

We realize that this is only a tradition but it is interesting that the putting of the books together would be tied in with Ezra. Then in II Macc. has also a statement which would indicate that Ezra had something to do with the setting together of the books of the O.T. It fits in with the general tradition of the canon being finished up at the time of Ezra and Nehemiah.

3. This tradition that Ezra collected them seems quite probable.

(1) The character of Ezra--he is called the scribe in Ezra 8; a ready scribe of the Law of Moses; Note Ezra 7:11.. Words are used to describe him which would be characteristic of someone who would be connected with the writing down of the Scripture.

(2) Character of Ezra's time--they were trying to get Jerusalem as in days bygone and it would be quite appropriate to get all the books of God at that time.

(3) Collections had been made of books before --Cf. Jer. 26:17-19--they refer here to ~~a~~ book of Micah. Cf. Dan. 9:2. It would be quite natural for them trying to get all the books together. It has usually be thought <sup>by</sup> the Jews that Ezra collected the books but it certainly is not an article of faith and we shouldn't speak dogmatically that Ezra did collect them but it is an interesting theory. It is very easy to <sup>get</sup> inferences and build a # 3 whole premise on simply an inference which might be correct all of the time but if we don't have a basis and direct proof for it we just find ourselves in a great deal more trouble. We must be careful not to put an inference in the realm of fact and then if someone doesn't agree with our inference we think they are out of the pale. We would say that the Holy Spirit helped preserve the Holy Bible though it is not included with the work of inspiration. The Holy Spirit caused them to be wonderfully preserved. We note that the wonderful preservation is a way beyond any other book that was ever preserved though a few errors have crept in in these many years.

H. The three-fold division of the Canon--of the O.T. books. We take up just typical evidences which prove that we can trust the Scriptures--we could not possibly take up all the questions. It isn't easy to get much material on the matter of the problems of the Bible, because there isn't much money available and we are in a bad situation when it comes to evangelical work--we have a lot of superficial work, and in contrast there is a tremendous amount of liberal material published. This subject is one which we will discuss a good deal but not at the present time.