

ade about the question, How did it come that the Jews in the time of Christ accepted exactly these books as authoritative? And the answer to that must be that there was a historical process. That is to say, something happened. It stands to reason, that at the death of Jeremiah not all the Jews accepted Jeremiah's writing as authoritative. That stands to reason, because ~~he~~ Jeremiah had enemies who said he was not a true prophet, and who prophesied in many regards very differently than he. And there were people in his day who said, Jeremiah is much too bitter. He is much too harsh. He advocates giving the Babylonians to ~~throw~~ throw over this country, and that is perfectly absurd, we are God's people, and God can deliver us. We don't need to say that Nebuchadnezzar is going to come in and take us over. It is perfectly ridiculous. There were people in his day who said, God has delivered us through the ages, and he is going to deliver us again. And ~~if~~ ^{this} Jeremiah is a prophet of doom, he is a bitter man who is frustrated in his heart, just because he hasn't gotten the position in the Jewish community that he'd like to have, and therefore he is critical and he is not the sort of man we should follow. And here are these loving prophets, who say, Peace, Peace, these men who are exhorting us to have good relations with all our Jewish leaders, and not to condemn some of them the way Jeremiah does, and not to say these terrible things that Jeremiah has written about these people. And they are the men we should follow, and not Jeremiah. And so we can be absolutely sure that at Jeremiah's death there were some very very fine people who said that Jeremiah is not a man to follow, but ~~the~~ these other men are men to follow, and we will treasure every scrap of writing that these other men wrote, because that is the true word of God. Now we know there must have been people who took that attitude. And as you read Jeremiah sometimes you feel as if the whole Jewish nation was against him. Sometimes you get the attitude as you read Isaiah or as you read Jeremiah that everybody was against them, and it is doubtless true that at many times in the course of the careers of those two men, that tremendous overwhelming majority, including all the leaders, were against him, and yet the fact remains, that at the time of Christ, that the Jews said, that Isaiah's book was a true book, Isaiah was a true prophet, and they said, Jeremiah's book was a true book,