



into the Melting Pot

the question is more important than the answer

Sunday 17 November 2013

Can We Trust The Bible? - Where did it come from?

The Old Testament

Our modern Protestant Old Testament is equivalent to the Hebrew Bible.

The Apocrypha (hidden: reserved for initiates; not good enough or heretical; Jerome's views c345-420 accepted in the 16th Century) is the material additional to the Hebrew Scriptures, but found in the Greek (Egyptian) Bible (even though some original manuscripts were in Hebrew), apart from Esdras 2, and known (used and quoted) by the early church.

- 1 & 2 Esdras
- Tobit
- Judith
- (Additional material in) Esther
- The Wisdom Of Solomon
- Ecclesiasticus (Wisdom of Jesus son of Sirach)
- Baruch
- A Letter of Jeremiah
- The Song of the Three (Daniel)
- Susanna (Daniel)
- Bel & the Snake (Daniel)
- The Prayer of Manasseh
- 1 & 2 Maccabees

Two additional books found in the Ethiopian and Coptic OT

- Enoch
- Jubilees

The Orthodox church also includes

- 3 Maccabees
- Psalm 151

The New Testament

Came together in its final form by the second half of the 4th Century, taking into account apostolic authorship, widespread acceptance, representing a common faith and authority. Books regarded as of doubtful status at some time, but eventually included:

- Hebrews
- 2 & 3 John
- 2 Peter
- Jude
- Revelation

Other texts which were excluded from the canon include (there are many thousands of fragments and texts!)

- 1 & 2 Clement
- Epistle of Ignatius
- Didache
- Epistle of Barnabas
- The Shepherd Of Hermes (at one time included)
- Gospel of Thomas
- Acts of Andrew
- Many, many others . . .

The Orthodox church includes the Didascalia, based on the Didache (teachings).

The Process for the Scriptural books

- Oral tradition (Aramaic and Greek)
- Written form (Greek)
- Redaction (editing together multiple sources)
- Choice of manuscripts
- Canonisation (tradition; orthodoxy and heresy)
- Translation
- Transcription
- Editing
- Translation

Translation - Virgin Birth

Matthew 1:23 – A virgin will become pregnant and have a son, . . .

This is a quote from Isaiah 7:14 in the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew text.

Hebrew: *almah* = young girl

Greek: *betulah* = virgin and not *parthenos* = young girl

Transcription – The Eye of a Needle

Matthew 19:24, Mark 10:25, Luke 18:25

For many years it has been common teaching that there is a gate in Jerusalem, used after dark, called 'the Eye of the Needle' through which a camel could not pass unless it stooped and first had all its baggage first removed. A lovely story and an excellent parable for preaching but unfortunately unfounded - there is no evidence for such a gate! The Greek *kamilos* ('camel') should really be *kamêlos*, meaning 'cable, rope'. Hence it is easier to thread a needle with a rope (rather than a strand of cotton) than for a rich man to enter the kingdom.

Descriptions of the Bible

- The Word of God
- Inspired
- Inerrant (in the 15th Century)
- Holy / Sacred
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