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WHAT IS SCRIPTURE?

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The Greek term *graphe* means writing and makes its way into the English language via the Latin word *scriptura* as “scripture.” The word almost always has the definite article “the” scriptures.” The expression may refer to a particular passage such as in Mark 12:10- “Have you not even read this **Scripture**?” referencing Psalm 118:22. It may also refer to all of the Old Testament writings such as in John 5:39- “You search the **Scripture**, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.”

Usually the word has the Old Testament writings in mind, but not always. Peter referred to Paul’s epistles as Scripture in 2 Peter 3:16- “...as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the **Scripture**.”

The term “scripture” or “scriptures” takes on a technical sense, having to do with a writing of divine origin such as 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, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

These “scriptures” speak as the authoritative voice of God. Listen to Paul in Romans 9:17- For the **Scripture** says to Pharaoh, ‘For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I may show My power in you, and that My name may be declared in all the earth.’ Also, listen to what Paul writes to the Galatians in Galatians 3:8- And the **Scripture**, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed.”

(Adapted from Wayne Jackson’s *Bible Words and Theological Terms Made Easy*)