



**Lecture # 11 Part 1**

# Supporting Claims for the Inspiration of the Old Testament

## NEW TESTAMENT REFERENCES TO THE OLD TESTAMENT AS A WHOLE

The New Testament has varied descriptions of the Old Testament as a whole. Each declares in its own way the divine origin of the entire canon of Hebrew Scriptures.

### “SCRIPTURE”

The New Testament uses the term *Scripture* in a technical sense. It occurs some fifty times, and in most cases **it refers unmistakably to the Old Testament as a whole**. To first-century Christians, the word *Scripture* meant primarily the canon of the Old Testament, which is called “sacred” ([2 Timothy 3:15](#)) or “holy” ([Romans 1:2](#)).

These they acknowledged to be “inspired” of God ([2 Timothy 3:16](#)) and the rule for faith and practice ([2 Timothy 3:17](#); cf. [Romans 15:4](#)).

Several New Testament passages may be cited (italics added) to illustrate this point. **(I have 12 points to make about this!)**

1. In [Matthew 21:42](#) Jesus charges the Pharisees saying, **“Did you never read in the Scriptures?”** The question implied that they were ignorant of their own sacred authority, the Old Testament.
2. In [Matthew 22:29](#) Jesus answers the Sadducees in like manner, saying, **“You are mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures or the power of God.”**
3. On the eve of His betrayal, in [Matthew 26:54, 56](#) Jesus refers to the Old Testament *Scriptures* as He says, **“But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.”**
4. [Luke 24](#) is a crucial passage in the present discussion, for Jesus not only opened to the disciples **“the Scriptures”** ([v.32](#)), but the *Scriptures* are described as everything written about Christ **“in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms”** ([v.44](#)). Earlier in this same chapter, while relating Christ’s exposition of the Old Testament law and prophets, Luke called these **“all the Scriptures”** ([v.27](#)).
5. [John 2:22](#) states that after Jesus was raised from the dead, the disciples **“believed the Scripture, and the word which Jesus had spoken.”**
6. In [John 5:39](#) Jesus says of the Jews: **“You search the Scriptures ... it is these that bear witness to Me.”**



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7. Several times in the gospel of John the word **Scripture (singular)** is used without citing a specific passage from the Old Testament, for example, “**As the Scripture said**” ([John 7:38](#); cf. [John 7:42](#); [John 19:36](#); [John 20:9](#)). That statement is somewhat akin to the current expression “**The Bible says.**”
8. In [John 10:35](#), another crucial passage, Jesus asserts that “**Scripture cannot be broken,**” showing that He considered the sacred Scriptures to be infallible.
9. In [Acts](#), the words **Scripture** and **Scriptures** are used in the same manner as they were by Jesus. The apostle Paul “**reasoned with them [the Jews] from the Scriptures**” ([Acts 17:2](#)). The Bereans “**examined the Scriptures daily**” ([Acts 17:11](#)). Apollos, who was called “**an elegant man ... mighty in the Scriptures,**” ministered to the Jews, “**demonstrating by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ**” ([Acts 18:24, 28](#)).
10. Paul repeatedly used the word **Scripture(s)** to refer to the entire authoritative canon of the Old Testament. In Romans he wrote that God had promised the gospel “**through His prophets in the holy Scriptures**” ([Romans 1:2](#)).

[Romans 1:2 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> **which He promised beforehand through His prophets in the holy Scriptures,**

The expression “**What does the Scripture say?**” occurs several times in that same epistle (e.g., [Romans 4:3](#); [Romans 9:17](#); [Romans 10:11](#)).

[Romans 4:3 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> **For what does the Scripture say? "ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS CREDITED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS."**

[Romans 9:17 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>17</sup> **For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "FOR THIS VERY PURPOSE I RAISED YOU UP, TO DEMONSTRATE MY POWER IN YOU, AND THAT MY NAME MIGHT BE PROCLAIMED THROUGHOUT THE WHOLE EARTH."**

[Romans 10:11 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>11</sup> **For the Scripture says, "WHOEVER BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."**

In [Romans 15:4](#) Paul says that **whatever was written in former days in the Scriptures** was for the believer’s admonition. He also spoke of “the *Scriptures* of the prophets” ([Romans 16:26](#)).

[Romans 15:4 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> **For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.**

[Romans 16:26 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>26</sup> **but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets,**



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according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, *leading to obedience of faith*;

In his other epistles the apostle Paul said that Christ had died and arisen “**according to the Scriptures**” ([1 Corinthians 15:3–4](#));

[1 Corinthians 15:3-4 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>3</sup> For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,

<sup>4</sup> and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day **according to the Scriptures**,

that the “**Scripture**” foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles ([Galatians 3:8](#));

[Galatians 3:8 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> **The Scripture**, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying*, “ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU.”

that “**the Scripture has shut up all men under sin**” ([Galatians 3:22](#)).

[Galatians 3:22 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>22</sup> But **the Scripture** has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

He also asked, “**What does the Scripture say?**” ([Galatians 4:30](#));

[Galatians 4:30 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>30</sup> **But what does the Scripture say?** “CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON, FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE AN HEIR WITH THE SON OF THE FREE WOMAN.”

made the statement, “**The Scripture says**” ([1 Timothy 5:18](#));

[1 Timothy 5:18 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>18</sup> **For the Scripture says**, “YOU SHALL NOT MUZZLE THE OX WHILE HE IS THRESHING,” and “The laborer is worthy of his wages.”

and declared that “**all Scripture is inspired by God**” ([2 Timothy 3:16](#)).

[2 Timothy 3:16 \(NASB\)](#)

<sup>16</sup> **All Scripture is inspired by God** and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;

11. The apostle Peter added to the picture, as he wrote that “**Scripture**” did not come “**by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God**” ([2 Peter 1:20–21](#); see [2 Peter 3:16](#)).



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### 2 Peter 1:20-21 (NASB)

<sup>20</sup> But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation,

<sup>21</sup> for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.

### 2 Peter 3:16 (NASB)

<sup>16</sup> as also in all *his* letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures, to their own destruction.

12. In a number of New Testament passages the word *Scripture* (**singular**) refers to a particular section or quotation from the Old Testament: [Luke 4:21](#); [John 13:18](#); [John 17:12](#); [John 19:24, 28, 37](#); [Acts 1:16](#); [Acts 8:32, 35](#); [James 2:8, 23](#); [James 4:5](#); [1 Peter 2:6](#).

### Luke 4:21 (NASB)

<sup>21</sup> And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."

### John 13:18 (NASB)

<sup>18</sup> "I do not speak of all of you. I know the ones I have chosen; but *it is that the Scripture may be fulfilled, 'HE WHO EATS MY BREAD HAS LIFTED UP HIS HEEL AGAINST ME.'*

### John 17:12 (NASB)

<sup>12</sup> "While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled.

### John 19:24 (NASB)

<sup>24</sup> So they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it, *to decide* whose it shall be"; this was to fulfill the Scripture: "THEY DIVIDED MY OUTER GARMENTS AMONG THEM, AND FOR MY CLOTHING THEY CAST LOTS."

### John 19:28 (NASB)

<sup>28</sup> After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, \*said, "I am thirsty."

### John 19:37 (NASB)

<sup>37</sup> And again another Scripture says, "THEY SHALL LOOK ON HIM WHOM THEY PIERCED."

### Acts 1:16 (NASB)

<sup>16</sup> "Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus.

### Acts 8:32 (NASB)

<sup>32</sup> Now the passage of Scripture which he was reading was this: "HE WAS LED AS A SHEEP TO SLAUGHTER; AND AS A LAMB



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**BEFORE ITS SHEARER IS SILENT, SO HE DOES NOT OPEN HIS MOUTH.**

**Acts 8:35 (NASB)**

<sup>35</sup> Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning from this Scripture he preached Jesus to him.

**James 2:8 (NASB)**

<sup>8</sup> If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, "YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF," you are doing well.

**James 2:23 (NASB)**

<sup>23</sup> and the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "AND ABRAHAM BELIEVED GOD, AND IT WAS RECKONED TO HIM AS RIGHTEOUSNESS," and he was called the friend of God.

**James 4:5 (NASB)**

<sup>5</sup> Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"?

**1 Peter 2:6 (NASB)**

<sup>6</sup> For this is contained in Scripture: "BEHOLD, I LAY IN ZION A CHOICE STONE, A PRECIOUS CORNER stone, AND HE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM WILL NOT BE DISAPPOINTED."

In summary, Jesus and the New Testament writers referred to the complete Hebrew canon of their day, including the Law and Prophets (or, the Law, Prophets, and Psalms), as inspired, unbreakable, authoritative in disputes, prophetic of Christ, given by the Holy Spirit through the prophets, and, in effect, the very Word of God.