

Sunday, February 14, 2016—Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*
Lesson 20 The New Testament Writer's Attitude Toward the Written Word

Introduction

- Last week, in Lesson 19, we looked at the attitude of the Living Word (the Lord Jesus Christ) toward the written word. In doing so we observed the following:
 - Jesus Christ believed that every word in the Bible was the word of God.
 - Jesus Christ verifies the historical authenticity of Old Testament figures and events.
 - Jesus Christ gave advanced authentication for the New Testament.
 - Jesus Christ never one time questioned the Old Testament. He always quoted it in such a way as to endorse it as verbally inspired.
- Given the testimony of the Living Word toward the written word we concluded Lesson 19 by noting the following three options:
 - *Number One*—there are errors in the scripture, but Jesus did not know about them; so He really is not God. (And if He is not God, you can just throw the whole Bible out the window, and we can stop studying right now.)
 - *Number Two*—there are errors, and Jesus Christ knew about them, and He covered them up. (Well, then He is not holy, and He would not be a suitable or sufficient Savior.)
 - *Number Three*—there are not any errors and that it is God's word; and when you are dealing with the Bible, you are dealing with God himself.
- Having established a firm understanding of our Lord's thoughts regarding the scriptures we will now turn our attention to ascertaining the attitude of the writers of the New Testament toward the written word. We will do this by considering the following two points:
 - New Testament writers affirm the Old Testament
 - New Testament writers on the New Testament

New Testaments Writers Affirm the Old Testament

- The writers of the New Testament give ample evidence that the Old Testament is exactly what it claims to be—the inspired word of God.
- The Old Testament is quoted in the New Testament about 250 times, and it is alluded to approximately 850 times. There are only five books in the Old Testament that are not quoted in

the New Testament – Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Solomon. All of the other books are quoted and/or alluded to in the New Testament. The New Testament writers view the Old Testament as authoritative and authentic.

- The Apostle Paul cited the Old Testament over and over again. In Romans 4, Paul talks about Abraham, and he never questions whether or not Abraham believed God, or that his faith was counted unto him for righteousness. Paul just accepted it as true.
- In Romans 9 Paul talks about Isaac, Esau, Jacob, and Pharaoh as well as Sodom and Gomorra. In Romans 3, he quotes Psalms 14, Psalms 5, Psalms 140 and he says that they are all scripture. Paul never questions or denies the Old Testament; rather, he quotes it in such a way so as to affirm it.
- The following is list of Old Testament persons and events affirmed by the New Testament writers. Please note that this list excludes examples from the four gospels made by Christ. Please see Lesson 19 for a list of Old Testament historical verifications found in the narrative of the four gospels.
 - Creation of the universe (Genesis 1)—Colossians 1:16
 - Creation of Adam and Eve (Genesis 1-2)—I Corinthians 11:8-9; 15:45; I Timothy 2:13
 - God resting on the seventh day (Genesis 1)—Hebrews 4:3-4
 - Marriage of Adam and Eve (Genesis 2)—I Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 5:31
 - The temptation of Eve (Genesis 3)—II Corinthians 11:3; I Timothy 2:14
 - The disobedience of Adam (Genesis 3)—Romans 5:12-19
 - The sacrifices of Cain and Abel (Genesis 4)—Hebrews 11:4
 - The murder of Abel by Cain (Genesis 4)—I John 3:12; Jude 11
 - The birth of Seth (Genesis 4)—Luke 3:38
 - The translation of Enoch to heaven (Genesis 5)—Hebrews 11:5
 - Marriage before the flood (Genesis 6)—Luke 17:27
 - The preservation of Noah and his family (Genesis 8-9)—I Peter 3:20; II Peter 2:5
 - The call of Abraham (Genesis 12-13)—Hebrews 11:8
 - Tithes to Melchizedek (Genesis 14)—Hebrews 7:1-3
 - Justification of Abraham (Genesis 15)—Romans 4:3
 - Ishmael (Genesis 16)—Galatians 4:21-26

- Promise of Isaac (Genesis 17)—Hebrews 11:18
- Abraham’s sojourn (Genesis 20)—Hebrews 11:9
- Birth of Isaac (Genesis 21)—Acts 7:8
- Offering of Isaac (Genesis 22)—Hebrews 11:17
- Exodus through the Red Sea (Exodus 14)—I Corinthians 10:1-2
- Provision of Manna (Exodus 16-17)—I Corinthians 10:3-5
- Fall of Jericho (Joshua 6)—Hebrews 11:30
- Miracles of Elijah (I Kings 17-18)—James 5:17-18
- Three Hebrew youths in the fiery furnace (Daniel 3)—Hebrews 11:34
- Daniel in the lion’s den (Daniel 6)—Hebrews 11:33 (Geisler, 201-202)

New Testament Writers on the New Testament

- The New Testament views itself as scripture. The New Testament writers view other New Testament authors as writing scripture. In other words, they viewed them as inspired and writing with equal authority.
- II Peter 3:1-2—This second epistle, beloved, I now write unto you; in *both* which I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance: 2) That ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour:
 - Peter says, “I want you to remember what the Old Testament prophets said as well as what I and the other apostles have commanded.” He does not consider that there was any gap between them, but total equality. In other words, Peter considered what he was saying as equal with the Old Testament.
- II Peter 3:15-16— 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; 16) 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.
 - Peter calls everything Paul wrote in “all his epistles” scripture or *graphē*. When the New Testament writers look out and see the other authors writing books, they say, “Hey, that is scripture too.” They recognize what is going on. They know and recognize each other’s books. There is a process whereby they are able to authoritatively identify which books are authoritative and authentic.

- I Timothy 5:18—“For the scripture (*graphē*) saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward.” As we have already seen in Lesson 13, this verse is comprised of quotations from both the Old and New Testaments.
 - Deuteronomy 25:4—“Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.”
 - Matthew 10:10 and Luke 10:7—“The labourer *is* worthy of his reward.”
- Now, do you see what Paul did? He quoted a passage out of Deuteronomy, (the words of Moses), and then he quoted a passage out of the Gospels (the words of Christ), and he called them both scripture. Paul did not make any distinction between them. So, they are both scripture— the Old Testament and the New Testament. Paul considers Luke 10 just as authoritative as Deuteronomy 25. That is important for you to realize, so you understand that Paul and the other New Testament writers consider their writings as equally inspired as the rest of the word of God.
- I Thessalonians 4:8—He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.
 - In other words, if you despise what Paul is telling you, you despise what God said.
- I Thessalonians 4:15—For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, ...
 - “That expression “by the word of the Lord” denotes a special and specific prophetic announcement, and it is used repeatedly in the Old Testament to describe God’s word coming unto someone and then going out through them.

Let’s look at a couple of verses. There is a formula that denotes a specific and special prophetic announcement – God’s word. Paul is very conscious of the fact that he is giving out more than just his own word and that he is giving out God’s word.

Genesis 15:1 – “AFTER these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying . . .”

Do you see that? The word of the LORD comes to Abraham in a vision and gives him the communication. There are a number of passages like this, but I just picked out a couple samples for you.

II Samuel 7:4 – “And it came to pass that night, that the word of the LORD came unto Nathan, saying . . .”

Do you see that formula—“the word of the LORD?” It has to do with a prophetic announcement. Paul knew what he was doing when he used that expression.

I Kings 12:22 – “But the word of God came unto Shemaiah the man of God, saying.” The word comes to him.

Now, you can run other references in the Old Testament and see the significance of what Paul is doing in 1 Thessalonians 4:15 when he says, “For this we say unto you by the

word of the Lord.” He is saying, “What I am writing to you people here is God Almighty’s communication to you.” Paul is conscious of what he is doing.

By the way, 1 Thessalonians is probably Paul’s first epistle (if not his first, then it is his second). But his very first epistles bear the highest claim to inspiration of any of them. He makes the highest claim to inspiration right at the beginning of his writing ministry. Paul starts out right at the beginning knowing what he is doing.” (Jordan, MSS 101, Lesson 5)

- I Timothy 6:3—If any man teach otherwise and consent not to wholesome words, *even* the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness.
 - I Timothy 6 is a passage about Paul’s authority as the apostle of the Gentiles, but it also shows you his estimation of the scripture. In Chapter 6 Paul is talking about what he had written in the book of I Timothy. It is obvious that Christ’s words were coming from Paul’s mouth, and he was conscious of that fact.
- II Corinthians 13:3—Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you.
 - The words of Jesus Christ were coming from Paul’s mouth, and he was conscious of that.
- II Thessalonians 3:6, 14—Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us. . . 14) And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed.
 - Paul is commanding them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to do some things; and he says that if the man does not “obey our word by this epistle” (i.e., the epistle that he is in the process of writing), that they are to have no company with him.

Conclusion

- In light of the evidence, the choice is clear: either the Bible or the critics? What the Bible affirms the critics deny.
- If Jesus is the Son of God, then the Bible is the Word of God, including what it says about the historical events listed in Lessons 19 and 20.
- On the contrary, if the Bible is not the Word of God, then Christ is not the Son of God. The Words of God, the Living and the written, are tied together.

Works Cited

Geisler, Norman L. *Systematic Theology: In One Volume*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 2011.

Jordan, Richard. *Manuscript Evidence 101*. Grace School of the Bible.