

## The Decision

Internal consistency and inerrancy – assumed by the Scriptures

*Moses came and told the people all the commands of the LORD and all the ordinances. Then all the people responded with a single voice, "We will do everything that the LORD has commanded." And Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. He rose early the next morning and set up an altar and 12 pillars for the 12 tribes of Israel at the base of the mountain. - Exodus 24:3-4 HCSB*



Every human must make a decision concerning the nature of the Scriptures. Like our Master who clearly taught that He was divine,<sup>1</sup> the Scriptures plainly claim to be the inspired and inerrant Word of God.

Moses told the people that the laws came directly from the Lord<sup>2</sup> and they believed it. Jesus backed Moses' claim, stating that God spoke directly to Moses<sup>3</sup> and for once even the Pharisees agreed with Him!<sup>4</sup> Jesus called the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms (all of the Old Testament) Scripture<sup>5</sup> and said that the Scriptures could not fail.<sup>6</sup> Note that our Master never said the scriptures *contain* the word of God. He said they *were* the word of God.

Peter later taught that not only Moses but each of the ancient prophets "spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit."<sup>7</sup> He then went on elevate Paul's writings to the same level as the Old Covenant saying "He (meaning Paul) speaks about these things in all his letters, in which there are some matters that are hard to understand. The untaught and unstable twist them to their own destruction, as they also do with the rest of the Scriptures."<sup>8</sup>

Paul accepted the authority of what he was divinely inspired to write, instructing the churches to pass his letters around and read them publicly<sup>9</sup> and the early church complied.<sup>10</sup>

We cannot accept this claim of divine inspiration while simultaneously holding that the Bible is characterized by errors. Either we accept the whole, or we reject the whole. Either the Scriptures are divinely inspired and thus infallible (free from error) in their original, or they contain errors and thus surely not inspired by perfect God.

"Thus says the Lord" occurs over 400 times in the Old Covenant. "God said" occurs 42 times in the Old and 4 times in the New. "God spoke" occurs 9 times in the Old and 3 times in the New. The Scriptures plainly teach that the Spirit of the Lord spoke through various prophets.<sup>11</sup> If we believe that God cannot make errors, then we must assume that His words are equally perfect.

To teach that the Scriptures are less than inerrant is to diminish God's capacity to use humans to fulfill His good, pleasing and perfect will.<sup>12</sup> It is to raise one's self as judge and jury over the Word of God. We must humbly settle ourselves to the idea of "nothing beyond what is written."<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John 10:30

<sup>2</sup> Exodus 25:1; Leviticus 1:1; Numbers 1:1; Deuteronomy 1:6

<sup>3</sup> Mark 12:26

<sup>4</sup> Matthew 19:4-7; John 9:29

<sup>5</sup> Luke 24:44 cp

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 5:18; 23:53-56; Luke 16:17; John 10:35

<sup>7</sup> 2 Peter 1:21 cp Hebrews 1:1

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

<sup>9</sup> Colossians 4:16

<sup>10</sup> Ignatius [*Epistle to the Ephesians*, 12], Polycarp [*Epistle to the Philippians*, 3.11,12], Clement [*Epistle to the Corinthians*, 1.47]

<sup>11</sup> 2 Samuel 23:2; 1 Kings 22:24; 2 Chronicles 20:14

<sup>12</sup> Romans 12:2

<sup>13</sup> 1 Corinthians 4:6