



Lecture # 11 Part 3

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.

“THE LAW”

Although the term Law was often reserved **for the first five books of the Hebrew canon** as a shortened form of the expression “the law of Moses,” *it was sometimes used to refer* to the **Old Testament as a whole**. In fact, the use of the word for other than the Mosaic writings demonstrates that they too were considered to have equal authority with the great lawgiver’s writings. [Matthew 5:18](#) uses “Law” in parallel reference to “Law or the Prophets” ([v.17](#)).

[Matthew 5:18 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁸ "For truly I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the “Law” until all is accomplished.

[Matthew 5:17 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁷ "Do not think that I came to abolish the “Law or the Prophets”; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.

In [John 10:34](#) Jesus says to the Jews, “Has it not been written in your Law?” just prior to quoting [Psalm 82:6](#).

[John 10:34 \(NASB\)](#)

³⁴ Jesus answered them, "Has it not been written in your Law, 'I SAID, YOU ARE GODS'?"

[Psalm 82:6 \(NASB\)](#)

⁶ I said, "You are gods, And all of you are sons of the Most High.

Similarly, [John 12:34](#) uses “the Law”; [John 15:25](#), “their Law”; “your Law” appears in [John 18:31](#); and [Acts 25:8](#) refers to “the Law of the Jews.”

[John 12:34 \(NASB\)](#)

³⁴ The crowd then answered Him, "We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"

[John 15:25 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁵ "But *they have done this* to fulfill the word that is written in their Law, 'THEY HATED ME WITHOUT A CAUSE.'

[John 18:31 \(NASB\)](#)

³¹ So Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves, and judge Him



Lecture # 11 Part 3

according to your law." The Jews said to him, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death,"

[Acts 25:8 \(NASB\)](#)

⁸ while Paul said in his own defense, "I have committed no offense either against the Law of the Jews or against the temple or against Caesar."

Paul's epistles make broad usage of the term, as he applies it to the Gentiles, who "do not have the Law" ([Romans 2:14](#)),

[Romans 2:14 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁴ For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves,

speaks of the "works of the Law" ([Romans 3:20](#)),

[Romans 3:20 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁰ because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law *comes* the knowledge of sin.

the "righteousness which is based on the Law" ([Romans 10:5](#)), and

[Romans 10:5 \(NASB\)](#)

⁵ For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness.

cites [Isaiah 28:11-12](#),

[Isaiah 28:11-12 \(NASB\)](#)

¹¹ Indeed, He will speak to this people Through stammering lips and a foreign tongue,

¹² He who said to them, "Here is rest, give rest to the weary," And, "Here is repose," but they would not listen.

after the introduction "In the Law it is written" ([1 Corinthians 14:21](#)).

[1 Corinthians 14:21 \(NASB\)](#)

²¹ In the Law it is written, "BY MEN OF STRANGE TONGUES AND BY THE LIPS OF STRANGERS I WILL SPEAK TO THIS PEOPLE, AND EVEN SO THEY WILL NOT LISTEN TO ME," says the Lord.

[Hebrews 10:28](#) refers to "the Law of Moses."

[Hebrews 10:28 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁸ Anyone who has set aside "the Law of Moses" dies without mercy on *the testimony of two or three witnesses*.

Thus, by extension, the term Law, which originally denoted the God-given books of Moses, came to be applied to the remainder of the Old Testament by both the Jews and the New Testament writers. Hence, the whole Old Testament was variously called



Lecture # 11 Part 3

by the authoritative titles “the Law,” “the Law of the Jews,” and even “the Law of God” (cf. [Romans 7:22](#)).

[Romans 7:22 \(NASB\)](#)

²² For I joyfully concur with “the law of God” in the inner man,

“THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS”

Other than the word *Scriptures*, the most common designation of the Old Testament is “the Law and the Prophets.” This is what Jesus called the Old Testament on two occasions during His Sermon on the Mount ([Matthew 5:17](#); [Matthew 7:12](#)).

[Matthew 5:17 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁷ “Do not think that I came to abolish the “Law or the Prophets”; I did not come to abolish but to fulfill.

[Matthew 7:12 \(NASB\)](#)

¹² “In everything, therefore, treat people the same way you want them to treat you, for this is the “Law and the Prophets.”

Sometimes the parallel “Moses and the Prophets” was used (cf. [Luke 16:29](#), [31](#); [Luke 24:27](#); [Acts 26:22](#)).

[Luke 16:29 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁹ “But Abraham *said, ‘They have “Moses and the Prophets”; let them hear them.’

[Luke 16:31 \(NASB\)](#)

³¹ “But he said to him, ‘If they do not listen to “Moses and the Prophets”, they will not be persuaded even if someone rises from the dead.’”

[Acts 26:22 \(NASB\)](#)

²² “So, having obtained help from God, I stand to this day testifying both to small and great, stating nothing but what “the Prophets and Moses” said was going to take place;

The canonical breadth of the title is revealed in [Luke 6:6](#), which states, “The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John.”

[KEY]

In other words, the Law and Prophets included all God’s written revelation to the time of John the Baptist. Further, it was “the Law and the Prophets” that were read in the synagogues ([Acts 13:15](#)).

[Acts 13:15 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁵ After the reading of the “Law and the Prophets” the synagogue officials sent to them, saying, “Brethren, if you have any word of exhortation for the people, say it.”



Lecture # 11 Part 3

Paul, in his defense before Felix, asserted that he worshiped “**the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with *the Law*, and that is written in *the Prophets*” ([Acts 24:14](#)).**

[Acts 24:14 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁴ “**But this I admit to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect I do serve the God of our fathers, believing everything that is in accordance with the Law and that is written in the Prophets.**”

The apostle’s point was that he believed and practiced the whole of God’s revelation to Israel up to the time of Christ, and the phrase “**the Law and the Prophets**” describes **the totality of that revelation.**

“THE WORD OF GOD”

Another expression that reflects the **totality** and **authority** of the Old Testament Scriptures is “**the word of God.**” It is used several times in the New Testament.

In [Mark 7:13](#) Jesus charged that the Pharisees made void “*the word of God*” through their tradition.

[Mark 7:13 \(NASB\)](#)

¹³ *thus* invalidating “**the word of God**” by your tradition which you have handed down; and you do many things such as that.”

[John 10:35](#) uses “**the word of God**” as a parallel to the “**Scripture,**” which “**cannot be broken.**”

[John 10:35 \(NASB\)](#)

³⁵ “If he called them gods, to whom the word of God came (**and the Scripture cannot be broken**),

Referring to the Old Testament, Paul says, “**It is not as though *the word of God* has failed**” ([Romans 9:6](#)).

[Romans 9:6 \(NASB\)](#)

⁶ *But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel;*

There are numerous other New Testament references “**to the word of God,**” most of which are not positively identifiable **with the Old Testament.**

However, many references may be applied to the present discussion. In [2 Corinthians 4:2](#) Paul records the Christians’ refraining from “adulterating *the word of God*”;

[2 Corinthians 4:2 \(NASB\)](#)

² *but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or “**adulterating the word of God**”, but by the*



Lecture # 11 Part 3

manifestation of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God.

the writer of Hebrews states that “the word of God is living and active” ([Hebrews 4:12](#)); and

[Hebrews 4:12 \(NASB\)](#)

¹² For “the word of God is living and active” and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

[Revelation 1:2](#) tells of John “who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus.”

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

² “who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ”, even to all that he saw.

“THE ORACLES OF GOD”

Closely allied with the foregoing descriptions of the Old Testament is the expression “the oracles of God.” [Romans 3:2](#) indicates that the Jews were “entrusted with the oracles of God.”

[Romans 3:2 \(NASB\)](#)

² Great in every respect. First of all, that they were “entrusted with the oracles of God.”

[Hebrews 5:12](#) refers to the Old Testament by this introduction, as it states the need for “someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God” before the readers could go on into perfection in Christ. In these references the Old Testament as a whole is viewed as the voice of God, a divine oration.

[Hebrews 5:12 \(NASB\)](#)

¹² For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you have need again for “someone to teach you the elementary principles of the oracles of God”, and you have come to need milk and not solid food.

“FROM ABEL TO ZECHARIAH”

On one occasion Jesus used still another phrase that includes the totality of the Old Testament, when He accused the Jews of the guilt of “all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah” ([Matthew 23:35](#); cf. [Genesis 4:8](#); [2 Chronicles 24:20–22](#)). Because Abel's death was at the beginning of Old Testament history and Zechariah's at the end, the phrase “from Abel to Zechariah” is somewhat akin to the expression “from Genesis to Revelation.”



Lecture # 11 Part 3

Matthew 23:35 (NASB)

³⁵ so that upon you may fall *the guilt of* “all the righteous blood shed on earth, from the blood of righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah”, the son of Berechiah, whom you murdered between the temple and the altar.

Genesis 4:8 (NASB)

⁸ Cain told Abel his brother. And it came about when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother and killed him.

2 Chronicles 24:20-22 (NASB)

²⁰ Then the Spirit of God came on Zechariah the son of Jehoiada the priest; and he stood above the people and said to them, "Thus God has said, 'Why do you transgress the commandments of the LORD and do not prosper? Because you have forsaken the LORD, He has also forsaken you.'"

²¹ So they conspired against him and at the command of the king they stoned him to death in the court of the house of the LORD.

²² Thus Joash the king did not remember the kindness which his father Jehoiada had shown him, but he murdered his son. And as he died he said, "May the LORD see and avenge!"

Previous discussion (Section # 1) has indicated that the Hebrew canon contained twenty-two (or twenty-four) books in New Testament times. Jesus and the apostles referred to that collection of books by various titles, all of which are reducible to the simple formula “the inspired Word of God.” The terms they used to identify the Old Testament as the authoritative God-given guide for mankind shows that the entire Hebrew canon was held to be for them the very Word of God.