

# How To Read, Study, and Understand The Bible

# 1. The Hebrew Bible – Old Testament

CANON

# Canonization

- Canon means reed, stalk, measure
- Refers to the body of materials included in Holy Bible
- List
- Texts deemed sacred and authoritative for the community of faith
- Implicit in the term is stability and flexibility

# Canonization and the Old Testament

- As a list, canon suggests inclusion and exclusion
- If some books were in, what was left out?
- What was the process that determined what was in/out of the canon?
- Is it appropriate to talk about a canonization process for the Old Testament?

# 3 divisions of the Hebrew Bible/OT

- Torah/Law/Pentateuch - *Torah*
- Prophets – *Nevi'im*
- Writings - *Ketuvim*

# Canonization as an organic process

- Texts that everyone agreed upon as authoritative
- Books of Moses – Law
- Prophets – Authoritative because the prophets spoke for God
- Books of Joshua, Judges, Samuel and Kings featured prophets

# OT Canonization

- LAW as early as 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE
- PROPHETS 2<sup>nd</sup> century BCE
- WRITINGS 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE



# Criteria for Canonization (Writings)

- Date: had to be written before the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE or attributed to someone who lived before then.
- Language: Hebrew (little Aramaic in Ezra and Daniel)
- Extent of Use:



**Stability**

**Flexibility**

## 2. The Christian Church's Appropriation of the Hebrew Bible

## Within The Gospels

Mt 4:1-11 (Deut. 8:3, 6:16,13)

Luke 4:16-21 (Isaiah 61:1-2)

Mt 5:21-48 (Ex 20, Deut 24, Lev 19, Num 30,  
Ex 21)

Mt 15:7-9 (Isaiah 29:3)

Mk 10:17-22 (Ex 20:12-16)

Luke 20:17-19 (PS 118:22,23)

Mk 15:34 (Ps 22:1)

Luke 24:13-27

## Within The Gospels

- ✓ Jesus referenced and quoted scripture from the Hebrew Bible Often
  - ✓ Used it as the basis of His teaching
    - ✓ “You heard it said v. but I say”

# By The Early Christian Church

Acts 2:14-40 (Joel 2, Ps 16:8-11, 110:1)

Acts 2:25-31

Acts 7:2-60 (42, 43 – Amos 5), (48-50 – Isaiah 66)

Acts 7:54

Acts 8:26-35 (Isaiah 53:7,8)

## By The Early Christian Church

- ✓ They used Hebrew scripture to validate, proclaim, and teach Jesus Christ
- ✓ Their use of Hebrew scripture was offensive to Jewish leaders
- ✓ Church leaders appropriated the Hebrew scripture as their own sacred scriptures

## By The Apostle Paul

Paul's use of the Hebrew Bible is extensive but can summarized as follows:

1. To show how the gospel of Jesus Christ was prophesied and revealed in OT
2. To guide and govern the life of the church by balancing grace and the law in areas such as money, family, and Christian relationship



## By The Apostle Paul

3. To break down the barriers between Jews and Greeks
4. To delineate the different lives of sin and righteousness
5. To summarize God's victory for us through Jesus Christ

The OT scriptures were used by Jesus, appropriated by the early church, incorporated into the theology and church governance of Paul, referenced by the Gospel writers and were generally accepted as a part of the foundation of Christianity before the formation of the NT