

the assumptive point of synagogue tradition. It seems to cut across historic emphasis, however. Since the Psalms are spoken of by Jesus as the law...it may be seen how "law, prophets, and writings" goes beyond a mere two-fold division although "law and prophets" could be extended to a three fold idea.

## 2. Completion of the canon

The traditional view sees the canon completed shortly after or around 400 BC. Malachi was the last prophet..and there may be a few psalms that reflect a slightly later date but not much..and even this is not proved. The liberal view sees the canon of the O.T. complete no earlier than 100 AD and puts a great stress on events that are supposed to have happened at Jamnia. We are prone to think that if the critical idea were true, the church would never have accepted the OT as a unit of foundational truth... especially as the animosity between the Jew and Gentile world increased so sharply. It would seem that after the Jewish/Christian persecution the church would be hard pressed to accept them, at that point, the work of the Jewish community.

## D. THE HIGHER CRITICAL VIEW OF THE CANON

(Remember, in this discussion, that **criticism** is a neutral word..lower criticism works with the text, higher with authenticity, etc. We are working not just with the concepts of higher criticism but particularly with the concepts that begin with doubting the Bible to be what it claims to be.)

### 1. Historical notes

The "fathers" of the Christian church were vigorous defenders of the Word. The defense was mounted by those who, like Justin and Augustine, found their personal knowledge of God anchored in the Word of His truth. Questions about the accuracy of the Biblical claim or the genuineness of a book did not arise within the community but without. Porphyry, Plotinus, Marcion, Celsus, Lucian, etc., all made pointed charges about the integrity of Scripture but they did it from the point of view of pagan philosophy. The Fathers, making much of fulfilled prediction, etc., argued sharply for the reliable nature of the Word. Among them there is no suggestion that Moses did not write the Pentateuch or