

reading. The interested reader may also consult Payne: THEOLOGY OF THE OLDER TESTAMENT, chapter 2. Watch the understanding of the adjective "old"...it does not mean worn out or out of phase.

3. Inspiration

The technical definition belongs more to systematic theology but it is impossible to study the Old Testament meaningfully without an understanding of this topic. One's view of inspiration is critical in the use of the Old Testament and serves as a guideline to the nature of theological conclusions that will be drawn and promulgated.

a. Essential definition:

Inspiration is a work of the Holy Spirit whereby He guided the writers of the Scripture so that their writings were preserved from error and conveyed the message of God to the people.

We speak of this as being an "inductive definition" in the concept that it is written only after all relevant Scriptures bearing on the subject have been consulted. (We do not show the process in this course but that is the nature of the work underlying the definition.) When the ideas of all relevant passages have been extracted, this is the sort of definition we feel is mandated. Among the many passages considered are Jer. 1:9; 2 Peter 1:21; John 5:39; 2 Tim. 3:15, etc., all in proper context. The list is almost endless and this is why it is no easy thing to write definitions inductively. There are critics of the inductive process but they are chiefly "after the fact" critics. In this area it is thought, with Hodge, et al, that the inductive method is the proper method of theology and the inductive definitions the proper form for arriving at defined concepts.

In reading definitions of inspiration, you will find that each theologian may introduce a particular word that identifies his special interest. Our terms in this definition are designed for simplicity and while they might not meet the ultimate, they will do for now.

The inductive definition, in general, has the chief advantage that the criteria on which it is based are always available for inspection and evaluation. The resultant ideas are superior to etymological definitions as well as speculative and philosophical delineations.