INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL STUDIES

IMMERSE CORNERSTONE SEMINAR
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INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL STUDIES

• OVERVIEW OF SEMINAR

• WORLDVIEW ISSUES
• THE BIBLE
  • WHAT IT IS
  • HOW WE GOT IT
  • HOW TO INTERPRET IT
• TOOLS FOR STUDY
• PRACTICE PASSAGES
• BIBLIOGRAPHY
YOUR WORLDVIEW MATTERS

• DO YOU, DOES CHRISTIAN MINISTRY, HAVE SOMETHING UNIQUE TO OFFER? WHAT IS IT?
YOUR WORLDVIEW MATTERS CONT’D

• WHO IS YOUR OFFERING FOR?
• HOW MUST YOU OFFER IT?
YOUR WORLDVIEW MATTERS CONT’D

• DO WE OFFER EXPLANATION OR PROCLAMATION? OR?
YOUR WORLDVIEW MATTERS CONT’D

• THE BIBLE AND CHURCH
IMPORTANCE OF BIBLICAL STUDIES FOR MINISTRY

• * FOUNDATIONAL...PROVIDES GROUNDING, FOCUS, AUTHORITY, AND SECURITY FOR OUR WORK

• * WITHOUT IT WE HAVE NOTHING (SPECIAL) TO OFFER

• * CF. SOCIAL WORK, COUNSELLING, HUMANITARIAN WORK

• * WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS...MESSAGE FROM OUTSIDE

• AUTHORITY IS THE RIGHT TO ACT

• POWER IS THE ABILITY TO ACT
WHAT IS THE BIBLE?

• * A BOOK
• * A MESSAGE?
• * A WAY OF LIFE?
• *CHRISTIANITY?
WHAT DO YOU DO WITH A BOOK?

• READ IT
• STUDY IT
• UNDERSTAND IT
• APPLY IT
• PREACH IT
WHAT IS IT CONT’D

• A SET OF 66 “BOOKS”
• BY MULTIPLE AUTHORS
• WRITTEN OVER ABOUT 1500 YEARS
• THREE LANGUAGES: HEBREW, ARAMAIC, GREEK
• ALL SET IN MIDDLE EAST AND MEDITERRANEAN WORLD
INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

• A BOOK... BUT NOT JUST AN ORDINARY BOOK
• INSPIRATION = “GOD BREATHED”
• PRESUPPOSITIONAL AND INDUCTIVE
• MEANS: WHATEVER IT IS, IT’S WHAT GOD WANTED TO GIVE US
• “HOLY BOOK?” NOT IN SAME SENSE AS BOOK OF MORMON OR KORAN
THE “CANON” OF SCRIPTURE

• EXCLUDED BOOKS
• INCLUDED BOOKS
• OT CANON DEFINED MOSTLY BY LXX
  • BEGINNING TRANSLATION 3rd CENT BC TO 132 BC
  • INCLUDES APOCRYPHAL AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHAL BOOKS
  • CATHOLIC BIBLES STILL INCLUDE
• BOOKS CONSIDERED “AUTHORITATIVE” FOR FAITH AND PRACTICE
• NT CANON SETTLED FOR CHRISTIANS FROM THE 4th CENTURY
  • I.E. OUR 27 BOOKS
  • LUTHER OPENED THE QUESTION AGAIN
APOCRYPHA AND PSEUDEPIGRAPHA

• MOSTLY INTER-TESTAMENTAL

• APPROACH TO INCLUSION IN CANON VARIES FROM JUDAISM TO CHRISTIANITY, AND WITHIN VARIOUS BRANCHES OF CHRISTIANITY

• APOCRYPHA = non canonical; not inspired
  • OT: TOBIT, JUDITH, WISDOM OF SOLOMON, WISDOM OF SIRACH, BARUCH, EPISTLE OF JEREMY, I, 2, 3 & 4 MACCABEES, 1 ESDRAS, SUSANNA, BEL AND THE DRAGON, ADDITIONS TO DANIEL AND TO ESTHER
  • NT: GOSPEL OF THOMAS, DIDACHE, AND MANY OTHER FRAGMENTS

• PSEUDEPIGRAPHA = attributed to known authors by writers
  • ENOCH, ASSUMPTION OF MOSES
HOW DID WE GET OUR BIBLE?

• MANUSCRIPTS
  • ALL “BY HAND” UNTIL THE MOVEABLE TYPE PRINTING PRESS IN 1450 (EARLIER IN CHINA)
  • SOME KIND OF PEN AND SOME KIND OF INK AND SOME KIND OF “PAPER”
  • PARCHMENT, PAPYRUS

• FORMS OF “BOOKS”
  • SCROLLS, WRITTEN ON ONE SIDE ONLY...OT
  • BOUND BOOKS, WRITTEN ON TWO SIDES...NT

• AUTHOR AND AMANUENSIS

• SHORT PIECES vs LONG PIECES ESP. IN OT
HOW DID WE GET OUR BIBLE CONT’D?

• EDITING PROCESSES
  • PROCESSES NOT ENTIRELY CLEAR
    • OT REPETITION
    • OT BLOCKS OF SIMILAR MATERIALS
    • GOSPELS: VARIOUS THEOLOGICAL THEMES/”BENTS”
  • STILL, PRETTY “FIXED”
HOW DID WE GET OUR BIBLE CONT’D?

• TRANSMISSION OF TEXTS
  • **OT:**
    • EXTREME CARE: COUNTING WORDS, LETTERS; GENIZA
    • SCRIBES
    • QUMRAN SCRIPTORIUM
    • MASSORETES
  
  • **NT:**
    • VERY LARGE NUMBER OF MSS
    • “LESS” CARE
HOW DID WE GET OUR BIBLE CONT’D?

• SEPTUAGINT = LXX
  • OT TRANSLATION INTO GREEK
    • ALEXANDRIA IN EGYPT
    • FAMOUS LIBRARY
    • STARTING IN 3rd CENT BC
    • 70 TRANSLATORS
    • Cf. OUR LXX INSTITUTE
    • IS KEY TO UNDERSTANDING HEBREW IDEAS IN GREEK
    • TRANSITION FROM HEBREW OT TO GREEK NT
HOW DID WE GET OUR BIBLE CONT’D?

• THE DEAD SEA SCROLLS
  • FROM 2ND C BC TO NO LATER THAN AD 70
  • A PIECE OR ALL OF EACH OT BOOK EXCEPT ESTHER
  • ISAIAH SCROLL
  • HUNDREDS OF FRAGMENTS OF ALL KINDS OF WORKS
  • MANUAL OF DISCIPLINE/COMMUNITY RULE
  • A FULL 1000 YRS OLDER THAN OLDEST PREVIOUS EXTANT MSS OF OT
CHRONOLOGY OF BIBLE EVENTS

BC
( ALL DATES APPROXIMATE)
2000-1900 ABRAHAM
1400 MOSES
1000 DAVID
750 ISAIAH
586 JERUSALEM DESTROYED BY NEBUDCHADNEZZAR
440 MICAH – END OF OLD TESTAMENT
CHRONOLOGY OF THE BIBLE CONT’D

• 440 – 5 INTERTESTAMENTAL PERIOD
• 5 JESUS BORN
CHRONOLOGY OF THE BIBLE CONT’D

- **AD**
  - 26 JOHN THE BAPTIST PREACHES; JESUS BAPTIZED
  - 30 CRUCIFIXION
  - 34 PAUL’S CONVERSION
  - MID TO LATE 40’S MARK’S GOSPEL; EPISTLE OF JAMES
  - 48 PAUL’S FIRST MISSIONARY JOURNEY
  - 51 - 67 PAUL’S WRITINGS
  - 95 JOHN’S WRITINGS
  - 95 END OF NEW TESTAMENT
KINDS OF LITERATURE IN THE BIBLE

• HISTORICAL
• PROPHETIC
• WISDOM
• APOCALYPTIC
• GOSPELS
• ACTS
• EPISTLES
• APOCALYPSE
GENRES OF LITERATURE IN THE OT

• NARRATIVE
• POETRY
• PROVERBS
• APOCALYPTIC
PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION

• THE “CORRECT” INTERPRETATION IS THAT INTERPRETATION REQUIRED BY THE RULES OF LANGUAGE AND THE FACTS OF HISTORY
• TREAT THE BIBLE AS AN OVERALL UNITY
• RECOGNIZE “PROGRESSIVE” REVELATION
• INTERPRET DIFFICULT/OBSCURE PASSAGES IN THE LIGHT OF CLEAR PASSAGES
• LITERAL MEANING IS PREFERRED EXCEPT WHEN SOMETHING IS CLEARLY FIGURATIVE
PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION CONT’D

- LITERARY/HISTORICAL STANDARDS AND NORMS CHANGE OVER TIME
- SOME STAY THE SAME – EG. IMPORTANCE OF EYE WITNESSES
- ALL LANGUAGE IS CULTURALLY CONDITIONED
- CONTEXT IS CRITICAL
- LET SCRIPTURE INTERPRET SCRIPTURE
- READ OUT OF THE TEXT NOT INTO IT
- ATTITUDE OF HUMILITY – LET THE BIBLE INTERPRET YOU
- SCRIPTURE IS THEO-CENTRIC
PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION CONT’D

• LOOK FOR THE WRITER’S INTENTION(S)
• LOOK FOR THE Plain AND OBVIOUS MEANING
STUDYING THE BIBLE

• LANGUAGE
• HISTORY

• THE CORRECT INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE (OR ANY OTHER WRITTEN MATERIAL) IS THAT INTERPRETATION REQUIRED BY THE RULES OF LANGUAGE AND THE FACTS OF HISTORY
INTRODUCTION TO LANGUAGE STUDY

• SEMANTICS
• MORPHOLOGY
• GRAMMAR
• SYNTAX
  • SEARCH CONJUNCTIONS
  • SEARCH VERBS
ISSUES RELATING TO “HISTORY”

• CHARACTERISTICS OF AUTHOR OR SPEAKER
• SOCIAL/POLITICAL/CULTURAL SITUATION OF WRITER AND OF SUBJECT MATTER
• CULTURAL UNDERSTANDINGS OF FIRST READERS
APPROACHES TO BIBLICAL STUDY

• WHOLE BIBLE
• WHOLE BOOKS
• PASSAGES, VERSES
• THEMES, TOPICS
TOOLS FOR STUDYING THE BIBLE

• ORIGINAL TEXTS
  • HEBREW
  • GREEK
TOOLS CONT’D

• ANCIENT TRANSLATIONS
  • LXX
  • SYRIAC
TOOLS CONT’D

• INTRODUCTIONS
TOOLS CONT’D

• BIBLE DICTIONARIES AND ENCYCLOPEDIAS
TOOLS CONT’D

• COMMENTARIES
  • SETS
  • INDIVIDUAL BOOKS
TOOLS CONT’D

• SPECIALIZED STUDIES
  • ARCHAEOLOGY
  • ANCIENT NEAR EAST STUDIES
  • GRECO-ROMAN BACKGROUND
  • SOCIOLOGICAL BACKGROUNDS

• THEMATIC STUDIES
PRACTICE PASSAGES: ECCLES 11:1-6

• WHAT’S IT ABOUT?
• WHAT IS EACH VERSE/SENTENCE SAYING?
• WHAT INTERPRETIVE ISSUES ARE RAISED?
• HISTORY? LANGUAGE?
PRACTICE PASSAGES

• IS 44 CONJS AND VBS
PRACTICE PASSAGES

• PHIL 2 CONJS AND VBS
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