

## THE WORD OF GOD IS OUR LIGHT

### B. Purpose (Significance) of this Study

#### B3. Demonstrate: Consistency of Scripture

We are guided by God's word, as is written in Psalm 119:105,

"Your word is a lamp to my feet And *a light to my path.*"

God's word being likened to a light is a common idiom throughout Scripture. In the New Testament, we learn that God's word was made flesh and dwelt among us<sup>i</sup>.

When these two facts are considered together, the words of the prophets come into sharper focus: that the majority of Scripture testifies of Jesus<sup>ii</sup>. For, this idiom of God's word as light adds to our understanding of Isaiah 49:5-6,

"now the Lord says, Who formed Me from the womb to be His Servant, To bring Jacob back to Him, So that Israel is gathered to Him (For I shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord, And My God shall be My strength), <sup>6</sup>Indeed He says, 'It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob, And to restore the preserved ones of Israel; *I will also give You as a light to the Gentiles*, That You should be My salvation to the ends of the earth.'"

Placing Jesus, the Word of God, into the passage as the light to the Gentiles, the Gospels of the New Testament reveal this prophecy<sup>iii</sup> fleshed out with pinpoint accuracy. For, Jesus proclaimed himself as the '*light of the world*'<sup>iv</sup>.

Several idioms covering a various array of topics are found in use throughout the Bible. From the 'seed of the woman'<sup>v</sup> to the 'water of life'<sup>vi</sup>, Biblical idioms

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<sup>i</sup> JOHN 1:14, *the Word became flesh and dwelt among us*, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

<sup>ii</sup> JOHN 5:39, You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and *these are they which testify of Me.*

<sup>iii</sup> ACTS 26:22-23, Therefore, having obtained help from God, to this day I stand, witnessing both to small and great, saying no other things than those which the prophets and Moses said would come <sup>23</sup>that the Christ would suffer, that He would be the first to rise from the dead, and *would proclaim light to the Jewish people and to the Gentiles.*"

<sup>iv</sup> JOHN 8:12, Jesus spoke to them again, saying, "*I am the light of the world.* He who follows Me shall not walk in darkness, but have the light of life."

should become familiar to everyone who studies Scripture diligently. Some are defined for us, as Paul does in 1 Corinthians 10:4,

“all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and *that Rock was Christ.*”

This idiom of the ‘Rock’, though not used in the Book of Revelation, is an example of those we will discover in our study. For, Revelation uses many of the idioms found elsewhere in the Bible. Such as, Moses’ description of the ‘Rock’, found in Deuteronomy 32:3-4,

“I proclaim the name of the Lord: Ascribe greatness to our God. <sup>4</sup>*He is the Rock*, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He.”

Moses continues in the same chapter to explain how the people of Israel ‘*scornfully esteemed*’ the Rock of salvation<sup>vii</sup>. If Moses’ writings in Exodus 17 and Numbers 20 were the only other uses of this idiomatic ‘Rock’, then the consistency would be less impressive. However, many more uses are found: Hannah in her prayer proclaims that there is no other ‘*rock like our God*’<sup>viii</sup>. David declares the Lord as his rock and fortress and deliverer<sup>ix</sup>, a theme he continues throughout his numerous psalms<sup>x</sup>. Asaph is recorded as the author of Psalm 78, in which he writes, ‘*God was their rock*’<sup>xi</sup>. In Psalm 89, Ethan the Ezrahite echoes Moses in his use of ‘*the Rock of my salvation*’<sup>xii</sup>. Isaiah presents the idiom again as the ‘*rock of offense to both the houses of Israel*’<sup>xiii</sup>, which Peter quotes when presenting his accusation<sup>xiv</sup> against the

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<sup>v</sup> GEN 3:15, I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and *her Seed*; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

<sup>vi</sup> REV 22:17, the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take *the water of life* freely.

<sup>vii</sup> DEUT 32:15, Jeshurun grew fat and kicked; You grew fat, you grew thick, You are obese! Then he forsook God who made him, And *scornfully esteemed the Rock of his salvation.*

<sup>viii</sup> 1SAM 2:1-2, Hannah prayed and said: "My heart rejoices in the Lord; My horn is exalted in the Lord. I smile at my enemies, Because I rejoice in Your salvation. <sup>2</sup>"No one is holy like the Lord, For there is none besides You, *Nor is there any rock like our God.*

<sup>ix</sup> 2SAM 22:1-2, David spoke to the Lord the words of this song, on the day when the Lord had delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul. <sup>2</sup>And he said: "*The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer.*

<sup>x</sup> PSM 28:1, To You I will cry, *O Lord my Rock*: Do not be silent to me, Lest, if You are silent to me, I become like those who go down to the pit.

<sup>xi</sup> PSM 78:35, they remembered that *God was their rock*, And the Most High God their Redeemer.

<sup>xii</sup> PSM 89:26, He shall cry to Me, 'You are my Father, My God, and *the rock of my salvation.*'

<sup>xiii</sup> ISA 8:13-14, The Lord of hosts, Him you shall hallow; Let Him be your fear, And let Him be your dread. <sup>14</sup>He will be as a sanctuary, But a stone of stumbling and *a rock of offense To both the houses of Israel*, As a trap and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

<sup>xiv</sup> 1PET 2:7-8, Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone," <sup>8</sup>and "A stone of stumbling And *a rock of offense.*" They stumble, being disobedient to the word, to which they also were appointed.

people of God. Finally, we find that Habakkuk also refers to the Lord as the ‘Rock’<sup>xv</sup>, who has marked the wicked for correction.

The consistency of the Bible in its use and definition of idiom is quite remarkable. In addition, this same quality applies also to the Biblical use of type (e.g. Father and Son in Genesis 22) and model (e.g. ‘Speak to the Rock’ in Numbers 20). This quality of consistency remains throughout Scripture, since it is a signature of the Holy Spirit. As we read in Psalm 33:11,

*“The counsel of the Lord stands forever, The plans of His heart to all generations.”*

The true authorship of the Bible, then, is demonstrated through the consistency of its singular inspiration. Paul informs us of this in 2 Timothy 3:16-17,

*“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*

Considering this information, we should recognize (1) the Holy Spirit inspires Scripture; and (2) figures of speech are found in the Bible. Therefore, we can conclude: that the Holy Spirit inspires use of idioms!

In fact, there are several literary devices, i.e. figures of speech, utilized throughout Scripture. The focus we need to maintain during our study is on the consistent use of these devices and how they are applied, especially within the book of Revelation. For instance, several similes appear in this passage from Revelation 1:12-15,

*“I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, <sup>13</sup>and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. <sup>14</sup>His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and *His eyes like a flame of fire*; <sup>15</sup>*His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters.*”*

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<sup>xv</sup> HAB 1:12, Are You not from everlasting, O Lord my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. *O Lord, You have appointed them for judgment; O Rock, You have marked them for correction.*

These same similes are also found in Daniel 10:6-7,

“I lifted my eyes and looked, and behold, a certain man clothed in linen, whose waist was girded with gold of Uphaz! <sup>6</sup>His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, *his eyes like torches of fire, his arms and feet like burnished bronze in color, and the sound of his words like the voice of a multitude.*”

The consistency of the overall illustration and the utilizing of similar language should grab our attention. Albeit the composing of these two passages is separated by over 500 years, the details closely mirror one another.

By comparing Scripture with Scripture, we will begin to notice the figures of speech in Revelation that are taken practically verbatim from the Old Testament. From these instances, we will gain a fuller, more vibrant picture detailed for us of God’s perfect ways and brilliant design. Paul explains the purpose of Scripture in Romans 15:4,

“whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”

We will develop a greater appreciation to how, from the beginning, God has told us of things to come, even of the end times. This study will help us see the Bible as one book: consistent in its message from cover to cover; and, prayerfully, we will draw closer to its ‘author’: the creator and sustainer of life!