

Dr. Ted Hildebrandt, OT History, Lit., and Theology, Lecture 2

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A. Introduction and Prayer [0:0-2:24]

This is lecture number two by Dr. Ted Hildebrandt on Old Testament History Literature and Theology. The lecture today will be on the doctrines of inspiration, canonization, transmission, and translation.

One thing I should say that somebody did last year that I thought was really cool, I had a girl who was sitting over here and her father wanted to take her Old Testament class with her. We're talking helicopter parent, but anyway, actually, I really enjoyed the guy. I ended up emailing him. This guy emailed me back and forth and it was really cool. He would go through the readings, and I got a kick out of that. By the way, was that really neat that he could see what his daughter was learning? You don't think that's neat...okay, I thought it was pretty neat.

Let's open with a word of prayer, and then we're going to run through some stuff here today.

Father, we are so grateful that you have spoken, and that you have spoken to prophets who were men and women of God, and they recorded Scripture. Then you had it preserved for us for thousands of years through all sorts of ravages of time. You've had it preserved for us and translated for us into English so we can understand it, and we still have it. Many of us even have multiple copies of it and we thank you for your word that you've spoken. We thank you for your word in nature, and we just, as the passing of this hurricane, realize that the heavens declare the glory of God. So we look at the heavens and we praise you for your greatness and for the universe that you've made. We thank you most of all for your son Jesus Christ who died for our sins. We thank you so much for your love and your compassion. I pray that you might help us today as we go over some things that are rather tricky. We pray that you might give me the ability to speak them in ways that build up faith rather than tear it down...and that the name of your son might be honored by this class, in his precious name we pray. Amen.

B. Review: Cosmological and Teleological Arguments for God's Existence [2:25-6:26]

Last time we were saying that the Bible (we are going to be studying the Old Testament), that this book is the word of God. So the first thing that we need to show is that a belief in God is reasonable. Now, can we prove that there is a God? No. Can we show that it is reasonable? Can people prove how the Big Bang happened 16 billion years ago or so? Can people prove that? No. Is that an assumption on their part as well? So is it only Christians who have faith in assumptions? Do other people also have assumptions? Yes. Science has them, every culture has them. So, is there a God?

We talked about the cosmological argument, which was basically following cause-effect, cause-effect, cause-effect, all the way back to the initial cause; the initial watermelon or grapefruit, and what caused the universe to come into existence. We as Christians would say the initial cause that was involved in blowing the watermelon or grapefruit apart was God, and that God was involved in the creation of the universe. So what cause was the first cause to cause all of the rest of this stuff to happen? We would say that's God. The first cause is the cosmological argument.

We also used the teleological argument. The teleological argument was an argument from design. The universe is very, very well structured; very well ordered. One guy has written a book, the six numbers, and if you change any of these six numbers, the whole universe changes. For example, the gravitational pull, what happens if the gravitational pull was different than what it is now? Suppose gravitation was just three quarters of what it is now. What would have happened to the universe when it exploded? Instead of gravitation holding things together, the universe would do what? It would have been blown apart. What happens if gravitation, on the other hand, was stronger than it is now? The universe would go out, and it is possible it would be sucked back together. But the way it is, the gravitational pull seems to be perfect in the way that it allows for us to live. There are other factors too. The size and the weight of a proton, and what if that was changed? It would change everything. And so, this guy goes through six numbers and says the universe is incredibly balanced around these six numbers. Now you could say

that's luck, right? That we just lucked out. But doesn't it make you say, "That's just too many things to be luck?"

So it's kind of like we used the example of this room with the chairs in this room. You walk into this room and you look at these chairs, would you assume that it was just luck and chance that these chairs popped in the way they are now? No, when you look at the chairs in rows you would conclude: "Somebody did that." How do you know that those chairs were put there by somebody? Because there is too much order. You've got three rows here, you've got no chairs sitting out in the middle, they kind of angle up, you've got ten in a row like that, they're all lined up nicely. You say "This couldn't just be by luck, there must have been a designer who designed this room and built it like this. So that's the argument from design, it's called the teleological argument.

Then we talked a little bit about intelligent design and actually I think last time I got my people, William Craig, mixed up with a guy named William Dempski, the mathematician that had the double PhD was Dempski out of the University of Chicago. Craig is also an apologist, on the west coast at Talbot seminary, is anybody familiar with it? Anyway, Craig is out there, he also argues apologetics, but Dempski is one of the big ones, double Ph.D., Intelligent Design. Now different people will establish then, how did this happen? Intelligent design says that there is so much order in the universe that you need someone, you need an intelligence, to design this because it's not just luck and chance otherwise, there'd be more chaos.

C. Moral Argument for the existence of God [6:27-9:39]

Now here's our next argument. This is the Moral argument. Do animals have morals? We went out to (I took my son who just got back from Afghanistan) Yellowstone National Park. What's one of the problems with taking a walk in Yellowstone? Are there big critters out there? What happened was there was a fifty-seven year old man and his wife who went for a walk. It turns out that there was a mother grizzly bear. The grizzly bear saw the man and went after him and killed him. What's the problem with the grizzly bear? Is a grizzly bear able to take a human being pretty easily? Just their claws are as long as my finger. The grizzly bear goes like that once and you're gutted. These animals

are incredibly strong and they can run really fast. Anyway, this guy was devoured. His wife got away, by the way, do you know how she got away? This is the truth... she started hollering at the bear and nobody can take a woman screaming at them so the bear took off... That was a joke (I have to be careful about these kind of things now that I'm being taped) but what I am saying is, how did the woman get away? Do you know what she did? This is the truth, what she did was while her husband was devoured by the bear, she pretended that she was dead. The bear came up, nosed her, may have clamped into her (I think she had some minor wounds) but the bear did not devour her because the bear figured she was dead and left her alone. That's the truth, she got away by playing dead. That's pretty freaky, isn't it? She totally went limp and pretended like she was dead and she was spared.

My point is, if an animal devours a human being, is that an immoral animal? Do animals have morals? No, they eat each other! That's what I'm saying; they devour things naturally. A human being that kills another human being, is there something immoral with that? We've got laws that call that murder. By the way, are there different levels of murder too? Some 85 year old person is in a car, and they don't know what they're doing. They stepped on the gas pedal instead of the break and ended up running a kid down. It ended up happening down in Boston. Suppose the kid gets killed, is that old person a murderer? Well, they should not be driving but that is a different question. What we're saying is there was no malicious intent or forethought. That person was probably devastated from the fact that they killed someone.

In other words, human beings have morals. Where did those morals come from? If you don't believe that there is a God, then where did morals come from? By the way, can secular people come up with places that morals come from? Yes, they can, but do they have to work a lot harder than we do, saying there is a God, who spoke and said "Thou shalt not" what? "Commit murder. Thou shalt not lie, thou shalt not steal, thou shalt not commit adultery," that's pretty straight up. So, where did morals come from? It's more of a problem without God than with God.

D. Pascal's wager as proof for the existence of God [9:40-13:16]

Pascal's wager. This is one I like. Does anybody like gambling? I don't, but let me just say this. We're going to roll seven and eleven on a couple of dice. Each die has six sides, so how many possibilities, can come up with two die? You guys probably do this in statistics. Six on each die, so six times six, so thirty-six different combinations. Now seven, you can get in how many ways? One and six, three and four, etc. So we're going to roll dice, and here's the way its going to be. Because I care about you guys, we're going to set this up. If I roll the dice and I don't get seven or eleven, in other words, you win and I lose, I will give you a dollar. If I get the seven or eleven, you're going to pay me ten thousand dollars. Does anybody want to roll? What's the problem? I roll them once and I lose, I pay you just a dollar. I roll them twice, I lose, I pay you a dollar. Three, four, five, ten, I roll them ten times, I paid you guys what? Ten bucks. I win once, and you pay me what? Ten thousand. Question: will I roll with you all night like that? Yes. Why? If I lose, I've got what to lose? I lose a dollar. I've got very little to lose. But have I got a huge amount to gain when I win? Very little to lose, everything to gain.

Pascal's wager works like that, it says this: "If there is no God, what have I lost?" Very little. Suppose there is no God, and you say "Well, you believed all your life and it was a lie and God doesn't exist." What have I gained from that? I've gained a wonderful family, a wonderful wife, I couldn't ask for more. So I've got all that stuff still. If, on the other hand, I believe that there is no God, and all of a sudden I die and I'm face to face with this God who doesn't exist and I've blasphemed him all my life and I get fried after that, is there a problem? In other words, you've got nothing to lose and everything to gain. If there is no God, and I believed there was a God, I didn't lose almost anything. If it turns out there is a God and I didn't believe in him, I lose everything after this life goes down. That is called Pascal's wager, and he's saying if you believe in God and it turns out that you were wrong, you didn't lose very much of anything. If you believe that there was no God and it turns out there is, you've just lost your soul and that's a big deal. Pascal's

wager--don't roll dice for money.

E. The Jesus Argument: Liar, lunatic, legend or Lord [13:17-20:46]

What do you do with Jesus? You can say, "I don't believe in God." Okay, what do you do with Jesus then? Did Jesus claim to be God? Jesus said, *Egw eimi*. This means "I am." I am what? When Jesus said "I am," how did the Jews respond? They wanted to stone him. Why did they want to stone him? "Because you, a mere man, claim to be" what? "God." Who is "I am that I am"? You remember in the Old Testament, "I am that I am." Is that the name "Jehovah," God's most sacred name? Jesus says "I am" and they try to stone him because they said "you just made a claim to be God. Therefore we're going to try to kill you, stone you, for blasphemy. Because you, a mere man, claim to be God." "In the beginning," John his apostle writes, "In the beginning was the word. The word was with God and the word was God.... And the word became flesh and dwelt among us." So he's talking about the *logos*. The divine being, the *logos*, the word of God, now becomes flesh. Jesus claimed to be God. So C.S. Lewis said this, Jesus is either a liar, a lunatic, or he is who he said he was, he's the Lord.

Now Jesus being a liar, what's the problem with that? When you read the works of Jesus, does he seem like much of a liar? "I am the way, the truth, and the life." Jesus spoke the truth and lying clashes with his moral character.

If a person in this room claimed that you were God, we'd think you were what? Crazy. Jesus claimed to be and, by the way, did his own brothers and sisters think he was crazy? In the passage in Matthew 12, they came to take him away because they thought he was crazy. Was Jesus a lunatic? Are there lunatics that think they are gods? Especially when they take a certain amount of substances. Is Jesus a lunatic? Have you read the Sermon on the Mount? When you read the Sermon on the Mount, "Blessed are the poor, blessed are the merciful for they shall obtain mercy, blessed are the pure in heart for they shall seek God..." Are those the statements of a lunatic? If you've ever read the Sermon on the Mount, is that the work of a lunatic? Isn't that some of the most incredible literature ever written anywhere? I don't think you're going to get to far with this idea of Jesus being a lunatic. The teachings of Jesus are incredible.

Jesus was Lord, that's Lewis' conclusion. Lewis skipped this one, and it bothers me because I think today, a lot of people still don't like Jesus as God. Everybody likes Jesus as a souped-up Mahatma Ghandi. So it is for many "Jesus was a good prophet," a kind of Martin Luther King on steroids. But anyway, where everybody has problems with Jesus is his claims to be God. That's where they have problems. Jesus was a good prophet, and everybody loves Jesus as a good prophet, but as soon as Jesus claims to be God, that's when people freak out.

Now, where did this "God-ness" of Jesus come from? Some of the critics today will say that this idea that Jesus was God was actually a legend, that actually developed over a period of time. So this legendary Jesus developed. But I want to ask you about his apostles, who they say designed these legends about Jesus. What do you know about the apostles? The apostles were really pretty courageous people. Early on Jesus' disciples were very "Jesus, you go to the death, and we will go to death with you. We will stick by your side. We are right there with you, we believe in you with our whole hearts." All of a sudden Jesus gets captured in the garden of Gethsemane and what happens to the disciples? These guys were: "Excuse me, somebody could get killed around here. They're going to kill somebody, we need to get out of here!" So the disciples take off. Now I ask you one question; at the cross of Jesus, where were all of the disciples? They were hiding in fear. It was the women who stuck with him.

But then what happens? Three days later, all of a sudden, they go to the tomb, and what happens to the disciples then? Is there a transition with the disciples? Will the disciples who were fearful and ran away now die for Jesus Christ after the resurrection? Tell me what happens to the 12 disciples (well, one of them kind of did the bucket list thing and didn't make it). So Judas is gone, but those eleven disciples, what happened to all of them, except we wonder about John, what happened to them? Do we have records of what happened to them? Every one of them died horrible deaths, let's use Peter as an example, Peter was crucified upside down. If he just made this up, the legend of Jesus being God, would you die for something like that? By the way, one or two might die, because they were crazy or something like that, but would all eleven of them die and

never say, “Stop, I just made that up, I was just kidding, don’t kill me.” No, they all walked to their death, and were martyred. Even John, they started to fry him in oil. What I’m saying is, did they believe this with all of their heart? They believed it to the point of what? Death. By the way, was this just putting a bullet in their head? No. Many of them were tortured to death, and that’s how they went to their deaths.

So this idea that the disciples just made up these legends, what’s the other problem with that? If the disciples just made up these stories, were there other people around them that could blow the whistle on them and say “that’s not true”? Jesus rose from the dead, the disciples said, and there were people around who said, “No, that didn’t ever happen, we were there, it never happened.” What’s the problem with that? Paul says, “Hey, if you don’t believe me about Jesus resurrecting from the dead, there are five hundred people still alive here, you can go ask them. Five hundred people all saw Jesus rise from the dead, besides the twelve apostles, and besides me, Paul, and I saw Jesus on the road to Damascus, alive after he was dead.” So in other words, they can’t make it up because there were other people who would have disconfirmed their stories. Paul is saying to go ask the people who were eyewitnesses. So Jesus is pretty good. Jesus Christ claims to be God, and there is reason for believing that. Now does this prove it? It doesn’t prove it, but it is reasonable to think some of these things.

F. Personal Testimony argument for the existence of God [20:47-22:21]

Personal testimony. Do you know people who suggest that they have met God? Are there people in this room who would claim that they have met God, including the professor? I swear I have seen the handiwork of God, this last year, praise God, I mean, have you ever prayed something that really, really matters? My son, last year, around this time, was over in Afghanistan. He was getting shot at every day. He was outside the wire for twenty-eight straight days, getting shot at every day. Did I pray for him? Did some of his buddies not come back? Other people did not come back. He came back. God spared him. I praise God for that. People will say he was lucky, it was just the luck of the draw that he didn’t get killed, but I can go over and over things that show that God answers prayer. Does personal testimony count? Are there millions of people that believe in Jesus

Christ that claim to have a relationship with God? Yes. Now do you just dismiss that because they're all a bunch of whackos? You need to think about that. You might say, "Well, yeah, you are, Hildebrandt!"

G. Predictive Prophecy as proof of God's existence [22:22-24:45]

Here are some other things that come from the Bible itself. In this book does God know the future from the beginning? From the beginning to the end, does God know the future? Now, do you know the future? Is there anybody in this room or on this campus who knows the future? Question: what will happen to the stock market tomorrow, up or down? Nobody knows! In other words, it's been so erratic that you can't tell tomorrow what's going to happen. Now, you've got a God who predicts things 700 years before they happen. By the way, is 700 years a little bit of a length of a time? 700 years before Christ, Micah the prophet in Micah 5:2 says, "Hey, when the Messiah comes, he's not going to just be born anywhere, the Messiah is going to be born in Bethlehem of Judea."

You could say, "Yeah, but there were millions of people born in Bethlehem and it was just his luck of the draw." Tell me, how big was the town of Bethlehem? The town of Bethlehem could fit on the quad here. We're talking three, four, five hundred people max. We're Americans, our cities are big: New York City, L.A., and Boston. We do big cities. Over there, their cities are towns, and actually you'll notice, in the DASV, I often translated it "towns" instead of "cities" because these places are so small. Most of the places and towns that you read about in Israel would fit on Gordon's campus, including Jericho. By the way, does anyone remember how many times they walked around Jericho in one day? Seven times. What does that tell you? Is this a huge city that they go around seven times or is this a small town that they go around seven times? Yes, small, Jericho is small. So what I'm saying is, if Jesus comes from Bethlehem of Judea, was that a small town to be from? It is predicted 700 years before he's born. What town is Jesus born in? Bethlehem of Judea. There are prophecies like that, let me add one prophecy to another prophecy to another prophecy, and you just start adding this stuff up and you say it can't be just the luck-of-the-draw. The Bible has got this down! Who knows the future? God knows the future. You would expect God to be able to say what the future is and to get it

right and he does.

H. Miracle Accounts as proof of the existence of God [24:46-27:26]

Another thing, miracles. You've got a record. Moses walks up to the Red Sea and he goes, "Wham bam!" and guess what happens? The waters part, the Jews go across. The Egyptians come trucking in after them and the water falls and drowns all of the Egyptians! Now you say, "That was just luck, the miracle, the wind was blowing they had a Noreaster that day and it blew all of the water back, but it was strong enough to blow 50 feet of water but the people could still walk through it?" Then they get to the other side and all of a sudden this manna started coming down from the sky. It doesn't usually happen that way. Then they are out in Sinai, a major desert, they haven't got any water, so this guy goes up with a stick and whacks a rock and all of a sudden this water comes out of this rock and satisfies all of these people. You say, "Miracle?" They go up to the Jordan River and the Jordan River parts too and they march around the city seven times and they go, "Hey, you guys, come out and play!" and the walls all fall down! Actually, what that was, was that they were jiving, they were walking around like that, all jiving and the ground was shaking... really? Enough for big walls to fall down? Yes, that would be miraculous. Jesus saying, "Hey, you've got five thousand people here, how much fish do you have? Let's feed these people." Or Elijah, going up on Mount Carmel, and a lightening bolt coming down at his request, frying that altar while these 400 prophets of Baal are off screaming to their gods and cutting themselves as slashers. So these are miracles.

If you're a critic of the Bible and don't believe in God, what are two things that you've got to get rid of in the Bible? You have to get rid of prophecy and you have to get rid of the miracles. You say "I don't believe in miracles, there is no God, so there can't be any miracles." You've got to go through miracle by miracle and explain them away throughout the whole Bible, including this guy being born of a virgin. You've got to get rid of that, although I guess we could do that today. But do you see what I'm saying, Jesus was born of a virgin, but they would use something like, "Maybe it was a German soldier," or "maybe it was artificial insemination" to explain the virgin birth away from

Christ. They have to get rid of it because the virgin birth was a miracle (Isa. 7:14).

I. The Jews as proof of God's existence [27:27-33:27]

Now, here's something that came up with King Frederick in Prussia, he said, "Prove to me that there is a God in one word." This advisor responded: "the Jews." Tell me about the Jewish people; tell me about the Babylonians. Do you remember the Babylonian empire? Babylon was a magnificent, huge empire. Where are the Babylonian people today? They're nowhere. What about the Assyrians? The Assyrians in Nineveh, 1850 acres of land, a huge city, a huge empire, but where are the Assyrians today? Nowhere. The Moabites, the Ammonites, the Edomites, all of the -ites and -tites of the Bible, where are all of those groups of people? They're gone. Question: If I asked you where the Jews were today, what would you say? New York City. To be honest, there are as many Jews in New York City as there are in Israel, did you know that? There are a lot of Jews in Israel and I have a lot of respect for them. I actually lived in Israel for a year. But things are getting bad there now and you need to pray for the peace in Jerusalem. All I am trying to say is, over the centuries, have people tried to purposely destroy the Jews? Has that happened repeatedly, over and over again in history? Yes, the latest being with Hitler in the Holocaust, 6 million Jews were wiped out. Is that a lot of Jews? Did the Jews survive that? Is there still a group of Jewish people even after that happened? Now by the way, are there people today who say the holocaust never happened? Yes. Three or four days ago, Ahminajab has said that he is committed to totally destroy Israel. This is just recently. Is he going to make a good shot at it probably? Yes. He is trying to create a nuclear weapon to do that. So Israel has got some major problems going on.

Question: the holocaust never happened? Ahminejad has his own opinion; he says that the holocaust never happened. You have your opinion, and you say the holocaust happened. It's your opinion versus his opinion. How do you know who's right? Everybody can have their own opinion. It is just his opinion versus your opinion. In post-modernism, for you guys it's just "Well, you think this and its okay to think this and I think that and it's okay. We can peacefully coexist." Does anybody ever say what really happened? His opinion is that it never happened, does that matter at all? Did it happen or

not? Does it matter whether I acknowledge it or not? If I don't acknowledge it, does that mean it didn't happen? No. It doesn't matter what I think. It happened. And by the way, some of the people that went in to Auschwitz and some of those places, did they say it was so horrendous, "No one will ever believe this." Eisenhower had his troops document those atrocities because he said, "Nobody would believe what we just found here." He purposely had that documented.

Now if you don't believe that, let me tell you a story about a lady named Sonya Weitz who stood on this platform. She is what they call "a survivor," and I'm sorry if you guys go off in a different direction when I say "survivor." When I'm talking about a "survivor," I mean someone who is a survivor of the holocaust. She was put on a cattle car, on a train with her sister, naked with hundreds of other people, like sardines. In her family, everybody was killed and only she and her sister survived. I don't know how they survived, she tells the story. She has been on this platform before. "Well," you say, "it's just your opinion" versus... Question: was she there? And she describes the holocaust. She's passed on now, by the way, are these people getting older? I am debating on whether I should put it online or not. It is just an incredible story, a woman who went through the holocaust and actually went into the concentration camps. Her family was destroyed, and she stood on this platform and told what happened to her. Question: is the holocaust legitimate? Yes! How do you know that? Because there is an eyewitness, this person was there. This isn't reading it in a history book, she was there.

So anyway, the Jews. How do you know the Jews are going to last? Are the Jews going to last until the end? Abraham's promise, land, seed--that their seed would multiply as what? The seed would multiply as the stars in the heavens and the sand of the seashore. He was to be a blessing to all nations. The covenant is land, the land of Palestine, seed, that the seed would multiply, and that he'd be a blessing to all nations. Are the Jews going to be here when Christ comes back? Sure enough. So, anybody that tries to destroy them, what usually happens to them? They end up having problems and so I'm worried about the next time this happens, I think it's going to be real serious. So the Jews, have persevered over all of these other people in the Bible who are gone, yet

the Jews still survive. Again, this is the handiwork of God.

J. Where did the Bible come from? Step One: Inspiration [33:28-38:50]

Now, we're going to switch gears. Where do we get our Bible from? So we're going to go and trace through this, and let me move a little more quickly. I'm going to do some of this out of my head just so we can speed this up a little bit. Does the Bible claim to be from God? Does it make that claim? Does your calculus textbook claim to be from God? Does your sociology, psychology, or chemistry textbook claim to be from God? Are there hundreds of thousands of volumes from our library that don't claim to be from God? There are how many books in our library that claim to be from God? Is there probably just a handful? Does the Bible make that claim? Yes, it does. 2 Timothy 3:16 says, "All Scripture is inspired by God." The actual Greek word there is *theopneustos*, which means "God breathed." "All Scripture is God breathed." When I'm talking up here, if you're sitting in the front you know this, when I talk, do I talk using breath? Yes, breath is how you speak. "All Scripture is God breathed," the word of God is breathed out into the prophets, and the prophets write it down. Paul says, "All scripture is God breathed and profitable for doctrine, reproof and correction ..."

Here's one that is interesting, over in 2 Peter 1:21, Peter says this, "For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man." Is that really important? Prophecy came, but did it come from man or did it come from God? Peter says that prophecy never came from the will of man. By the way, were there prophets who went negative, who spoke from their own will, and said, "Thus saith the Lord," when the Lord hadn't "thus saith-ed"? Were there prophets like that, "thus saith the Lord," and God had not talked to them. Those people are called what? False prophets. Were there a lot of false prophets in the Old Testament? When Elijah, the good prophet, goes up against them, what's the ratio of true prophets to false prophets? One to four hundred. There were a lot of false prophets. The true prophets say, "Thus saith the Lord..." and they spoke from God. Peter says that, "prophecy never had its origin in the will of men. But men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit." These men did not speak from themselves, making this

stuff up, they were “carried along by the Holy Spirit,” and so that’s 2 Peter 1:21, the origin is in God.

Here’s another one. “In times past,” the writer of Hebrews tells us, “God spoke to the prophets in many different ways and times.” Did God speak to the prophets in different ways? Sometimes he appeared to them; sometimes he spoke to them, and in all different ways. “But in these last days,” the writer of Hebrews says, “he has spoken to us in his son.” Jesus Christ becomes the word of God incarnate. The word of God, the Old Testament word of God, where God spoke to the people, Jesus Christ now becomes. “In the beginning was the word and the word was with God, and the word was God... And the word became flesh and dwelt among us (John 1).” The word of God gets incarnated in Jesus Christ. So the prophets did well, but does Jesus do better? Yes, Jesus blows everything away. Now you’ve got the expression of God, not in words in written phonemes and morphemes, you’ve got the word in flesh. Jesus is God in flesh, Hebrews points that out.

Here’s another one, Jesus does this, what does Jesus say about the Old Testament? Does Jesus state that the Old Testament is from God? Jesus says, “Not one jot or tittle will pass from the law until all is fulfilled.” What are a jot and a tittle? A jot is a *yodh*. It is the smallest Hebrew letter. It’s like half of a letter. It is the smallest Hebrew letter. What is a tittle? A tittle is, well, do you know what serif versus sans serif fonts are? Do know how the Times New Roman font has a little mark on the end of a “d”? It has that little thing that hangs out on the d, that’s called a serif. Sans serif would be more like Arial where the d is just a straight line and then a circle. When Jesus says not one jot or tittle, the tittle is a serif. It’s the little hook on the letter. Jesus says not one jot or tittle will pass from the law until all is what? Until everything is fulfilled. Did Jesus have a fairly high view of the law? Jesus said, “I did not come to destroy the law, I came to do” what? “To fulfill it.” Jesus takes the law as the fulfillment of his life. So Jesus has a very high view of Scripture as coming from God.

K. Four Steps from God to us: Inspiration, Canonization, Transmission,

Translation [38:51-50:52]

Now, there are four steps in this process from God to us.

The first step is called “inspiration.” Inspiration is God’s spiration breathing, God breathing his word into these prophets. The prophets spoke and they wrote it down. Now by the way, if the prophets didn’t write it down, is it lost to us? Did God ever speak to people who never wrote it down? He did. For example, look at the book of Huldah. Where is the book of Huldah? Has anyone read Huldah lately? Huldah was a prophetess, God spoke to her as a prophetess, and we don’t have any of her books. She either didn’t write it down or maybe she did and it was lost. But inspiration, the prophets wrote it down as God’s word.

Canonization: which books are authoritative?

What is canonization? Once God’s got the content written down, do the people of God have to collect those books as sacred books? So the prophets write this content down, God comes down, speaks to the prophets, “Thus saith the Lord...”, and the prophet writes it down. Canonization is the people of God then collect those books that are considered holy. Do the people have to decide which books are holy and which books are not? Are there some books talked about in Scripture that are even mentioned in Scripture that are not holy books? In the book of Kings it says, if you want more about King Josiah, go to the annals of the kings of Israel and Judah. Do we have the annals of the kings of Israel and Judah? No. They were not considered sacred books, they were considered the annals of the kings of Judah. But did the writer of Kings use those annals to give us some of his writings? Yes. So, were there other books in the ancient world floating around that we don’t have that are not canonical? But the ones we do have, the Jewish people, the people of God, collected them and said, “These are the ones that are from God.” That collection of books and sanctioning of those books is the process of canonization.

Transmission: the copying of the text by scribes

Next is transmission, that is, scribal copying. Did the books have to be copied over and over again for thousands of years? Do scribes make mistakes? When you copy a thousand page book, do you make mistakes? I will give you a word processor with spell check, even then, can you type a thousand pages without error even with spell check? Is it possible if you went back over it a number of times you could probably get it? I think you probably could. I think I've done it myself. What I'm saying is, it is really hard to get it right. These guys are copying by hand. Question: copying a thousand pages by hand, is this a problem? When copying by hand a thousand pages you've got hand writing problems and all sorts of things.

So scribal errors, I will show you errors, I will show you errors in your Bible as a result of the scribing process. Now, after you've got it copied over and over and over again for 2,000 years or whatever, now you've got to do what? The Bible was originally written in Aramaic, Hebrew, and Greek. The Old Testament was written mostly in Hebrew. After they came back from the exile to Babylon, they wrote in Aramaic and spoke in Aramaic, and then in Greek after Alexander the Great came through. So we've got it in those languages and we've got to get it translated into what? Hebrew, of course not. We need it in English. So we have to get it translated. What's the problem with translation? When you translate between languages do things get lost in translation? Do languages match up perfectly? No. And so there are some words, I think of the word *hesed*, I struggle with how to translate that word. Do I translate it into "loyal love" or "steadfast love" or just "love" or "mercy"? How do I translate that word, when there is no single English word that matches *hesed* it just doesn't exist in the English language. Question: Have I got a problem as a translator? No, I just use the NIV and you don't have to worry about it [joke]. But do you see the problem of going between languages?

Various Means of Inspiration

So let's look at the process of inspiration, how did God inspire his word? With Moses, does God speak face to face? In Numbers 12, God says of Moses, "Moses is not like the run of the mill prophet, he is not a normal prophet." He says, "Normally with prophets I speak to them in dreams and in visions, with Moses it is not like that. With

Moses I go head to head, face to face.” By the way, it’s so face-to-face that when Moses comes down from the mountain, what is his face? Does anyone remember? His face is shining and the people say “Hey, Moses, you’ve been up talking to God, you just stay over there, I don’t like your shiny face Moses, cover that up.” So Moses does what? Moses drops a veil over his face! When he goes up to talk to God, he pulls the veil off, and when he comes down to talk to the people he puts the veil on. So Moses is a prophet and he has got that kind of interaction with God. Normally God came down and told the prophet, “Thus saith the Lord...” and the prophet would quote, “Thus saith the Lord...” Isaiah, Jeremiah, all of the prophets, *coi amar Yahweh*, and then they quote from the Lord. So, God speaks to them in words, and they reveal it. God spoke in dreams, and in visions. He even appeared to them in a fiery bush.

Now here’s another way God spoke: God spoke in his son. Jesus, as we said, becomes the incarnate Word. Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God because what you’ve got is the Word becoming flesh. The Word, rather than being spoken, is now alive. The Word now communicates to us, not just in words but in deeds and in miracles—incredible things--that Jesus did. The Word becomes flesh and now God incarnates himself in flesh. Can human beings go up to Jesus and punch him in the gut? Yes! Does anyone remember the Garden of Eden? Did people in the Garden of Eden walk with God and talk with God? Yes! What happens after the fall they are cut off now. But Jesus comes back, in a sense; does Jesus Christ bring us back to the Garden where God walks among us? But what do the people do? They beat him! It’s terrible. So Jesus, “In the beginning was the word, the word was with God and the word was God... and the word became flesh and dwelt among us.” It’s a beautiful passage in the New Testament (John 1).

Now some writers, however, did research. In other words, it wasn’t God coming down and dictating something in their ear. In the book of Luke, Luke’s going to write a gospel about Jesus Christ, but did Luke ever meet Jesus Christ? No. Luke never met Jesus Christ. So, on what basis does Luke write a gospel about Jesus Christ? Well, Luke tells us where he got his data from. Where did Luke get his information? “Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as

they were handed down to us, by those who were from the first eyewitnesses [Luke 1:1-4].” Did Luke get his material about Jesus Christ from eyewitnesses? Does Luke know the difference between eyewitnesses and secondary sources? Yes. Is he a good historian? He says, “I got this information from eyewitnesses.” He checks with eyewitnesses and servants of the word, because he himself was not an eyewitness. “For since I myself have carefully investigated...” Where does the book of Luke come from? It comes from his careful investigations, talking and interviewing people who were eyewitnesses. “Everything from the beginning, now it seemed good to me also to write an orderly account.” Now I’m going to order it, he says, “for you most excellent Theophilus...so that you may know of the certainty of the things you have been taught.” So where did Luke get his information? Luke got his material largely from eyewitnesses whom he interviewed, and he tells us that [Luke 1:1-4].

Now what about this: Solomon, in Proverbs 25:1. Solomon wrote many proverbs, but who built the book of Proverbs? Was it Solomon? No! Partially yes, but in Proverbs 25:1, it says, “These are more proverbs of Solomon copied out by the men of Hezekiah.” So Hezekiah [700 BC], at least 200 years after Solomon [960 BC], from the collection or book of Solomon’s proverbs, the men of Hezekiah copied these proverbs out from that bigger collection. Do you see how the Bible gained them? They had a big collection of Solomon’s proverbs, basically chapters 25 to 29 of Proverbs was copied out of a larger collection. The men of Hezekiah did that 200 years after Solomon’s time. So do you see how God inspires people in different ways? That is all I am trying to show you.

Here’s one that Paul does. Paul in Acts 17 when he is on Mars hill, when he is in Athens in Greece. He is walking around seeing all of these gods and he says, “Hey, you guys are right. One of your poets has said, ‘In him we live and move and have our being,’ as some of your poets have said.” Paul quotes Aretas, a pagan poet, and says what the guys said was right! Is that in Scripture? “In him we live and move and have our being, as your poets have said.” Paul quotes a pagan Greek poet, and that’s in our Bible now. Did God inspire people in all different ways? Paul had that quote in his head, and he puts

it down and says, “No, that was right, what that guy said.” Now it is under the inspiration of Scripture. God inspired in different ways.

Now, there was external cooperation. Let me just do this quickly. When you pick up the Bible, if you’ve read other books, is the Bible an incredible book especially the moral quality? What are the two most important things in the Bible? “Love the Lord your God with all of your heart.” And what? “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Question: if you had to pick something noble in the world, are those some of the greatest statements ever? Love God with all of your heart, love your neighbor as yourself, these are huge things. The Bible reflects this moral quality that is absolutely incredible. The deepest human values and needs are met and expressed in Scripture. Is the Bible a deep book? You’d say, “No, Hildebrandt I know the book of Genesis...” I’m going to tell you that someone in the last class said “I’m pretty familiar with the book of Genesis.” I just want to tell you, I don’t know the book of Genesis and I’ve been teaching it for however many years. Are there things in Numbers, among others, that I still wonder about until this day? The book of the Bible is incredibly deep, you could spend your lifetime studying the depth and the meaning there.

L. Alleged Errors in the Bible: Camels, Hittites, David and archaeological confirmations [50:53-60:05]

Now here are some things about the Bible. Critics have attacked the Bible and what you get are things like this--let me just give you the argument about the camel. I love camels. Actually, the honest truth is, I hate camels. I slept by a camel one night and, if somebody says you have camel breath, that is not a compliment. Camels have the worst smelling breath, that was the worst smell I have smelled in my entire life. We slept by a camel and he breathed on our tent throughout that night. It was terrible, though I have a great deal of respect for camels.

So what’s the deal with camels? Critics say that the Bible’s got it wrong, and that there are errors in the Bible. The Bible says that Abraham had camels. When is Abraham’s date? 2,000 B.C. The Bible says he has camels. Critics claim that research shows that camels weren’t domesticated until 1200 B.C., and the Bible says Abraham had

camels (ca. 2000 B.C.). It is obvious that people didn't know that Abraham couldn't have camels domesticated, because they weren't domesticated until 800 years later. The Bible has an error in it. I'm serious this has been argued. Lo and behold, some archaeologists are digging around and they come to place called Ebla. Ebla dates from about 2400 B.C. which puts it about how many years before Abraham? About 400 years before Abraham. Guess what they had in Ebla? Lo and behold, domesticated camels in Ebla, 400 years before Abraham lived. Question: the Bible said Abraham had camels, is that right? That's right. Did these critics get it wrong? Yes, they got it wrong.

Now here's another one, the Hittites. The Bible mentions that Uriah the Hittite was married to Bathsheba. There are also other Hittites in the Bible. The critics have said, "The Bible's wrong, we know all of the peoples in the ancient world, we have all of the archaeology, there is no group called the 'Hittites,' we don't have any record of these Hittite people, therefore they didn't exist. The Bible's got it wrong, the Hittites did not exist." Lo and behold, somebody goes up into the northern part of Turkey, and all of a sudden they start digging around at Boghazkoy, and guess what? It turns out that this is the capital of the Hittite empire, and they dig up a whole culture of the Hittites! By the way, can you go to the University of Pennsylvania now and study the Hittite language? Yes! There is a whole culture with thousands of tablets from the Hittites, indeed the book of Deuteronomy is built off of a Hittite treaty form. So question: do we know now that the Hittites did exist and that the critics were wrong and the Bible was what? Right. What I am trying to ask is: is the Bible historically reliable? Yes. And what I am saying is that the critics who critique it, they end up being wrong.

What about David? This is even only thirty years ago, people were saying David didn't really exist. David was King Arthur in the ancient world, they just made up David, this figure of this great king who was benevolent. It's just like King Arthur, who never really existed. They projected all of their ideals back on David and made up this wonderful idealized king. We have no record in archaeology of David, and therefore he never existed. Lo and behold, I think it was in the 1980's, the archaeologist out there with a shovel, he digs up something about this big. Turns out it was a pomegranate, and the

pomegranate dates from about the ninth or tenth century B.C., which is right around the time of David, and guess what the pomegranate says on the side. It says “*le DVD*”. Now let me walk over here for a minute. This was the first record of the *DVD* in history. That there were going to be *DVD*’s and you’ve all been using them, and historically you can see how the Jews are brilliant and ahead of their time: *DVD*’s. Well, what’s the problem with that? The reason I say the *le* which means “to” or “for”, what is the problem with ancient Hebrew? They didn’t use what? Vowels. So you’ve got the letters *DVD*, guess what you fill in there, you don’t have to be too bright to figure it out. You have two places for vowels, what are the vowels? It is inscribed on a stone, who inscribes things on stone? Is that royalty or is that a poor man? Poor men use potshards [broken pottery pieces]. A rich man carves into stone. So this is royalty, this is David--“To David.” Guess where half of the psalms (well not half, but a ton of the psalms), guess how they start? “*Le David*” or, “For David.” So someone says, “How do we know that DVD means David?” Some critics still will not accept that and so they say DVD actually stands for some god, “To a DVD/god.” I’m not talking about your DVDs, no, they said there was a god called (and actually they used DWD) DVD from the ancient world. But what’s the problem with that argument? In all of our records, is there any god named DVD, with or without the vowels? No, there’s no record of that. Is that total conjecture on their part, because they don’t want to accept it. DVD probably means what? If anybody has ever done anything with Hebrew and you see DVD it means David. So we’ve got actual records of that now.

Now we’ve also got Jeremiah’s scribe, let me tell you about bullae. These guys, wore stuff on their rings. It was like a fingerprint. What you did on your bullae, you would stick it in wax or stick it in mud because they used to write on mud. You would stick it in the mud, and it left your print (and by the way you knew it was your print because it had your name on it.) This is what scribes did, this is how they “copyrighted” back then. That was a joke, okay? When they went bam on the document, that meant it was their document. Now there was this guy named Jeremiah, he wrote a few books, a big book actually and liked to lament. He had a scribe named Baruch, Baruch the scribe. Guess what? In 1975 you see it right there, that’s the bullae of Baruch. In Jeremiah 36,

God comes down and says, “Jeremiah, I am going to start talking to you and you need to start writing it down. You need to get one of Hildebrandt’s Old Testament scribes to type this up for you because I am going to start talking and you need to write it down. So go out and find yourself a scribe. Moreover, I’ll tell you the name of the scribe. I want you to find Baruch, the son of Neriah, the scribe. You find this guy and he’s going to write it down for you.” Have we got the bullae, the signet ring of this guy? Do we have that? By the way, its Barakaya the son of Nariah the scribe, does it come from the exact same period? In 1975 this was found. The guy who wore that ring, did he write Scripture? Did he copy down Scripture from the mouth of Jeremiah? We’ve got the guy’s bullae. Is that pretty incredible? You can’t make this stuff up. This is incredible, we’ve actually got that, the actual bullae of the guy. It says here that this was his bullae, and he actually penned this in Jeremiah 36.

There is also Jerahmeel, Seriah, Gemariah--these are also guys mentioned in the book of Jeremiah and they have found artifacts with these guy’s names on them. Is that pretty incredible? All I am trying to say is: the Bible is historically reliable. Do we dig stuff up 2,000 years later that confirms what was going on?

So we’ve got Balaam, does anybody know about Balaam and his talking donkey? Do know that this guy’s name has actually been found, Balaam the son of Beor. They’ve actually found something in trans-Jordan with this guy’s name on it--not just in the Bible, but outside of it.

On the Mesha Stone from the king of Moab, they found Omri. Omri is famous because he is the father of King Ahab. Do you remember Ahab and Jezebel? This is Ahab’s father. He is actually in a record in Assyria, because in Assyria they called Israel “the land of Omri.” So this guy is confirmed in Assyrian documents in the annals of the Assyrians, Omri is listed there. Sennacherib, the king of Assyria, is also mentioned in the Bible.

Resurrection witnesses are just some other things too, about historicity. Paul says there were 500 people who saw Jesus rise from the dead at one time.

M. Fulfilled Prophecy [60:06-62:32]

Now, fulfilled prophecy, I'm going to hit these quickly. Each one of these, to be honest, could take an hour, two hours, three hours, starting with Tyre. Ezekiel predicted in the Bible that Tyre, this massively strong city, would be destroyed; that it would be flattened like a pancake and thrown into the ocean. Guess what? Alexander the Great comes 200-300 years later and guess what he does. He comes up to Tyre and says, "Hey, that city is going into the ocean." He throws the whole city into the ocean, and the long story is that Ezekiel predicted the destruction of Tyre, and that is exactly what happened.

Isaiah tells us about Cyrus, 200 years before Cyrus lives. Isaiah tells us about Cyrus. Then you've got Cyrus the Persian coming and freeing the people. Cyrus is one of the greats, if ever you want to study someone great in the Old Testament. I call Alexander the Great, "Alexander the Grape," you know, having fun with him, but Cyrus, I say Mr. Cyrus to him. You want to study a leader, a real leader, look at Cyrus--that guy has my greatest respect. His troops respected him so much, that after he died at 75 leading his troops into battle, the Medo-Persians carried his body a thousand miles to bury it with dignity and respect. Did he have the respect of his troops? They carried his body a thousand miles to give it a decent burial. Cyrus is a great warrior king. By the way, Isaiah also has intimations of Cyrus being an anointed one. An "anointed one" in Hebrew is what?--*Messiah*. You get this flavor that Cyrus is the anointed one, kind of a precursor of Jesus.

Then, of course, was Jesus predicted in the Old Testament? Yes, born in Bethlehem. If you want to read anything about Jesus, read Isaiah 53 and when you're done it absolutely blows you away.

Here, in 1 Kings 13, it predicts King Josiah, 300 years before Josiah lived. Josiah is predicted, and it tells what he would do. The Bible predicts what the guy would do and calls him by name and tells what he would do 300 years before he lived. So does this book have some pretty spectacular things in it? Yes.

N. Canonization [62:33-74:36]

Now let's cruise on here to canonization. Do we have recorded for us in the Bible, everything that God ever spoke? Well, do we have the book of Huldah? No. God spoke to Huldah, Huldah addressed the people. She was a prophetess of God, yet we don't have her book. So there are some things that God said that he wanted for that day and age but not for forever? Do you say things that you just want your parents to know but nobody else to know? So he talked, and he didn't record everything forever. Solomon, for example, wrote 3,000 proverbs. How many proverbs do we have in our Bible from Solomon? About 375. That means we've only got about a tenth of what Solomon wrote. You know Solomon wrote 1,000 songs, how many songs of Solomon do we have? Yea, they put the one Song of Solomon in the Bible and said "That's enough we don't want any more of that!" So anyway, there are 3,000 proverbs, we've got about 375. Did Solomon write a lot of proverbs that we don't have? Yes.

Here's a classic one from Jesus. At the end of John, John says, "You know, I wrote and told you a lot of things about Jesus, but if I were to tell you everything I know about Jesus, the books of the world couldn't hold it!" In other words, there are many things that Jesus did, that are not written in this book. John says that flat out: "There are many things that Jesus did that I didn't put in this book otherwise the book would have been too big." So John comes out flatly and tells us that there are a lot of things Jesus did that aren't recorded.

Now, when things were recorded from God, did the people sanction those things and take them as authoritative immediately? Or, did legend and tradition have to grow so that they grew in their authority? Were they instantaneously authoritative? Let's take Moses, for example, he walks down from Mount Sinai; he's got the Ten Commandments, right? He comes down to the people. Are those Ten Commandments immediately accepted as authoritative from God? After he busts the first ones he comes out with the second ones. But he comes down and those are immediately accepted and as a matter of fact the Ten Commandments are put in what place to show that they are sanctioned as coming from God? Where were the ten commandments put? They were put in the Ark of

the Covenant. Have you guys seen Indiana Jones? What's in the Ark? You open it up and people's faces melt down. Anyway, the Ten Commandments were put in the Ark, does that show these Ten Commandments were immediately accepted as God's word and they were sanctioned as such. In 1 Kings 8:9, Solomon says he took the Ark into the temple. Remember Solomon built the temple, then he hauls the Ark into the temple and says, "Hey, the Ark was supposed to have a pot of manna, Aaron's budding rod, and the Ten Commandments. I pulled the Ark in here and the Ark only has the Ten Commandments, now that's all that's in there." The other two things are gone. I always wondered how he found that out. He must've had an x-ray or something.

Then in Nehemiah's day, what do they do when they come back from the Babylonian exile? They read the "Book of the law." By the way, do the Jews to this day, at many of their feasts read the book of the law? Is it accepted as authoritative for that group? Do the people of God accept the word of God? So they say, "Okay, these are the books that are good, and that are in there." Are there still people hunting for the Ark? What happened to the Ark? I got that question in the last class. I think the Ark, when they went to the exile, remember they went to Babylon. Remember Daniel, Shadrack, Meshach and Abednego, and Nebuchadnezzar, they went to Babylon. Basically Nebuchadnezzar flattened the temple of Solomon. They did what with the gold? They melted it down and they took all of the bronze and brass and hauled it to Babylon and it is just gone. Now, do some people think that the Jews hid the Ark in the Judean desert? There was a guy back just a few years ago that was spending big dollars hunting in all of the caves in the Judean wilderness trying to find this buried Ark under things. It's kind of like Indiana Jones, but there are actually people who do that. I think the Ark is gone, and that brings up an important point too.

Preservation of God's Word

The Ark is gone. Do we have the original copy of Isaiah? The original copy of Isaiah that Isaiah wrote, do we have that? Could God have preserved that? Yes. Did God preserve it? No. Jeremiah, Isaiah, Daniel, David's psalms, do we have those? Do we have any of the Pentateuch, Moses' writings? No. Did God preserve his word perfectly or did

he turn it over to scribes? Now when scribes copy it, do they make mistakes? Why did God have his word lost, and not preserve the perfect original? I'm going to make a suggestion--I'm just making this up, but it seems to me that if God had preserved the Ten Commandments, what would the people do to that? People would worship it. If you had the actual book of Moses, would people worship the relic rather than the God of the book? So my guess is that God said, "Hey, I want you to worship me! Not the relics. So let them go, and you worship me." That's why I think those texts were lost. Now, by the way, did I just make that up? Yes. But does it make a little bit of sense. If you've got a better one, come up and talk to me.

Here's one, this is Revelation. Are there statements in the Bible that you should not add or subtract to Scripture? At the end of the book of Revelation, it says, "Whoever adds to this book, the curses of this book will be added to you. Whoever subtracts from this book, your name will be subtracted from the tree of life." Is that a bad thing? That's a bad thing. By the way, Deuteronomy 4:2 does the same thing. Moses says don't add or subtract from this book, this is from God, this is a canonical work, don't mess with it.

Peter, Paul and immediate authority

Now one of the ones that I love is Peter and Paul. You've got this statement from Peter. What was the relationship of Peter to Paul? Did Paul rebuke Peter to his face? Peter and Paul in the book of Galatians had it out. Peter was saying, "Maybe the Gentiles have to be circumcised, maybe they have to do all of this Jewish stuff." Paul says, "No, you are wrong Peter." Now, by the way, is Peter the big disciple? Paul is the newcomer. Paul goes to Peter, puts his finger in his face and says, "Peter, you're wrong!" And he rebukes him to his face. What does Peter say about that? In 2 Peter, does Peter get the last word? In 2 Peter, this is what he says about Paul, "Bear in mind, that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul has also wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him." Does Peter acknowledge that God gave Paul wisdom and that Paul was writing to them? Yes. Peter acknowledges that God gave Paul wisdom. Now what was Peter by trade? A fisherman. What was Paul by trade? A tentmaker, yes, but was he more of a scholarly person, studying under Rabbi Gamaliel. So Peter is a fisherman. Here's what

Peter says concerning Paul, he says, “He writes the same way in all of his letters.” Was Peter aware of all of Paul’s letters? Did Paul’s letters take years and years before they became authoritative or were they immediately authoritative? Did Peter recognize the authority of Paul’s letters immediately? He says, “Paul wrote many letters, God spoke to him from wisdom, speaking in them of these matters,” and I love this part, “...his letters contain some things that are hard to understand.” Is that the fisherman speaking? If you’ve read the letters of Paul in the New Testament, Paul does write some pretty advanced ideas. And Peter acknowledges this, he says, “Paul writes God’s wisdom, and I’m not sure I understand all of this.” “Which the ignorant and unstable distort as they do,” the what? They distort Paul’s letters “as they do the other Scripture.” This means he is putting Paul’s letters on the same level as what? The scriptures, the holy writings. Did Peter accept Paul’s writings immediately? Yes. And so those are important verses.

They were immediately authoritative and you can actually see this here with Daniel. Daniel cites Jeremiah, they were contemporaries, they lived at the same time. Daniel says, “Jeremiah said we’re going to be in Babylon for 70 years. It’s going to be 70 years.” Daniel accepts Jeremiah immediately. So the people of God accepted the word of God immediately.

Criterion for Canonization

Now the question that gets raised here is why were certain books accepted and others rejected? In other words, they were accepted immediately but then what happened was, you’ve got a process. If Paul writes to Ephesus, the people at Ephesus get that letter but the people sitting over in Rome, they know nothing of that letter. Those letters had to be circulated, so you get the problem of circulation. And then the question is: Okay, we’re sitting in Rome, can we get the letter to the Ephesians? Did Paul really write that? Was that really the one? So the early church actually struggled with that for probably 200-300 years. There was a process of canonization, but what I’m suggesting to you is this, is there evidence in Scripture that things were accepted immediately. But the problem seems to me more about circulation in the early church. But with the Jews you get the

same kind of thing.

I want to cap it there, but let's do some Bible-robics!

Transcribed by Erika Abrahamsen
Rough edited by Ted Hildebrandt-2