

It's a miracle that goes beyond our understanding, beyond anything we can imagine any human being doing or being done humanly. But it is an important step in God's making it possible for us to have the profit we get from the Scripture.

Now there is a third miracle and this miracle is little spoken of today, in fact so little it might not be necessary to say much about it. But who knows when the devil will make the question of the canon a matter of primary consideration. I knew a young fellow who was a student in the college that I attended, and who began taking night courses at the Bible Institute. The president of the college heard of it. He called him into his office. He said "Why are you doing that? You will lose all the value of your college course! We're teaching you to think, to know facts. You go there and you'll be misled." Well, the man said, "I believe the Bible is God's Word; I want to learn about it too." And this was a supposedly Christian college. The president who had formerly been a teacher of Church History in a rather well-known seminary said to him, "Now the Bible has 66 books in it. How were these books picked? Did some individual pick out the 66 books, or was there a Council that did it?"

The fellow said to me, "I didn't know which, so I said, I guess a council." The president said, "No, No. No Council made the decision. Well, in this case the student decided he didn't know enough about these things to argue with the president so he said, 'I'll leave the college and go full time to the Bible Institute.'"

I think in most cases the decision is made the other way. The canon can be made a question to confuse people very much. Here were these inspired books written. And there were many other books written. Here were these great prophets to whom God spoke, and there were many false prophets who also wrote books. How do we know that we have the correct books? It is a miracle which God worked. It is a tremendous miracle!

The Jews have argued about all kinds of questions. You read the Talmud. It is just one argument after another right straight through. All kinds of questions, all kinds of differences. But there is no evidence of any sizeable group of Jews that has ever said that their Bible consisted of anything else than these 39 books in our OT. It is a miracle! There are those who talk about the Council of Jamnia which they said made a decision. There's no clear proof there ever was such a Council. There's absolutely no proof that any decision was made. There is some evidence in the Talmud of some discussions about, "Should we throw out this book? Should we reject that one?"

But even the liberal student today recognizes that these discussions from the very nature of them as you read them in the Talmud were based not upon an attempt to really decide where these -- whether these should be thrown out, but to work out arguments to answer people who were raising questions. There's no evidence whatever at any time when any sizeable group of Jews have suggested that a book was inspired which is not one of our 39 books in the OT. God worked a miracle and within two centuries after the last book of