i>T. Jos.</i> <i>T. Jud. (Test. Jud.)</i> | <i>Testament of Joseph</i> <i>Testament of Judah</i> |
| 1QpHab | Peshar to Habakkuk from Qumran Cave 1 | <i>T. Levi</i> <i>T. Moses</i> | <i>Testament of Levi</i> <i>Testament of Moses</i> |
| 11QPs ^a | The Psalms ^a Scroll from Qumran Cave 11 (11Q5) | <i>T. Naph.</i> <i>T. Reuben</i> | <i>Testament of Naphtali</i> <i>Testament of Reuben</i> |
| 1QS | Rule of the Community (Serek Haya- had) from Qumran Cave 1 | <i>T. Sol.</i> <i>Tg. Ps.-J.</i> | <i>Testament of Solomon</i> <i>Targum Pseudo-Jonathan</i> |
| Quintilian, <i>Inst.</i> | <i>Institutio Oratoria</i> | <i>Tr. Eruv.</i> | Babylonian Talmud, <i>Tractate Eruvim</i> (see <i>b. Eruv.</i>) |
| REB | REVISED ENGLISH BIBLE | | |
| RSV | REVISED STANDARD VERSION | <i>y.</i> | Jerusalem Talmud |
| <i>Seder Olam R.</i> | <i>Seder Olam Rabbah</i> | <i>y. Sot.</i> | Jerusalem Talmud, <i>Sotah</i> |
| <i>Shab.</i> | <i>Shabbat</i> | v., vv. | verse, verses |

Note: The abbreviation “Q,” unless specified as “Quelle” (“Source”) for the posited New Testament document of non-Markan common material in Matthew and Luke, refers to Qumran, and manuscripts from Qumran are identified by the cave number, which precedes the Q, and the official manuscript number, which follows it; thus, 1Q34 = Manuscript 34 from Cave 1 at Qumran; 4Q174 = Manuscript 174 from Cave 4; etc.

THE EDITORS' PREFACE

For over five decades *The Oxford Annotated Bible* and its successor *The New Oxford Annotated Bible* have served generations of readers and students as a study Bible. That extraordinary longevity is eloquent testimony to its success. This fifth edition retains the format and features that have proven so attractive. At the same time, the field of biblical studies has not been static, and this edition is a thoroughgoing revision of the previous ones. In particular, the editors have recruited contributors from a wide diversity of backgrounds and of scholarly approaches to the biblical traditions. In order to present this diversity more fully, the introductions, maps, and annotations have been significantly enhanced.

For this edition the editors have thoroughly revised the study materials and commissioned new materials where appropriate. As always, everything has gone through multiple readings by several editors and revisions by the editorial board and the contributors.

The editors recognize that no single interpretation or approach is sufficient for informed reading of these ancient texts, and have aimed at inclusivity of interpretive strategies. On a great number of issues there is a consensus among scholars, and the contributors have been encouraged to present such consensus when it exists. Where it has broken down, and has not yet re-formed, alternatives are mentioned. Moreover, in order to respect the canonical status of various parts of the Bible for different communities, and to avoid privileging any book or part of the Bible, the editors have kept both introductions and annotations roughly proportionate to the length of the books, while recognizing that some parts require more elaboration than others.

The editorial process was collaborative. Each contribution was read in its entirety by at least three of the editors, and revised with a view toward consistency of tone, coherence of approach, and completeness of coverage. The editors have also wanted to allow the contributors' own voices to be heard, and have avoided imposing a superficial uniformity of style and approach. Throughout, the editors have kept the needs of the general audience firmly in mind during the editorial stages, and the aim has been a congruity of experience as a reader turns from book to book and from section to section of the finished volume.

CONTENTS OF THE ANNOTATED BIBLE

The biblical text stands apart from any editorial contributions, in both placement and format. This will enable anyone who wishes to do so to read the text unprejudiced by editorial judgments.

The footnotes that are part of the New Revised Standard Version (indicated by an italic superscript letter after the word or phrase in question) are printed at the bottom of the right-hand column of the biblical text on each page where they occur. In these notes, divergent textual readings and alternate translations are printed in italics. Abbreviations in the textual notes are listed on p. xi. The phrase "Other ancient authorities read" means that the reading (i.e., the wording) of the passage is different in various manuscripts and early versions, and the word "Or" signifies that the Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek, or Latin text permits an alternate rendering besides the one given in the text.

Each book is preceded by its own introduction, which sketches the book's structure, main themes, literary history, and historical context, as well as broad lines of interpretation; they therefore present a clear overview and guide to reading. These introductions are organized so that they cover the same topics in the same order.

At the bottom of each page of the biblical text, in a different font from it and in a single column, are the annotations. The annotations are just that, notes rather than paraphrase or commentary, although these genres admittedly overlap. They are intended to enhance the reader's understanding of the text, providing essential information, background, and interpretation, rather than only summarizing what it says. The boldface headings delineate the larger units of the book and provide a detailed consecutive outline of its contents. The word or phrase being glossed is given in italics. Quotation marks are used for words quoted from elsewhere in the Bible as well as for transliterations of ancient languages. Since we desire each book to stand on its own, as much as possible the annotations are self-contained. We have thus tried to avoid both cross-references to fuller discussion elsewhere, and the misconception that a book or larger part of the Bible is merely a perfunctory reworking of other material, or that a particular passage can only be understood fully in the light of later biblical traditions. At the same time, we recognize that the Bible is often a progressive text, and that later parts of the Bible often contain the oldest interpretations of earlier traditions. The best starting point for interpreting a particular passage is often another

passage, and we have encouraged contributors to point out interconnections in the biblical material by means of cross references. (The cross-references that end with “n.” refer to the annotation as well as to the biblical text.)

A listing of abbreviations for the books of the Bible used in this edition is found on p. xi. The chapter and verse divisions in a reference are separated by a period; thus, Gen 3.8 refers to the book of Genesis, chapter 3, verse 8. Inclusive references are used for both chapters and verses; thus, Ex 1–15 refers to the first fifteen chapters of the book of Exodus; Rom 11.33–36 to verses 33 through 36 of chapter 11 of the letter to the Romans; and so forth. Partial verses—either separable clauses, individual sentences where two or more are part of the same verse, or lines of poetry—are referred to with lower-case letters; thus, Gen 2.4a means the first part (here, a sentence) of verse 4 in chapter 2 of the book of Genesis. When a book of the Bible is referred to within an annotation on that book, the name of the book is not repeated unless there is ambiguity.

In keeping with the general desire to take account of the diversity of the users of this study Bible, the editors have adopted two widely-accepted conventions: referring to the first portion of the text as “the Hebrew Bible,” since it is a collection preserved by the Jewish community and that is how Jews regard it; and citing all dates in the notes as BCE or CE (“Before the Common Era” and “Common Era”) instead of BC or AD (“Before Christ” and “Anno Domini” [“in the year of the Lord”]), which imply a Christian view of the status of Jesus of Nazareth. Use of the title “Old Testament” for those books here designated as “the Hebrew Bible” is confined to instances expressing the historical view of various Christian interpreters. These conventions are followed in the study materials that the editors have produced; the translation has its own conventions, which may not be altered.

Several maps are interspersed in the biblical text. These will assist readers to locate important places mentioned in the text.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

It remains to express our gratitude, first and above all to the contributors, whose learning has made this a work of which we are immensely proud. We are grateful, as always, for the support and careful work of all those at Oxford University Press who make it possible to publish complex projects such as this. Lisa Grzan and Claudia Dukeshire oversaw the entire process of editorial development and typesetting, as well as the production of digital versions of this edition. Mary Sutherland copy-edited the entire text and prepared it for the compositor; Peachtree Editorial and Proofreading Service proofread the biblical text, and Debbie Ruel & Jan Maas proofread the study materials; 2K/DENMARK undertook the design and setting of the text. Erina Zadra oversaw the printing and binding process. Steve A. Wiggins and Donald Kraus handled all of the pre-production editing with unequalled skill and serenity. We are grateful to them all.

MICHAEL D. COOGAN, MARC Z. BRETTLER, CAROL A. NEWSOM, PHEME PERKINS — *August 2017*

TO THE READER

[The following prefatory essay, "To the Reader," is part of the New Revised Standard Version Bible translation (NRSV), and is reprinted here in accordance with the requirements of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the U.S.A., which holds copyright to the NRSV.]

This preface is addressed to you by the Committee of translators, who wish to explain, as briefly as possible, the origin and character of our work. The publication of our revision is yet another step in the long, continual process of making the Bible available in the form of the English language that is most widely current in our day. To summarize in a single sentence: the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible is an authorized revision of the Revised Standard Version, published in 1952, which was a revision of the American Standard Version, published in 1901, which, in turn, embodied earlier revisions of the King James Version, published in 1611.

In the course of time, the King James Version came to be regarded as "the Authorized Version." With good reason it has been termed "the noblest monument of English prose," and it has entered, as no other book has, into the making of the personal character and the public institutions of the English-speaking peoples. We owe to it an incalculable debt.

Yet the King James Version has serious defects. By the middle of the nineteenth century, the development of biblical studies and the discovery of many biblical manuscripts more ancient than those on which the King James Version was based made it apparent that these defects were so many as to call for revision. The task was begun, by authority of the Church of England, in 1870. The (British) Revised Version of the Bible was published in 1881–1885; and the American Standard Version, its variant embodying the preferences of the American scholars associated with the work, was published, as was mentioned above, in 1901. In 1928 the copyright of the latter was acquired by the International Council of Religious Education and thus passed into the ownership of the Churches of the United States and Canada that were associated in this Council through their boards of education and publication.

The Council appointed a committee of scholars to have charge of the text of the American Standard Version and to undertake inquiry concerning the need for further revision. After studying the questions whether or not revision should be undertaken, and if so, what its nature and extent should be, in 1937 the Council authorized a revision. The scholars who served as members of the Committee worked in two sections, one dealing with the Old Testament and one with the New Testament. In 1946 the Revised Standard Version of the New Testament was published. The publication of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, took place on September 30, 1952. A translation of the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books of the Old Testament followed in 1957. In 1977 this collection was issued in an expanded edition, containing three additional texts received by Eastern Orthodox communions (3 and 4 Maccabees and Psalm 151). Thereafter the Revised Standard Version gained the distinction of being officially authorized for use by all major Christian churches: Protestant, Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Eastern Orthodox.

For the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books of the Old Testament the Committee has made use of a number of texts. For most of these books the basic Greek text from which the present translation was made is the edition of the Septuagint prepared by Alfred Rahlfs and published by the Württemberg Bible Society (Stuttgart, 1935). For several of the books the more recently published individual volumes of the Göttingen Septuagint project were utilized. For the book of Tobit it was decided to follow the form of the Greek text found in codex Sinaiticus (supported as it is by evidence from Qumran); where this text is defective, it was supplemented and corrected by other Greek manuscripts. For the three Additions to Daniel (namely, Susanna, the Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Jews, and Bel and the Dragon) the Committee continued to use the Greek version attributed to Theodotion (the so-called "Theodotion-Daniel"). In translating Ecclesiasticus (Sirach), while constant reference was made to the Hebrew fragments of a large portion of this book (those discovered at Qumran and Masada as well as those recovered from the Cairo Geniza), the Committee generally followed the Greek text (including verse numbers) published by Joseph Ziegler in the Göttingen Septuagint (1965). But in many places the Committee has translated the Hebrew text when this provides a reading that is clearly superior to the Greek; the Syriac and Latin versions were also consulted throughout and occasionally adopted. The basic text adopted in rendering 2 Esdras is the Latin version given in *Biblia Sacra*, edited by Robert Weber (Stuttgart, 1971). This was supplemented by consulting the Latin text as edited by R. L. Bensly (1895) and by Bruno Violet (1910), as well as by taking into account the several Oriental

versions of 2 Esdras, namely, the Syriac, Ethiopic, Arabic (two forms, referred to as Arabic 1 and Arabic 2), Armenian, and Georgian versions. Finally, since the Additions to the Book of Esther are disjointed and quite unintelligible as they stand in most editions of the Apocrypha, we have provided them with their original context by translating the whole of the Greek version of Esther from Robert Hanhart's Göttingen edition (1983).

As for the style of English adopted for the present revision, among the mandates given to the Committee in 1980 by the Division of Education and Ministry of the National Council of Churches of Christ (which now holds the copyright of the RSV Bible) was the directive to continue in the tradition of the King James Bible, but to introduce such changes as are warranted on the basis of accuracy, clarity, euphony, and current English usage. Within the constraints set by the original texts and by the mandates of the Division, the Committee has followed the maxim, "As literal as possible, as free as necessary." As a consequence, the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) remains essentially a literal translation. Periphrastic renderings have been adopted only sparingly, and then chiefly to compensate for a deficiency in the English language—the lack of a common gender third person singular pronoun.

During the almost half a century since the publication of the RSV, many in the churches have become sensitive to the danger of linguistic sexism arising from the inherent bias of the English language towards the masculine gender, a bias that in the case of the Bible has often restricted or obscured the meaning of the original text. The mandates from the Division specified that, in references to men and women, masculine-oriented language should be eliminated as far as this can be done without altering passages that reflect the historical situation of ancient patriarchal culture. As can be appreciated, more than once the Committee found that the several mandates stood in tension and even in conflict. The various concerns had to be balanced case by case in order to provide a faithful and acceptable rendering without using contrived English. Only very occasionally has the pronoun "he" or "him" been retained in passages where the reference may have been to a woman as well as to a man; for example, in several legal texts in Leviticus and Deuteronomy. In such instances of formal, legal language, the options of either putting the passage in the plural or of introducing additional nouns to avoid masculine pronouns in English seemed to the Committee to obscure the historic structure and literary character of the original. In the vast majority of cases, however, inclusiveness has been attained by simple rephrasing or by introducing plural forms when this does not distort the meaning of the passage. Of course, in narrative and in parable no attempt was made to generalize the sex of individual persons.

This new version seeks to preserve all that is best in the English Bible as it has been known and used through the years. It is intended for use in public reading and congregational worship, as well as in private study, instruction, and meditation. We have resisted the temptation to introduce terms and phrases that merely reflect current moods, and have tried to put the message of the Scriptures in simple, enduring words and expressions that are worthy to stand in the great tradition of the King James Bible and its predecessors.

For the Committee,
BRUCE M. METZGER

TIMELINE

| DATE | PERIOD | EGYPT |
|---|---|--|
| Ca. 3300–2000 BCE 3300–3100 | EARLY BRONZE AGE Early Bronze I | Earliest forms of writing |
| 3100–2700 2700–2300 | Early Bronze II Early Bronze III | Political unification; Early Dynastic period Old Kingdom; Dynasties 3–5 |
| 2300–2000 | Early Bronze IV | First Intermediate Period |
| Ca. 2000–1550 BCE 2000–1650 | MIDDLE BRONZE AGE Middle Bronze I–II | Middle Kingdom; Dynasties 11–12 |
| 1650–1550 | Middle Bronze III | Second Intermediate/ Hyksos Period |
| Ca. 1550–1200 BCE | LATE BRONZE AGE | New Kingdom; Dynasties 18–19: Thutmose III (1479–1425), Akenhaten (1352–1336), Seti I (1294–1279), Rameses II (1279–1213), Merneptah (1213–1203); Sea Peoples (groups including Philistines) invasions begin |
| Ca. 1200–586 BCE Ca. 1200–1025 Ca. 1025–586 Ca. 1025–928 | IRON AGE Iron I Iron II Iron IIA | Rameses III (1184–1153) ¹ |
| Ca. 928–722 | Iron IIB | Shishak I invades Palestine (925) |

| SYRIA-PALESTINE | MESOPOTAMIA, ASIA MINOR | |
|---|---|--|
| | Earliest forms of writing; Full urbanization; Sumerian culture develops | |
| In Egyptian sphere Flourishing city-states | High point of Sumerian culture Sargon of Akkad; Naram-Sin of Akkad; Gudea of Lagash | |
| Decline/abandonment of city-states | Third Dynasty of Ur | |
| Revival of urbanism; Invention of alphabet | Amorite kingdoms: Shamshi-Adad of Assyria (ca. 1813–1781); Hammurapi of Babylon (ca. 1792–1750); Rise of Hittites | |
| In Egyptian sphere; Rise of Mitanni in north; Ugarit flourishes; | | |
| Exodus of the Hebrews from Egypt; | Hittites challenge Egypt for control of Syria; | |
| Collapse of city-states | Hittite empire collapses; Trojan War | |
| Israel emerges in Canaan; Philistines settle on SW coast; Small city-states develop in Phoenicia, Syria, Transjordan | Resurgence of Assyria: Tiglath-pileser I (1114–1076) | |
| United Monarchy in Israel: Saul (1025–1005); David (1005–965); Solomon (968–928) | | |
| Divided Monarchy: | | |
| JUDAH: Rehoboam (928–911) | ISRAEL: Jeroboam I (928–907) Omri (882–871); Capital at Samaria Ahab (873–852) | Rise of Neo-Assyrian Empire Shalmaneser III (858–824); Battle of Qarqar (853) |
| Jehoshaphat (867–846) | Prophet Elijah (mid-ninth century) Prophet Elisha (mid- to late ninth century) | |
| Athaliah (842–836) | Jehu (842–814) | |
| Jehoash (836–798) | Jehoash (800–788) Jeroboam II (788–747) Prophet Amos (mid-eighth century) Prophet Hosea (mid-eighth century) | Adad-nirari III (811–783) |
| Ahaz (743/735–727/715) | Hoshea (732–722) | Tiglath-pileser III (745–727); Assyrian conquest of the Levant Shalmaneser V (727–722) Samaria captured (722) |

TIMELINE

| DATE | PERIOD | EGYPT |
|---------------|----------------|---|
| Ca. 722–586 | Iron IIC | <p>Egypt conquered by Assyria (671) Psammetichus I (664–610)</p> <p>Neco II (610–595)</p> |
| Ca. 586–539 | NEO-BABYLONIAN | |
| 539–333 | PERSIAN | <p>Greeks repel Persian invasions</p> <p>Peloponnesian War (431–404)</p> |
| 333–63 | HELLENISTIC | <p>Alexander the Great (336–323); Defeats Persians at Issus (332); Occupies the Levant and Egypt</p> <p>Rome gains control over Greece (ca. 188–146);</p> <p>Sack of Carthage and Corinth (146)</p> |
| 63 BCE–330 CE | ROMAN | <p>Julius Caesar named dictator (49); assassinated (44) Octavian (Augustus) defeats Antony at Actium (31); (Emperor 27 BCE–14 CE) Tiberius (14–37 CE) Gaius (Caligula) (37–41) Claudius (41–54) Nero (54–68) Vespasian (69–79) Titus (79–81) Domitian (81–96) Nerva (96–98) Trajan (98–117) Hadrian (117–138)</p> |

| SYRIA-PALESTINE | MESOPOTAMIA |
|--|--|
| <p>JUDAH:</p> <p>Prophet Isaiah (late eighth to early seventh centuries)</p> <p>Prophet Micah (late eighth century)</p> <p>Hezekiah (727/715–698/687)</p> <p>Manasseh (698/687–642)</p> <p>Josiah (639–609)</p> <p>Prophet Zephaniah (late seventh century)</p> <p>Prophet Jeremiah (late seventh to early sixth centuries)</p> <p>Jehoahaz (609)</p> <p>Jehoiakim (608–598)</p> <p>Jehoiachin (597)</p> <p>Prophet Ezekiel (early sixth century)</p> <p>Zedekiah (597–586); Capture of Jerusalem (586)</p> | <p>Sargon II (722–705)</p> <p>Sennacherib (705–681); Attack on Judah and seige of Jerusalem (701)</p> <p>Esar-haddon (681–669)</p> <p>Ashurbanipal (669–627)</p> <p>Rise of Babylon</p> <p>Assyrian capital of Nineveh captured (612)</p> <p>Nebuchadrezzar II (604–562) of Babylon</p> <p>Nabonidus (556–539)</p> |
| EASTERN AND MEDITERRANEAN | |
| <p>Some exiles return from Babylon (538)</p> <p>Second Temple built (520–515)</p> <p>Prophet Haggai (520); Prophet Zechariah (520–518)</p> <p>Nehemiah governor of Judah (ca. 445–430)</p> <p>Mission of Ezra the scribe (mid-fifth [or early fourth] century)</p> | <p>Cyrus II (the Great) (559–530); Capture of Babylon</p> <p>Cambyes (530–522); Capture of Egypt (525)</p> <p>Darius I (522–486)</p> <p>Xerxes I (486–465)</p> <p>Artaxerxes I (465–424)</p> <p>Artaxerxes II (405–359)</p> |
| <p>Seleucus I (312/311–281) controls Syria and Mesopotamia</p> <p>Ptolemy I (323–282) controls Egypt, Palestine, Phoenicia</p> <p>Antiochus III (223–187) gains control of southern Syria, Phoenicia, and Judea from Ptolemy IV (202–198)</p> <p>Ben Sira (Sirach) (early second century)</p> <p>Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164)</p> <p>Revolt of the Maccabees (167–164)</p> <p>HASMONEAN RULE OF JUDEA (165–37):</p> <p>John Hyrcanus (135–104); Alexander Janneus (103–76);</p> <p>Salome Alexandra (76–67)</p> | |
| <p>Pompey conquers the Levant (66–62); Enters Jerusalem (63)</p> <p>Herod the Great king of Judea (37–4);</p> <p>Rebuilds Second Temple</p> <p>(Herod) Antipas (4 BCE–39 CE)</p> <p>Life of Jesus of Nazareth (ca. 4 BCE–30 CE)</p> <p>Pontius Pilate governor of Judea (26–36)</p> <p>(Herod) Agrippa I (39–44)</p> <p>Missionary activity of Paul (mid-first century)</p> <p>(Herod) Agrippa II (53–93)</p> <p>First Jewish Revolt in Judea against Rome (66–73); Jerusalem is captured (70)</p> <p>Jewish revolts in Egypt, Libya, Cyprus (115–118)</p> <p>Second Jewish Revolt in Judea against Rome (132–135)</p> | |

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF RULERS

| DATE | EGYPT | SYRIA |
|---------|--|--|
| | | HELLENISTIC PERIOD Alexander (the Great) (336–323) |
| 300 BCE | Ptolemy I Soter (305–282) Ptolemy II Philadelphus (285–246) Ptolemy III Euergetes (246–221) Ptolemy IV Philopator (221–204) Ptolemy V Epiphanes (204–180); Cleopatra I (180–176) Ptolemy VI Philometor (180–145); Cleopatra II (175–116) Ptolemy VII Neos Philopator (145) Ptolemy VIII Euergetes II Physcon (170–116) | Seleucus I Nicator (305–281) Antiochus I Soter (281–261) Antiochus II Theos (261–246) Seleucus II Callinicus (246–225) Seleucus III Soter Ceraunos (225–223) Antiochus III (the Great) (223–187) Seleucus IV Philopator (187–175) Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164) Antiochus V Eupator (164–162) Demetrius I Soter (162–150) Alexander Epiphanes (Balas) (150–145) Demetrius II Nicator (145–141 and 129–125) Antiochus VI Epiphanes (145–142) Trypho (142–138) Antiochus VII Sidetes (138–129) Cleopatra Thea (126–121) Antiochus VIII Grypus (125–121 and 121–96) Seleucus V (125) Antiochus IX Cyzicenus (115–95) Seleucus VI (95) Antiochus X Eusebes (95–83) Antiochus XI Philadelphus (95) Demetrius III Eukairos (95–88) Philip I Epiphanes Philadelphus (95–84) Antiochus XII Dionysus Epiphanes (87–84) Philip II (67–66) Antiochus XIII Asiaticus (69–68 and 65–64) |
| 100 BCE | Cleopatra III (116–101) Ptolemy IX Soter II (116–107 and 88–80) Ptolemy X Alexander I (107–88) Cleopatra Berenice (101–88) Ptolemy XI Alexander II (80) | |
| 50 BCE | Ptolemy XII Auletes (80–59 and 55–51) Cleopatra VII (51–30) Ptolemy XIII (51–47) Ptolemy XIV (47–44) | |

Note: Names in boldface occur in the Bible. Overlapping dates indicate coregencies. Date ranges are reigns, not life spans.

PALESTINE

HASMONEAN RULERS

[Mattathias d. 166]

Judas Maccabeus, son of Mattathias (165–160)

Jonathan, son of Mattathias (160–142)

Simon, son of Mattathias (142–135)

John Hyrcanus I, son of Simon (135–104)

Judah Aristobulus I, son of John Hyrcanus (104–103)

Alexander Janneus, son of John Hyrcanus (103–76)

Salome Alexandra, wife of Alexander Jannaeus (76–67)

Aristobulus II, son of Alexander Jannaeus and Salome Alexandra (67–63)

Hyrcanus II, son of Alexander Jannaeus and Salome Alexandra (63–40)

Mattathias Antigonus, son of Aristobulus II (40–37)

THE NEW OXFORD ANNOTATED APOCRYPHA

Fully Revised
Fifth Edition

New Revised Standard Version Bible Apocrypha

THE APOCRYPHA

The Apocryphal/
Deuterocanonical books
of The Old Testament

New Revised Standard Version

INTRODUCTION TO THE APOCRYPHAL/ DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS

DEFINITIONS

The Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical books are those works that were included in the Septuagint (the ancient Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible, abbreviated LXX) or in the Old Latin and Vulgate translations, but are not included in the Hebrew text that forms both the canon for Judaism and the Protestant Old Testament. All of these works, whether they are individual books or additions to the Hebrew texts of Esther and Daniel, have been regarded as canonical by one or more Christian communities, but not by all. (The exception is 4 Maccabees, which appears only in an appendix to the Greek Bible.)

“Apocrypha” means “hidden things,” but it is not clear why the term was chosen to describe these books. In antiquity “hidden books” sometimes referred to books that were restricted because they contained mysterious or esoteric teaching, too profound to be communicated to any except the initiated (see 2 Esd 14.45–46). Some early Christian writers used the term to describe works they considered to be spurious or heretical. But neither usage aptly describes the set of books that now goes by this name. The use of the term to refer to this group of books can be traced to the Christian scholar Jerome at the turn of the fifth century CE. It serves to distinguish them from books of the Christian Old Testament that are also found in the Jewish canon.

“Deuterocanonical,” along with its coordinate term “protocanonical,” is used in Roman Catholic tradition to describe the status of the two groups of books of the Old Testament. The “protocanon” consists of the books of the Hebrew Bible, concerning which there was no debate as to their canonical status. The “Deuterocanon” refers to those additional books whose canonical status was reaffirmed at a later date. This distinction, introduced by Sixtus of Sienna in 1566, acknowledges the differences between the two categories while making clear that Roman Catholics accept as fully canonical those books and parts of books that Protestants call the Apocrypha (except the Prayer of Manasseh, Psalm 151, 3 and 4 Maccabees, and 1 and 2 Esdras, which both groups regard as apocryphal). Thus, although the terms “Deuterocanonical” and “Apocryphal” can describe the same collections of writings, they clearly indicate the difference in status of the writings among different groups. In the NRSV translation, subheadings in the table of contents for these books, and in the text itself, explain the differing canonical status of various writings.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC, ORTHODOX, AND PROTESTANT CANONS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

Toward the end of the fourth century CE, Pope Damasus commissioned Jerome, the most learned Christian biblical scholar of his day, to prepare a standard Latin version of the scriptures (the translation that was to become known as the Latin Vulgate). In the Old Testament Jerome followed the Hebrew canon; though he also translated the apocryphal books, he called attention to their distinct status in prefaces. Subsequent copyists of the Latin Bible, however, did not always include Jerome’s prefaces, and during the medieval period the Western Church generally regarded these books as scripture, without differentiation. After the Protestant reformers had denied the canonical status of these books, in 1546 the Council of Trent decreed that the canon of the Old Testament includes them (with the exceptions listed earlier). Subsequent editions of the Latin Vulgate text, officially approved by the Roman Catholic Church, placed these books within the Christian sequence of the Old Testament books. Thus Tobit and Judith come after Nehemiah; the Wisdom of Solomon and Ecclesiasticus (Sirach) come after the Song of Solomon; Baruch (with the Letter of Jeremiah as ch 6) comes after Lamentations; and 1 and 2 Maccabees conclude the books of the Old Testament. Esther is given in its longer (Greek) form rather than in the version based solely on the Hebrew text; the Prayer of Azariah and Song of the Three Jews appear as vv. 24–90 of ch 3 of Daniel, and the stories of Susanna and Bel and the Dragon as chs 13 and 14 of Daniel. An appendix after the New Testament contains the Prayer of Manasseh and 1 and 2 Esdras, without implying canonical status.

The Eastern Orthodox Churches recognize several other books as authoritative. Editions of the Old Testament approved by the Holy Synod of the Greek Orthodox Church contain, besides the Roman Catholic

Deuterocanonical books, 1 Esdras, Psalm 151, the Prayer of Manasseh, and 3 Maccabees, while 4 Maccabees appears in an appendix. Slavonic Bibles approved by the Russian Orthodox Church contain, besides the Deuterocanonical books, 1 and 2 Esdras (called 2 and 3 Esdras), Psalm 151, and 3 Maccabees.

Protestant Bibles have followed the Hebrew canon, though in a different order. The disputed books, if they are included at all, have generally been placed in a separate section, usually bound between the Old and New Testaments, but occasionally placed after the close of the New Testament.

Here is a list of the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical books in the order in which they are found in this Bible, showing which religious communities accept them as scripture:

| | ROMAN CATHOLIC | GREEK ORTHODOX | SLAVONIC (RUSSIAN ORTHODOX) | LATIN VULGATE APPENDIX | GREEK APPENDIX | PROTESTANT/ ANGLICAN APOCRYPHA |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Tobit | • | • | • | | | • |
| Judith | • | • | • | | | • |
| Additions to Esther | • | • | • | | | • |
| Wisdom of Solomon | • | • | • | | | • |
| Ecclesiasticus ¹ | • | • | • | | | • |
| Baruch | • | • | • | | | • |
| Letter of Jeremiah (Baruch ch.6) | • | • | • | | | • |
| Additions to Daniel | • | • | • | | | • |
| 1 Maccabees | • | • | • | | | • |
| 2 Maccabees | • | • | • | | | • |
| 1 Esdras ² | | • | • | • | | • |
| Prayer of Manasseh | | • | • | • | | • |
| Psalm 151 | | • | • | | | |
| 3 Maccabees | | • | • | | | |
| 2 Esdras ³ | | | • | • | | • |
| 4 Maccabees | | | | | • | |
| ¹ Also called The Wisdom of Jesus, Son of Sirach, or simply Sirach. | | | | | | |
| ² 2 Esdras in Slavonic; 3 Esdras in Appendix to Vulgate; in the Vulgate, Ezra-Nehemiah are 1 and 2 Esdras. | | | | | | |
| ³ 3 Esdras in Slavonic; 4 Esdras in Vulgate Appendix. | | | | | | |

THE STATUS OF THE APOCRYPHAL/DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS IN CHRISTIANITY

During the first centuries of the Common Era, early Christian writers (most of whom knew no Hebrew) quoted, in Greek, passages both from books in the Hebrew canon and from these additional works without making any distinction between them. Such citations were usually preceded by a word or phrase making it clear that the writer regarded the text being cited as canonical. During this time, only a few thinkers investigated the Jewish canon or distinguished between, for instance, the Hebrew text of Daniel and the addition of the story of Susanna in the Greek version.

By the fourth century, theologians in the Eastern (Greek) churches had begun to recognize a distinction between the books in the Hebrew canon and the rest, though they continued to cite all of them as scripture. During the following centuries the matter was debated and, consequently, practice varied in the East, but at the Synod of Jerusalem in 1672 (which expressed the Orthodox churches' reaction to the Protestant Reformation), Tobit, Judith, Ecclesiasticus (Sirach), Wisdom, Additions to Daniel, and 1 and 2 Maccabees were expressly designated as canonical.¹ In the Western (Latin) church, on the other hand, though there was some variety of opinion, in general theologians regarded these books as canonical. More than one local synodical council (e.g., Hippo, 393, and Carthage, 397 and 419) justified and authorized their use as scripture. The so-called *Decretum Gelasianum*, a Latin document probably dating to the sixth century, contains lists of the books to be read as scripture and of books to be avoided as apocryphal. The former list, which is not present in all

the manuscripts, includes among the biblical books Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus (Sirach), and 1 and 2 Maccabees.

Occasionally, however, writers questioned the status of these books. Jerome, near the end of the fourth century, thought that books not in the Hebrew canon should be designated as apocryphal, and other thinkers, though always a minority, followed his view, at least theoretically. Toward the close of the fourteenth century John Wycliffe and his disciples produced the first English version of the Bible. This translation of the Latin Vulgate included all of the disputed books, with the exception of 2 Esdras. In the Prologue to the Old Testament, however, it makes a distinction between the books of the Hebrew canon, listed there, and the others which, the writer says, “shall be set among apocrypha, that is, without authority of belief.” In the books of Esther and Daniel, the translators included a rendering of Jerome’s notes calling the reader’s attention to the additions.

At the time of the Reformation, Protestant thinkers came to the conclusion fairly early that they would need to determine which books were authoritative for the establishment of doctrine and which were not. For instance, disputes over the doctrine of purgatory and of the usefulness of prayers and masses for the dead involved the authority of 2 Maccabees, which contains what was held to be scriptural warrant for them (12.43–45). The first extensive Protestant discussion of the canon was Andreas Bodenstein’s treatise *De Canonicis Scripturis Libellus* (1520). Bodenstein (or Carlstadt, after his place of birth) distinguished the books of the Hebrew Bible from the books of the Apocrypha, classifying the Apocrypha into two divisions. Concerning Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus (Sirach), Judith, Tobit, and 1 and 2 Maccabees, he says, “These are Apocrypha, that is, are outside the Hebrew canon; yet they are holy writings” (sect. 114). He continues:

What they contain is not to be despised at once; still it is not right that Christians should relieve, much less slake, their thirst with them. . . . Before all things the best books must be read, that is, those that are canonical beyond all controversy; afterwards, if one has the time, it is allowed to peruse the controverted books, provided that you have the set purpose of comparing and collating the non-canonical books with those which are truly canonical (sect. 118).

The second group, 1 and 2 Esdras, Baruch, Prayer of Manasseh, and the Additions to Daniel, he declared without worth.

The first Bible in a modern vernacular language to segregate the apocryphal books from the others was the Dutch Bible published by Jacob van Liesveldt in 1526 at Antwerp. After Malachi there follows a section embodying the Apocrypha titled “The books which are not in the canon, that is to say, which one does not find among the Jews in the Hebrew.”

The first edition of the Swiss-German Bible was published in six volumes (Zurich, 1527–29), the fifth of which contains the Apocrypha. The title page of this volume states, “These are the books which are not reckoned as biblical by the ancients, nor are found among the Hebrews.” A one-volume edition of the Zurich Bible, which appeared in 1530, contains the apocryphal books grouped together after the New Testament. One Swiss reformer, Oecolampadius, declared in 1530: “We do not despise Judith, Tobit, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, the last two books of Esdras, the three books of Maccabees, the Additions to Daniel; but we do not allow them divine authority with the others.”

In reaction to Protestant criticism of the disputed books, in 1546 the Council of Trent gave what is regarded by Roman Catholics as the definitive declaration on the canon of the scriptures. After enumerating the books, which in the Old Testament include Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus (Sirach), Baruch, and the two books of Maccabees, 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, as they have been accustomed to be read in the Catholic Church and as they are contained in the old Latin Vulgate Edition” (trans. H. J. Schroeder). The reference to “books in their entirety and with all their parts” is intended to cover the Letter of Jeremiah as ch 6 of Baruch, the Additions to Esther, and the chapters in Daniel including the Prayer of Azariah, the Song of the Three Jews, Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon. It is noteworthy, however, that the Prayer of Manasseh and 1 and 2 Esdras, although included in some manuscripts of the Latin Vulgate, were denied canonical status by the Council of Trent. In the official edition of the Vulgate, published in 1592, these three are printed as an appendix after the New Testament, “lest they should perish altogether.”

In England, even though Protestants were unanimous in declaring that the apocryphal books were not to be used to establish any doctrine, differences arose as to the proper use and place of noncanonical books. A milder view prevailed in the Church of England, and the lectionary attached to the Book of Common Prayer, from 1549 on, has always contained prescribed lessons from the Apocrypha. In addition, portions of the Song of the Three Jews are used as a canticle, or song of praise, alongside selected Psalms in the service of Morning Prayer. In reply to those who urged the discontinuance of reading lessons from apocryphal books as being inconsistent with the sufficiency of scripture, the bishops at the Savoy Conference, held in 1661, replied that the same objection could be raised against the preaching of sermons, and that it was much to be desired that all sermons should give as useful instruction as did the chapters selected from the Apocrypha.

The Puritans took a stricter view, and some Geneva Bibles, printed in 1599 mainly in the Low Countries, excluded the Apocrypha. The omission of the Apocrypha was presumably due to those responsible for binding the copies, since the titles of the apocryphal books occur in the table of contents. During subsequent centuries Bibles that lacked the books of the Apocrypha came to outnumber those that included them, and soon it became difficult to obtain ordinary editions of the King James Version containing the Apocrypha.

THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE APOCRYPHAL/DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS

With the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple by the Babylonians under Nebuchadnezzar in 586 BCE, and the subsequent exile of many Judeans to Babylon, the history of Israel underwent a decisive break. Henceforth there would always be Diaspora Jewish communities outside the land of Israel, and even after the Persian king Cyrus allowed the exiles to return in 538 BCE, large communities flourished in Babylon, Egypt, and elsewhere.

For two centuries the Persians controlled the Near East. The rebuilt Temple became the institutional focus of the province of Judah. Although details are uncertain, this era probably saw important work on the editing of the Pentateuch and the prophetic writings, as well as the composition of other literature. The Persian period came to an end when Alexander the Great completed a series of conquests that put him in control of the former Persian empire, including Egypt. When Alexander died in 323, his empire was divided among his generals, and two of them—Seleucus, king of Syria, and Ptolemy, king of Egypt—and their successors fought over the territory of Judah, which fell first under Ptolemaic and then Seleucid control. Despite the political changes, however, the overall cultural influence remained: This was the era of the triumph of Hellenistic culture, including the use of the Greek language as the standard for the whole empire.

There had already been, in the Hebrew Bible, contention about such issues as intermarriage (Ezra 9.1–10.44; Neh 13.23–31). Now, with large numbers of Jews living outside the land as minorities within much larger and more dominant cultures, this issue and that of other religious observances came to be much more important. Stories of faithfully observant Jews among non-Jewish populations (Tobit, 3 Macc) were joined by expanded versions of books that strengthened this point (Greek Esther, the Prayer of Azariah, and Song of the Three Jews in ch 3 of Daniel).

Jews both in the Diaspora and in Judah appropriated many elements of Hellenistic culture, usually without incident. During the second century BCE, however, an attempt to establish Hellenistic educational and civic institutions in Jerusalem created a crisis when the persons involved bribed King Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175–164) to appoint Hellenizing high priests (Jason and Menelaus) and funds were taken from the Temple itself to pay the king. In response to the ensuing violence, Antiochus invaded Jerusalem in 169; in 167 he effectively outlawed the Jewish religion, making the teaching of the Torah a crime and establishing polytheistic worship in the Temple. This final provocation led to the ultimately successful Jewish revolt under the Hasmonean family, led by Mattathias and his five sons, one of whom, Judas, was known as Maccabeus, “the hammer.” The revolt and the subsequent establishment of a Jewish government (which took more than twenty years to accomplish) are therefore referred to as Maccabean. This Maccabean (or Hasmonean) rule lasted for eighty years, until because of constant power struggles among the various factions of Jews, the Romans were able to intervene and take direct control of the territory in 63 BCE.

KINDS OF LITERATURE IN THE APOCRYPHAL/DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS

The Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical books contain different literary genres, including histories, historical fiction, wisdom, devotional writings, letters, and an apocalypse. Though several of the books combine more than

one of these genres, most of the books can be classified as predominantly one type or another. Thus 1 Esdras, 1 Maccabees, and in a certain sense, 2 Maccabees are histories. First Esdras summarizes 2 Chr 35:1–36:23 and reproduces all of Ezra and Neh 7:38–8:12. Only 1 Esd 3:1–5:6 is a significant addition. First Maccabees recounts the history of the Seleucid persecutions and the rebellion and rise of the Maccabees. Second Maccabees, with its bombastic rhetoric and abundant use of invectives against the Seleucid tyrants and Hellenizing Jews, is an example of a popular Hellenistic genre, the “pathetic history,” which uses highly charged language, exhortation, exaggeration, and other methods to stimulate the imaginations and emotions (“pathos”) of readers. Third Maccabees is misleadingly named: It actually has nothing to do with the Maccabean period or the Seleucid dynasty, but deals with a period a half-century earlier and concerns the sufferings of the Jewish community in Egypt under the Ptolemaic rulers. It is a religious novel, written in Greek by an Alexandrian Jew sometime after 30 BCE. Using legendary elements, it tells three stories of conflict between Ptolemy IV (221–204) and the Jewish community in Egypt. The most dramatic section (5:1–6:21) describes Ptolemy’s scheme to martyr the Jews: They were to be herded into an arena near Alexandria to be trampled under the feet of five hundred intoxicated elephants. The king’s plan was finally foiled when angelic intervention terrorized those supervising the persecutions and also frightened the elephants into turning upon the Egyptian soldiers.

Fourth Maccabees is not a historical narrative but rather a Greek philosophical treatise addressed to Jews on the supremacy of reason over the passions. In the form of a Stoic diatribe, or popular address, it uses narratives of exemplary behavior, and the conversations and arguments of characters in the narratives, to explore philosophical issues. The author begins with a theoretical exposition of his theme, which he then illustrates at length with examples of the martyrs drawn from 2 Maccabees, who preferred death to committing apostasy. The book was probably written by a Hellenistic Jew before 70 CE. In early Christianity the Maccabean martyrs were venerated as saints and eventually accorded a yearly festival in the ecclesiastical calendar (August 1).

Judith, Tobit, Susanna, and Bel and the Dragon are short historical fictions written to convey a moral point, as well as to entertain. Except for Judith, which is set in Judah, the rest are sometimes referred to as “Diaspora novellas” since they are all set in the Jewish Diaspora of Mesopotamia. Yet they differ from one another in other respects. Like the canonical stories of Daniel 1–6, Bel and the Dragon is a court tale, in which the hero’s relationship with the king and other members of the court provides the conflict of the plot. The motif of the lion’s den, which occurs in Daniel 6, also occurs in the story of the dragon. In contrast to the earlier Daniel tales, however, Bel and the Dragon is preoccupied with the theme of the exposure of idols as false gods and their priests as fraudulent (see also the Letter of Jeremiah). Bel and the Dragon and Susanna are sometimes referred to as ancient examples of the detective story. Whereas Daniel functioned as an interpreter of dreams and visions in Daniel 1–6, in these stories Daniel uses cleverness and logical deduction to uncover deception.

Although Tobit, like Daniel, is presented as a court official of a Mesopotamian king, the story is concerned with personal and family affairs, not a rivalry at court. Thematically, Tobit may be compared with the prose story of Job, since it concerns the suffering of the righteous (both Tobit and his eventual daughter-in-law Sarah). The book of Tobit is distinguished by the use of various folktale motifs (e.g., the motifs of the grateful dead, the angel in disguise, the dangerous bride, and the demon lover), and by its references to Ahikar, the hero of a non-Jewish folktale from Mesopotamia.

Judith might seem to bear comparison with 1 and 2 Maccabees, since it concerns a threat to the people from a foreign army. But whereas 1 and 2 Maccabees are histories, the fictional nature of Judith is evident from the story’s flagrant historical inaccuracies, such as describing Nebuchadnezzar as king of Assyria and the invasion as taking place after the people’s return from exile. A better comparison might be between Judith and Esther. Though set in Judah rather than in the Diaspora, Judith, like Esther, tells how a courageous Jewish woman saves her people from enemies bent on destroying them.

Wisdom literature is represented in the Apocrypha by two books: the Wisdom of Solomon, and the Wisdom of Jesus son of Sirach (also known as Ecclesiasticus). Sirach, which was originally composed in Hebrew ca. 180 BCE, shows particularly close connections with the style and content of the book of Proverbs in the Hebrew Bible, from which it is a natural development. The Wisdom of Solomon, by contrast, contains none of the proverbial material that characterizes the Hebrew wisdom tradition. It does, however, share with Proverbs and Sirach an interest in the figure of wisdom personified as a woman. What makes the Wisdom of Solomon distinctive is the strong influence of Greek literary styles and philosophical ideas. Thus, it comes from the Greek-speaking Diaspora, probably from Alexandria in Egypt.

The Prayer of Manasseh is a hymnic lament of great feeling and literary skill. The Prayer of Azariah and the Song of the Three Jews are both modeled on psalms that are liturgical in form. In addition to the 150 psalms comprising the book of Psalms in the Hebrew Bible, during the Hellenistic and Roman periods similar hymns were composed in Hebrew and in other languages; there are a number of such compositions in the Dead Sea Scrolls. One, which celebrates the prowess of young David in slaying Goliath, is appended (as Ps 151) to the book of Psalms in some Greek and Hebrew manuscripts.

The Hebrew Bible contains no books that are in the form of a letter, although letters or excerpts from letters occur at various places. There are decrees (Ezra 1.1–6), diplomatic correspondence (1 Kings 5.2–6), royal commands (2 Sam 11.14–15), even forgeries (1 Kings 21.8–10), but all are used to advance the narratives in which they occur, or explain incidents that follow, so it is unclear how representative they are. Twenty-one of the twenty-seven books of the New Testament are in the form of letters, but some (for instance, Hebrews) are more like sermons than letters. The Letter of Jeremiah, which dates from the Hellenistic period, may have provided later, Christian writers with an example of how this literary form could be used for religious purposes, combining theological content with a direct personal approach.

Finally, 2 Esdras, a book that purports to reveal the future, belongs to the genre of apocalypse, a word that literally means “an unveiling.” Like the last six chapters of Daniel in the Hebrew Bible and the book of Revelation in the New Testament, which also are apocalypses, 2 Esdras uses metaphorical language, symbolic numbers, and angelic messengers who reveal hidden information.

Despite this diversity of genres, most of which parallel or are developed from similar ones in the Hebrew Bible, there is no correlative to classical prophecy. Even within the prophetic books of the Hebrew Bible, apocalyptic elements had already begun to supplant strict prophecy (for instance, Isa 24–27; Ezek 38–39; Joel 2; Zech 9–14). This absence perhaps supports the view of the late first-century CE historian Josephus (*Ag. Ap.* 1.8), that “the exact succession of the prophets” had been broken after the Persian period; a similar idea is found in later rabbinic literature. Sometimes there is a direct statement that “prophets ceased to appear” (1 Macc 9.27); at other times the writers express the hope that prophecy might one day return (1 Macc 4.46; 14.41). When a writer imitates prophetic style, as in the book of Baruch, he repeats with slight modifications the language of the older prophets

THE APOCRYPHAL/DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS WITHIN JUDAISM

Most of the writings in the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical books (with the exception of parts of 2 Esdras) are Jewish in origin, but it is not clear that they were collected by any particular community of Jews. Some of them (for instance, Sirach) were quoted by rabbis, but for others no evidence exists that they were regarded as central to the Jewish community at any point. Some (Tobit, parts of Sirach, the Letter of Jeremiah, and Psalm 151) are among the Dead Sea Scrolls, and were therefore presumably of importance to the Essene community there, but their canonical status is not clear.

Nevertheless, influences from some of these works are apparent within Judaism. As mentioned above, rabbinic literature quotes and appropriates sayings from Sirach. The martyrdom of the woman and her seven sons (2 Macc 7.1–42; 4 Macc 8.3–18.24) is recounted in several places (*Lam. Rab.* 1.50; *b. Git.* 57b; *Seder Eliyahu R.* 29).

First and Second Maccabees (1 Macc 4.36–59; 2 Macc 10.1–8) provide the original accounts of the purification of the Temple in 164 BCE, which is commemorated in the festival of Hanukkah. The Talmudic legend (*b. Shabb.* 21b) that oil in the Temple, though only enough for one day nevertheless burned for eight—the supposed reason for the eight-day length of the observance—is not found in the books of Maccabees. Judith was, during the Middle Ages, associated with Hanukkah as well, on the grounds that both had to do with rallying an oppressed Jewish population to overthrow a threatening or occupying power.

Both Tobit and 2 Esdras influenced later Jewish literature and were popular during the Middle Ages. Baruch may have been read in synagogues at one time (see Bar 1.14), and Baruch himself, and therefore his writing, were regarded in some rabbinic writings as sharing Jeremiah's prophetic status (*Sifre Num.* 78; *Seder Olam R.* 20; *b. B. Bat.* 14b; *y. Sot.* 9.12). Susanna's story is recounted in the Babylonian Talmud (*b. San.* 93a).

The sense of a canon of scripture emerged only gradually in Judaism. During the time in which the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical books were composed, the Torah (Pentateuch), the Prophets, and possibly the book of Psalms were considered authoritative. Many other writings, both those now in the Jewish canon and additional ones, were widely popular but did not have the status of scripture. A sense of a closed set of authoritative

books emerged only in the first century CE, and even then there was some uncertainty about its extent. Josephus, however, says that “there are not with us myriads of books, discordant and discrepant, but only twenty-two, comprising the history of all time, which are justly accredited” (*Ag. Ap.* 1.43).

Even if these additional writings were not considered scripture, they were often read and cited. Josephus himself makes use of 1 Esdras, 1 Maccabees, and the additions to Esther. Early rabbinic literature, however, makes no mention of any of these books except for Sirach, which is frequently quoted. The rabbis were, however, aware of the festival of Hanukkah, which is described in 1 and 2 Maccabees. During the Middle Ages, Jews became reacquainted with some of the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical works from Christian sources and retranslated Tobit and Judith into Hebrew. The entire Apocrypha/Deuterocanon was translated into Hebrew in the early sixteenth century.

NEW TESTAMENT USES OF THE APOCRYPHAL/DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS

None of the books of the New Testament quotes directly from any Apocryphal book, in contrast to the frequent quotation of the thirty-nine books in the Hebrew Bible. Several New Testament writers, however, do allude to one or more apocryphal books. For example, what seem to be literary echoes from the Wisdom of Solomon are present in Paul’s Letter to the Romans (cf. Rom 1.20–29 with Wis 13.5,8; 14.24,27; and Rom 9.20–23 with Wis 12.12,20; 15.7) and in his correspondence with the Corinthians (cf. 2 Cor 5.1,4 with Wis 9.15). The short Letter of James, a typical bit of “wisdom literature” in the New Testament, contains allusions not only to the book of Proverbs in the Hebrew Bible but to gnomic sayings in Sirach as well (cf. Jas 1.19 with Sir 5.11; and Jas 1.13 with Sir 15.11–12).

THE FURTHER INFLUENCE OF THE APOCRYPHAL/DEUTEROCANONICAL BOOKS

The influence of the Apocrypha has been widespread, inspiring homilies, meditations, and liturgical forms, and providing subjects for poets, dramatists, composers, and artists. Some common expressions and proverbs have come from the Apocrypha. The sayings, “A good name endures forever” and “You can’t touch pitch without being defiled,” are derived from Sir 41.13 and 13.1. The affirmation in 1 Esd 4.41, “Great is Truth, and mighty above all things” (KJV), or its Latin form, “Magna est veritas et praevalet,” has been used as a motto or maxim in a wide variety of contexts.

The importance of these books extends to the information they supply concerning the development of Jewish life and thought just prior to the beginning of the Common Era. The stirring political fortunes of the Jews in the time of the Maccabees; the rise of what has been called normative Judaism, and the emergence of the sects of the Pharisees and the Sadducees; the lush growth of popular belief in the activities of angels and demons, and the use of magic to drive away malevolent influences; the first reflections on “original sin” and its relation to the “evil inclination” present in every person; the blossoming of apocalyptic hopes relating to the messiah, the resurrection of the body, and the vindication of the righteous—all these and many other topics are to be found in the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical books.

Carol A. Newsom

(a) The books and parts of books from Tobit through 2 Maccabees are recognized as Deuterocanonical Scripture by the Roman Catholic, Greek, and Russian Orthodox Churches.

TOBIT

NAME AND CANONICAL STATUS

The book is named for its principal character, Tobit. It is not included in the Jewish or Protestant canons, though it is canonical in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches and acknowledged in Protestant tradition as part of the Apocrypha. The Anglican Church recognizes Tobit as scripture for the purpose of edification and liturgy.

AUTHORSHIP, TEXT, AND DATE OF COMPOSITION

The author of the book is unknown. Although the original language was likely Aramaic or possibly Hebrew, only fragments of that text have survived. The translation below is based primarily on the Greek text of Codex Sinaiticus (sometimes referred to as G^s); what is missing in this text (from 4.7–19b and 13.6i–10b) is filled in from other manuscripts. Other versions attest a shorter Greek recension (Gⁱ), preserved in several manuscripts, as well as various translations into other languages. Five fragments, one in Hebrew and four in Aramaic, were found among the Dead Sea Scrolls (4Q196–4Q200); these tend to resemble the text of Gⁱ rather than G^s; however, they provide insufficient witness for determining which, if either, was the original. The book likely dates to sometime in the third or possibly early second century BCE; its place of composition remains unknown, with plausible suggestions including the eastern Diaspora, Egypt, and Israel.

Citations of Tobit appear in the early church fathers; for example, Polycarp, bishop of Smyrna (ca. 80–155) quotes Tob 4.10 in his *Letter to the Philippians* 10.2: “Almsgiving delivers from death.” Jerome, who prepared the Latin (Vulgate), states that he translated Tobit from Aramaic rather than from Greek. The suggestion that Rom 9.18 is an allusion to Tob 4.19 is unlikely.

CONTENTS AND STRUCTURE

After the Assyrian conquest of the Northern Kingdom of Israel in 722 BCE, Tobit, his wife Anna, and his son Tobias (Heb/Aram “Tobiah”) were exiled from their home in Galilee to Assyria. There Tobit, like Joseph (in Gen 39–50), Mordecai (in the book of Esther), and Daniel (in the book of Daniel), found himself in the service of a foreign ruler, as an officer in the court of the Assyrian king Shalmaneser. Like those characters, this pious Israelite too was tested: Shalmaneser’s successor removed Tobit from his official position and then persecuted him for his insistence on burying the unattended corpses of his fellow Jews. Finally, one evening, following yet another burial, Tobit was blinded by bird droppings that fell into his eyes. Dependent on others, including his wife, for economic support, and following an argument with her in which she questioned the value of his piety, Tobit prayed for death. At the same time his relative Sarah was also praying for death. The demon Asmodeus had killed each of her seven successive grooms on their wedding night. To resolve these improbable situations, the angel Raphael, in disguise as Tobias’s traveling companion, escorts the young man first to Media to exorcise the demon and marry Sarah and then back to Nineveh to cure Tobit.

The complex plot is tied together by the parallel situations of Tobit and Sarah, prayers of praise and references to almsgiving, and frequent supernatural events. Its humorous aspects—from the angel in disguise to the attack by a fish—make the stories of Tobit and Sarah almost farcical and so prevent the book from becoming tragic or maudlin. Readers familiar with biblical literature will recognize familiar motifs and themes: wisdom sayings; the comparison of Sarah to the Sarah of Genesis (their beauty, inability to conceive, sexual attention from inappropriate partners, difficult relations with female slaves, and miraculous solutions to their fertility problems); the search for a bride for Isaac (Gen 24); the successes and trials of the Jew in the royal court (Joseph, Daniel, Mordecai); the problems of life in the Diaspora; Job’s trials; the role of angels; the centrality of Jerusalem; the fulfillment of prophecy; and the importance of charity. The numerous personal prayers, similar to those found in the stories of Judith, Daniel (including the Additions), the Greek Additions to Esther, and elsewhere in postexilic Jewish literature, emphasize the universal authority and righteousness of God.

INTERPRETATION

Combining ethical exhortation and prayers with broad humor, a rollicking plot, and vivid characters, the book of Tobit is both entertaining and edifying. Classified variously as a folktale, wisdom tale, travel story, romance, comedy, and novella, it combines the traits of all these genres; Tobit is best grouped with such Second Temple novellas as *Esther* (with the Additions), *Daniel* (with the Additions), *Judith*, *3 Maccabees*, and *Joseph and Aseneth*. It offers its Jewish readers guidelines on how to preserve their identity in Diaspora contexts; it gives theologians a view of a God who tests the faithful, responds to prayers, and redeems the covenant community; and it provides historians information about family life, gender roles, travel, burial and eating customs, and medicine in the postexilic period.

Where Temple sacrifice is unavailable and the people are scattered, the story insists that Jews maintain their identity not only through piety and practice but also through strong bonds between parents and children, between husbands and wives, and with family members and fellow Jews. For example, the first chapter includes many kinship terms (e.g., “descendants,” “tribe,” “brother,” “father,” “son,” “family,” “kindred,” “nephew”). To preserve the community, Tobit insists that his son imitate Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who “took wives from among their kindred” (4.12–13). Further, the book stresses the importance of the Jerusalem Temple, the following of the commandments, and the presence of the “merciful God” (3.11 cf. 11.17), the “God of our ancestors” (8.5), “who lives forever” and whose “kingdom lasts throughout the ages” (13.1). Although the character Tobit gives voice to what is sometimes called Deuteronomic theology, which states that the sinful suffer and the good are rewarded, the plot belies this claim: good people, such as Sarah and Tobit himself, do suffer, and sinful people, such as the Assyrian kings, thrive. Tobit’s wife Anna presents a view more compatible with Ecclesiastes or Job: she bitterly asks her blind husband, “Where are your acts of charity? Where are your righteous deeds?” (2.14).

The book also displays connections to well-known folktale motifs, including the dangerous bride, the monster in the nuptial chamber, the supernatural being in disguise, the miraculous animal, and the grateful dead. Characters from the Aramaic *Words of Ahikar*, known from the Elephantine papyri (fifth century BCE) as well as later Syriac, Slavonic, and other texts, make personal appearances in Tobit, where they are identified as Israelites. Tobit may also draw plot motifs from Homer’s *Odyssey* and Sophocles’s *Antigone*.

Amy-Jill Levine

1 This book tells the story of Tobit son of Tobiel son of Hananiel son of Aduel son of Gabael son of Raphael son of Raguel of the descendants^a of Asiel, of the tribe of Naphtali, ² who in the days of King Shalmaneser^b of the Assyrians was taken into captivity from Thisbe, which is to the south of Kedesh Naphtali in Upper Galilee, above Asher toward the west, and north of Phogor.

³ I, Tobit, walked in the ways of truth and righteousness all the days of my life. I performed many acts of charity for my kindred and my people who had gone with me in exile to Nineveh in the land of the Assyrians.

^a Other ancient authorities lack *of Raphael son of Raguel of the descendants*

^b Gk *Enemessaros*

1.1–2: Exilic context. The superscription establishes Tobit’s location and genealogy. **1:** *Tobit* (Aram “Tobi”), meaning “my good,” a short form of “Tobiyah(u),” “The LORD (YHWH) is my good,” or “Tobi’el,” “God (El) is my good.” *Naphtali* (see Josh 19.32–39; Judg 1.33; 5.18; 6.35; 7.23), one of the ten northern tribes that rebelled in 928 BCE against the Davidic dynasty (1 Kings 12.19–20). Listings of tribal identification (e.g., 1 Kings 7.14) are relatively rare in Jewish Hellenistic texts (but see Lk 2.36; Phil 3.5). In the narrative, almost everyone, including Ahikar (1.21–22), is either related to Tobit or from tribe of Naphtali. **2:** *Shalmaneser* V r. 727–722 BCE. Shalmaneser’s predecessor, Tiglath-pileser III (r. 745–727), deported the Naphtalites to Assyria (2 Kings 15.29); in 722, Sargon of Assyria, Shalmaneser’s brother and successor (r. 722–705), conquered Samaria, Israel’s capital, and resettled substantial portions of the population (2 Kings 17.5–6); such historical errors (see Jdt 1) are not uncommon in postexilic novellas. References to *captivity* and exile recur throughout the book (e.g., 1.3,10; 2.2; 3.4,15; 7.3; 14.4). *Kedesh*, in northern Galilee (see Josh 12.22; 19.37; Judg 4.6). *Asher*, perhaps a Greek spelling of Hazor, ca. 6 mi (10 km) south-southeast of Kedesh. *Thisbe* and *Phogor* have not been identified.

1.3–9: Tobit’s background. Tobit speaks in the first person in 1.3–3.6; the book then shifts to third-person narration. In his self-presentation Tobit emphasizes his own righteousness. **3:** *Walking in the ways of truth and*

⁴ When I was in my own country, in the land of Israel, while I was still a young man, the whole tribe of my ancestor Naphtali deserted the house of David and Jerusalem. This city had been chosen from among all the tribes of Israel, where all the tribes of Israel should offer sacrifice and where the temple, the dwelling of God, had been consecrated and established for all generations forever.

⁵ All my kindred and our ancestral house of Naphtali sacrificed to the calf^a that King Jeroboam of Israel had erected in Dan and on all the mountains of Galilee. ⁶ But I alone went often to Jerusalem for the festivals, as it is prescribed for all Israel by an everlasting decree. I would hurry off to Jerusalem with the first fruits of the crops and the firstlings of the flock, the tithes of the cattle, and the first shearings of the sheep. ⁷ I would give these to the priests, the sons of Aaron, at the altar; likewise the tenth of the grain, wine, olive oil, pomegranates, figs, and the rest of the fruits to the sons of Levi who ministered at Jerusalem. Also for six years I would save up a second tenth in money and go and distribute it in Jerusalem. ⁸ A third tenth^b I would give to the orphans and widows and to the converts who had attached themselves to Israel. I would bring it and give it to them in the third year, and we would eat it according

to the ordinance decreed concerning it in the law of Moses and according to the instructions of Deborah, the mother of my father Tobiel,^c for my father had died and left me an orphan. ⁹ When I became a man I married a woman,^d a member of our own family, and by her I became the father of a son whom I named Tobias.

¹⁰ After I was carried away captive to Assyria and came as a captive to Nineveh, everyone of my kindred and my people ate the food of the Gentiles, ¹¹ but I kept myself from eating the food of the Gentiles. ¹² Because I was mindful of God with all my heart, ¹³ the Most High gave me favor and good standing with Shalmaneser,^e and I used to buy everything he needed. ¹⁴ Until his death I used to go into Media, and buy for him there. While in the country of Media I left bags of silver worth ten talents in trust with Gabael, the brother of Gabri. ¹⁵ But when Shalmaneser^e died, and his son Sennacherib reigned in his place, the highways into Media became unsafe and I could no longer go there.

^a Other ancient authorities read *heifer*

^b A *third tenth* added from other ancient authorities

^c Lat: Gk *Hananial*

^d Other ancient authorities add *Anna*

^e Gk *Enemessaros*

righteousness is a prominent motif of the Israelite wisdom tradition (e.g., Prov 2.7–9; 4.11; see also Isa 38.3; Ps 26.1). *Charity*, almsgiving is emphasized throughout (e.g., 1.16–17; 2.14; 4.7,16; 12.8–9; 14.2,8,10). *Nineveh*, capital of Assyria. 4: Tobit's life span, ranging from before 928 to after 722 BCE (but see 14.2), further indicates the tale's fictional nature (see v. 2n.). *Offer sacrifice*, references to the Temple appear only in the opening and closing chapters, as though framing the book (see 13.10–18; 14.5). 5: *Calf*, 1 Kings 12.28–29; *Jeroboam* led a revolt against David's grandson Rehoboam and established worship sites at *Dan* (northeast of Kedesh) and Bethel (1 Kings 12.26–33). 6: *I alone*, Tobit's claim is contradicted by 5.14. Participation in the pilgrimage *festivals* (Deut 12.11–12; 16.16–17) of Booths (Sukkot), Passover (Pesach), and Weeks (Shavuot/Pentecost, see 2.1n.) entailed the giving of *first fruits* (Deut 26.1–11), *firstlings* (Ex 13.12), *tithes of cattle* (Lev 27.32), and *first shearings of the sheep* (Deut 18.4). The extent of Tobit's pilgrimages and sacrificial activity emphasizes his faithfulness to the Torah, in contrast to his kin. 7–8: For tithing of produce, see Lev 27.30; Deut 14.22. For the distribution of tithes to *Levites, orphans, and widows*, see Deut 14.27–29. 8: *Instructions of Deborah* indicates women's roles in religious education (see Prov 1.8; Sir 3.2); the name may have some connection to Kedesh and Naphtali (see Judg 4–5). 9: *Our own family*, endogamy, marriage within the kinship group, is a major theme (3.17; 4.12–13; 6.11–12; 7.10–11; cf. Gen 11.29; 24.3–4; 27.46–28.2; Deut 7.3–4; Ezra 9–10; Neh 10.28–30; but contrast the marriages of Joseph, Moses, Boaz, and Esther).

1.10–22: **Early captivity.** The setting and Tobit's initial political success resemble Dan 1–6. Like Daniel and his companions (Dan 1.8–20), Esther (Add Esth C.17), and Judith (Jdt 12.1–3), Tobit follows Jewish dietary laws (e.g., Lev 11.1–47; Deut 14.3–21). 12: *Mindful of God with all my heart*, cf. Deut 6.6; 8.18. 13: Tobit regards his political office as steward as a reward for righteousness; later events question such justice. 14: *Media* (northern Iran) is east of Assyria; on Israelites exiled there, see 2 Kings 17.6. *Ten talents*, ca. 750 lbs (350 kgs). 15: Sargon II (see v. 2n.), not *Shalmaneser*, was *Sennacherib's* father (see vv.2n.,18n.). 16–17: Tobit continues his earlier charitable works

¹⁶ In the days of Shalmaneser^a I performed many acts of charity to my kindred, those of my tribe. ¹⁷ I would give my food to the hungry and my clothing to the naked; and if I saw the dead body of any of my people thrown out behind the wall of Nineveh, I would bury it. ¹⁸ I also buried any whom King Sennacherib put to death when he came fleeing from Judea in those days of judgment that the king of heaven executed upon him because of his blasphemies. For in his anger he put to death many Israelites; but I would secretly remove the bodies and bury them. So when Sennacherib looked for them he could not find them. ¹⁹ Then one of the Ninevites went and informed the king about me, that I was burying them; so I hid myself. But when I realized that the king knew about me and that I was being searched for to be put to death, I was afraid and ran away. ²⁰ Then all my property was confiscated; nothing was left to me that was not taken into the royal treasury except my wife Anna and my son Tobias.

²¹ But not forty^b days passed before two of Sennacherib's^c sons killed him, and they fled to the mountains of Ararat, and his son Esar-haddon^d reigned after him. He appointed Ahikar, the son of my brother Hanael^e over all the accounts of his kingdom, and he had authority over the entire administration.

²² Ahikar interceded for me, and I returned to Nineveh. Now Ahikar was chief cup-

bearer, keeper of the signet, and in charge of administration of the accounts under King Sennacherib of Assyria; so Esar-haddon^d reappointed him. He was my nephew and so a close relative.

2 Then during the reign of Esar-haddon^d I returned home, and my wife Anna and my son Tobias were restored to me. At our festival of Pentecost, which is the sacred festival of weeks, a good dinner was prepared for me and I reclined to eat. ² When the table was set for me and an abundance of food placed before me, I said to my son Tobias, "Go, my child, and bring whatever poor person you may find of our people among the exiles in Nineveh, who is wholeheartedly mindful of God,^f and he shall eat together with me. I will wait for you, until you come back." ³ So Tobias went to look for some poor person of our people. When he had returned he said, "Father!" And I replied, "Here I am, my child." Then he went on to say, "Look, father, one of our own people has been murdered and thrown into the market place, and now he lies there strangled." ⁴ Then I sprang up, left the dinner before even tasting it, and removed

^a Gk *Enemessaros*

^b Other ancient authorities read either *forty-five* or *fifty*

^c Gk *his*

^d Gk *Sacherdonos*

^e Other authorities read *Hananael*

^f Lat: Gk *wholeheartedly mindful*

(1.3n.). *Dead body*, burying corpses is his principal act of righteousness (1.18–20; 2.3–8; cf. 4.3–4; 6.15; 14.10–13); their unburied presence indicates Assyria's brutality (Deut 28.26; 1 Kings 14.11; 21.24; Jer 7.33; Ezek 29.5); even executed criminals deserved proper burial (Deut 21.22–23). More than a fifth of the book's 244 verses refer to death or burial. *Behind the wall*, suggesting the garbage dump. **18:** *Sennacherib* succeeded his father Sargon II in 705 BCE. *Fleeing . . . in those days of judgment*, a reference to the defeat of Sennacherib by divine intervention; see 2 Kings 19.35–36. **19:** Like Sophocles's *Antigone*, Tobit is threatened with death for burying the executed; cf. 2 Sam 21.8–14. **20:** Like Daniel and his companions (Dan 3; 6), Tobit is persecuted for practicing Jewish piety. *Tobias*, a Greek form of Heb "Tobiyah(u)"; see 1.1n. It was unusual for a son to have the same name as his father. **21:** *Killed him*, see 2 Kings 19.37. The narrative distinguishes the familial loyalties of Tobit and Raguel from the disarray of the Assyrian household. *Esar-haddon* reigned 681–669 BCE. **21–22:** *Ahikar*, a legendary Aramean wise man and courtier who served in the Assyrian court. Though Ahikar is not a Jew according to the *Book of Ahikar* (see Introduction), the claim of Ahikar's relationship to Tobit, noted only in this book, enhances Tobit's status. Ahikar's story is summarized in 14.10; cf. 2.10; 11.18.

2.1–10: Tobit's blindness. Tobit's charity toward others results in his being blinded. **1:** *Pentecost*, from a Greek word for "fifty," specifying the number of days after the festival of First Fruits when Shavuot, the Festival of Weeks, commemorating the spring harvest was to be celebrated (Lev 23.15–21; Deut 16.9–12; 2 Chr 8.13). It also celebrated the giving of the Torah. *Good dinner*, almost every chapter has a reference to food. **2:** Tobit



The geography of Tobit.

the body^a from the square^b and laid it^a in one of the rooms until sunset when I might bury it.^a ⁵ When I returned, I washed myself and ate my food in sorrow. ⁶ Then I remembered the prophecy of Amos, how he said against Bethel,^c

“Your festivals shall be turned into mourning,
and all your songs into lamentation.”
And I wept.

⁷ When the sun had set, I went and dug a grave and buried him. ⁸ And my neighbors laughed and said, “Is he still not afraid? He

has already been hunted down to be put to death for doing this, and he ran away; yet here he is again burying the dead!” ⁹ That same night I washed myself and went into my courtyard and slept by the wall of the courtyard; and my face was uncovered because of the heat. ¹⁰ I did not know that there were sparrows on the wall; their fresh droppings fell into my eyes and produced white films. I

^a Gk *him*

^b Other ancient authorities lack *from the square*

^c Other ancient authorities read *against Bethlehem*

consistently demonstrates charity toward his people in exile (4.7–11, 16–17; 12.8–9; 14.10–11). 5: Num 19.11–22 commands washing as purification after contact with a corpse, but Tobit does not exactly follow these instructions. 6: Am 8.10, one of the book’s few scriptural citations; since the book is set in the eighth century following the Assyrian defeat of Israel in 722, Tobit the character and Amos the prophet are near contemporaries. 9: Why Tobit sleeps outside is unclear, especially since after moving the corpse he returned home to eat dinner (v. 5). Neither biblical teachings on ritual purity following contact with a corpse (see 2.5n.) nor Jewish tradition mandates exclusion from one’s home. A similar connection of dinner and grave-digging, but with humorous overtones, appears in 8.9–11. 10: *Droppings*, Tobit is blinded in an ignominious manner. Other texts associate

went to physicians to be healed, but the more they treated me with ointments the more my vision was obscured by the white films, until I became completely blind. For four years I remained unable to see. All my kindred were sorry for me, and Ahikar took care of me for two years before he went to Elymais.

¹¹ At that time, also, my wife Anna earned money at women's work. ¹² She used to send what she made to the owners and they would pay wages to her. One day, the seventh of Dystrus, when she cut off a piece she had woven and sent it to the owners, they paid her full wages and also gave her a young goat for a meal. ¹³ When she returned to me, the goat began to bleat. So I called her and said, "Where did you get this goat? It is surely not stolen, is it? Return it to the owners; for we have no right to eat anything stolen." ¹⁴ But she said to me, "It was given to me as a gift in addition to my wages." But I did not believe her, and told her to return it to the owners. I became flushed with anger against her over this. Then she replied to me, "Where are your acts of charity? Where are your righteous deeds? These things are known about you!"^a

3 Then with much grief and anguish of heart I wept, and with groaning began to pray:

² "You are righteous, O Lord,
and all your deeds are just;

all your ways are mercy and truth;
you judge the world.^b

³ And now, O Lord, remember me
and look favorably upon me.
Do not punish me for my sins
and for my unwitting offenses
and those that my ancestors committed
before you.

They sinned against you,
⁴ and disobeyed your commandments.
So you gave us over to plunder, exile, and
death,
to become the talk, the byword, and an
object of reproach
among all the nations among whom
you have dispersed us.

⁵ And now your many judgments are true
in exacting penalty from me for my sins.
For we have not kept your commandments
and have not walked in accordance with
truth before you.

⁶ So now deal with me as you will;
command my spirit to be taken from
me,
so that I may be released from the face
of the earth and become dust.
For it is better for me to die than to live,

^a Or to you; Gk with you

^b Other ancient authorities read you render true and righteous judgment forever

bird dung with healing (e.g., Pliny, *Nat. Hist.* 30.8.26). *Vision was obscured*, placing Tobit in the role of the blind Isaac (Gen 27:1), with Sarah in Rebecca's role, and Tobias like Jacob, who will find a bride from the extended family (Gen 28:1–2). *Ahikar*, see 1.21–22n. *Elymais*, earlier Elam, northwestern Persia.

2.11–14: The argument. The first of three (see 5.17–19; 10.1–7) conversations between Anna and Tobit. Dependent on others, Tobit becomes increasingly despondent. **11:** *Women's work* here is weaving (cf. Prov 31.13,24); Tobit's earlier source of income, aside from investments, is unmentioned. **12:** At this verse and at 2.15–16, the Vulgate adds a comparison of Tobit to Job and thus implicitly of Anna to Job's wife. *Dystrus*, fifth month in the Macedonian calendar (February/March), corresponding to the Jewish month of Shevat; the Macedonian name is an indication of the book's Hellenistic date. **13:** Tobit's outburst nuances his claims of righteousness and may also reflect his sense of dishonor in being supported by a woman (cf. Sir 25.22); *T. Job* also depicts a wife who supports a disabled husband. *Stolen*, an accusation that recalls Hannah (variant of the name Anna), the mother of Samuel, falsely accused of drunkenness (1 Sam 1.13–15); see also Susanna, falsely accused of adultery in The Additions to Daniel. **14:** Like Job's wife (Job 2.9), Anna questions the relationship between *righteous deeds* and a good life.

3.1–6: Tobit's prayer. The fight, coupled with Anna's observations about justice, not his blindness, causes Tobit to seek death. Personal prayer is a major motif of this book (3.2–6,11–15; 8.4–8,15–17; 11.14–15; 13.1–17) as well as in Hellenistic Jewish literature generally (e.g., Jdt 9; Esth Addition C; Song of Thr; Sus; 1 Macc 7.37–38). **2:** *Righteous . . .*, Pss 11.7; 37.28; 116.5; 119.137; etc. **3–4:** Tobit admits his own sin and the sin of his *ancestors* (see Ex 20.5–6; Bar 1.16–22). The theology that *plunder, exile, and death* are punishment for *sins* is voiced only by Tobit and belied by the plot, in which both Tobit and Sarah suffer although they are righteous. **6:** Moses (Num 11.15)