



## The Apocrypha is found in The New Catholic Translation

# What's in YOUR Bible?

by Tal Davis

“Mom, how many books are in the Bible?” asked Ava as she flipped through the table of contents of a new Bible her friend had given her as a gift. “We were taught in Vacation Bible School there are 66 books.”

“That’s right,” her Mom affirmed. “There are 39 in the Old Testament and 27 in the New Testament.”

### Too Many Books

Ava quietly counted the books. “Then why does the one Natalie gave me have more than that? I counted 46 in the Old Testament. That makes 73 books total!”

Ava’s mom looked at it and remarked, scratching her head, “Hmm, it sure does have more! Tobit, Judith, 1 and 2 Maccabees, Wisdom, and Sirach. I’ve never heard of those books. What Bible is this?” She looked at the cover, “The New American Bible—The New Catholic Translation.”

Ava and her mom then recalled that her friend Natalie attends a Roman Catholic church. The Catholic Bible has the 66 books just like other versions, but also include writings not found in other ones.

### The Apocrypha

Those other writings are called the Apocrypha (A-poc’-ri-pha), or “hidden things.” It includes other books and additions to the Old Testament written by Jewish writers in the years between the Old and New Testaments (300 B.C. to A.D.100). It contains interesting stories and valuable history about the Jewish people in the years leading up to the birth of Christ. Nonetheless, the Apocrypha has never been regarded as inspired Scripture by the Jewish people.

The story of how the Bible’s books were selected is a long and fascinating one. The short version is that early Christian leaders, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, included only books that met strict standards of authorship and inspiration.

### Scripture in the Catholic Church

Many years later when the Roman Catholic Church translated the Bible into Latin, which was its official language, the Apocrypha was included. However, it was not until the year 1546 that it was officially accepted as Scripture by the Catholic Church. Other Christian denominations, as did the Jews, rejected its authority and do not usually include it in their versions. They do not regard it as meeting the historical and doctrinal standards of the other Bible books.

Today, all Bible versions and translations accepted by the Catholic Church contain the Apocrypha. If someone gives you a copy of a new Bible, check to see if it contains those extra writings. If so, you don’t have to give it back. In fact you may enjoy reading it, but remember that those books are not regarded as Scripture. Always remember to find out, “What’s in your Bible?” 