

extra books. They considered them as books useful for reading, but not free from error, and not to be used to establish any doctrine. Eventually the term "apocryphal" came to be applied to them, as meaning books which were not actually part of the Bible. These books dealing with the period of the Old Testament are in quite a different category from the so-called New Testament apocrypha. The latter are mostly very superficial books presenting imaginary ideas about Christ that are often harmful and some times even silly. The so-called Old Testament apocrypha are actually good books, but not authoritative. There were seven of these books, along with certain additions to the books of Daniel and Esther.

During the Middle Ages it was very easy to lose the clear line of distinction between the authoritative books of the Bible and these additional books that some wished to include in the Old Testament. At the very eve of the Reformation, just about the time that Luther was writing his theses in Germany, Cardinal Ximenes, the head of the Roman Catholic Church in Spain, published a book in which he expressed his definite conviction that these other books are not part of the actual Word of God. He dedicated this book to the contemporary pope and the latter received the dedication with an expression of thanks.

After the Reformation began, when arguments between Protestants and Romanists became frequent, some of the Roman doctrines were found to be without support in the Bible. This is particularly true of the doctrine of purgatory. In one of these other books there was a statement which was claimed to prove the existence of purgatory, though a careful examination of the statement shows that it proves nothing of the kind. Instead of dealing at length with the interpretation of the passage, the Protestants quite naturally tried to brush aside the argument by pointing out that actually the book from which it was taken was not part of the Old Testament at all. This brought the question of these extra books into strong relief, and at the beginning of the Roman Catholic Council of Trent there was much discussion. Some of those present wanted to throw these books out altogether; others wished to put them on a somewhat lower plane than the books of the Scripture; but the view that prevailed was to insist that they are actually part of the Old Testament. Consequently these