

INTRODUCTION

Our course this semester is, in a sense, a continuation of the course *Introduction to the Old Testament* in which we examine what the Old Testament is, what revelation is, and what inspiration is. I presume that you have an idea of what we deal with in that course in regard to this vital matter of God's revelation to us. Although our emphasis was on the Old Testament, most of what we have in that course would apply equally well to either testament. The same is also true in respect to questions concerning the canon. The principles we dealt with there would apply equally well to the New Testament, though they are more difficult to apply in that connection, and this makes it especially important that we get an understanding of their application to that part of God's Word. In the latter part of the course we discussed the four important ancient and immediate versions of the Old Testament, and learned by examining the evidence how we can determine that we have the correct text.

All the material in the first part of that course is very important to our understanding of the entire Bible. The middle part dealt with matters that have become tremendously important as Barthianism has continued its attack upon the canon, although that importance is not always apparent to all. The latter part of that course is very important when you are doing a study of the specialized application of individual OT verses, but it may not affect your particular work for many years.

The present course is very different. It is much more focused on a particular area. We will be dealing with a small section of scripture, but it is a section that has been very fiercely attacked. We will deal with an area that can be called the watershed of division between believers in supernatural Christianity and those who reject it. It has been at this point (of Introduction to the Pentateuch) that many great leaders in Christian thought have been gradually diverted from their allegiance to orthodox Christianity and have then become instrumental in shifting entire seminaries and even whole denominations onto altogether different tracks, leading them in an entirely different direction.