

WHY BAPTISTS BELIEVE WHAT BAPTISTS BELIEVE, PART 18

THE AUTHORITY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

[Question 17] The phrase, “Thus saith the Lord,” or its equivalent, occurs more than **2000** times in the Old Testament. I just gave a few examples previously of God speaking to different people either directly or through the angels or through His prophets. The Bible is authoritative because it contains, not merely the words of men, but the very words of God Himself.

Again, back to Luke Chapter 24 where Jesus is on the road to Emmaus talking to Cleopas and the other guy... “And He [Jesus] said to them, ‘O foolish ones, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken!’” (Luke 24:25). Apparently, these two men were having a hard time understanding what had happened earlier that week in Jerusalem. They hadn’t been reading their Bible and Jesus is a little irked at them.

[Question 18] What did Jesus call those who did not believe the Old Testament prophecies? He called them **foolish**. These are strong words.

In the book of Exodus Moses is writing about an event that he had been personally involved in. He is talking about the giving of the Law on tablets of stone. He goes up to Mount Sinai and there God gives him the Law. “And He [the LORD] gave to Moses, when He had finished speaking with him on Mount Sinai, the two tablets of the testimony, tablets of stone, written with the finger of God” (Exodus 31:18). “The tablets were the work of God, and the writing was the writing of God, engraved on the tablets” (Exodus 32:16).

[Question 19] According to Moses, who wrote on the tablets of stone? Based on these passages it was **God** Himself. They were

“written by the finger of God.” The tablets were God’s work,
“God’s writing engraved on the tablets.”

Then, in 2 Samuel Chapter 23 David is talking about the LORD speaking to him... “The Spirit of the LORD speaks by me; His word is on my tongue” (2 Samuel 23:2).

[Question 20] Who does David say was the inspiration for his writings? **The Lord**. “The Spirit of the Lord” was the One who spoke to David. David says, “His word is on my tongue.”

“For the LORD spoke thus to me with His strong hand upon me, and warned me not to walk in the way of this people...” (Isaiah 8:11).

[Question 21] Who does Isaiah say spoke to and instructed him? Again, **The Lord**. Do you notice a pattern in all these questions?

In Jeremiah 1:9 Jeremiah says, “Then the Lord stretched out His hand and touched my mouth, and the Lord said to me, ‘Behold I have put My words in your mouth...’”

[Question 22] Who touched Jeremiah’s mouth and spoke to him? **The Lord**.

In 1 Chronicles 28:19 David said, “All this He [God] made clear to me in writing from the hand of the LORD, all the work to be done according to the plan.” In this passage David is speaking to his son, Solomon about the pattern for the temple that God gave David.

[Question 23] Who dictated the pattern for the temple? **The Lord**.

What you need to understand is that the Old Testament scriptures contain through and through the very words of God Himself. His principles and precepts do not change. He’s the same

yesterday, today and forever (Hebrews 13:8). The words that God spoke to the Old Testament writers concerning righteousness and His character still apply today.

In Matthew Chapter 4 you have the account of Jesus's temptation in the wilderness. These are Jesus's response to the devil who is tempting Him...

"But He [Jesus] answered, 'It is written, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God,"'" quoting Deuteronomy 8:3 (Matthew 4:4). "Jesus said to him, 'Again it is written, "You shall not put the Lord your God to the test,"'" quoting Deuteronomy 6:16 (Matthew 4:7). "Then Jesus said to him, 'Be gone, Satan! For it is written, "You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve,"'" quoting Deuteronomy 6:13 (Matthew 4:10).

[Question 24] What authority did Jesus Christ use to answer Satan? He quoted Scripture - **the Old Testament**. Jesus quoted Deuteronomy three times in this passage. So, Deuteronomy is pretty important. In fact, Deuteronomy and Psalms are the most quoted Old Testament books in the New Testament. Jesus quoted Deuteronomy a lot.

In Matthew Chapter 22 there is a confrontation between Jesus and the Sadducees. "But Jesus answered them, 'You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection, they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in Heaven. And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob"? He is not God of the dead, but of the living'" (Matthew 22:29-32).

When the Sadducees tried to trip Jesus up with a hypothetical question, what authority did Jesus Christ use to respond? He quoted Scripture - **the Old Testament**.

Again, in Matthew Chapter 22 the Pharisees come calling and enter a theological debate with Jesus. “He [Jesus] said to them, ‘How is it then that David, in the Spirit, calls him Lord, saying, “The Lord said to my Lord, ‘Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet’”? If then David calls him Lord, how is He, his son?’ And no one was able to answer Him a word, nor from that day did anyone dare to ask Him any more questions” (Matthew 22:43-46).

So, what authority did Jesus Christ use to answer the Pharisees? He quoted Scripture - **the Old Testament**.

“And they [the Jewish religious leaders] said to Him [Jesus], ‘Do you hear what these are saying?’ And Jesus said to them, ‘Yes; have you never read, “Out of the mouth of infants and nursing babies You have prepared praise”?’” (Matthew 21:16). When the chief priests and the scribes complained to Jesus about the people calling Him the “Son of David,” a title for the Messiah, what authority did Jesus Christ use to reply? He quoted Scripture - **the Old Testament**.

The Old Testament identifies man’s need for a Savior - from the sin of Adam and Eve in Genesis Chapter 3 to the ungodly actions of God’s people in Malachi Chapter 3 and all the failures, disappointments and wickedness in between. But in the midst of all of that mess, God has a solution. Through His messengers and by His actions, God points the world toward the Savior, the Messiah, His Promised One. In the Old Testament all the road signs of hope and salvation point toward Jesus.

In every Old Testament book there is either a direct reference to Jesus, the Messiah, the promised One or there is a picture of Him in that book.

In Genesis He is the seed of the woman. He is the One who will bruise Satan on the head (3:15).

In Exodus He is the Passover lamb (12:21-33).

In Leviticus He is the sacrificial lamb without spot or blemish offered for the atonement of sins (14:10-20).

In Numbers He is the bronze serpent that brings healing (21:9).

In Deuteronomy He is the rock whose work is perfect (32:4).

In Joshua He is the cord of scarlet thread that identifies who will be saved (2:15-21).

In Judges He is the torch of Gideon (7:20); Paul calls Jesus “the light that shines out of darkness.” (2 Corinthians 4:6)

In Ruth He is our Redeemer who restores and sustains life (4:14-15).

In 1 Samuel He is the glory of Israel (15:29).

In 2 Samuel He is my shield and the horn of my salvation (22:2-3).

In 1 Kings He is a lamp before God (11:36).

In 2 Kings He is the Holy One of Israel (19:22).

In 1 Chronicles He is the One whose throne will be established forever (17:14).

In 2 Chronicles He is God’s covenant king promised to David (21:7).

In Ezra He is the righteous Lord God of Israel (9:15).

In Nehemiah He is a gracious and compassionate God (9:31).
Of course, when Jesus was here, showed grace and compassion.

In Esther He is the relief and deliverance of the Jews (4:14).

In Job He is my Redeemer (19:25).

In Psalms He is my Shepherd (23:1).

In Proverbs He is a strong tower (18:10).

In Ecclesiastes He is a cord of three strands that is not quickly torn apart (4:12).

In Song of Solomon, He is my beloved (2:16).

In Isaiah He is the wonderful Counselor, mighty God, everlasting Father, Prince of peace (9:6).

In Jeremiah He is the Lord our righteousness (23:6).

In Lamentations He is my portion and hope (3:24).

In Ezekiel He is the surrounding radiance of the glory of the Lord (1:28).

In Daniel He is the fourth man in the fiery furnace (3:25). If you remember, King Nebuchadnezzar when he sees that fourth man declares, "He is like the son of the gods!" How close he was because what he sees in that furnace is THE Son of God.

In Hosea He is the Holy One who is faithful (11:12).

In Joel He is the restorer of the fortunes of Judah and Jerusalem (3:1).

In Amos He is the plumb line (7:8). He is God's perfect standard by which we are measured.

In Obadiah He is the Lord whose kingdom will be established (21).

In Jonah He is the salvation from the Lord (2:9).

In Micah He is our peace (5:5).

In Nahum He rebukes the sea (1:4). We see that in Matthew 8:26 as Jesus rebukes the sea and it obeys Him.

In Habakkuk He is radiance like the sunlight (3:4).

In Zephaniah He is the King of Israel, the Lord (3:15).

In Haggai He is the peace that the Lord will give (2:9).

In Zechariah He is my Shepherd and my Associate (13:7).

In Malachi He is the Lord whom you seek (3:1).

Jesus all through the Old Testament!