

CANON CROSSFIRE

Does The
Protestant Bible
Blow Up The Case for
Christianity?



Matthew Mark McWhorter, Esq.

ARE THE APOCRYPHA AND CHRISTIANITY A PACKAGE DEAL?

Written for critical thinkers, theology buffs, skeptics, and believers alike, **Canon Crossfire** presents a bold, evidence-based investigation into the Christian biblical canon. It explores a fundamental question: **What if the Catholic "Apocrypha" were part of the Apostolic deposit—and what if rejecting them undermines the case Protestants use to defend the authenticity of the Gospels and the Resurrection of Jesus?**

Through legal-style reasoning, meticulous research into primary historical sources, and both scriptural and statistical analysis of the King James Version, retired attorney Matthew Mark McWhorter argues that the early Church, whose judgment Protestants trust to define the Bible, did accept these books—and that this acceptance is not an obscure minority view but the mainstream stance for the first four centuries of Christianity.

Canon Crossfire is a spiritual and intellectual journey from skepticism to belief. Written with honesty, wit, and a willingness to admit human fallibility, this book invites readers to examine the foundation of Christian faith with fresh eyes.

Does your belief rest on evidence or assumption? Read **Canon Crossfire** and decide for yourself.

Matthew Mark McWhorter, Esq.

retired after a successful career at some of America's most prestigious law firms and largest corporations. All proceeds from this book will be donated. Visit the author's website: www.canoncrossfire.com

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*This book is dedicated to all the early Church Fathers
who were tortured and killed for believing what they wrote
—the words which we now think of as “mere citations.”*

*“The metric is 70% martyred.”
(Page 484)*

INTRODUCTION TO THE CASE

In my opinion, the case for Christianity would be lost by a Protestant¹ who believes that the Apocrypha² were never accepted as authentic Scripture by the early Church, the Apostles, or Jesus. After the Protestant has presented all the evidence for the authenticity, historicity, and truth of Christian claims for the actual Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, as proclaimed in the Gospels, etc., a skeptic would be able to establish the Protestant's standard for acceptance and belief. Each piece of evidence in favor of the acceptance of the Apocrypha by the Apostles and their disciples would be presented, so as to be rejected as insufficient by such a Protestant. The judge would hear the Protestant's own voice tell her that the evidence for the Apocrypha is not enough, and explain all the reasons why it cannot be considered as sufficient proof of what the Apostles actually taught.

The case for Christianity would thus shift. It would no longer be a simple matter of Christians presenting evidence that meets or exceeds the traditional standards for proving historical or legal facts. Instead, it would require convincing the judge that the evidence proves that the Gospels and Epistles are authentic testimony and teaching from Apostles—even though the Protestant “admits” that much the same evidence does not prove that the Apocrypha were authentic Apostolic teaching.

Rather than continue to try to explain how this could work, allow me to show you one way this becomes a problem, by turning to two tiny pieces of evidence: Susanna and Baruch.

¹ Generally speaking, by “Protestant” I just mean they who insist upon the Protestant canon (39 Old Testament Books). “Protestants” and “Jews” are just labels for extremely diverse groups (e.g., there are both Protestants and Jews who accept all the Apocrypha), and being clear about that in every single sentence is not feasible. While most of the discussion herein relates to those who deny that the early Church accepted the Apocrypha, the evidence should still be of interest to those who acknowledge that as a fact but reject the Apocrypha on theological grounds or limit their use in some way as secondary to other Scripture.

The word “canon” means something like a measuring stick (a ruler, therefore a rule). In Biblical terms, it ends up being the official table of contents, applied as the “rule” that defines what is or is not included in the Bible as Scripture.

² I generally use the capitalized word “Apocrypha” to refer only to the Books of Susanna, Judith, Tobit, Baruch, Wisdom, Sirach, 1 Maccabees, and 2 Maccabees. These are some of the additional Books of the Catholic “Deuteroconan,” which are part of the Catholic canon. All other books would be considered “apocryphal” to both Catholics and Protestants—and outside of my scope. It is confusing to use the term this way, and impossible to use it consistently, but hopefully, the precise meanings will be obvious in context and will not distract from the point I am trying to make (which is mostly addressed to Protestants, hence my use of Protestant lingo).

THE PROLOGUE BEFORE THE OVERVIEW

HOW SUSANNA CAN DEFEAT THE CASE FOR CHRISTIANITY

Susanna is presented as a book in the 1611 King James Version of the Bible, but is Chapter 13 of Daniel in Catholic Bibles and the first chapter of Daniel in the Orthodox Bible.³ Unfortunately, by not being a definitive “book,” it can get lost in the discussion, which seems to lead to a massive amount of confusion and error when discussing the Apocrypha.

Consider Michael J. Kruger’s *Canon Revisited: Establishing the Origins and Authority of the New Testament Books*—an attempt to prove that Christians have “good reasons” for believing in the authenticity of the New Testament canon.⁴ He discusses the Apocrypha in a long footnote:⁵

In the first few centuries of the church we have good evidence that the dominant position (though not the only position) was an acceptance of the Jewish Old Testament canon⁶ and not the Apocrypha. This would include church fathers like Melito of Sardis, Origen, Eusebius, Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, Hilary of Poitiers, Gregory of Nazianzus, Rufinus, and Jerome. Thus, it appears that both the Jewish “church” and the first centuries of the Christian church widely adopted the Old Testament books and not the Apocrypha (of course there were minority opinions, but this does not contradict the model).

Emphasis added in order to emphasize just how incredibly wrong that statement really is. Professor Kruger’s point is that the early Church accepted the 27 Books of the New Testament, and his goal is to show that we can trust the early Church to have identified the authentic Apostolic writings. But given Kruger’s beliefs, for that to be true, the early Church had to also reject all the “wrong” books, i.e., all the Apocrypha. He cites ten witnesses (essentially

³ Susanna is a complete story, is three times as long as the Book of Obadiah, and could easily be a full Book separated from “Daniel” (as, indeed, the KJV organizes it). From the other direction, Daniel is a collection of writings, i.e., an anthology. So, Susanna could also “fit” into Daniel.

⁴ Kruger argues that we have good factual reasons for believing that the entire New Testament is authentic, beyond “mere self-authentication.” As part of that, he offers proofs for all the Books, not just the Gospels. The book is a five-star must-read, in my opinion.

⁵ As is so often the case, his entire thesis stands on a foundation that is briefly mentioned in a footnote: Ch. 6, note 11. If it matters, my copy of the book is from Crossway, 2012, first printing.

⁶ Almost always, this and similar phrasing (whether from myself or other authors) means the canon as the Jews see it today—the same canon the Protestants keep. We will discuss later whether the Jews of antiquity really kept to that canon.

referring us to their canon lists) to disprove the claim that the early Church accepted the Apocrypha.

To see how wrong he is about that, we start with Rufinus, and we focus on Susanna. Here is Rufinus, in the year 400 AD, in his own words, as part of a disagreement with Jerome:

There has been from the first in the churches of God and especially in that of Jerusalem, a plentiful supply of men who being born Jews have become Christians ... [and yet] has there been one who has dared to make havoc of the divine record handed down to the Churches by the Apostles and the deposit of the Holy Spirit? For what can we call it but havoc, when some parts of it are transformed, and this is called the correction of an error? For instance, the whole of the history of Susanna ... has by him [Jerome, says Rufinus (incorrectly)] been cut out, thrown aside and dismissed...⁷

Rufinus tells us that Susanna is Scripture to the early Church and always has been. But how do we know that Rufinus was correct? Partly, we can corroborate it with evidence from his enemy, Jerome. On whether Susanna is accepted as Scripture, they agree entirely.

First, we have Book 2 of Jerome's *Apology Against Rufinus* (402 AD):⁸

... In reference to Daniel ... We have four versions to choose from: those of Aquila, Symmachus, the Seventy [the Septuagint], and Theodotion. The churches choose to read Daniel in the version of Theodotion⁹ [the modern Catholic/Orthodox version, with Susanna]. What sin have I committed in following the judgment of the churches? But when I repeat what the Jews say against the Story of Susanna ... which [is] not contained in the Hebrew Bible, the man who makes this a charge against me proves himself to be a fool and a slanderer; for I explained not what I thought but what they commonly say against us.¹⁰

⁷ www.newadvent.org/fathers/27052.htm

⁸ www.newadvent.org/fathers/27102.htm

⁹ Theodotion's Greek Daniel superseded the Septuagint Greek version (also called the Seventy, or LXX: from the second century BC) that had been used by the Church until 150 AD. Both included Susanna—the Church just started with one version and switched to another. And, according to Kruger's witnesses, no one in the Church of 400 AD had yet to even advocate for using a version without Susanna. Rufinus misunderstood what Jerome wrote, as Jerome does not actually call for the rejection of Susanna: "... Leaving this for the reader to pronounce upon as he may think fit ..." tertullian.org/fathers/jerome_preface_daniel.htm. (The Hebrew Daniel (without Susanna) was not being used by Christians; only a handful could even read it. Among them was Jerome, who translated it into Latin so that others could start to use it.) All this is endlessly misunderstood, e.g., the Orthodox Study Bible (Intro, p. vi, 2008 ed.) claims to have the original Bible because they have the Septuagint—but they are wrong, they too have the Theodotion Daniel.

¹⁰ That last sentence is a detail forgotten, or misunderstood, by roughly 100% of authors 100% of the time when discussing these things. But what Jerome said to Rufinus is applicable to anyone else who claims Jerome matched the Jewish/Protestant canon: "I repeat what the Jews say against

Jerome also wrote a Prologue to Daniel, where he tells us:

I also wish to emphasize to the reader the fact that it was not according to the Septuagint version but according to the version of Theodotion himself that the churches publicly read Daniel. ... all the churches of Christ, whether belonging to the Greek-speaking territory or the Latin, the Syrian or the Egyptian, publicly read this edition...¹¹

So, Jerome repeatedly confirms that the early Church is not following the Jewish/Protestant canon and accepts Susanna as Scripture.¹² Thus, everyone in the dispute is agreeing that to the early Church, Susanna is Scripture and always had been.

But also, there is much earlier corroborating evidence to further confirm it, from a discussion 150 years before Jerome and Rufinus wrote:

Letter from Africanus to Origen: "... you referred to that prophecy of Daniel which is related of his youth [i.e., the story of Susanna]. ... I cannot understand how it escaped you that this part of the book is spurious. ... this section, along with the other two at the end of it, is not contained in the Daniel received among the Jews ..."¹³

Letter from Origen to Africanus: "... You begin by saying, that ... I did this as if it had escaped me that this part of the book was spurious. ... In answer to this, I have to tell you what it behooves us to do in the cases not only of the History of Susanna, which is

the Story of Susanna ... the man who makes this a charge against me proves himself to be a fool and a slanderer; for I explained not what I thought but what they commonly say against us." So sayeth Jerome. It is clear from Rufinus and Jerome that anyone calling for the removal of Susanna in 400 AD would have found it a very unpopular position, which is presumably (a) part of why Jerome does not quite take that stance and (b) part of why Rufinus jumps to the mistaken conclusion that his enemy really was advocating to get rid of it. In any event, Jerome is, himself, evidence that there is still no actual controversy within the Church over Susanna, just the beginning of one that will play out later due to Jerome's influence.

¹¹ www.tertullian.org/fathers/jerome_daniel_02_text.htm

¹² As full, complete, 100%, canonical Scripture. Neither Jerome nor Rufinus (nor anyone else) says that the early Church sees Susanna as "Ecclesiastical" or just "to be read" or "not to confirm doctrine" or anything of the sort. As far as the evidence shows, Susanna was just a piece of Daniel, even if the Jews did not accept it. Until Jerome, it was treated like everything else in Daniel, without any distinction whatsoever.

¹³ www.newadvent.org/fathers/0413.htm. Note that Africanus is not really evidence of his view for any other Christian but himself: his letter is a request for an answer to the issues he is raising and gives no sign that anyone else within the Church was debating any of this at that time. Regardless, he ends the letter with: "I have struck the blow; do you give the echo; answer, and instruct me." Origen's letter back to him appears to have been the end of it.

found in every Church of Christ in that Greek copy which the Greeks use, but is not in the Hebrew ...”¹⁴

We will discuss Origen’s explanation of why the Church did not use the Hebrew Scriptures in detail shortly, but for now the “why” does not matter. Origen tells us that every Church of Christ held Susanna as Scripture, while knowing that Susanna is not in the Hebrew version of Daniel—and telling us so 150 years before Jerome and Rufinus also tell us so.

The position of the early Church is crystal clear—in fact, it is crystal clear just from the Fathers cited by Kruger (let alone all the other evidence). Susanna was Scripture, full Christian Scripture, regardless of the Jewish canon, and regardless of it not being written in the Hebrew language or anything else. The early Church fully accepted this Apocrypha along with the Jewish/Hebrew Scriptures (as the Jews of its time (or our time) define them, and as Protestants accept them). The evidence for that includes each and every one of the other Fathers on Kruger’s list:

Athanasius repeatedly refers to Susanna as Scripture, e.g. “it is equally plain from what follows that ... in the same Scriptures ... And in Daniel, ‘Susanna cried out with a loud voice and said, O everlasting God, that know the secrets, and know all things before they be.’ Thus, it appears that ...”¹⁵

Epiphanius: “God knoweth all things before they be, as scripture says” (Susanna 42).¹⁶

Eusebius: “At this time also Africanus... was well known. There is extant an epistle of his to Origen, expressing doubts of the story of Susannah in Daniel, as being spurious and fictitious. Origen answered this very fully.”¹⁷

Cyril of Jerusalem: “And if further a man peruse all the books of the Prophets, both of the Twelve, and of the others, he will find many testimonies concerning the Holy Ghost; ... The chaste Susanna was condemned as a wanton; ... We bring this forward as a testimony... And indeed it were easy to collect very many texts out of the Old Testament, and to discourse more largely concerning the Holy Ghost.”¹⁸

Hilary of Poitiers: “...refute their vain and pestilent teaching by the witness of the evangelists and apostles. ... They say that the Father has prescience of all things, as the blessed Susanna says, O eternal God, that know secrets, and know all things before they be; that He is incomprehensible, as it is written ...”¹⁹

¹⁴ www.newadvent.org/fathers/0414.htm; there is earlier evidence for Suzanna as well, from Fathers not on Kruger’s list.

¹⁵ Four Discourses against the Arians 1, 12-13. www.newadvent.org/fathers/28161.htm.

¹⁶ Panarion, Section 2, Heresy 30, Ebionites 9, 2. Not available online.

¹⁷ Church History 6, 31, 1: www.newadvent.org/fathers/250106.htm.

¹⁸ Catechetical Lecture 16: 29-32 www.newadvent.org/fathers/310116.htm

¹⁹ On the Trinity Book 4: 7-8. www.newadvent.org/fathers/330204.htm.

Gregory of Nazianzus refers to Susanna as part of Daniel and, therefore, as Scripture. “Passing by the elders in the book of Daniel; for it is better to pass them by, together with the Lord’s righteous sentence and declaration concerning them, that wickedness came from Babylon from ancient judges.” [Susanna 5 (Daniel 13:5)]²⁰

That is nine out of the ten people on Kruger’s list who are on the record as considering Susanna (Apocrypha) as full Christian Scripture, and the absence of Melito of Sardis is because he never said anything about Susanna. We have very little from Melito, so that is not surprising. However, his canon list uses the Septuagint name for Daniel—and the Septuagint version of Daniel definitely included Susanna. Thus, based on the words of his list—which is (a) the only statement from Melito himself that we possess on the subject, and (b) why Kruger cited to Melito—the evidence shows that his Daniel would have included Susanna.

So yes, there was debate with the Jews. Yes, there are individuals within the Church (Africanus and Jerome) who seem to want to agree with the Jews. Yes, accepting Susanna does not mean that all the other Apocrypha were accepted. Yes, yes, yes...

But the factual inquiry is as simple and conclusive as it could possibly be. The evidence shows us that there is no dispute or argument over the early Church’s position on Susanna. Every single ancient source that Kruger himself is citing is telling us that the early Church saw it as canonical Scripture. Unanimously. There is not even a “minority view.” Jerome tells us that Susanna is accepted and publicly read by “all the churches of Christ, whether belonging to the Greek-speaking territory or the Latin, the Syrian or the Egyptian.” He could not have been more specific or certain on that point.

Kruger’s case for the authenticity of the New Testament was based on “an acceptance of the Jewish Old Testament canon and not the Apocrypha.” But according to his own witnesses, for 400 years—at least sixteen generations, and the same time period from the Pilgrims to us today—“all the churches of Christ” (as Jerome says) and “every Church of Christ” (as Origen says) accepted Susanna as “the divine record handed down to the Churches by the Apostles and the deposit of the Holy Spirit” (as Rufinus says).

²⁰ Oration 2, 64. www.newadvent.org/fathers/310202.htm.

Susanna, alone, kills the horse. As far as Kruger's case for Christianity is concerned, the rest of this book is just me repeatedly beating that dead horse's corpse, of course.²¹

Three key points to consider. First, a brief interlude to discuss wordsmithing. What we often hear is that the name "Daniel" in a Protestant Bible matches the name "Daniel" on an ancient canon list. Some go further and mistakenly handwave Susanna away by claiming it is just part of a "textual variation" of Daniel. While true, such things are completely irrelevant to all discussion of Susanna.

We are discussing Susanna, not Daniel. The question is whether a list's mention of "Daniel" is referencing the Daniel that includes Susanna or not. When focusing on Susanna, every other word of Daniel is the irrelevant textual variation! We do not care in the slightest about the "rest of" Daniel. Yes or no, "Professor," did the list's mention of "Daniel" include Susanna?

The answer is always yes and can only ever be yes. The explanation that "they thought Susanna was part of Daniel" forms the actual proof: if it was a part of Daniel, it was accepted. The author of the list did not mean solely the Protestant Daniel, and (except for Melito and unknown authors) his own use of the term proves that. For the others, the evidence may be circumstantial, but it is still the evidence. The lists should, therefore, say "Daniel [and Susanna]" because the word "Daniel" meant (to the Father who wrote it) what to Protestants would be said as "Daniel and Susanna." The modern translator should be trying to convey the correct modern English meaning of the Father's Greek word "Daniel." Instead, they bury it in a footnote and confuse everyone.

In fact, Protestant scholars go to great lengths to stress this exact concept all the time when discussing the canon—it is just that they do not do so with Susanna. Instead, they do so with a different lady: Ruth. Read any discussion of the canon lists that are just numbers (such as Josephus, in which he mentions "22 books") or read any discussion of a list that specifically mentions the book "Judges" (without mentioning the Book of Ruth):

²¹ If we seek the first list, or Bible, or Church or Father that does not accept Susanna, it would be from someone influenced by Jerome's ideas in a later era. Edmon Gallagher (e.g., at www.academia.edu/14345165/) calls the "obelus" (the marking Jerome used to note that Susanna was not in the Hebrew Daniel) a "death warrant" for Susanna—but a death warrant is not an execution until it is actually carried out. So, then, who first takes it out? What is the first Bible whose Daniel does not have it, or the first canon list that really excludes it, or the first person to openly say it is not Scripture, etc.? I have long sought the answer, but no one seems to say. I did not find anything through 450 AD in my own searches.

inevitably, as part of arguing that the references are actually to all 39 books of the Protestant canon as they are currently thought of and named, someone expresses the idea that Judges and Ruth were thought of as one book by the ancients, so therefore Ruth is part of that canon.²²

Exactly! The ancients also thought of Daniel and Susanna as one Book. The same logic that identifies Ruth was part of a canon list that only indicates Judges makes Susanna part of the early Church's canon lists when they said Daniel.²³ The only difference is that the scholars *stress* the inclusion in one context and *dismiss* the inclusion in another.

But the result is inarguable: the canon lists of the early Church used the word Daniel to refer to a Book that included both Daniel and Susanna.

Second, I shall preach a gospel of being “fair and consistent”—but not out of a spirit of Christian goodness. It is simply a practical necessity because this is the case for Christianity. Notably, the case presupposes that the judge will always rule based on evidence, not speculation. I.e., the evidence shows that Jesus Christ rose from the dead—and the evidence wins despite endless speculation otherwise.

For example, the judge will rule that someone's use of the word “Matthew” refers to the physical Book we call “Matthew” because the ordinary meaning of a word stands, absent sufficient evidence to the contrary. So, too, will the Septuagint name for Daniel refer to the Septuagint Book (with Susanna). There is plenty of evidence proving the ordinary meaning of the term Melito used, and that definition would be the basis of the ruling in an

²² E.g., “He limits the number of canonical books in these three divisions to twenty-two. This would be the same as the current twenty-four – Ruth was attached to Judges, and Lamentation attached to Jeremiah.” blogs.blueletterbible.org/blb/2012/05/29/josephus-historical-evidence-of-the-old-testament-canon/.

²³ There is actually far earlier evidence of this practice for Susanna than for Ruth: Origen (a Christian) is the first to mention this alleged Jewish practice for Ruth, and he does so 200 years after Christ. Compare this to Irenaeus, who was writing well before Origen in *Against Heresy* IV, 26, 3: “hear those words, to be found in Daniel the prophet: ...” and then quoting Susanna 52-53. www.newadvent.org/fathers/0103426.htm). In addition, indirect evidence for Susanna would include the Church's use of the Septuagint version of Daniel (which included Susanna), etc.

Moreover, Origen is also better evidence for Susanna than he is for Ruth because it is Origen talking about his own church (in fact, there is still ongoing debate over whether the Jews actually did combine Judges and Ruth). If a judge accepts what Origen says about Ruth as proof, then a judge is certainly going to accept what Origen says about Susanna.

evidentiary hearing. While speculation and debate to the contrary exists, meaningful evidence does not.²⁴

Third, I will discuss Susanna itself in more detail later, including all the evidence from the centuries before the canon lists. However, if it seems to you that it would be a good idea to look into the possibility that the evidence from the period before the lists does not match what the lists indicate about Susanna, then please realize that you have proven to yourself that relying only on canon lists is a mistake for ignorant fools—because the fact that Susanna is on all of them did not satisfy you either. So, inclusion/exclusion by canon lists should never be the end of the inquiry for any other Book or timeframe.

But actually, for purposes of Kruger’s case, the “even earlier” Church is completely irrelevant. Because the point here is not actually about Susanna; it is what Susanna shows us about Kruger’s claim. No one is trying to prove that Susanna was Scripture. In fact, Kruger is the only Christian involved in the case, and he alone cares about such metaphysical “nonsense.” The opponent just wants to defeat the case and is using Susanna to do so.

The opponent’s point is that, because of Susanna, not a single one of the ten witnesses actually evidences the claim that Kruger was trying to prove: the “acceptance of the Jewish Old Testament canon and not the Apocrypha.” In effect, after ten witnesses have come and gone, Kruger has not yet presented a single shred of evidence to prove his claim.

So, then, what could earlier evidence prove? Simply that the early Church was entirely and completely wrong. After all, that is precisely what Jerome was saying: everyone had been unanimously accepting Susanna for centuries, but the Jews say that they should not have done so. Recall that Rufinus says that it “is called the correction of an error.” And per Jerome, those who might be wrong were “all the churches of Christ, whether belonging to the Greek-speaking territory or the Latin, the Syrian or the Egyptian.”

Kruger would only disprove his claim that the early Church correctly identified the authentic Books handed down by the Apostles. Even if he won the “case against the Apocrypha,” he would lose the case for Christianity.²⁵

²⁴ Thus, I devote less time to dealing with endless speculation than other books on the canon. I simply go with the position that I feel would win in the actual case for Christianity, based on the evidence.

²⁵ The same thing would happen, of course, if a judge ruled that Melito’s reference is insufficiently proved. What, then, is proved, except that the Church and the later nine Fathers were mistaken? This is actually why a judge would never even rule on it: either way, Kruger loses. Case dismissed.

CANON CROSSFIRE

CANON LISTS AND SUSANNA

Below is a chart of every early canon list and whether Susanna is canon on each. For Christians, it is unanimous.

<u>FATHER/LIST/BOOK</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>SUSANNA CANONICAL?</u>	<u>EVIDENCE</u>
MELITO OF SARDIS	170	CANON FOR JEWS?	SEPTUAGINT NAME
MURATORIAN CANON	170	N/A	NT LIST
CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA	203	CANON	GREEK DANIEL
ORIGEN (JEWISH LIST)	220	NOT FOR JEWS	SEE THE LETTER
ORIGEN (TO AFRICANUS)	248	CANON	SEE THE LETTER
ORIGEN (CITATIONS)	250	CANON	PREP GOSPEL 6, 11
EUSEBIUS (APPROVAL)	324	CANON	CH. HISTORY 6, 31, 1
THE NICENE COUNCIL	325	UNKNOWN	UNKNOWN
CODEX CLAROMONTANUS	349	CANON	VERSES DAN. 1600
<i>CODEX VATICANUS</i>	350	<i>CANON</i>	<i>DANIEL CHAPTER 1</i>
<i>CODEX SINAITICUS</i>	350	<i>UNKNOWN</i>	<i>ALL DANIEL MISSING</i>
CYRIL OF JERUSALEM	350	CANON	LECTURE 16: 29-32
ST CATHERINE'S SYRIAC	350	CANON	AS SYRIAC DANIEL
CHELTENHAM LIST	360	CANON	DANIEL 1350 LINES
COUNCIL OF LAODICEA	363	CANON	AS DANIEL
ATHANASIUS	367	CANON	4 D. ARIANS 1, 12-13
HILARY OF POITIERS	367	CANON	ON TRINITY 4: 7-8
GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS	380	CANON	ORATION 2, 64
AMPHILOCHIUS OF ICONIUM	380	CANON	ORATIO IN ILLUD
APOSTOLIC CANONS	380	CANON	BOOK 2, 51
THE COUNCIL OF ROME	382	CANON	AS DANIEL
EPIPHANIUS PANARION 8.6.1	385	CANON FOR JEWS	SEPTUAGINT
EPIPHANIUS PAN.76.22.5	385	CANON	2, 30, 9, 2
JEROME (HELMETED)	390	CANON	APOLOGY 2, 33
EPIPHANIUS DE MENS. 4-5	392	CANON FOR JEWS	SEPTUAGINT
THE COUNCIL OF HIPPO – 70 BISHOPS	393	CANON	AS DANIEL
AUGUSTINE	397	CANON	HOLY VIRGIN. 19
COUNCIL OF CARTHAGE - 44-48 BISHOPS	397	CANON	AS DANIEL
JEROME (SOLOMON)	398	CANON	APOLOGY 2, 33
RUFINUS	400	CANON	APOLOGY 2, 33
JEROME (TOBIT/JUDITH)	404	CANON	APOLOGY 2, 33
POPE INNOCENT I	405	CANON	AS DANIEL
COUNCIL OF CARTHAGE - 217 BISHOPS	419	CANON	AS DANIEL
<i>CODEX ALEXANDRINUS</i>	450	<i>CANON</i>	<i>DANIEL CH.1</i>
<i>CODEX EPHRAEMI R.</i>	450	<i>UNKNOWN</i>	<i>ALL DANIEL MISSING</i>

Explanations and discussion about the individual lists will come later in the book (but in case you are wondering, the stricken-out councils probably did not issue those canon lists: the much later evidence is dubious). Note that it is

the canon list that is the evidence of Susanna's canonicity. The other writings just evidence what the label "Daniel" meant, so that we correctly interpret the meaning of the words of the canon lists. This case for Susanna is a "canon list case" as much as the case for any other Book, in that we look to the Greek (etc.) words of the list but need external proof of their meaning.

Clearly, the evidentiary "arrow" of the canon lists points to Susanna every bit as much as it does to any other Old or New Testament Books.²⁶ Lose sight of this at your peril. The case for Christianity is based on the claim that the New Testament is authentic Apostolic testimony. Kruger was trying to prove that, and he failed. The canon lists are the very best evidence for his view, and yet what they evidence is that not one single person in the early Church held to the canon that Kruger claims they held—not even Jerome.

However, Susanna is not a full-length Book, and sometimes scholars try to distinguish it on that basis. I do not believe that such a tactic works in a real case, but I need not argue the point. Instead, let us turn to Baruch.²⁷

HOW BARUCH CAN DEFEAT THE CASE FOR CHRISTIANITY

The early Church accepted Baruch, according to nine of the ten Fathers that Kruger cites, let alone all the other Fathers. The first and only Father we know of who may have rejected Baruch is Jerome, 360 years after Christ.

Jerome again evidences this in what he tells us about Baruch. He is really a tenth witness to the Church's unanimous position; he just may not agree with it, so he ends the unanimity. Jerome is very clear that "the Hebrews" reject Baruch, but pointedly does not say that the Church rejects Baruch. Instead, he gives clear evidence that his Christian peers do not agree with the Jews:

And the Book of Baruch, his scribe,²⁸ which is neither read nor found among the Hebrews, we have omitted, standing ready, because of these things, for all the curses

²⁶ And it points more to Susanna than for some: e.g., Susanna is on every single list, but both Old Testament Books (notably Esther) and New Testament Books are missing on various canon lists.

²⁷ The other "longer form" pieces of Daniel and Esther raise essentially the same issue as Susanna, just with different evidence in support of their acceptance by the early Church. However, I do not have space in this book to discuss their evidence in detail.

²⁸ Jeremiah may have been illiterate, and the Book of Jeremiah was actually written by Baruch as his scribe. This interconnected "dual authorship" is at the heart of the practice of calling Baruch "Jeremiah" (and similar practices shared by Lamentations and the Epistle (Baruch Chapter 6)). The Book of Baruch does not pretend to be by Jeremiah and begins by saying "And these are the words of the book, which Baruch ... wrote in Babylon." On the other hand, Jeremiah is an

from the jealous, to whom it is necessary for me to respond through a separate short work. And I suffer because you think this.²⁹

Nowhere does Jerome mention a single predecessor who agrees with the Jewish view. If read carefully, he does not even say that he agrees with it. For the purposes of this book, I assume he does, but he does not actually say so (and he accepts Baruch as Prophecy in other writings).

So (a) focus on Baruch, not Apocrypha, and (b) understand that (in the case of Fathers who make no express mention of the name Baruch) the Book of Baruch was considered part of the Book of Jeremiah by the early Church (similar to how Susanna was considered part of Daniel, or Ruth was considered part of Judges, or even how Lamentations was also considered part of Jeremiah).³⁰ Eight of Kruger's ten Fathers expressly quote verses from Baruch as Scripture, or Prophecy, or the word of God, etc. A few specifically say that the quotes came from the Book of Baruch, but others say that the quotes came from Jeremiah.

A citation from the Book of Baruch as coming from Jeremiah is confirmation that the Father did, in fact, see it as part of Jeremiah. The canon list is the proof that (like everyone else) he thought that Jeremiah was "canon." Thus, the citation is just proof that the Jeremiah on his canon list included Baruch, too.

Note that the canon list case for Baruch has something that even Susanna did not: Baruch is explicitly mentioned by name as a canonical Book on several lists.

anthology that collects shorter writings; so as with Susanna and Daniel, the question is whether Baruch is part of the collection. Sorting all that out is an issue for a later discussion; at the moment, all we care about is that the early Church considered the Book of Baruch to be part of the Book of Jeremiah. I.e., Baruch was canon to the early Church, every bit as much as the "rest of" Jeremiah.

²⁹ www.tertullian.org/fathers/jerome_preface_jeremiah.htm

³⁰ See below for additional citation evidence for the practice in the period between Christ and the year 200. As for the Jews before Christ, many experts believe that the same person translated (from Hebrew into Greek) Jeremiah, Baruch, and the Epistle, which would also be evidence that they were on the same scroll. There is even a piece of possible Biblical evidence: in Daniel 9:2, Daniel explicitly mentions Jeremiah and, then, in 9:5 and 9:8, may have quoted from Baruch (i.e., the Baruch part of Jeremiah) in his prayers. (Compare Daniel 9:8 "O Lord, to us belongeth confusion of face, to our kings, to our princes, and to our fathers, because we have sinned against thee" and Baruch 1:15-17: "15And ye shall say, To the Lord our God belongeth righteousness, but unto us the confusion of faces, ..., 16And to our kings, and to our princes, and ... to our fathers: 17For we have sinned before the Lord"). There are other possible quotes and allusions by Daniel as well. (But like everything else with the canon discussion, the Biblical evidence is debated.)

Athanasius separates Baruch from Jeremiah, and his canon list expressly declares Baruch to be Scripture (and not in his third category).³¹

Rufinus (a) does not list Baruch as Ecclesiastical, and (b) in the exact same book, (see Section 38) he quotes from Baruch. “Which also the Prophet foretold when he said, This is our God: ... Afterward He showed Himself upon the earth, and conversed with men.” (Baruch 3:35-37).³²

Origen quotes from Baruch as part of his homily on Jeremiah: “... about which it is written: Hear Israel. Why is it that you are in the land of enemies ... If you have walked in the way of God, you would have dwelt in peace forever.” (Baruch 3:9-13).³³

Hilary of Poitiers lists Jeremiah as canon and quotes from Baruch as Jeremiah, e.g., “...listen now to Jeremiah inculcating the same truth as they:— This is our God ... Afterward did He show Himself upon earth and dwelt among men. ... Jeremiah proclaims God seen on earth and dwelling among men...” (Baruch 3:35-37).³⁴

Eusebius does not have his own Old Testament canon list, but he cites to Baruch as inspired prophecy, e.g.: “It is prophesied that the God of the Prophets...will some Day afterwards be seen on Earth, and mingle among Men. I need add nothing to these inspired words, which so clearly support my argument.” (Baruch 3:29-37).³⁵

Epiphanius' Christian list (in his Panarion) does not specifically mention Jeremiah or Baruch, but his reference to 27 Books is read by all to incorporate the 27 Books on his Jewish list in the same work, which does mention Baruch by name as part of Jeremiah. He then quotes from Baruch as Scripture throughout the same book: “But the scripture says...he alone is Son by nature, not grace—for “He hath found out every path of understanding” (Baruch 3:32) and “none shall be declared his equal.”” (Baruch 3:35).³⁶

³¹ See www.bible-researcher.com/athanasius.html.

³² Commentary on the Apostles' Creed, 5, www.newadvent.org/fathers/2711.htm

³³ Homily 7 on Jeremiah, 3.3, not available online. Origen's situation is more complicated than I allude to above. He is the first to separate Baruch from Jeremiah, and his list (which is a Jewish list, not a Christian one—see later discussion) does not specifically mention it by name. It does mention the Epistle of Jeremiah (Baruch Chapter 6, to Catholics), which makes the absence of Baruch odd. Many think it is a copyist's mistake: either both should be off the list or on it, in the usual practice. On the other hand, he may have meant to leave it off the Jewish list as not being canon to the Jews, which (as will be discussed) does not mean that he does not accept it as canon for Christians. It makes sense to me that he (as the first to separate Baruch) might do so because he knew that the Jews did not accept it, without realizing (at the time of his writing) that they also rejected the Epistle—but no one else ever mentions that idea, so perhaps I am wrong. In any event, there is nothing in Origen's writings to show that he did not consider Baruch part of the Christian canon. He cited to it 16 times, including the “it is written” noted above (which notably occurs in a homily on Jeremiah, without mentioning whether he takes it from Jeremiah or Baruch). See also the discussion in Chapter 3, footnote 68, p. 87 of Gallagher and Meade.

In addition, note that Athanasius states that Baruch was handed down to him in the Church at Alexandria more than a century after Origen (a predecessor of his in the Church at Alexandria)—evidence that Origen continued to teach Baruch as canon for Christians. See his statement at www.bible-researcher.com/athanasius.html.

³⁴ On the Trinity, 4, 42 (www.newadvent.org/fathers/330204.htm).

³⁵ Demonstratio Evangelica, 6.19 www.ccel.org/ccel/pearse/morefathers/files/eusebius_de_08_book6.htm.

³⁶ Panarion, Section 4, Heresy 49, Arians, 53, 7 (not available online).

Gregory of Nazianzus lists Jeremiah as canon and quotes from Baruch (without naming a Book), e.g.: “Since I have ...solved in the mass the objections and oppositions drawn from Holy Scripture, ... yet we have not yet gone through the passages in detail, because of the haste of our argument. ... In what passage? Why, in this: This is your God; ... after this did He show Himself upon earth, and conversed with men.” (Baruch 3:35-3:37).³⁷

Cyril of Jerusalem specifically lists Baruch as canon in his list.³⁸

Melito lists Jeremiah but is not known to have ever mentioned Baruch or to have quoted from the Book (he also does not list Lamentations, so the only way for his list to include Lamentations is to apply the logic that the Book of Jeremiah included Lamentations, the exact same logic as for Baruch). There is citation evidence from others contemporaneous with Melito, as well as the general evidence about use of the Septuagint (the names on Melito’s list are the Septuagint names of Books, not the Hebrew), which point to the inclusion of Baruch.

Jerome alone may reject Baruch. He actually never says so expressly, and he seems to accept it in some writings (e.g., calling Baruch a prophet in Letter 77, 4).³⁹ But for the purposes of this book, I grant that Jerome stands for the rejection of Baruch.

Now another brief interlude on wordsmithing. We are often told that the name Jeremiah on some ancient canon list includes Lamentations because Lamentations was often included as “part of Jeremiah.” Exactly! Just as Lamentations was “always canon,” so was Baruch. It is literally the exact same claim, although the evidence is sometimes different. Compare and contrast:

Why is Lamentations canon? “Lamentations was attached to the Book of Jeremiah... Therefore, its canonical status was not in doubt.”⁴⁰

Why do some claim Baruch is “not really” canon? “The Roman Catholic Deuterocanon also includes Baruch, but we have seen that in this early period this work was often considered a part of Jeremiah.”⁴¹

Note carefully the stress put on this in one quote and the dismissiveness put on it in the other, even though the situation is identical.

Does it matter that the Fathers considered Baruch part of Jeremiah? In a discussion about whether the early Church accepted Apocrypha as Scripture, it most certainly does: they accepted Baruch because they accepted Jeremiah. Does it matter if the Fathers were “mistaken” to think that Baruch was part of Jeremiah? No, not in the slightest. We are discussing whether Apocrypha were canon to the early Church and the answer is that Baruch was canon. There endeth all discussion. If you believe that it was a mistake, and that there is a

³⁷ Oration 30, 13 (Fourth Theological Oration) Section 1 www.newadvent.org/fathers/310230.htm

³⁸ www.bible-researcher.com/cyril.html

³⁹ The letter is available at www.newadvent.org/fathers/3001077.htm

⁴⁰ www.blueletterbible.org/Comm/stewart_don/faq/right-books-in-old-testament/question17-new-testament-quote-old-testament.cfm.

⁴¹ Gallagher and Meade, p. 5 (as will also be discussed below).

good reason to get rid of it or place it in a separate section of the Bible, that is up to you (and will be discussed a bit later)—but the point is that it was/is a later theological decision. The evidence (all from Kruger’s witnesses, I remind you) does not identify anyone who felt that way until Jerome, and as far as I could find, no one else felt that way until after at least 450 AD (30 years after Jerome’s death). The early Church accepted Baruch.⁴²

Something else is also clear, when we look solely at Baruch and not at the Apocrypha as a group: with respect to Baruch (and, in fact, Susanna, as briefly mentioned above) there is no third category (the three categories being Scripture, not Scripture, and something in between = Apocrypha), no Ecclesiastical, no “only to be read and not to be used to confirm doctrine,” nothing like that at all. Baruch is either full canonical Scripture or it is not, and it is that way for every single Father, including Athanasius, Rufinus, and Jerome (the three Fathers most often cited as support for a “third category” of Books), and also including Epiphanius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Gregory of Nazianzus, Amphilochius of Iconium,⁴³ and the Apostolic Canons⁴⁴ (additional Fathers occasionally cited as support for a third category).⁴⁵

A claim that the Apocrypha were only ever “Ecclesiastical” and never considered full Scripture by the early Church is as easily disproven by the canon lists as Kruger’s claim that the Apocrypha were never accepted at all.

My point in covering this at the beginning is to stress that it does not matter how many canon lists someone claims to have that (they say) show that

⁴² As with Susanna, there is no real debate on this. In fact, it is often acknowledged in the footnotes of Protestant books on the canon (see e.g., Gallagher’s blog, where he notes offhand that “Rufinus had assumed the presence of Baruch within Jeremiah” (sanctushieronymus.blogspot.com/search/label/Baruch). However, as I discuss below, it is often done in a dismissive way that leads to confusion, such as we see with Kruger, Gallagher and Meade, etc.

⁴³ His list only says Jeremiah, but he cites to Baruch in other works (Homily 1, On the Nativity, 1.2.50-52, not available online) as “other sayings of the prophet,” i.e., Jeremiah.

⁴⁴ A list that is part of a book called the Apostolic Constitutions. The list merely says “the 16 books of the prophets,” but that number would presumably include Jeremiah, with Baruch as part of Jeremiah. The book elsewhere cites to Jeremiah and Baruch repeatedly, e.g., Book 6, 4, 23 (“For says He [God]: ... And again: Blessed are we, O Israel, because those things that are pleasing to God are known to us.” Baruch 4:4), even mentioning that the Jews of 380 AD still accept Baruch: “For even now, on the tenth day of the month Gorpiaeus, when they assemble together, they read the Lamentations of Jeremiah, in which it is said ... and Baruch, in whom it is written, “This is our God; ... Afterwards He was seen upon earth, and conversed with men.” And when they read them, they lament and bewail...” (Baruch 3:35-37). Book 5, 3, 20. Newadvent.org/fathers/07156.htm and newadvent.org/fathers/07155.htm.

⁴⁵ As with Susanna, the first support for such a categorization of Baruch would come either in the Middle Ages or, perhaps, even after the Reformation (Sorry, but I could not find any mention of when precisely that first occurs. I found no evidence for it before 450 AD).

CANON CROSSFIRE

the Protestant/Jewish canon was the early Church's canon. The lists actually show the exact opposite. Just focus on Susanna and Baruch, and you will see that the claim is provably false. In fact, the canon lists prove that the early Church's Scriptures differed from the "Jewish canon" and included Apocrypha—at the very least, Susanna and Baruch.

Note that I said "provably false." The claim can be disproved using the claimant's own evidence and their own standards of proof. And the case for Christianity can be lost just as easily over Baruch as with Susanna.

CANON LISTS AND BARUCH

Below is a chart of every canon list, and whether Baruch is canon on each. For Christians, it is unanimous, except for Jerome.

<u>FATHER/LIST/BOOK</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>BARUCH</u> <u>CANONICAL?</u>	<u>NAME</u>
MELITO OF SARDIS	170	CANON FOR JEWS?	JEREMIAH
MURATORIAN CANON (NT LIST)	170	N/A	N/A
CLEMENT OF ALEXANDRIA	203	CANON	JEREMIAH
ORIGEN (JEWISH LIST)	220	NOT FOR JEWS?	BARUCH?
ORIGEN (LETTER)	248	N/A	N/A
ORIGEN (CITATIONS)	250	CANON	BARUCH
EUSEBIUS (CITES W/ APPROVAL)	324	CANON	JEREMIAH
THE NICENE COUNCIL	325	UNKNOWN	UNKNOWN
CODEX CLAROMONTANUS	349	CANON	JEREMIAH
<i>CODEX VATICANUS</i>	350	<i>CANON</i>	<i>BARUCH</i>
<i>CODEX SINAITICUS</i>	350	<i>CANON</i>	<i>BARUCH</i>
CYRIL OF JERUSALEM	350	CANON	BARUCH
ST CATHERINE'S SYRIAC MS 10	350	CANON?	JEREMIAH
CHELTENHAM LIST	360	CANON?	JEREMIAH?
THE COUNCIL AT LAODICEA	363	CANON	BARUCH
ATHANASIUS	367	CANON	BARUCH
HILARY OF POITIERS	367	CANON	JEREMIAH
GREGORY OF NAZIANZUS	380	CANON	JEREMIAH
AMPHILOCHIUS OF ICONIUM	380	CANON	JEREMIAH
THE APOSTOLIC CANONS	380	CANON	BARUCH
THE COUNCIL OF ROME	382	CANON	JEREMIAH
EPIPHANIUS PANARION 8.6.1-4	385	CANON FOR JEWS	BARUCH
EPIPHANIUS PAN. 76.22.5	385	CANON	BARUCH
JEROME (HELMETED PREFACE)	390	NOT CANON	BARUCH
EPIPHANIUS DE MENS. 4-5	392	NOT FOR JEWS	BARUCH
THE COUNCIL OF HIPPO – 70 BISHOPS	393	CANON	JEREMIAH
AUGUSTINE	397	CANON	JEREMIAH
THE COUNCIL OF CARTHAGE - 44-48 BISHOPS	397	CANON	JEREMIAH
JEROME (SOLOMON)	398	NOT CANON	BARUCH
RUFINUS	400	CANON	JEREMIAH

CANON CROSSFIRE

<u>FATHER/LIST/BOOK</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>BARUCH CANONICAL?</u>	<u>NAME</u>
JEROME (TOBIT/JUDITH)	404	NOT CANON	BARUCH
POPE INNOCENT I	405	CANON	PROPHETS (JER.)
THE COUNCIL OF CARTHAGE - 217 BISHOPS	419	CANON	JEREMIAH
CODEX ALEXANDRINUS	450	CANON	JEREMIAH
CODEX EPHRAEMI RESCRIPTUS	450	UNKNOWN	UNKNOWN

So, given what the evidence actually is, how did Kruger come to be citing witnesses who disprove his claim? My guess is that Susanna and Baruch were pieces of trivia rattling around in the back of his brain, and he simply never realized that the trivia ruined his case. It takes an actual opponent digging through the evidence to point out that the footnotes in the canon debate are the smoking gun that defeats the case for Christianity.

Kruger is not exceptional for making this mistake. Nearly all canon scholars trivialize and then promptly forget the smoking gun. Kruger is exceptional because he entered the arena to make the case for Christianity. His footnote is the foundation of his proof of Christian beliefs, so his error is not just the usual mistaken detail buried in one footnote among hundreds.⁴⁶

Often, the verbal gymnastics involved in the canon debate are so pervasive that authors even go on to fool themselves. Take, for example, *The Biblical Canon Lists from Early Christianity* by Edmon L. Gallagher and John D. Meade—a book we know Kruger read, since he gives the book a nice little blurb on the back cover:

‘Gallagher and Meade have provided a useful and much-needed tool in the study of the biblical canon. No doubt it will be a key resource for anyone wishing to explore the reception history of either the Old or New Testament.’ Michael Kruger, *Journal of Theological Studies*.⁴⁷

Consider an early mention of Baruch in Gallagher and Meade. It is, of course, in a footnote (footnote 18, Chapter 1, p. 5):

⁴⁶ In fact, Kruger’s peers, students, and even enemies (let alone proofreaders and fact checkers) are also so accustomed to seeing the usual erroneous statements that (as far as I know) no one even noticed the problem it creates.

⁴⁷ I agree entirely with the blurb, and as you will see many times below, the book is my go-to reference for canon lists. It is another five-star must-read, despite all my arguing with their opinions. Just read the book carefully and sort wheat from chaff—as you should do with any book, including this one. If it matters to someone trying to find an exact citation, my copy is from Oxford University Press, first paperback edition, 2019.

The Roman Catholic deuterocanon also includes Baruch, but we have seen that in this early period this work was often considered a part of Jeremiah. In this way, it was also included by Augustine, but also by other Christians who did not include the other books of the deuterocanon (i.e., Tobit, Judith, etc.). The term deuterocanonical was coined by Sixtus of Siena in his *Bibliotheca Sancta* (Venice, 1566, p. 10). The term refers to books that were not recognized as authoritative until a later time, and for Sixtus the deuterocanonical books include more books and sections of books than are commonly included under that label today.

That footnote is so misleading (inadvertently, I am sure) that, apparently, Kruger could read it without realizing what it does to his beloved model. Even worse, it is so misleading that the authors contradict themselves in their own footnote. They begin by saying:

The Roman Catholic deuterocanon also includes Baruch, but we have seen that in this early period this work was often considered a part of Jeremiah.⁴⁸

In other words (in better words!), since it was considered part of Jeremiah, it was inarguably⁴⁹ considered canon by everyone, except for Jerome and only except for Jerome. Yet the authors minimize this crucial fact, which is actually an important point not to be missed.

In this way, it was also included by Augustine, but also by other Christians who did not include the other books of the deuterocanon (i.e., Tobit, Judith, etc.).

In other words, Baruch was an Apocrypha/Deuterocanonical book that was included on every single canon list except for Jerome's. Note the editorial choice to mention Augustine by name rather than someone centuries earlier—that, too, is part of the dismissiveness. They are not wrong, but they are also

⁴⁸ Gallagher and Meade's use of the phrase "often considered a part of Jeremiah" is accurate, but note that those who did not consider it part of the Book of Jeremiah (such as Athanasius) still believed it was Scripture as the Book of Baruch. The only possibility I have found for someone agreeing with Jerome before 450 AD (a generation after Jerome's death) is noted in passing by Gallagher's blog (sanctushieronymus.blogspot.com/search/label/Baruch), referencing a colophon (a note left by a monk who copied Jerome's Biblical translations) that "dates to maybe the fifth century" and "comes in a manuscript containing Jerome's version of Jeremiah, without Baruch." However, even if the fifth century dating of the colophon is correct, it still might not be before 450 AD, which is the referential end date for this book. (Note that what we are looking for are Bibles or canon lists or other notes that can be shown to exclude the "Old Latin" Book of Baruch, which was sometimes included with Jerome's (newer Latin) translation of Jeremiah. See e.g., the *Codex Cavensis* (or *Biblia de Danila*), which has both, per Gallagher and Meade, p. 256.)

⁴⁹ As noted above, I speak of an actual case for Christianity. That a scholar can argue anything is inarguable, just as it is for lawyers. In actual cases, however, the point is reached where the judge tells both to shut up. The evidence for Baruch is inarguable by any judicial standard.

not stressing that it was always accepted by everyone. In fact, among the many that get confused by this endless dismissiveness are the gentlemen who wrote the footnote, because they go on to say:

The term deuterocanonical was coined by Sixtus of Siena in his *Bibliotheca Sancta* (Venice, 1566, p. 10). The term refers to books that were not recognized as authoritative until a later time...⁵⁰

At a minimum, the term Deuterocanonical expressly encompasses both (a) “books that were not recognized as authoritative until a later time” (if such is true) and (b) Baruch. Thus, the authors instantly forgot what they had just said about Baruch and what it and its history do to most such generalized claims about Apocrypha and Deuterocanonical books (even just definitions).⁵¹

So, that is what happens. We have Level One (understanding that Baruch was accepted as a matter of trivia) moving up to Level Two (a generalization about the Apocrypha that ignores Baruch as mere trivia) then becoming the basis for Level Three (a claim that the generalization is entirely true)—which is easily disproved by opponents who investigate Level One.

I could continue endlessly with all the examples I have found, but to keep this short I will pick a random one instead. Consider this, from William Webster at christiantruth.com/articles/canon/, which was carefully selected by performing a sophisticated statistical analysis of the leading global archive of all known discussions of the Apocrypha (i.e., this was the first thing at the top of my Google search): “Origen and Athanasius who were from Alexandria both reject the Apocryphal books as being canonical. There are a couple that Athanasius does receive such as Baruch but he mistakenly thought such a work was part of canonical Jeremiah.” Webster structured his thoughts as “Bold statement that is not true. And here is my own trivialized proof that it is false.” Such a technique is not dishonest or even necessarily deceptive—after all, every book with footnotes does this on practically every single page. “The

⁵⁰ Note, incidentally, that a claim that “the Apocrypha were recognized as authoritative at a later time” itself implies that the rest of the canon was, somehow, recognized earlier. But there was no Ecumenical Council that recognized the Protestant canon either. The only way to try to claim that Apocrypha came later is if the Protestant canon was canon earlier, which is to acknowledge that consensus is the standard for judging the early Church’s canon, whether Old Testament, New Testament, or Apocrypha. Below, we will see Kruger make the point that only consensus determined the New Testament canon.

⁵¹ A neutral definition of the Deuterocanon is just the Books Catholics accept and Protestants do not. Anyone varying from a neutral definition always seems to go on to fool themselves.

sky is blue. Footnote: Except when it is not, such as when there is cloud cover.”

However, in some contexts this way of thinking can become very misleading. And here, the fact to remember is that the canon lists are clear evidence that the Fathers and the early Church accepted Apocrypha. No matter how many times you hear something like Webster’s first sentence, Webster’s second sentence makes it clear that Athanasius, the “Father of the Canon,” is actually an example of how every single Father accepted at least some of the Apocrypha. What Webster’s two sentences combine to say is not that Athanasius rejected all of the Apocrypha (though that is what he expressly stated in the first sentence), but that Athanasius’ acceptance of Apocrypha like Baruch was “mistaken.” Those are not the same thing!

And again we see how authors forget ‘mere details’ when they use this confusing thought structure: read both of Athanasius’ and Origen’s lists carefully and you will see that both expressly include the Epistle of Jeremiah.⁵² That makes something of a mockery of Webster’s claim that “both reject the Apocryphal books as being canonical” – because both Athanasius and Origen expressly accept that one.⁵³ Webster mistakenly forgot to note that his belief is that Origen was also “mistaken,” not just Athanasius.

Now of course, this particular confusion is just one example of how the canon can undermine the case for Christianity, and we are discussing what might only be Kruger’s first attempt. He or someone else could go back down to Level One (i.e., the actual evidence, rather than relying on an abstraction or a generalization) and try to build an argument that remembers Susanna and Baruch and is based on all the evidence, including all the earlier writings (beyond just the canon lists), etc. What would happen then?

They would always lose, just not as instantly as Kruger did with his first attempt. Such is my opinion, anyway! But decide for yourself. For the love of God—literally, for the love of God—do not let my personal views keep you from considering the evidence properly. Tweak whatever I miswrote and figure out the actual truth. That, after all, is the only part of this that matters.

⁵² The Epistle of Jeremiah is included as chapter 6 of the Catholic Book of Baruch, but historically it is a separate writing that has its own unique history and evidentiary support (and is not a minor piece of it, despite being set off as only one chapter: it is 73 verses long, more than half as long as the “rest of” the Book of Baruch’s 140 verses).

⁵³ See bible-researcher.com/origen.html and bible-researcher.com/athanasius.html. I will discuss other problems involved with citing to Origen later.

This book is not concerned with the theological decision of what modern Christians should accept as “the” canon, and it is not an argument with anyone. It is just a review of the evidence, with a focus on what the evidence would then be held to prove, given the claims made in the case for Christianity—where the evidence for the Apocrypha is never trivial and never to be dismissed or handwaved away. Whatever it is, it is.

Of course a Protestant has every right to claim that the evidence is not enough to prove that the Books were really accepted, and does not prove that the Books were authentic Apostolic teaching, etc.—but understand that the opponents in the case for Christianity do not care about whether Apocrypha should be “Scripture.” They are introducing the Apocrypha into the discussion so that the Protestant will testify that the evidence is insignificant, unreliable, or insufficient. Because as soon as the Protestant is done testifying to that, the skeptics are going to compare it to the evidence in the case for Christianity, to show the judge that the Protestant “admits” that the case for Christianity is not proved. It is this comparison of (a) whatever the evidence for the Apocrypha is, to (b) the evidence being cited in the case for Christianity, that (c) determines whether there is really enough evidence to prove that Jesus Christ rose from the dead—e.g., whether we have the true authentic Apostolic eye-witness testimony that we claim to have.

The rest of this book goes through all the evidence in order to unconfuse people about what the evidence for the Apocrypha actually is, show how it interrelates, and how it would be used in an actual case for Christianity. In effect, I have reviewed the “evidence file” for the case for Christianity. This is my report on what one aspect of the case would entail and what you would need to be ready to deal with.

With that, let’s get started and finally move on to the initial overview.