

Attempting to sustain his Jewish orthodoxy (following charges against him after the Roman Jewish war in the first century) it is very unlikely that he would state things not well understood to be truth among his Jewish contemporaries.

(2) **Baba Bathro** is a tractate from the second century BC in the Babylonian Talmud and gives the essential material of Josephus and offers suggestions on the ways in which the prophets received their material.

(3) **Melito**, bishop of Sardis about 160 AD, prepared a list of Old Testament books based on what he had learned through researches and discussions in Asia Minor. He is in the very heart of the New Testament canonical argument era and follows the essential material of Josephus although he omits Esther and apparently treats Ezra-Nehemiah as one book.

The thrust of these citations is merely to show that the idea of a canon was well known and accepted in the world of the church in those early times. It is not a development of later church fathers but an applied idea in the life of the Jewish-Christian community before, during, and after the time of Christ.

5. Qumran Witness

It is, unfortunately, strictly inferential but still rather solid. No lists are found at Qumran. The stress on the law and the needed study of it for community fellowship leaves no doubt about its reception at the community. Similarly the works of the prophets and writings show up in profusion of such nature that it is difficult to imagine they were less well received than the law. However there are many other materials at Qumran as well including some that were not well thought of in other Jewish communities... targumes, and pseudipigrapha of various sorts. From the Qumran community we learn that literary activity was very pronounced at this time but we do not see a lot of sharp lines defining the parameters. I think, that at least until this time, none of the formal apocrypha books have been found...but a lot of other things have been...and even this may have changed by now. I am a little behind the times on this!