



# Introducing the Apocrypha: Message, Context, and Significance

*David A. deSilva*

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The status of the apocryphal (or deuterocanonical) books has been one of the longstanding areas of disagreement among various Christian traditions. David deSilva suggests, however, that whether one views these books as Scripture (Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Christians) or not (Protestant Christians), these books should be read and studied for their inherent value.

The books of the Apocrypha are a witness to faith, specifically the faith of Jewish people living from 200 B.C.E. to 100 C.E. Contemporary Christian readers find these books to be surprisingly relevant. In addition, they provide essential historical background for understanding the Judaism of Jesus' day and the Jewish matrix of early Christianity.

After explaining the value of studying the Apocrypha and surveying the historical context from which these writings emerged, deSilva proceeds through each book of the Apocrypha (as found in the NRSV). Using all the tools of a skilled interpreter, he provides the necessary background details (date, circumstances of writing, etc.) before surveying the content and message of each book. Along the way, readers are introduced to connections between the Apocrypha and the Old and New Testaments and are encouraged to embark upon their own exploration of these fascinating books.

Especially suitable for classroom settings, this substantive, up-to-date, and well-written volume is accessible to and will be enjoyed by clergy and laity as well.

"DeSilva does a fine job of placing the Apocrypha within the historical context of the Jewish world in which early Christianity was forged."--*Publishers Weekly*

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