

The Authority of the Scriptures

The one who rejects Me and doesn't accept My sayings has this as his judge: the word I have spoken will judge him on the last day. - John 12:48 HCSB



On July 1, 2004, a thin, downcast elderly man, with bags under his eyes and a graying beard, stepped into a courtroom. That simple act came at the cost of thousands of lives and billions of dollars. The man's name was Saddam Hussein and he was the former president of Iraq. He stood accused of killing religious figures; gassing Kurds in Halabja; killing members of the Kurdish Barzani clan; killing many political opponents for a span of three decades; ruthless suppression of Kurds and Shiites; and, invading Kuwait.

This man, who had formerly terrorized millions of people and held the entire world at bay, now stood before a judge like any common criminal. Alternating between aloofness, depression and downright aggression, at several points Mr. Hussein shook his finger at the judge and challenged the court's authority over him.

On the morning of December 30, 2006, the guards came for Mr. Hussein. With fear on his face, he struggled briefly with them then finally slumped in defeated apathy as they led him to the execution chamber. In a final act of defiance, he refused the hood that would cover his eyes. They hung the noose around his neck and at 6:05 AM, Mr. Hussein died. Challenging the court's authority did him no good.

We can question the Scripture's authority all we like. We can even question the Judge's very existence. Belligerent rebellion against authority does not lessen authority; it puts one at even greater odds with it. It was because Mr. Hussein felt that no laws applied to him, that the law gained the power to kill him.

Those who reject the Christ will one day face Him, not as their potential Savior, but their Judge. Books will be opened, one being the Book of Life.¹ I have come to believe that the other books will be the 66 we have within the holy Canon.

These are the sacred Scriptures which are able to instruct us as to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. They are inspired by God and profitable for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training.² With their help and under their guidance, order may be established – both individually and nationally. The leader who ignores them will soon find his people running wild.³

They are not human in origin. They are a message from God and are therefore effective.⁴ On that day, our chosen interpretation will be meaningless for only the Holy Spirit's interpretation and application will matter.⁵ If even an angel were to appear with a different message than they provide, that angel would be cursed!⁶

So "to the law and to the testimony!" Why would we consult anyone other than God? For if they do not speak to our situation then there is truly no hope.⁷

¹ Revelation 20:12

² 2 Timothy 3:15-17

³ Proverbs 29:18

⁴ 1 Thessalonians 2:13; Psalm 18:30

⁵ 2 Peter 1:20-21

⁶ Galatians 1:8

⁷ Isaiah 8:19-20