

## Chapter 1: What is Holy Scripture?

"Oh, that's just the New Testament" is a phrase I've heard from the non-virgin birth proponents. This phrase is given when these persons feel that New Testament passages "contradict" Old Testament passages. Instead of attempting to harmonize the totality of Holy Scripture, it is very easy for them to say that something does not belong in Scripture, presupposing an unsubstantiated interpolation, and go on their way as if they had done justice to interpreting Scripture. Scripture, to most of these individuals, is what is commonly termed as the Old Testament. With that belief I have no problem. The problem occurred when I first learned that they did not accept the New Testament as Scripture, and therefore did not believe it was inspired by Yahweh.

### Old Covenant vs. Writings of that Dispensation

Although people do refer to the books of Genesis to Malachi as the Old Testament, this is not the best word representation for the books themselves. There must be a distinction made between the Old Covenant, and the writings which took place under the Old Covenant. We find Yeshua referring to these books as the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms.<sup>1</sup> He identified these headings as Scripture in John 5:39 when He stated "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." We also find the apostle Paul referring to the writings of the Old Covenant as Scripture in Romans 1:1-2.<sup>2</sup>

Paul did not say that the prophets spoke of these things in the Old Testament, simply because that is not what first century believers commonly called this collection of books. We find a similar reference by Paul in his epistle to Timothy, where he states that from a child Timothy had known the Holy Scriptures.<sup>3</sup>

The *Old Covenant* is the covenant that Yahweh made with the nation of Israel, beginning on Mount Sinai in Exodus 19. However, the writings which took place during that covenant were not known primarily as the Old Covenant (Testament) but rather the Sacred Writings, or Holy Scriptures.

### New Covenant vs. Writings of that Dispensation

The same can be said in regards to the New Covenant. The New Covenant itself was a Covenant, once again made with physical Israel, and can be found most clearly identified in Hebrews 8:7-12. The writings which took place under the New Covenant should not be termed as the New Covenant. We could phrase them as epistles of the New Covenant, apostolic Sacred Writings, or New Covenant *Holy Scripture*. That's right, the epistles were also Scripture, Holy Scripture.

There are many Bible verses which show this to be true. Not only do the apostles attribute the term Holy Scripture to the writings of the prophets existing before them, but

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 24:44-45 "And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures."

<sup>2</sup> Romans 1:1-2 "Paul, a servant of Yeshua Messiah, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of (the) Almighty, which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures."

<sup>3</sup> 2 Timothy 3:15 "15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Messiah Yeshua."

they also refer to their writings as being Scripture as well. The apostle Peter makes this clear when he spoke of Paul's writings in this way.

And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction. [2 Peter 3:16]

Peter makes mention here that there are some things that Paul wrote that the unlearned and unstable twist and mangle, just as they do the other Scriptures. The use of the phrase *other* Scriptures is a clear implication that Peter viewed Paul's writings as Scripture, equal to what the prophets had written years before Paul. This needs to be understood by all students of Holy Scripture.

Yeshua himself claimed that His words "will not pass away."<sup>4</sup> Such a claim is evidence that he viewed His words as coming directly from Yahweh. What words of an uninspired man could be said to never pass away? Yeshua did refer to the writings of the prophets before him as Scripture, but this in no way was meant to imply that his teachings were uninspired. After all, if we accept what the Bible says, he was the only begotten son of Yahweh (John 3:16). He came from Yahweh's Being. Why wouldn't we think his words were inspired? Yeshua compared his teachings with the Law of Moses,<sup>5</sup> whom he viewed as inspired, and also gave commandments to the apostles *by* the Holy Spirit.<sup>6</sup> Matthew 28:20 even shows that Yeshua told his apostles to teach all nations to observe whatsoever *He* commanded them. The Apostle Paul also wrote in his epistle to the Corinthians:

If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord. But if any man be ignorant, let him be ignorant. [1 Corinthians 14:37]

When the assemblies received the words of the apostles they were not receiving words coming from uninspired men as you and I. The assemblies were to recognize that their words were the very words of Yahweh, speaking through chosen vessels.

For this cause also thank we [the] Almighty without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of [the] Almighty which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of [the] Almighty, which effectually worketh also in you that believe. [1 Thessalonians 2:13]

The apostle Peter was also inspired, as he was given the keys to the kingdom of heaven. He was told that whatever he loosed or bound on earth should be loosed or bound in heaven.<sup>7</sup> This binding and loosing does not mean that Peter privately chose what to loose and bind; quite the contrary. It shows he was Holy Spirit inspired. The Holy Spirit spoke through Peter in such passages as Acts 2:38, which concerned New

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<sup>4</sup> Mark 13:31

<sup>5</sup> Matthew 5

<sup>6</sup> Acts 1:2

<sup>7</sup> Matthew 16:19-20

Covenant salvation, and Acts 10:28, which concerned not calling any man (son of Adam) unfit for salvation.

### **By Permission and not By Commandment**

Those who do not view the New Covenant epistles as inspired are often quick to quote a few passages penned by the apostle Paul in the book of 1 Corinthians, chapters seven and eight. Paul says the following in these chapters.

But I speak this by permission, and not of commandment. [1 Corinthians 7:6]

But to the rest speak I, not the Lord: If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. [1 Corinthians 7:12]

Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: yet I give my judgment, as one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful. [1 Corinthians 7:25]

I speak not by commandment, but by occasion of the forwardness of others, and to prove the sincerity of your love. [2 Corinthians 8:8]

Non-virgin birth proponents sometimes use these verses to show that the apostle Paul was an uninspired man as you and I, and had no authority, but merely gave his judgment or opinion on doctrine. However, these people are not looking at the superior picture. In these passages the apostle could be saying one of two things:

1. He has no direct commandment from Yahweh, but he speaks by permission of Yeshua who has granted him the inspiration of the Holy Spirit on an issue.
2. He was simply at that present time giving his opinion on a few things.

Also notice after the statement made by Paul in 1 Corinthians 7:6, he goes on to say in verse 10, “And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord.” He also states in 1 Corinthians 7:25 that he gives his judgment as “one that hath obtained mercy of the Lord to be faithful.” Both of these passages would align with the #1 possibility given above. In other words, although he does not have a direct audible or written word from Yahweh, he does speak under Yahweh’s inspiration, and desires for the Corinthians to know and believe this. In 2 Corinthians 8:8 I feel Paul to be purposefully not commanding them to give, in order to see if they will join in the giving, out of a desire to help the brethren, as opposed to a forceful *have to*.

Those who only use *some* of the passages I quoted from Paul, are only accepting the passages they wish to accept; the passages which go along with their doctrinal bias. If you accept everything Paul said, then you must accept the following.

- Paul’s writings were Holy Scripture.<sup>8</sup>
- Paul’s writings were commands of Yahweh.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> 2 Peter 3:16

<sup>9</sup> 1 Corinthians 14:37

- Paul's writings were the Word of Yahweh.<sup>10</sup>
- Paul sometimes gave his opinion.<sup>11</sup>

I believe each of the above four points, simply because this is what the Bible teaches. Anyone else who chooses to make the Bible their measuring stick must also acknowledge these points.

“But, this is simply Paul and others claiming their own inspiration!” some might wish to say. However, is that not what the authors of the Old Covenant writings did as well? Every time they stated a “Thus Saith Yahweh” they were claiming their own inspiration. The key is that Yahweh was speaking through them.

I should also point out that some of the passages used by non-virgin birth proponents to show the Old Covenant writings as being inspired, are found in none other than the New Covenant writings! Yes, 2 Timothy 3:16 and 2 Peter 1:18-21 are the passages predominantly used to prove that the Old Covenant writings are indeed inspired. Many want to accept Paul and Peter's teachings here, but not elsewhere. “Inconsistency” is the word that rings out in my ears.

### **Conclusion**

Many point out such passages where Paul might state something such as “The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee.<sup>12</sup>” and then state that surely I do not believe Paul was inspired to ask for his cloak! Well, of course I do not believe that. Paul's uninspired request for his cloak is nothing different than certain Old Covenant writing such as Genesis 24:64 which says, “And Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac, she lighted off the camel.” I would say that asking someone for your cloak or getting off of a camel is of equal level. While both statements are true, neither is teaching doctrine by way of moral command. However, in matters of faith and doctrinal practice, both the Old Covenant writings and New Covenant writings are equally inspired of Yahweh.<sup>13</sup>

We need to be at a place where we can acknowledge the books of Matthew to Revelation as inspired of Yahweh. Then and only then can we work from a foundation. Without a foundation for our beliefs, we cannot really discuss the virgin birth issue, or any other issue for that matter. Therefore, for those non-virgin birth proponents who do not view the New Covenant writings as inspired, I cannot reason with you concerning the virgin birth, unless you are willing to acknowledge the fact forthrightly shown throughout the apostle's writings. The fact that their writings were and are Holy Scripture.

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<sup>10</sup> 1 Thessalonians 2:13

<sup>11</sup> 2 Corinthians 8:8

<sup>12</sup> 2 Timothy 4:13

<sup>13</sup> I do believe that any latter revelation will never contradict former revelation. This does not mean that progressive revelation is not real, it only means that we interpret latter in a way that harmonizes with former. Yahweh is not a schizophrenic Mighty One that changes His rules depending upon which dispensation He is in.