

THE AUTHORITY OF GOD'S WORD - THE BIBLE

(EKB - Feb 1992)

1. **The Old Testament Scriptures** were accepted by the Jewish leaders of the nation of Israel, as God's Word, with full absolute authority, for hundreds of years before Christ.
2. In all the strong conflict between the Jewish leaders and Christ, neither ever accused the other of denying the **absolute authority of God's Word**. When either party quoted the Word of God it was accepted without question as the final authority.
See: *Mat 15:3-6, Mat 12:2-8, Mat 19:3-6,7,8, Mat 21:12,13,15,16.*
3. Jesus Christ is God come in the flesh. (See "the Divinity of Christ" No 94). As true God and true man He based His life, teaching, preaching and ministry on the principle that the Scriptures of the Old Testament are the **infallible Word of God**.
4. Jesus said, "**It is written,**" *Mat 4:4,7,10, 11:10, 21:13, 26:24, 26:31*. When He quoted *Ex 3:6* to the Sadducees, in *Mat 22:32*, He said that was God speaking to them (see v31). He said, "**Have you not read!**" *Mat 12:3,5, 19:4, 21:16,42, 22:31*.
"Scripture cannot be broken" *Jn 10:35* (i.e. contains no contradictions or errors.)
"One jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled," *Mat 5:18, Lk 16:17*.
"You search the Scriptures.... and it is they that bear witness of Me," *Jn 5:39*.
On the road to Emmaus, He said, "O foolish and slow of heart to believe **all** that the prophets have spoken, and beginning at Moses and **all** the prophets, He expounded to them in **all** the Scriptures the things concerning Himself," *Lk 24:25-27*.
5. Jesus spoke about the people mentioned in the O.T., accepting totally the record of their lives. Some critics have questioned the writing about Jonah, but Jesus clearly **believed in a literal Jonah** who spent 3 days and nights in the belly of a great fish before going and preaching to the people of Nineveh, *Mat 12:40,41*.
6. To be a confessed follower of Jesus Christ requires that we also believe in the **full inspiration and authority of the Scriptures**, as God's Word, as He did.
7. The authority of the Scriptures is due to the process of inspiration by the Holy Spirit in communicating the Word of God to faithful, holy men of God who recorded what God said to them in writing. *2Tim 3:16*, "**All scripture** is given by inspiration of God....."
"Inspiration of God," (Gk:theopneustos) means that Scripture is "God breathed."
2Pet 1:20,21 "No prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."
8. To confess the inspiration of Scripture is firstly saying something about God and His work as the Holy Spirit, before saying anything about the Scriptures themselves. We are saying firstly that God has given us His own revelation, He has spoken His own Word, and that He has embodied it in writing, using human speakers and authors in a work of the Holy Spirit. Secondly we are making a statement about the authority and reliability of the Bible.
9. To reject the inspiration and authority of God's Word is to reject the God revealed in the Word because "inspiration" is part and parcel of the doctrine of God in the Scriptures.

10. The testimony of Jesus Christ to the full authority of God in the Scriptures is very strong and enables us to have total confidence in the Bible as God's Word.
11. In the N.T., quotations are found from all but four of the O.T. books.
12. Some references by Jesus to O.T. Scriptures:
Mat 12:42 and 1K 10:1 - Queen of Sheba; *Mat 24:15, Dan 11:31,12:11*;
Jn 15:25, Ps 35:19 - that He would be hated for no valid reason;
Mat 13:14, Is 6:9,10; Mat 22:31,32, Ex 3:6; Lk 4:17-19, Is 61:1,2.
13. In the N.T., Jesus conferred on the words He spoke the full authority of God and His Word. *Mk 13:31, (Is 40:8), (Mat 24:35, Lk 21:33), Mat 5:22, Mat 5:28,32,34,39,44.* He said that the Words He spoke were given to Him by God the Father to speak, *Jn 7:16, 8:26,38, 12:49, 14:10.*
14. The N.T. writers also claim the full authority of God for the N.T. scriptures. *2Pet 1:20,21*
2Tim 2:15 a worker rightly dividing the Word of truth.
1Thes 2:13 the Word of God which effectively works in you who believe.
2Thes 2:15 brethren stand fast and hold the traditions, which you were, taught whether by word or our epistle (letter)
1Pet 1:23 you have been born again.... through the Word of God.
2Tim 1:13,14 Hold fast.....sound words which you have heard from me.
2Pet 3:16 (here Peter equates Paul's letters with the rest of Scripture
Rev 22:18,19 John declares that the words he has spoken are from God.
15. The books of the N.T. were written from 50-100AD.
 100-200AD They were collected together and read in the churches.
 200-300AD They were carefully examined and compared with counterfeits.
 300-400AD A number of General Church councils met to decide which books were inspired and authoritative and which were not. Most books that now form the N.T. were agreed upon, by all, from the start. There was a gradual consensus of opinion about the rest until full agreement was reached. The Church Councils were representative of the whole church worldwide and occurred before any major divisions. (See a good church history book for details of the Councils). In deciding which books should be in the "canon" of scripture the Councils were not conferring authority and inspiration on the writings but acknowledging it.
16. Before 1947-48 the oldest known text of the Hebrew O.T. was written just before 900AD and critics cast doubts on its claim to record the writings of Moses and the like who lived long before Christ, but in 1947-48 the Dead Sea Scrolls were discovered. These contain almost all of the O.T. and were written in 120BC. They are word for word with the text of 900AD.
17. In the N.T. read and consider:
Heb 3:7-11 and Ps 95:7-11 "as the Holy Spirit says...." *Heb 3:7.*
Mk 12:36 and Ps 110:1 "David himself said by the Holy Spirit."
18. Finally consider *2Cor 13:8.* God's truth will stand forever - *Is 40:8.*