

"Contend Earnestly For the Faith" Part 12: The Inspiration of the Old Testament

Tuesday Night Bible Study, June 27, 2006

--the Old Testament, as we know it, is the final form of prophetic writings that were written by prophets in Israel and systematically collected throughout Israel's history:

--collection began with writings of Moses (the Pentateuch)

--Joshua added his writings to the writings of Moses. "Then Joshua wrote these words in the Book of the Law of God." (Joshua 24:26)

--the detailed history (1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles) was gradually recorded by various prophets and later compiled by single prophets. Examples:

--David's history was recorded by Samuel, Nathan, and Gad (1 Chronicles 29:29)

--Solomon's history was recorded by Nathan, Ahija, and Iddo (2 Chronicles 9:29)

--other mentions of prophets who recorded select history: 2 Chronicles 12:15; 13:22; 20:34; 33:19; 35:27

--many prophets individually wrote entire books. Examples: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel, Zechariah, ...

--by the time of the Babylonian captivity, Daniel referred to the collection of prophetic writings as "the books" (Daniel 9:2) ... same name used by early Christians – "ta Biblia"

--the first recorded section of Scripture:

--God wrote the first written text (the Ten Commandments) of Scripture and commanded Moses to place them in the Ark of the Covenant

--Deuteronomy 10:1-2: "At that time the LORD said to me, **Hew for yourself two tablets of stone** like the first, and come up to Me on the mountain and make yourself an ark of wood. 2 And **I will write on the tablets** the words that were on the first tablets, which you broke; and **you shall put them in the ark.**"

--the central theme of Scripture is God's plan to provide a way for the requirements of the law to be satisfied through Christ.

--Romans 3:19-22: "Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. 20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21 **But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed**, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God, **through faith in Jesus Christ**, to all and on all who believe."

--picture the contrast between God's voice introducing Moses to the Ten Commandments and God's voice introducing Jesus Christ who alone fulfilled the requirements of the Ten Commandments... **from God writing the law on tablets of stone to God becoming a man to fulfill the law... this is the backbone of all Scripture, affirmed not only by the voice of prophets but by the voice of God the Father from heaven!**

--Matthew 3:16-17: "When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 **And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."**

****Stand back and look at the overall body of Scripture... the two main pillars of Scripture – the law and Christ (the Old Covenant and New Covenant) – came directly from God. All the rest of scripture that God spoke through the apostles and prophets is supplemental to what was directly revealed by God.**

--Old Testament prophets:

--qualifications for prophets:

--the only special requirement was God's calling. Prophets came from all walks of life: shepherds and farmers like Amos (Amos 7:14) and Elisha (1 Kings 19:19), princes like Abraham (Genesis 23:6), priests like Ezekiel (Ezekiel 1:3), and kings like David and Solomon. Some prophets, like Samuel, were called from childhood and others from adulthood.

--the role of prophets:

--prophets were God's messengers to Israel.

--the prophet's messages from God did not necessarily involve the foretelling of future events.

--Many times they suffered persecution as they faithfully proclaimed God's truth while Israel rebelled against God. (example: story of Elijah on Mt. Carmel - 1 Kings 18:1-44).

--example descriptions of God speaking through prophets:

--2 Peter 1:21 describes prophets who wrote Scripture as "holy men of God [who] spoke as they were **moved by the Holy Spirit.**"

--Isaiah 51:16 "[God told Isaiah] **I have put my words in your mouth** and covered you with the shadow of my hand — I who set the heavens in place, who laid the foundations of the earth, and who say to Zion, 'You are my people.'"

--Isaiah 50:4: "The Sovereign LORD has given me an instructed tongue, to know the word that sustains the weary. He wakens me morning by morning, wakens my ear to listen like one being taught."

--Jeremiah 20:8-9: "Whenever I speak, I cry out proclaiming violence and destruction [*God's message of warning to Israel*]. So the word of the LORD has brought me insult and reproach all day long. But if I say, 'I will not mention Him or speak any more in His name, 'His word is in my heart like a fire, a fire shut up in my bones. I am weary of holding it in; indeed, I cannot.'"

--2 Samuel 23:2 "The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me [David], and His word was on my tongue."

--false prophets were detected by their **false prophecies** and their association with **false gods**:

--Deuteronomy 18:19-22: "But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded him to say, or a prophet who **speaks in the name of other gods**, must be put to death." 21 You may say to yourselves, "How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the LORD?" 22 **If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken.** That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him."

--Deuteronomy 13:1-5: "If there arises among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and he gives you a sign or a wonder, 2 and the sign or the wonder comes to pass, of which he spoke to you, saying, '**Let us go after other gods**' — which you have not known — 'and let us serve them,' 3 you shall not listen to the words of that prophet or that dreamer of dreams, for the LORD your God is testing you to know whether you love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul. 4 You shall walk after the LORD your God and fear Him, and keep His commandments and obey His voice; you shall serve Him and hold fast to Him. 5 But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has spoken in order to turn you away from the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of bondage, to entice you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall put away the evil from your midst."

--sometimes God miraculously confirmed His prophets:

--1 Kings 18:1-44: Elijah and the prophets of Baal on Mt. Carmel...

--Numbers 16:1-49: Moses and Korah

--Exodus 7-12: Moses and the plagues of Egypt