

mine whether Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon were written in Solomon's early days, or in his later years, and of thus deciding whether they are books that can safely be used as a guide in spiritual matters, or whether, on the other hand, they are books to which the words of Deuteronomy apply: "Thou shalt not hearken unto that prophet."

Is it an individual question for each of us to determine for himself, which of the Old Testament books were written by true prophets, and which of the New Testament books were written by apostles, or under apostolic supervision? Is this something which each believer must decide for himself, on the basis of evidence available to him? If it is, we must be very careful indeed. We dare not quote the word of fallible man as if it were the Word of the infallible God. Yet in the case of book after book the evidence is simply not available for us to determine today whether it was written by a true prophet. In the case of book *after book* we have no way of proving with certainty that it was written by an apostle, or under apostolic supervision. Must each believer decide which books he dares to take as God's Word? If so he must beware of sermons or doctrines drawn from other books. He soon finds himself of necessity in an almost impossible situation, with large sections of the Bible lost to him.

It is the conviction of the present writer, however, that this is not the real situation. He believes thoroughly in the right and duty of the individual believer to determine objectively the meaning of the Scripture for himself. He believes, however, that God has given us a means of knowing exactly what books the Bible should include, without the necessity of making an individual judgment on the basis of evidence which is no longer available. This can be shown by examining certain definite propositions:

1. As a first step <sup>toward</sup> in finding the answer to this problem we should note that for the Christian the supreme authority is the Lord Jesus Christ.