

Week 3 – Old Testament Canonization

Supplemental Notes

General vs. Special Revelation.

- God condescends to speak to people. He is always the initiator. He is the first cause of communication to man. (Ex: Adam, Abraham, Moses, David, Prophets, Mary, Disciples, Paul). John 6:44 – “no one can come to Me, unless the Father who sent Me draws him.”
 - ▶ **General Revelation:** God speaks to people everywhere. (Romans 1:18-32; Psalm 19:1; Matthew 4:45; Acts 14:17; Romans 2:14-15)
 - Problem: Bruce Milne, *Know the Truth* - “God repeatedly reveals Himself, humankind repeatedly resists, obscuring & misusing the general revelation.”
 - Result: General revelation renders mankind guilty before God. (Romans 1:19-21) Sin has ruined the relationship with God and opened up a chasm between man & God. General revelation is unable to bridge the chasm. A fuller and further revelation is necessary, so God speaks again.
 - ▶ **Special Revelation:** God’s words addressed to specific people, including the words of the Bible. Special revelation takes 2 forms:
 - **Jesus Christ, the Living Word** – Jesus is the supreme form of God’s self-disclosure. God became incarnate in the second person of the Trinity. Jesus, fully God, took on flesh and became a man and dwelt among us (John 1), so that we could know God (Hebrews 1:1-3a).
 - **Holy Scriptures, the Written Word** – By its own claim, the Scriptures record God’s holy words to His creatures.
 - 2 Timothy 3:16; Psalm 119:89; Isaiah 40:8, John 10:35
 - Originally spoken in history to particular generations, by God’s providence, they address *every* generation. (Acts 7:38; Romans 15:4; 1 Corinthians 10:11; Romans 3:2)

Advantages of a Written Record.

- Abraham Kuyper’s 4 Advantages to a Written Record
 - ▶ It achieves durability.
 - ▶ It can be universally disseminated through translation and reproduction.
 - ▶ It has the attributes of fixedness and purity.

- ▶ It is given a finality and normativeness which other forms of communication cannot attain.

Jesus Accorded Divine Authority to the OT Scriptures.

- Jesus directly quoted from or alluded to 23 of the 39 books of the OT. (Matthew 4:4; Mark 14:27)
 - He quoted it in a manner which revealed His personal respect for its divine status. (Matthew 4:4; Mark 14:27)
 - He quoted from all 3 sections of the Tanakh:
 - The Law – Matthew 4:1-10
 - The Prophets – Mark 7:6
 - The Writings – Psalm 118:22, Psalm 22
- Jesus endorsed the Hebrew scriptures as authoritative without reservation and referred to it as the “Word of God.” (Matthew 5:17-19; Luke 4:16-21; Luke 24:27; John 5:39; Mark 7:13)
 - NOTE: Jesus and the Jewish religious leaders debated many issues, but the Bible does not record that they ever debated about what constituted the Holy Scriptures/Word of God.
- Jesus accepted OT history as true. (Matthew 22:32; Matthew 12:3; John 3:14). He spoke of Abel, Jonah, Zechariah, Ezekiel and many other OT people.
- Jesus based His Messianic legitimacy on His ability to fulfill the prophecies of these ancient writings. (Luke 4:16-30; Luke 24:27, 44)
- Jesus deferred to OT authority regarding His teaching & actions and His Messianic ministry. (John 5, 6, 10)
 - Bruce Milne, *Know the Truth* – “Being persuaded that He was the long-awaited Messiah through Whom God’s kingdom was to come, Jesus modeled His Messianic role in terms of Old Testament teaching on it. It was the Scriptures that persuaded Him of the inevitability of His rejection and coming suffering, and that took Him on His last journey to Jerusalem, finally to submit to the horror of the cross....In the Scriptures, Jesus discovered the divine blueprint for Messiah’s ministry.”

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