

Conflicting Voices

Joe Slater

Practically any subject of a religious nature is a lightning rod for controversy. Some think it's wrong even to discuss controversial matters; yet by saying we should shy away from controversy, they themselves are being controversial! So, how should we deal with conflicting voices? Do we just pick one that sounds good and go with it? Do we blindly follow tradition? The only safe course is to heed the voice of God, who speaks to us today through His written word.

When Jeroboam led the northern ten tribes of Israel into idolatry, God lovingly sent an unnamed prophet to warn him of the terrible consequences of his sin (1 Kings 13). The king, somewhat shaken, invited the prophet home to be refreshed (rest and have something to eat). But the prophet declined: *"If you were to give me half your house, I would not go in with you; nor would I eat bread nor drink water in this place. For so it was commanded me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'You shall not eat bread nor drink water, nor return by the same way you came'"* (vv. 8-9). Now that's as plain as language can be!

But soon a conflicting voice arose. Another unnamed prophet lied to the man of God: *"I, too, am a prophet as you are, and an angel spoke to me by the word of the Lord, saying, 'Bring him back with you to your house, that he may eat bread and drink water'"* (v. 18). Sorry to say, the man of God believed the lie, and it cost him his life.

Remember Paul's admonition to the Galatians: *"But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed"* (Galatians 1:8).

Trust God! Reject the conflicting voices!

Jesus Rocks!

Jesus is...

...the Rock of Ages (Isaiah 26:4)

...the Rock of Our Salvation (Psalm 95:1)

...the Rock of Refuge (Psalm 31:2)

...the Rock of Strength (Psalm 62:7)

...the Rock that is Higher than I (Psalm 61:2)

...the Rock in a Weary Land (Isaiah 33:2)

...the Rock Upon Which We Must Build
(Matthew 7:24-25)

"For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ."
(1 Corinthians 10:4)

"The LORD lives! Blessed be my Rock!" (Psalm 18:46)

--Edd Sterchi (Campellsville, KY)

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If you are living your life angry at the world and all you have is a hammer, everything looks pretty much like a nail!

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Jesus' Bible

Jesus' Bible was the Old Testament. This was the foundation of all Jewish education and, like all Jewish children, Jesus would be trained from early childhood in the atmosphere of these thirty-nine books. It is evident that He spent many hours with the Sacred Page, because He quoted so frequently from the law, the prophets, and the psalms. His soul was steeped in the great old Scriptures of His people.

It is unfortunate that many of us have only a nodding acquaintance with the book Jesus knew so well. It is true that we live under a new and better covenant, but our lack of knowledge of the old deprives us of many valuable insights into the new.

The apostle Paul insists that *"Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope"* (Romans 15:4). Jesus tells us that these Scriptures *"bear witness of Me"* (John 5:39). And again, *"All things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms concerning Me"* (Luke 24:44). The fulfilling of many prophecies of the Old Testament concerning Christ clearly proves the inspiration of the writers and the Deity of Jesus.

Many of the important truths of the New Testament are based upon events of the past. The admonition to remember Lot's wife, the story of Moses lifting up the serpent, the selling of Esau's birthright, the praying of Elijah, and countless other examples tell us that we cannot really understand these New Testament passages without a knowledge of the Old Testament.

Old Testament persons, events, and institutions find their antitypes in the New Testament. The priesthood, the tabernacle, the deliverance from Egypt, the salvation of Noah, etc., all have a part in helping us to understand what Christianity is all about.

And who has not been inspired by the thrilling stories of men and women *"who through faith conquered kingdoms, enforced justice, received promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched raging fire, escaped the edge of the sword, won strength out of weakness, became mighty in war, put foreign armies to flight"* (Hebrews 11:33, 34)?

Read the Old Testament. Jesus did!

--John Gipson (Little Rock, AR) via Buchanan Dam, TX