

THE LOST APOCRYPHA OF THE
OLD TESTAMENT

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THE OLD TESTAMENT

THEIR TITLES AND FRAGMENTS

COLLECTED, TRANSLATED AND DISCUSSED

BY

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INTRODUCTORY

THE SOURCES.—PATRISTIC QUOTATIONS

THE object of this book is to collect in a form convenient to English readers the remains of some of the apocryphal writings connected with the Old Testament which have not survived in their entirety. That there were many such books we know; and the student may find, scattered in dictionary articles, or collected in such works as the—still unsurpassed—*Codex Pseudepigraphus Veteris Testamenti* of John Albert Fabricius, their names and fragments. But there is not a handy English guide to this information, such as I now attempt to supply.

It is impossible in most cases to assign anything like a precise date to these writings; the most we can say is that they are pre- or post-Christian (and even that is not always clear), and that they must have been in existence before the time of the writer who quotes them. That latter point at least is certain. But we shall not be far out if we regard the first century before and the first century after the Christian era (100 B.C.—A.D. 100) as covering the period during which most of them were produced. Our uncertainty as to their chronological order forbids me to attempt any arrangement of them based upon date; and I have preferred the simpler plan of following the Biblical order of the personages to whom they are attributed, or of whom they treat.

Before, however, we consider any of them individually, it will be well to form an idea of the sources from which we get any information about them.

These are mainly of two kinds : lists of books, and quotations.

The quotations from these books are for the most part to be found in the writings of the Greek Ante-Nicene Fathers. The so-called Apostolic Fathers, Clement of Rome, Barnabas, and Hermas, are important contributors; Justin Martyr and the other apologists give us little. Clement of Alexandria and Origen are incomparably the richest sources; Hippolytus has something. In the fourth century the yield is far smaller : Epiphanius, a determined borrower from earlier writers, is not to be despised; but for our present purpose such writers as Athanasius, Basil, Chrysostom, the Gregories, are barren and useless. The next stratum that is at all productive (and the last) is to be found in the Byzantine chronographers, George the Syncellus, George Cedrenus, Michael Glycas.

The Latins are throughout poorer. Tertullian and Cyprian will be referred to; but Jerome hates apocryphal literature, and says so, while Augustine, a valuable source of knowledge about some New Testament Apocrypha, never, it so happens, quotes spurious Old Testament literature at all. Yet, if Latin Fathers are poor, we shall see that Latin versions of some very queer books were current, and have left traces in manuscripts.

PRODUCTION OF APOCRYPHA

We can readily understand, or at least imagine, the state of mind which made the later Church writers chary of quoting the extra-canonical books. For one thing, the conception of canonicity had grown much clearer by the fourth century; the experience of the first three centuries had shown the necessity of defining doctrine, and consequently of stating clearly what books purporting to be sacred were really to be considered authoritative, and could legitimately be used in public worship. Most of us have very little idea how many gospels, revelations, histories or "acts" of apostles, and books of prophecies were in circulation for which the claim was

set up that they should be so used. It was the recognized method of pushing a particular set of doctrines to produce a writing under some venerable name, in which the special tenets were openly or covertly advocated. The fashion is on the wane now, yet we have heard of the *Book of Mormon*, of Notovich's Buddhist *Life of Christ*, and perhaps of an astounding work called the *Archko Volume*. But though the methods of to-day are of necessity different, it would not be very surprising even now if a coterie of spiritualists were to publish, and to gain some credence for, a *Life of our Lord* dictated "automatically" by the spirit of one who had known Him in the flesh; and this war has taught us that apocryphal prophecies are by no means out of date.

It was, of course, specially important that the books which professed to contain teachings of Christ or of Apostles should be sifted; but it was also necessary to banish from the churches those which had been fathered upon the prophets and patriarchs of the Old Testament. Many such had been made the vehicle of anti-Catholic, and even of anti-Christian, teaching. We shall encounter instances of these, though they are not so common as writings that are legendary, or apocalyptic.

LISTS AND STICHOMETRIES

This necessity for definition led to the drawing-up of lists of the sacred books, and then, naturally, of longer lists, in which apocryphal books were included and expressly reprobated. Such lists form our second main source of knowledge about the lost writings. There are three Greek lists, one Latin, and some in other languages, especially Armenian, which will have to be noticed.

The Greek lists are known as the Stichometry of Nicephorus, the list of the Sixty Books, and that in the Pseudo-Athanasian *Synopsis of Holy Scripture*. The Stichometry of Nicephorus is a catalogue appended to the chronography called of Nicephorus, Patriarch of Constantinople (806-815), and it is called "Stichometry" because it appends to the title of each book a statement

of the number of *stichoi* or lines which it contained. The line was the unit of payment for the professional scribe, and was commonly of the average length of a line of Homer, say sixteen syllables or thirty-four to thirty-six letters. It is thought that this particular catalogue must be appreciably older than the ninth century, perhaps as old as the fifth or sixth; but I do not think its date is very important to us. It seems to have been added to the chronography about 850, at Jerusalem. The list in the *Synopsis of Scripture*, falsely attributed to Athanasius, is very similar to that of Nicephorus, but not, in the judgment of a good critic, Theodor Zahn, copied from it. In the single section which concerns us, the two are identical. The book in which it occurs is of uncertain date, not earlier than the sixth century.

The list of the Sixty Books is found appended in some MSS., but not in all, to the *Questiones* of Anastasius of Sinai. By the Sixty Books the Canonical Scriptures are meant. The names of these are followed by nine more, described as "outside the Sixty" (Wisdom, Eccclus., 1-4 Macc., Esther, Judith, Tobit), and these by twenty-four more under the title "apocrypha." Probably this list also may be of the sixth or seventh century.

The three lists contain the following titles of Old Testament apocryphal books:—

<i>Nicephorus (Synopsis)</i>	<i>No. of lines.¹</i>	<i>Sixty Books.</i>
Enoch	4800	Adam.
Patriarchs	5100	Enoch.
Prayer of Joseph	1100	Lamech.
Testament of Moses	1100	Patriarchs.
Assumption of Moses	1400	Prayer of Joseph.
Abraham	300	Eldad and Modad.
Eldad and Modad	400	Testament of Moses.
Of Elias the Prophet	316	Assumption of Moses.
Of Sophonias the Prophet	600	Psalms of Solomon.
Of Zacharias the father of John	500	Apocalypse of Elias.
Pseudepigrapha of Baruch, Ambacum (Habakkuk), Ezekiel, and Daniel		Vision of Esaias.
		Apocalypse of Sophonias.
		Apocalypse of Zacharias.
		Apocalypse of Esdras.

¹ In *Nicephorus* only.

The Latin list of apocryphal books is contained in a document known as the *Gelasian Decree*, "concerning books to be received and not to be received." It purports to have been issued by a Pope acting as the mouth-piece of a Council of bishops; in most MSS. the Pope is Gelasius I (496), but in some Damasus (384), and in some Hormisdas (523). The view expressed by its latest editor, E. von Dobschütz, is that it is not really a papal document at all, but a compilation made in France in the sixth century. That question is not settled. Whatever its origin, the *Decree* gives us several very unusual names of apocryphal books, and omits many, like *Enoch*, which we should expect to find, and which we know were current in Latin. Its contribution is as follows:—

The book, concerning the daughters of Adam, of Leptogenesis	Apocryphal.
The book which is called the Penitence of Adam	Apocryphal.
The book concerning the giant named Ogias, who is stated by the heretics to have fought with a dragon after the Flood	Apocryphal.
The book which is called the Testament of Job	Apocryphal.
The book which is called the Penitence of Jannes and Mambres	Apocryphal.
The writing which is called the Interdiction (or Contradiction) of Solomon	Apocryphal.

The Armenian lists collected by Zahn in 1893 (*Forschungen*, V. 109) are three in number.

1. Samuel of Ani (*cir.* 1179) mentions, among books brought into Armenia about A.D. 591 by Nestorian missionaries, the *Penitence of Adam*, and the *Testament*; the latter may be that of Moses, but is more probably that of Adam.

2. Mechithar of Aïrivank (*cir.* 1290) has a list closely resembling the Greek ones. One section of it is headed *Secret Books of the Jews*, and runs thus:—

- (1) Book of Adam.
- (2) Book of Enoch

- (3) Book of the Sibyl.
- (4) The twelve Patriarchs, *i. e.* the testaments of the twelve sons of Jacob.
- (5) The Prayers of Joseph.
- (6) The Ascension of Moses.
- (7) Eldad, Modad.
- (8) The Psalms of Solomon.
- (9) The Mysteries of Elias.
- (10) The Seventh Vision of Daniel.

This is essentially the list of the Sixty Books, substituting the *Sibyl* for *Lamech*, omitting the *Testament of Moses*, and replacing the last four items by the *Seventh Vision of Daniel*.

3. A second list in the same writer's chronicle, under the year 1085, mingles some apocryphal titles with the Canon of the Old Testament, *viz.* :—

The Vision of Enok—probably a late document (translated by Issaverdens).

The Testaments of the Patriarchs.

The Prayers of Aseneth.

Tobit, Judith, Esther.

Ezdras Salathiel (*i. e.* 4 Esdras).

(Job, etc.).

The Paralipomena concerning Jeremiah Babylon (*i. e.* the Rest of the Words of Baruch).

Deaths of the Prophets (a version of the Pseudo-Epiphanian Lives of the Prophets).

Jesus Sirac.

This list consists entirely of books which still exist. The *Prayers of Aseneth* seems to take the place of the *Prayer of Joseph* in the former list.

The above lists include nearly all the names which will concern us. Some notice, however, will have to be taken of other writings attributed to some of those whose names occur in the lists, *e. g.* Moses, and of books fathered upon, or relating to, Eve, Seth, Noah, Ham, Melchizedek, Hezekiah, as well as the ancient Persian king Hystaspes; and a collection of the passages which early writers have quoted without naming their source.

THE LOST APOCRYPHA OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

THE FRAGMENTS

ADAM

WE hear of quite a considerable number of books attributed to, or relating to, Adam: an *Apocalypse*, a *Penitence*, a *Testament*, a *Life*, are the foremost. As to the first three of these titles, there is uncertainty as to whether they represent one, two, or three books. Perhaps it will be possible to form an opinion when the evidence has been set out.

The *Apocalypse of Adam* is expressly and certainly quoted only once.

In the *Épistle of Barnabas*, ii. 10, we read: "But to us he speaks thus: 'The sacrifice of God is a contrite heart; a savour of sweetness to the Lord is a heart glorifying Him that hath formed it.'" Upon this the Constantinople MS. has this marginal note: "Psalm l. and in the *Apocalypse of Adam*." The first clause is, of course, familiar, occurring in Ps. l. (li.); the second is not from the Bible. Yet two early Fathers, namely, Clement of Alexandria and Irenæus, quote it in this form—Clement twice—always in connexion with the passage Isa. i. 11, which, be it noted, Barnabas has also quoted just before. We need not doubt the statement that the words occurred in the *Apocalypse of Adam*. They have to do with repentance, and plainly repentance was a favourite topic in connexion with Adam. The *Gelasian Decree* and an Armenian list, we have seen,