



## Did Jesus and the New Testament Writers Really Quote from the Apocrypha?

### Rebuttal by Karen Sue Nyquist

Quotes in this paper are from the article, "Canon of the Bible," University of Calgary, <http://people.ucalgary.ca/~Apologetics/Apologetics>.

When we are witnessing to someone, they may ask a question or make a statement that we don't know how to respond to. We can answer with, "That's a good question (or an interesting comment), I will study up on it." If you will see them again, you can respond, "I will study up on it and get back to you." Then continue witnessing as the Holy Spirit leads you.

I found this article about the Catholic canon, "The Canon of the Bible" on line. While skimming through I noticed this section that declared that Jesus and the New Testament writers quoted from the "Deuterocanonical" books (the Apocryphal books). I had read on several other sites that they had not. Yet this writer was quoting a man who is a Catholic apologist, author, and lawyer, who was stating that they had done so and gave 12 examples. I wondered, "So which is true?" Both writers' premise is that there are "direct references between New Testament quotes and those found in the 7 Deuterocanonical books."

"The following is taken from, 'The Biblical Basis for the Catholic Faith' by John Salza, page 16 and reflects direct references between New Testament quotes and those found in the 7 Deuterocanonical books."

To respond thoroughly, I looked up the passages that the writer, John Salza, had referred to in the New Testament, then found the corresponding passages he had quoted in the Apocryphal books, then compared both. At first, I was so surprised because it did look like Jesus and the New Testament writers were actually quoting from the Apocrypha. How then could these other sites state otherwise? This was one of the basic premises that Protestant Christians had used for not accepting these books into the Bible, nor into their canon, (their basic beliefs). I was befuddled. Then the Lord gave me the idea to research the Old Testament to see if the Apocryphal writers were in fact quoting the Old Testament, which was written hundreds of years before. I found out that often they were! So, Jesus and the New Testament writers were not quoting the Apocryphal but were quoting from God's Word, the Old Testament. Thank You Lord, for giving me this insight!

Below are my responses to the writer's examples. The writer's comments are in bold and in the quotation marks. My responses are written after the double slash marks.

1. **"Jesus quotes from Tobit 7:18 when He calls His Father, 'Lord of Heaven and earth' (Mt 11:25)."** //Actually, God is the Lord of heaven and earth, so Jesus is stating a fact, the book of Tobit was stating a fact. This does not mean that Jesus was quoting from the Tobit.
2. **"Mary follows Sirach 10:14 when she says 'He has put down the mighty from their thrones' (Lk 1:52)."** //Actually, Ezekiel, in his prophecy against Tyre, was saying that during God's judgment, those rulers "will come down from their thrones ... with trembling" (Ezekiel 26:15-17). The Holy Spirit, through Mary, is probably referring to Ezekiel's wording, not to Sirach.
3. **"Elizabeth alludes to Judith 13:18 when she declares that Mary is most 'blessed ... among women' (Lk 1:42)."** //Actually, this phrase was used in Judges. "Most blessed of women be Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, of tent-dwelling women most blessed" (Judges 5:24).
4. **"Mark and Luke record the Sadducees' story about the seven brothers in Tobit 3:8 and Tobit 7:11."** //Actually, the Sadducees may have been

referring to Tobit, but Jesus wasn't. He responded, "You are mistaken, **not knowing the Scriptures** nor the power of God" (Matthew 22:29). The Sadducees had a lot of false beliefs: they believed there was no supernatural, refuted belief in angels, demons, heaven, hell, and the resurrection. They did not really believe in the Apocrypha either, since these books support some of the teachings that they deny. They were just trying to trap Jesus in His words.

5. **"James follows Sirach 29:10-11 in his teaching about laying up one's true treasure instead of silver and gold that will rust (see James 5:3)."** // Actually these words are not being used in the same manner, they are not a real quote.

6. **"The seven spirits before God in John's Revelation are the same seven angels who present the prayers of the saints before the Holy One in Tobit 12:15 (see Rev 1:4)."** //Actually, the seven spirits of God are first referred to in Isaiah. "Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, and a branch from His roots will bear fruit. The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and strength, the spirit of knowledge, and the fear of the LORD. And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear" (Isiah 11:1-3). Also, in Tobit, this "angel Raphael" presents several false statements. This could be a fallen angel or the writer of Tobit could have just been making up story. The seven spirits of God are identified but never named in the Old or New Testaments.

//This is a strange story about an "angel" Raphael, who says "Prayer with fasting is good, but better than both is almsgiving with righteousness. For almsgiving saves from death and purges away every sin. Those who give alms will enjoy a full life" (Tobit 12:9). Giving alms, does not purge away sin.

//Raphael says "Although you were watching me, I really did not eat or drink anything—but what you saw was a vision" (Tobit 12:19).

//Raphael says, "As for the fish's heart and liver, if you burn them to make smoke in the presence of a man or a woman who is afflicted by a demon or evil spirit, any affliction will flee and never return. As for the gall, if you apply it to the eyes of one who has white scales, blowing right into them, sight will be restored" (Tobit 6:8-9). These are not collaborated in the Old or New Testaments.

//Raphael says, "So now when you and Sarah prayed, it was I who brought and read the record of your prayer before the glory of the Lord, and likewise whenever you would bury the dead. And that time when you did not hesitate to get up and leave your dinner to go and bury the dead, I was sent to you to test you. And at the same time God sent me to heal you and Sarah your daughter-in-law. I am Raphael, one of the seven angels who stand in the glorious presence of the Lord, ready to serve him" (Tobit 12:12-15).

//Revelation 1:4; 3:1; 4:5; and 5:6, do talk about 7 spirits but this whole story sounds false and even if there is a Raphael, this story is not backed up with scripture, none of the 7 spirits are named.

7. **"Peter alludes to Wisdom 3:5-6 when he teaches that God will test us just as gold is tested by fire (see 1 Pet 1:6-7)."** //Actually this was originally a quote from Zachariah. "And I will put this third into the fire, refine them as one refines silver, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on my name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'They are my people'; and they will say, 'The Lord is our God'" (Zachariah 13:9).

8. **"The author of Hebrews follows Sirach 25:2 when he tells us to strengthen our "drooping hands" and "weak knees" (Heb 12:12)."** //Actually this was originally a quote from Isaiah. "Strengthen the weak hands, And make firm the feeble knees" (Isaiah 35:3).

9. **“Paul follows Wisdom 5:17-20 when he charges us to take up the "armor of God," the "breastplate of righteousness," the "helmet of salvation" and the "shield of faith.”** //Actually is was originally a quote from Isaiah. “He put on righteousness like a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation on his head; he put on garments of vengeance for clothing, and wrapped himself in fury as in a mantle ... My words which I have put in your mouth, shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your descendants” (Isaiah 59:17, 21). Wisdom 5:17, mentions a sword and shield, but does not have the same intended meaning as Paul did in Ephesians 6:10-18.

10. **“Paul borrows from Baruch 4:7 when he teaches that the pagans "sacrifice to demons and not to God.”** //Actually this is a quote from Deuteronomy, “They sacrificed to demons, not God,” (Deuteronomy 32:17).

11. **“Paul quotes from 2 Maccabees 12:15, when he calls God the "one and only Sovereign.”** //Actually, using the NIV translation, there are 278 verses in the Old Testament that refer to God as the Sovereign LORD. In the New Testament, there are 5 references to God as Sovereign, all written by other authors, not Paul. So, these New Testament authors were quoting from the Old Testament, not from the Apocrypha.

12. **“Paul also refers to 2 Maccabees 7:1-42, which is one of the most incredible stories of faith in Scripture, regarding the torture and murder of a mother and her children (see Hebrews11:35).”** //Actually Paul was stating a fact, that believers have been tortured and killed throughout history. This was also recorded in Maccabees as a book of historical accounts, but not part of sacred scripture.

**My response** - From these 12 examples, we see that the the writers of the Apocrypha were probably quoting, or referring to, scriptures from the Old Testament. A few times, these writers were just stating a well-known fact. These examples do not prove that Jesus and the writers of the New Testament were quoting from the Apocrypha. The Jews of the New Testament time knew the apocryphal books, but they did not consider them sacred scripture. From other articles, I have learned that Jesus, His apostles, and the early church fathers did not accept the Apocrypha as divinely inspired scriptures. Today, we can read current books written by devout Christians, recording the impact that Christianity has had on American history and culture, but we would not claim those to be divinely inspired scripture. In the same way, some these Apocryphal books may be good sources for historical or cultural sources of information only.

I know that 12 is a small number of samples. Since John Salza was an apologist, author, and a lawyer, I am assuming that he probably chose the strongest examples that he thought would best make his case. I did find another article in which Salza quotes 80 examples, but I have not studied those. But if these 12 samples all turned out to not be quotes from the Apocrypha (also called the Deuterocanonicals), there's a good chance that Salza's other 68 will not be either. If you want to read all 80 you may. The article is: “SOLID PROOFS THAT THE DEUTEROCANONICALS WERE QUOTED BY JESUS AND THE APOSTLES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT,” Catholic Apologetics, The Splendor of the Church, January 26,2017, <https://thesplendorofthechurchcom.>2017/01/26>so>

**In Conclusion** - When a person we are witnessing to, makes a comment or a statement that we don't know how to respond to, we can respond by saying that we will study up on it. Then continue witnessing. Later, ask the Holy Spirit to lead you in the study, so you can document what is the truth. Another person just might ask the you same question or make the same comment.