

Background of Scripture

Scripture – God’s Self-Revelation to the Human Family about himself, of himself. Often through the stories of God and Man, Man and Man, Man and Woman, Man and Sin, Man and Country. All the relationships of our lives.

Oral Tradition; Family; Clan; Culture; Faith; Nation of the Hebrew Peoples
Similarity of Stories; Differences by Experiences – Israel and Judah Kingdoms
Redaction and Merging of versions

Inspiration of God upon the Human authors. Acceptance by Human Ears. Meant to Inspire, not historical accounts (mostly). Moral Theology and Faith in the Lord primary emphasis.

Sense of Scripture:

Literal Sense – all scripture has a literal sense (what is meant), not a LITERAL account.

Spiritual as Allegory (figurative treatment of one subject under the guise of another), Moral (what ought to be) and Anagogic (future sense)

Literary forms:

- Parables –fictional story, virtue stories, moral stories
- Poems, Songs, Wisdoms, Proverbs, Letters, Epistles, Creedal Statements
- Allegory – figure story with a veiled meaning (Genesis Adam and Eve)
- Short Story – mostly historical
- Historical Novel – tradition and fashions to bring out a religious meaning called a midrash.
- Problem Story – moral problem or spiritual problem to be solved.
- Speech – Moses in Deuteronomy
- Apocalyptic Visions
- Redaction Types –
 - Deuteronomistic - the Law
 - Jahwist - the oldest source, make up half of Genesis and the first half of Exodus describes a human-like God, called Yahweh (or rather YHWH). southern kingdom
 - Elohist - promotes Israel over Judah, and Levitical priests over Judah's Aaronite priests. Northern kingdom
 - Priestly - Babylonian Exile/ focus on Levitical laws.
- Methods of Criticism and Interpretation:
 - Historical criticism
 - Literary criticism - literary forms, structures and themes
 - Source criticism - identifying potential sources and precursors
 - Form criticism - oral precursors (stories, legends, myths, etc.) are discernable behind the text
 - Tradition criticism - process by which religious tradition was passed down
 - Redaction criticism -

Hebrew Canon:

- First written records date back to about 1400 BCE
- Consolidated versions at or about 550 BCE – Hebrew – Diaspora - scattering or sowing of seeds
- Septuagint (246 BCE) Greek

Christian Canon:

- First written record about 50 CE
- 325 CE Council of Nicaea/Creed
- Consolidated version about 400 CE (Vulgate; Saint Jerome)

Criteria for Scripture:

- Content And Unity of the Scripture – God’s loving care
- Hebrew Testament – Jesus’ own embrace, Hebrew Canon accepted
- Gospel Message – Hebrew and Christian Testaments - Suffering Servant – Messiah; Apostolicity
- Tradition of the Church (Apostle Writing; Fathers of the Church; Rome)
- Plenty not included; No new inclusions

Up To Exodus (the ages before time and the time of the Patriarchs):

- Creation story (2 of them)
- The Fall of Man
- Noah and the Flood, Covenant
- Tower of Babel
- Abram is called – Ur to Babel, Haran, Shechem, Egypt, Hebron, Dan, Hobah (near Damascus).
- Abram Covenant and the Covenant of Circumcision
- Abram and Sarah
- Abram and Lot
- Isaac
- Jacob
- Joseph and the first slavery in Egypt
- Migration to Egypt

Geography:

The Fertile Crescent begins in what is now southern Iraq where the Tigris and Euphrates rivers empty into the Persian Gulf. It extends north along with the rivers, turns westward in what was ancient Assyria, and then turns back south in what is modern Syria. The Fertile Crescent then extends down into southern Palestine; sometimes the Nile River region is included in the Fertile Crescent despite the fact that it and southern Palestine are separated by the distinctly un-fertile Sinai peninsula.

Places:

- Thebes – Egyptian Capitol pre Exodus
- Goshen - At delta triangle
- Mount Sinai or Horeb I Sinai
- Canaan

OT Structure:

- Pentateuch or Torah or the Law - The Five Books - Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy
- The Tanakh - Tanakh is the Bible used in Judaism.
- The name "Tanakh" is a Hebrew acronym formed from the initial Hebrew letters of the Tanakh's three traditional subdivisions:
 - The Torah ("Teaching," also known as the Five Books of Moses),
 - Nevi'im ("Prophets") and
 - Ketuvim ("Writings") - hence TaNaKh.

Nevi'im ("Prophets"):

- First Prophets - Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings
- Latter Prophets - Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel – Christian
- Minor Prophets: Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, Malachi

Ketuvim ("Writings"):

- The Three Poetic Books - Psalms, Proverbs, Job
- The Five Scrolls - Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther
- Other Historical Books - Daniel, Ezra, Chronicles