

# Debate Sheet: The Fatal Flaws of Sola Scriptura

## Why “Scripture Alone” is Logically Incoherent and Why We Need Living Prophets

**Target Audience:** Protestant/Evangelical believers in Sola Scriptura **Framework:** Direct, unapologetic challenge to Protestant theology **Purpose:** Demonstrate Sola Scriptura is self-refuting, historically false, and practically disastrous—and why LDS prophetic authority is the correct solution

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### Executive Summary

Sola Scriptura—the Protestant doctrine that Scripture alone is the sole infallible authority for Christian faith and practice—is fundamentally incoherent. It fails on six devastating grounds: (1) **self-refutation** (the Bible never teaches it), (2) **circular reasoning** (using the Bible to prove the Bible’s sole authority), (3) **the canon problem** (church authority determined which books are Scripture), (4) **interpretive chaos** (33,000+ Protestant denominations prove it doesn’t work), (5) **historical impossibility** (the early church never practiced it), and (6) **Protestant hypocrisy** (they don’t actually follow all biblical practices like baptism for the dead).

Church authority was needed to organize the biblical canon and preserve Christian teachings—but that authority was later lost through apostasy. The solution is the LDS restoration: **living prophets** who receive continuing revelation from God, interpret Scripture authoritatively, and provide the unified authority that Sola Scriptura promised but could never deliver.

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### FOUNDATIONAL QUESTION: What Even IS “Scripture”?

**Before we can discuss “Scripture Alone,” we must first ask: What constitutes Scripture? Who decided which books are in the Bible? By what authority?**

This is the most devastating question for Sola Scriptura—because the answer **requires church authority**, which immediately undermines the entire doctrine.

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## THE CANON FORMATION PROBLEM: How We Got the Bible

**What is “Scripture”?** Scripture refers to sacred texts considered authoritative and divinely inspired for faith and practice.

**What Makes a Book “Canonical”?** “Canon” (Greek *kanōn* = “rule”) refers to the official list of books recognized as Scripture.

**Criteria Used by the Early Church:** 1. Apostolic Authorship/Origin 2. Divine Inspiration 3. Orthodox Content 4. Universal Acceptance 5. Antiquity 6. Liturgical Use

**Critical Point:** These criteria were applied by **church authority**, not by the Bible itself. The Bible contains no inspired table of contents.

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## OLD TESTAMENT CANON: The Protestant Problem

### A. What Bible Did Jesus and the Apostles Use?

**The Shocking Answer: NOT the Protestant Old Testament.**

**Two Different Old Testament Canons in Jesus’ Time:**

**1. The Hebrew Bible (Later: Masoretic Text)** - Used primarily by Palestinian Jews  
- Written in Hebrew - Contained roughly the 39 books Protestants accept today -  
**BUT:** The Hebrew canon wasn’t officially closed until AFTER Jesus and the apostles died

**2. The Septuagint (LXX)** - Greek translation of the Hebrew Scriptures - Translated in Alexandria, Egypt (3rd-2nd century BC) - Used by Greek-speaking Jews throughout the Roman Empire - Contained the 39 books PLUS 7 additional books (called deuterocanonical by Catholics, apocrypha by Protestants) - **This is what Jesus and the apostles primarily used**

**The Seven Additional Books in the Septuagint:** 1. Tobit 2. Judith 3. 1 Maccabees 4. 2 Maccabees 5. Wisdom of Solomon 6. Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) 7. Baruch

Plus additions to Esther and Daniel.

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### B. Proof Jesus and the Apostles Used the Septuagint

**Statistical Evidence:** > “Protestant authors Archer and Chirichigno list **340 places where the New Testament cites the Septuagint** but only **33 places where it cites from the Masoretic Text.**”

**Jesus Himself Quoted the Septuagint:** - Mark 7:6-7: Jesus quotes the LXX version of Isaiah 29:13 - The wording matches the Septuagint, not the Hebrew

**The New Testament Writers Used the Septuagint:** > “The large majority of Old Testament references in the New Testament are taken from the Koine Greek Septuagint (LXX), **editions of which include the deuterocanonical books.**”

**Over 300 times**, the NT authors quoted the Septuagint.

**Implication:** Jesus and the apostles considered the Septuagint—which contained the deuterocanonical books—to be reliable Scripture.

**Sources:** - Archer & Chirichigno, *Old Testament Quotations in the New Testament - Catholic Answers*, “How to Defend the Deuterocanonicals”

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### **C. New Testament References to the Deuterocanonical Books**

**While the NT doesn't contain formal quotations, it contains numerous allusions and thematic parallels:**

**Hebrews 11:35 and 2 Maccabees 7:** > “Women received their dead by resurrection. Some were tortured, refusing to accept release that they might rise again to a better life.” (Hebrews 11:35)

**Where is this story in the Protestant Old Testament?** It's not. It's in **2 Maccabees 7**, where a mother and her seven sons are tortured and refuse to deny their faith, believing in the resurrection.

**Without 2 Maccabees, Hebrews 11:35 makes no sense.**

**Romans 1 and Wisdom of Solomon 13-14:** > “It's well known among New Testament scholars that in Romans 1, the Apostle Paul **adapts material and themes from Wisdom of Solomon 13-14.**”

Paul's description of Gentile idolatry and suppression of truth closely mirrors Wisdom's language.

**Matthew 11:28-30 and Sirach:** > “Jesus picks up key words and images from the Wisdom of Ben Sira 6:23-30 and 51:18-27 and applies them to himself.”

**Other Parallels:** - James 1:19 echoes Sirach 5:11 - Matthew 6:7 reflects Sirach 7:14 - Matthew 27:43 parallels Wisdom 2:18 - Revelation 8:3-4 mirrors Tobit 12:12, 15

**The Question:** If the NT writers considered these books uninspired, why do they reference them and assume readers know them?

**Sources:** - Catholic Answers, “How to Defend the Deuterocanonicals” - Scripture Catholic, “Deuterocanonical Books in the New Testament”

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### **D. What Protestants Won't Tell You: The Hebrew Canon Was Decided AFTER Jesus by Jewish Leaders Who REJECTED Christ**

**The Council of Jamnia (c. 90 AD):**

For a long time, scholars believed Jewish leaders met at Jamnia around 90 AD and officially closed the Hebrew canon, **excluding** the deuterocanonical books.

**The Problem:** - This happened **AFTER** Jesus' death and resurrection - It was decided by **Pharisees who rejected Jesus as the Messiah - Why would Christians follow a canon determined by those who rejected Christ?**

**Modern Scholarship:** The “Council of Jamnia” theory has been largely discredited. It wasn’t a formal council that “decided” the canon, but rather discussions about marginal books (Ecclesiastes, Song of Songs).

**The Reality:** The Hebrew canon wasn’t officially closed until much later. The Masoretic Text (the Hebrew Bible Protestants use) **wasn’t compiled until the 7th-10th centuries AD**—long after the apostles.

**The Devastating Implication:** When Protestants rejected the deuterocanonical books during the Reformation, they were: 1. Rejecting books the early Christians used 2. Following a Hebrew canon that **post-dated** Christianity 3. Accepting the judgment of **rabbis who rejected Jesus**

**Sources:** - Catholic Answers, “The Council That Wasn’t” - Wikipedia, “Development of the Hebrew Bible Canon” - Wikipedia, “Council of Jamnia”

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## **E. The Early Church Always Included the Deuterocanonical Books**

**Historical Fact:** > “Early Christians read the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint. **It included the seven deuterocanonical books.** The acceptance of some of these books among early Christians was widespread, though not universal, and **surviving Bibles from the early Church always include, with varying degrees of recognition, books now called deuterocanonical.**”

**Church Councils That Affirmed the Deuterocanonical Books:** - **Council of Hippo (393 AD):** Listed 46 OT books (including the 7 deuterocanonicals) - **Council of Carthage (397 AD):** Reaffirmed the same canon - **Council of Carthage (419 AD):** Again confirmed the same canon

**These councils were presided over by St. Augustine,** one of the most influential church fathers.

**St. Athanasius (367 AD):** In his Easter letter, Athanasius listed the 27 NT books and the OT books including deuterocanonicals.

**For over 1,100 years,** Christians used a Bible that included these 7 books.

**Sources:** - Catholic Answers, “Did Catholics Add 7 Books to the Bible?” - Wikipedia, “Deuterocanonical Books”

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## **F. Martin Luther’s Removal of the Deuterocanonical Books**

### **The Protestant Revision:**

When Martin Luther translated the Bible into German (1534), he made a shocking decision: - He **removed the 7 deuterocanonical books** from the Old Testament - He placed them in a separate section called the “Apocrypha” - He labeled them: “Books which are **not considered equal to the Holy Scriptures**, but are useful and good to read”

**By What Authority?** Luther’s reasoning: These books weren’t in the Hebrew canon he preferred (the Palestinian/Masoretic tradition).

**The Problem:** 1. Jesus and the apostles used the Septuagint, which **included** these books 2. The early church for 1,500 years **included** these books 3. Luther had **no authority** to remove books that had been in the Christian Bible for over a millennium

**Catholic Response:** In response to Luther's removal, the **Council of Trent** (April 8, 1546) dogmatically defined the biblical canon, affirming all 73 books (46 OT + 27 NT).

**The Irony:** Protestants claim "Bible alone" but accept a Bible that one man (Luther) edited based on his personal preference, removing books Christians had used for 1,500 years.

**Sources:** - Wikipedia, "Luther's Canon" - National Catholic Register, "Why Did Martin Luther Remove Inspired Books From the Bible?"

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## **G. The Protestant Dilemma: Which Old Testament?**

**The Question Protestants Cannot Answer:**

**If Sola Scriptura is true, which Old Testament is "Scripture"?**

**Option 1: The Septuagint (73 books)** - Used by Jesus and the apostles - Referenced by NT writers - Accepted by the early church for 1,500 years - **Problem:** Contains the 7 deuterocanonical books Protestants reject

**Option 2: The Masoretic Text (66 books)** - Compiled by Jews 600-900 years AFTER Christ - Excludes the deuterocanonicals - **Problem:** Wasn't available to Jesus, the apostles, or early Christians

**The Protestant Choice:** They chose Option 2—a canon that **didn't exist when the NT was written** and was compiled by **Jews who rejected Jesus**.

**The Question:** By what authority did Protestants make this choice? **The Bible doesn't tell you which Old Testament to use.**

You need **extra-biblical authority** to decide—which **destroys Sola Scriptura**.

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## **NEW TESTAMENT CANON: Who Decided the 27 Books?**

**The Reality:** The NT canon wasn't decided by Jesus or the apostles. It developed gradually over 300+ years.

**Early Disagreements:** - Some churches accepted Hebrews; others doubted it - Revelation, James, 2 Peter, 2-3 John, and Jude were debated - Some churches used the Shepherd of Hermas, Epistle of Barnabas, or Didache as Scripture

**The Problem:** If the Bible is self-authenticating and Scripture alone is sufficient, **why did it take 300+ years and church councils to determine which books belong in the NT?**

**Who Decided:** - **Athanasius' Easter Letter (367 AD):** First surviving document to list exactly 27 NT books - **Council of Hippo (393 AD):** Recognized the 27 NT books - **Council of Carthage (397 AD, 419 AD):** Confirmed the canon

**The Authority:** These councils operated under the authority of **bishops** guided by **church tradition** and **consensus of the faithful**—NOT by “Scripture Alone.”

**The Inescapable Conclusion:** If you accept the 27-book NT canon, you are trusting the authority of the church councils that gave it to you.

**You cannot have the Bible without church authority.**

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## **THE DEVASTATING SUMMARY: The Canon Destroys Sola Scriptura**

**The Fatal Logic:**

1. **The Bible doesn't contain a list of which books are biblical**
2. **Church authority (councils, bishops, tradition) determined the canon**
3. **If church authority was needed to determine the canon, it has authority beyond the canon**
4. **Therefore, Sola Scriptura is false**

**For Protestants:** - You reject ongoing church authority - But you accept the Bible that church authority gave you - You accept the canon that church authority decided - Yet you claim the Bible is your sole authority

**This is incoherent.**

**The LDS Position:** A church with proper authority was indeed necessary to organize the biblical canon and preserve Christian teachings. However, that authority was later lost through the Great Apostasy when the apostles died and priesthood keys were not passed on. The true church with proper authority was restored through Joseph Smith.

**The Protestant Response:** “The Church didn't *create* the canon; it *recognized* the canon. The books were self-authenticating.”

**The Counter:** 1. If books were self-authenticating, why did Christians disagree for 300+ years? 2. Why did some churches use different books? 3. Who authenticated the authenticators? How do you know the Church recognized the right books? 4. **By what authority do you trust the Church's recognition?**

No matter how you answer, you're appealing to **church authority**—which contradicts Sola Scriptura.

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# PART I: THE DEVASTATING CASE AGAINST SOLA SCRIPTURA

## 1. THE SELF-REFUTATION ARGUMENT: The Bible Never Teaches Sola Scriptura

**Thesis:** If Sola Scriptura is true, it must be taught clearly in Scripture. It is not. Therefore, by its own standard, Sola Scriptura is false.

### A. The Logical Problem

**Catholic apologist's argument:** > “If sola Scriptura isn't ‘clearly taught’ in the pages of Scripture, it would amount to what logicians refer to as a ‘self-refuting proposition,’ a doctrine that refutes itself.” >> **Source:** Catholic Answers, “A Quick Ten-Step Refutation of Sola Scriptura”

**The Logic:** 1. Sola Scriptura claims: “Scripture alone is the sole infallible authority” 2. This claim must itself be proven by Scripture alone (by its own standard) 3. No Scripture passage teaches Sola Scriptura 4. Therefore, Sola Scriptura fails its own test

**Protestant admission:** Even Protestant scholars Norman Geisler and Ralph MacKenzie admitted: “Sola Scriptura is **not formally stated or taught anywhere in Scripture.**”

**Implication:** You cannot hold Sola Scriptura **on the basis of Sola Scriptura.** You need an extra-biblical authority to establish it—which immediately contradicts the doctrine itself.

**Sources:** - Catholic Answers, “A Quick Ten-Step Refutation of Sola Scriptura” - Geisler & MacKenzie, *Roman Catholics and Evangelicals* (admission of Protestant scholars)

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## A2. THE INSCRIPTURATION PROBLEM: Sola Scriptura Couldn't Work During the Apostolic Era

### The Most Devastating Logical Flaw:

Sola scriptura couldn't have been operative during the apostolic era when Scripture was still being written. Even prominent Protestant defender James White conceded:

“Protestants do not assert that sola Scriptura is a valid concept **during times of revelation.**”

**The Paradox:** 1. If Scripture was written when oral revelation still existed 2. Then no biblical text could authentically teach sola scriptura without being anachronistic 3. The doctrine would be advising something that wasn't yet possible 4. **How can Scripture teach a principle that couldn't work while Scripture was being written?**

**Timeline Reality:** - Paul's letters: 50-67 AD - Gospels: 60-90 AD - Revelation: ~95 AD - When Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians (51 AD), **most of the NT didn't exist yet** - When he wrote 2 Timothy 3:16-17 about Scripture being profitable, **the NT canon wasn't complete**

**The Devastating Question:** If sola scriptura wasn't valid during the apostolic age (when most Christians lived), how can it be God's intended model for all Christians?

**Source:** Scriptural Mormonism blog, "Not By Scripture Alone"

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## **B. The Failed Proof Text: 2 Timothy 3:16-17**

**The Protestant Appeal:** Protestants inevitably cite 2 Timothy 3:16-17 as proof of Sola Scriptura:

"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 perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

### **Why This Fails—Five Catholic Refutations:**

**1. Paul Was Referring to the Old Testament Only** - Paul reminded Timothy that he had known "the sacred writings from childhood" (v. 15) - None of the New Testament had been written when Timothy was a child - Paul could not have been referring to his own letters (which make up most of the NT) - **Conclusion:** This passage affirms the Old Testament's value, not "Bible alone"

**2. "Profitable" ≠ "Sufficient Alone"** - The passage says Scripture is "profitable" (Greek: *ōphelimos* = useful, beneficial) - It does NOT say Scripture is the *only* thing that's profitable or *sufficient alone* - Parallel: Prayer is profitable (1 Tim 2:1-4), but that doesn't mean "prayer alone" is sufficient

**3. "Complete and Equipped" Modifies the MAN, Not Scripture** - Verse 17 says Scripture helps make "the man of God" complete and equipped - It does NOT say Scripture itself is complete - To make a man "equipped" presupposes he already has other equipment (like teachers, tradition, the Church)

**4. The Immediate Context Contradicts Sola Scriptura** - 2 Timothy 3:14: "Continue thou in the things which thou hast **learned** and hast been assured of, **knowing of whom thou hast learned them**" - Paul prioritizes Timothy's **learned faith from teachers** before mentioning Scripture - Timothy relied on **tradition and authoritative teachers**, not Scripture alone

**5. The Same Logic Would Prove "Patience Alone"** - James 1:4: "Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be **perfect and entire, wanting nothing**" - If 2 Timothy 3:17 proves Sola Scriptura, then James 1:4 proves "Sola Patientia" (patience alone) - James's language about patience is even **stronger** than Paul's about Scripture - Obviously absurd—which shows the Protestant interpretation is flawed

**Catholic Conclusion:** > "This passage (or any other) does not even hint at Scripture being the sole rule of faith. It says Scripture is inspired and **necessary—a rule of faith**—but in no way does it teach that Scripture **alone** is all one needs." > >

**Source:** Catholic Answers

**The Question Protestants Cannot Answer:** If 2 Timothy 3:16-17 teaches Sola Scriptura, why did no Christian in history interpret it that way until Martin Luther in the 16th century?

**Sources:** - Catholic Answers, "According to Scripture" - Jimmy Akin, "2 Timothy 3:16-17 and Sola Scriptura" - Tim Staples, "Sola Scriptura: An Unbiblical Recipe for Confusion"

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### **C. What the Bible ACTUALLY Teaches: Scripture + Tradition + Church Authority**

#### **The Bible Affirms ORAL Tradition:**

**2 Thessalonians 2:15:** > "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the **traditions** which ye have been taught, **whether by word, or our epistle.**"

- Paul commands believers to hold BOTH oral teaching ("by word") AND written teaching ("epistle")
- This directly contradicts Sola Scriptura
- **Protestant bind:** "Protestants have to nullify the word of God found in 2 Thessalonians 2:15" to defend a doctrine nowhere explicitly taught in Scripture

**2 Timothy 2:2:** > "And the things that thou hast **heard of me** among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also."

- Paul commands Timothy to pass on what he **heard** (oral tradition)
- A chain of authorized teachers, not individual Bible reading

**1 Corinthians 11:2:** > "Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the **ordinances [traditions]**, as I delivered them to you."

- Paul praises the Corinthians for keeping oral traditions he delivered
- Not everything was written down

#### **The Bible Affirms CHURCH Authority:**

**Matthew 18:17:** > "And if he shall neglect to hear them, **tell it unto the church:** but if he neglect to hear the church, **let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.**"

- Jesus commands ultimate appeal to the **Church**, not Scripture
- Refusing to hear the Church = being treated as an unbeliever

**Matthew 16:19 and 18:18 - Binding and Loosing Authority:** > "And I will give unto thee the **keys of the kingdom of heaven:** and whatsoever thou shalt **bind on earth shall be bound in heaven:** and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt 16:19)

“Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall **bind on earth shall be bound in heaven:** and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”  
(Matt 18:18)

**Critical Rabbinic Context:** - “Binding and loosing” were **technical rabbinic terms** meaning legislative power to establish doctrine and practice - This demonstrates **commissioned teaching authority beyond Scripture** - Jesus granted apostles authority to make binding decisions, not just interpret existing Scripture

**John 20:23 - Authority to Remit/Retain Sins:** > “Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.”

- Empowers apostles to remit or retain sins
- Establishes an **agency role in spiritual matters**
- Cannot be exercised through Scripture alone

**1 Timothy 3:15:** > “But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is **the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.**”

- The CHURCH is “the pillar and ground of the truth”
- Not “the Bible is the pillar and ground of the truth”

**Acts 15:1-29 (The Jerusalem Council):** - A dispute arose about circumcision and the law - Did the early Christians say, “Let’s each read the Bible and decide”? **NO** - They convened the **apostles and elders** who decided authoritatively (v. 28: “it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us”) - **Key point:** Leadership relied on Peter’s authoritative declaration and James’s interpretive judgment, **not scriptural proof-texting** - They made a decision **without clear scriptural precedent** for abolishing circumcision - The Church made binding decisions, and believers submitted to them

**The Bible Points to LIVING PROPHETS:**

**Amos 3:7:** > “Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he **revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.**”

**Ephesians 4:11-14:** > “And he gave some, **apostles; and some, prophets;** and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints... Till we all come in the unity of the faith...”

- Christ gave apostles and prophets **to the Church**
- They exist to bring believers to unity
- Sola Scriptura has produced division; living prophets produce unity

**Matthew 23:1-3 - Recognizing Non-Inscripturated Teaching Authority:** > “Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do...”

- Jesus commanded followers to accept the scribes’ and Pharisees’ **authoritative teachings**
- This demonstrates recognition of **non-inscripturated teaching authority**
- Even though Jesus condemned their hypocrisy, He affirmed their teaching office

**Conclusion:** The Bible teaches **Scripture + Tradition + Church Authority + Living Prophets**, NOT Scripture alone.

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## **D. The New Testament Uses Extra-Biblical Traditions as Authoritative**

**The Problem for Sola Scriptura:** If Scripture alone is sufficient, why does the New Testament quote and reference sources that aren't in the Old Testament?

**2 Timothy 3:8 - Jannes and Jambres:** > “Now as **Jannes and Jambres** withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth...”

**Where are these names in the OT?** - They're NOT in Exodus or anywhere in the Protestant Old Testament - These names come from Jewish Targums and apocryphal writings - **Yet Paul treats this knowledge as authoritative** without needing to cite “Scripture alone”

**1 Corinthians 10:4 - The Rock That Followed Israel:** > “And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that **spiritual Rock that followed them:** and that Rock was Christ.”

**Where is this “following rock” in the OT?** - It's NOT in Exodus or Numbers - This tradition comes from **Targum Onqelos** (rabbinic tradition) - Paul incorporates extra-biblical tradition and applies it to Christ

**Jude 9 - Michael Disputing with the Devil:** > “Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.”

**Where is this story in the OT?** - It's NOT in Deuteronomy or anywhere in the Protestant Bible - This comes from “**The Assumption of Moses,**” an apocryphal work - Jude quotes it directly, **treating it as authoritative revelation**

**The Devastating Implication:** - If sola scriptura were true, the NT writers violated it constantly - They relied on oral tradition, rabbinic teachings, and non-canonical sources - **The Bible itself demonstrates Scripture is NOT sufficient alone**

**Protestant Response:** “These are just minor details, not doctrinal foundations.”

**Counter:** 1. Jude's entire argument in v. 9 depends on this “minor detail” being true  
2. Paul's theological point in 1 Cor 10:4 requires the rabbinic tradition  
3. If these sources were unreliable, the NT writers wouldn't cite them authoritatively  
4. **By what authority do YOU decide which extra-biblical sources are acceptable?**  
(Violates sola scriptura!)

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## **2. THE CIRCULAR REASONING ARGUMENT: You Cannot Use the Bible to Prove the Bible's Sole Authority**

**Thesis:** Protestants use the Bible to prove the Bible is the sole authority. This is textbook circular reasoning and logically invalid.

## The Logical Fallacy

**Catholic argument:** > “The Protestant appeal to the sole authority of Scripture to defend sola scriptura is a **textbook example of circular reasoning**, and it betrays an essential problem with the doctrine itself: **It is contrary to reason.**” > > **Source:** The Coming Home Network, “Is Sola Scriptura Scriptural? Part III: Circular Reasoning”

**The Circle:** 1. Protestant: “How do you know the Bible is the sole authority?” 2. Response: “Because the Bible says so.” 3. Question: “How do you know the Bible is true?” 4. Response: “Because it’s God’s Word.” 5. Question: “How do you know it’s God’s Word?” 6. Response: “Because the Bible says it is.” 7. ← **Back to step 1. Circular reasoning.**

**The Problem:** > “One must prove the point **outside of the text itself** to avoid the fallacy of circular reasoning.”

To establish the Bible’s authority, you need an **external authority**—which immediately undermines Sola Scriptura.

**What Authority Established the Bible?** - The **Church** decided which books are Scripture (Councils of Hippo 393, Carthage 397, 419) - If the Church has authority to determine the canon, it has authority beyond the canon - Sola Scriptura collapses

**Sources:** - The Coming Home Network, “Is Sola Scriptura Scriptural? Part III: Circular Reasoning” - Catholic Answers, “According to Scripture”

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## 2B. PROTESTANT PROOF-TEXT FAILURES: Misused Verses Don’t Support Sola Scriptura

### 1 Corinthians 4:6 - “Not Beyond What Is Written”

**The Protestant Claim:** > “And these things, brethren, I have in a figure transferred to myself and to Apollos for your sakes; that ye might learn in us **not to think of men above that which is written**, that no one of you be puffed up for one against another.” (1 Cor 4:6)

Protestants claim “not beyond what is written” teaches sola scriptura.

#### Why This Catastrophically Fails:

**1. Protestant Scholars Admit the Text Is Problematic:** - Protestant scholar Kevin Vanhoozer acknowledges that commentators “**express considerable angst over the interpretation**” of this verse - The text contains significant **textual difficulties** - Scholar James Moffatt noted the problematic phrase is “**beyond recovery**” - Using a textually corrupt, disputed passage as your foundation = building on sand

**2. The Context Shows Paul Meant Only OT Texts He’d Quoted:** - Paul had just quoted Old Testament passages in chapters 1-3 - “What is written” likely refers **only to those specific OT texts** - Not a blanket statement about “Scripture alone” for all doctrine

**3. Paul Couldn't Have Meant "NT Scripture Alone":** - When Paul wrote this (c. 55 AD), **most of the NT didn't exist yet** - The Gospels weren't written - Most of Paul's own letters weren't written - **He couldn't have been teaching NT sola scriptura when the NT wasn't complete**

**4. Paul Regularly Appealed to Oral Tradition:** - 2 Thess 2:15: "hold the traditions... **whether by word, or our epistle**" - 1 Cor 11:2: "keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you" - 2 Tim 2:2: "the things that thou hast **heard of me**... commit thou to faithful men"

**If Paul meant "written Scripture alone," he contradicted himself constantly.**

**The Verdict:** 1 Cor 4:6 is textually uncertain, contextually limited to specific OT quotes, and chronologically impossible as a sola scriptura proof-text. Even Protestant scholars express "angst" over it.

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### **Revelation 22:18-19 - "Add Not to This Book"**

**The Protestant Claim:** > "For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of **this book**, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life..." (Rev 22:18-19)

Protestants claim this forbids adding any revelation beyond "the Bible."

#### **Why This Spectacularly Fails:**

**1. "This Book" = Revelation, NOT the Entire Bible:** - John wrote "**this book**" (singular) - He was referring **only to the book of Revelation** - The "Bible" as a complete canon didn't exist when John wrote this - The NT books were scattered letters and gospels, not yet compiled

**2. By This Logic, Nothing After Revelation Could Be Written:** - Revelation was **NOT the last NT book written chronologically** - Many scholars date some of John's epistles and the Gospel of John to **after Revelation** - If Rev 22:18-19 applied to all future revelation, John violated it by writing more books

**3. The OT Has Identical Warnings:** - **Deuteronomy 4:2:** "Ye shall not **add** unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish ought from it" - **Deuteronomy 12:32:** "What thing soever I command you, observe to do it: thou shalt not **add** thereto, nor diminish from it" - **Proverbs 30:6:** "**Add thou not** unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar"

**If these verses forbid all future revelation:** - Deuteronomy would have ended God's revelation (no prophets, no NT) - Proverbs would have forbidden Jesus and the apostles from teaching anything new - **Obviously absurd**

**4. This Was a Common Ancient Curse Formula:** - Ancient documents (including OT books) often ended with warnings against textual corruption - This protected manuscripts from scribal tampering - **It's not a statement about cessation of revelation—it's about textual integrity**

**The Verdict:** Rev 22:18-19 addresses **only the book of Revelation** and warns against textual corruption, not against all future revelation. Using this to support sola scriptura is eisegesis (reading into the text what isn't there).

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### 3. THE “SCRIPTURE INTERPRETS SCRIPTURE” FALLACY

**Thesis:** Protestants claim “unclear passages are explained by clearer passages” to avoid needing church authority. This is circular reasoning that still requires an interpreter—YOU.

#### The Protestant Claim

**Common Protestant Response:** “We don't need church authority because **Scripture interprets Scripture**. Unclear passages are explained by clearer passages.”

**The Appeal:** This sounds reasonable. If the Bible is God's Word, shouldn't it be internally consistent? Shouldn't clearer passages shed light on unclear ones?

**The Problem:** This still requires **an interpreter to decide:** - Which passages are “clear”? - Which passages are “unclear”? - Which “clear” passage interprets which “unclear” passage?

**And that interpreter is YOU.**

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#### The Devastating Problems

##### 1. Who Decides Which Passages Are “Clear”?

**Example: Predestination - Calvinists** think Romans 9 **clearly** teaches unconditional election - **Arminians** think 1 Timothy 2:4 **clearly** teaches God desires all to be saved - Both claim their interpretation is the “clear” one

**Question:** Who has the authority to declare which passage is “clear”? **Not Scripture alone—that's your interpretation.**

##### 2. Who Decides Which Passage Interprets Which?

###### Example: Does Baptism Save?

**“Clear” Passage 1 (Mark 16:16):** > “He that believeth and is **baptized shall be saved**; but he that believeth not shall be damned.”

**“Clear” Passage 2 (Acts 16:31):** > “**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved**, and thy house.”

**Protestant Solution:** - Use Acts 16:31 to “interpret” Mark 16:16 - Conclusion: Baptism is not required for salvation; faith alone saves

**The Question:** **By what authority** do you decide Acts 16:31 interprets Mark 16:16 instead of the reverse?

**Alternative Interpretation:** - Use Mark 16:16 to “interpret” Acts 16:31 -  
Conclusion: Faith AND baptism are both required

**Both interpretations use “Scripture interprets Scripture”—yet reach opposite conclusions.**

**Who’s right? Not Scripture alone—YOU decided which passage takes priority.**

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### **3. This Still Requires an Interpreter—YOU**

The phrase “Scripture interprets Scripture” is just a **disguise** for “**I interpret Scripture.**”

**What you’re really saying:** - “I’ve decided which passages are clear” - “I’ve decided which passages are unclear” - “I’ve decided which clear passage interprets which unclear passage” - “I’ve decided what the clear passage means”

**This is NOT Sola Scriptura—it’s Solo Scriptura (me and my Bible alone).**

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### **4. This Produces the Exact Chaos We See**

If “Scripture interprets Scripture” actually worked, there would be **unity**.

**Instead, we have:** - **33,000+ Protestant denominations** - All claiming “Scripture interprets Scripture” - All reaching **opposite conclusions**

**Examples of “Clear” Disagreements:** - Baptism: Immersion vs. sprinkling; infant vs. believer - Communion: Real presence vs. symbolic vs. memorial - Predestination: Calvinism vs. Arminianism - Eternal security: Once saved always saved vs. possibility of apostasy - Women’s ordination: Biblical vs. cultural - End times: Pre-trib vs. mid-trib vs. post-trib vs. amillennial

**Each group claims the “clear” passages support their view.**

**Question:** If Scripture interprets Scripture, why don’t these “clear” passages produce clear unity?

**Answer:** Because it’s not Scripture interpreting Scripture—it’s **individual interpreters** using Scripture to justify their pre-existing theology.

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### **The LDS Solution**

**Living prophets provide authoritative interpretation.**

When interpretations conflict, LDS members don’t endlessly debate “which clear passage interprets which.” They look to the prophet for clarification.

**Example:** - Debate: Is baptism necessary for salvation? - Protestant answer: Depends who you ask (Baptists say yes, many evangelicals say no) - LDS answer: The prophet has clarified through revelation—baptism by proper authority is essential

**This is how the early church operated:** - Acts 15: A doctrinal dispute arose about circumcision - They didn't say "let each person read Scripture and decide" - They convened the apostles and elders who decided authoritatively (v. 28: "it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us")

**Scripture + Living Prophets = Doctrinal Unity**

**Scripture Alone = Interpretive Chaos**

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#### **4. THE INTERPRETIVE CHAOS ARGUMENT: 33,000+ Protestant Denominations Prove Sola Scriptura Doesn't Work**

**Thesis:** If the Bible alone were sufficiently clear to guide Christians, there would be unity. Instead, Sola Scriptura has produced catastrophic division—33,000+ Protestant denominations, all claiming to follow the Bible alone.

##### **A. The Statistical Reality**

**The Number:** Catholic apologists cite over **33,000 Protestant denominations** as evidence of mass confusion caused by Sola Scriptura.

**Source:** World Christian Encyclopedia (Oxford University Press, 2001), page 10.

**Updated figures suggest 40,000+ denominations.**

**The Argument:** If Scripture is clear and sufficient, why do sincere, Spirit-filled Christians who read the same Bible come to contradictory conclusions on: - Baptism (infant vs. believer, sprinkling vs. immersion) - Communion (real presence, symbolic, memorial) - Church government (episcopal, presbyterian, congregational) - Predestination vs. free will - Eternal security vs. apostasy - Charismatic gifts (cessationism vs. continuationism) - Women's ordination - Divorce and remarriage - End times (pre-trib, mid-trib, post-trib, amillennial)

**Each group claims:** - "We follow the Bible alone" - "The Holy Spirit guides us" - "Our interpretation is correct"

**Yet they disagree on fundamental doctrines.**

**Catholic Critique:** > "The disintegration of Protestantism into competing factions teaching different doctrines is **an important indicator of the practical failure of sola scriptura.**" >> **Source:** EWTN, "The Practical Problems of Sola Scriptura"

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##### **B. The "Essentials vs. Non-Essentials" Dodge**

**Protestant Defense:** "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity."

**Translation:** "We agree on the essentials; the divisions are only over non-essentials."

**Why This Fails—Four Devastating Counter-Arguments:**

**1. Who Decides What's Essential?** > “It is **not that easy to distinguish between essentials and non-essentials**, and the motto **fails to tell us what is essential or what is non-essential.**” > > **Source:** Core Christianity, “Why We Need to Rethink ‘In Essentials, Unity’”

- Calvinists say predestination is essential; Arminians say it's not
- Some say baptism is essential for salvation; others say it's just a symbol
- Who has the authority to declare what's essential? **Not Scripture alone—it doesn't provide a list**

**2. Everything Scripture Teaches Is Essential** > “**Everything that Scripture proposes to be believed and practiced is essential**—not equally essential but essential nonetheless.”

- If God inspired it, it matters
- Dismissing parts of Scripture as “non-essential” is a **canon within a canon**
- Protestants claim “Scripture alone,” then ignore parts of Scripture they find inconvenient

**3. Protestant Divisions ARE Over Essentials** - The Reformation itself split over essentials (justification, sacraments, authority) - Denominations divide over what **they** consider essential - Baptist churches split from Presbyterian churches because infant baptism is NOT a “non-essential” to them

**4. This Admits Sola Scriptura Doesn't Produce Unity** - The maxim is an admission of failure - “We can't agree, so let's agree to disagree” is not unity—it's **fragmentation** - Jesus prayed “that they all may be one” (John 17:21), not “that they all may agree to disagree on non-essentials”

**Sources:** - Core Christianity, “Why We Need to Rethink ‘In Essentials, Unity; In Nonessentials, Liberty’” - Ligonier Ministries, “In Essentials Unity”

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### **C. The Interpretive Authority Problem**

**Catholic Argument:** > “Scripture itself carries **no operative authority apart from interpretation**, and any appeal to Scripture is an appeal to **an interpretation**—the question being **‘whose interpretation?’**” > > **Source:** Called to Communion, “Solo Scriptura, Sola Scriptura, and the Question of Interpretive Authority”

**The Problem:** - Protestants say “Scripture alone” - But in practice, it's “Scripture + my interpretation” - When interpretations conflict, there's no mechanism to resolve disputes - Each person/church becomes their own pope

**Presbyterian theologian's admission:** > “A lot of Protestants disagree about **how much [of Scripture] is clear.**”

**The Chaos:** - No stabilizing structure ensuring ecclesiastical unity - Scripture alone has **never worked historically** to restore unity - Every Protestant is de facto his own final interpreter

**Result: Hermeneutical Anarchy.**

**Source:** - Called to Communion, “Solo Scriptura, Sola Scriptura, and the Question of Interpretive Authority”

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## 4. THE HISTORICAL ARGUMENT: The Early Church Never Practiced Sola Scriptura

**Thesis:** Sola Scriptura is a 16th-century invention. For 1,500 years, the Church operated on Scripture + Tradition + Church Authority. The early church fathers explicitly affirmed oral tradition and apostolic succession.

### A. Historical Impossibility Before the Printing Press

**Catholic Argument:** > “Sola scriptura was **completely impossible before the invention of the printing press**, which didn’t happen for the first 1,400 years of Church history.” >> **Source:** EWTN, “The Practical Problems of Sola Scriptura”

**The Reality:** - The printing press was invented around 1440 - Before that, Bibles were rare, hand-copied, and expensive - Most Christians were illiterate - **How could “Scripture alone” guide the average Christian who couldn’t read and didn’t own a Bible?**

**The Answer:** It didn’t. The Church taught them through oral tradition, sacraments, and church authority.

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### B. The New Testament Writers Couldn’t Have Taught Sola Scriptura

**Catholic Argument:** > “None of the New Testament writers could have possibly taught sola scriptura since the books were written over several decades, and only the last book written could even potentially teach this doctrine.” >> **Source:** Catholic Answers

**The Timeline:** - Paul’s letters: 50-67 AD - Gospels: 60-90 AD - Revelation: ~95 AD - When Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians (51 AD), **most of the NT didn’t exist yet** - When he wrote 2 Timothy, the Gospels weren’t completed

**Implication:** Paul could not have taught “Scripture alone” because “Scripture” (as we know it) didn’t exist in complete form until the end of the 1st century.

**What Did the Early Church Follow?** - The **oral teaching** of the apostles - The **traditions** passed down - The **authority** of apostolic leaders

**Source:** - Catholic Answers, “The Practical Problems of Sola Scriptura”

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### C. The Early Church Fathers Affirmed Tradition and Church Authority

**Irenaeus (180 AD):** > “When [heretics] are confuted from the Scriptures, they turn round and accuse these same Scriptures... when we refer them to that **tradition which originates from the apostles**, [and] which is preserved by means of the succession of presbyters in the Churches, they object to tradition.”

**Tertullian (200 AD):** > “Our appeal [must not be made] to the Scriptures alone... **the natural order requires that this question should be first proposed: With whom lies that very faith to which the Scriptures belong?** From what and through whom... has been handed down that **rule of faith?**”

**Basil of Caesarea (375 AD):** > “**Some we possess derived from written teaching; others we have received delivered to us in a mystery by the tradition of the apostles;** and both of these have the same force.”

**Key Points:** - Heretics misinterpret Scripture; apostolic tradition guards truth - Authority to interpret comes from apostolic succession - Written (Scripture) and oral (Tradition) both have authority

**Apostolic Succession:** The apostles appointed bishops through laying on of hands, and those bishops appointed successors.

**Biblical Foundation:** - Acts 1:20-26: Matthias chosen to replace Judas - 1 Timothy 4:14: Gift given “by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery” - 2 Timothy 1:6: “Stir up the gift... by the putting on of my hands” - Titus 1:5: “ordain elders in every city”

**Clement of Rome (96 AD):** > “The apostles... **appointed their first converts,** testing them by the Spirit, **to be the bishops and deacons of future believers...** they appointed those who have already been mentioned and afterwards added the further provision that, if they should die, other approved men should succeed to their ministry.”

**LDS Application:** The early church DID have apostolic succession and authority—but that authority was later lost when the apostles died without passing on the priesthood keys. The LDS church represents the restoration of that lost authority.

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## **5. THE PROTESTANT HYPOCRISY ARGUMENT: If You Really Believed “Bible Alone,” You’d Follow ALL of It**

**Thesis:** Protestants claim “Scripture alone” is their authority, yet they selectively ignore or reinterpret biblical practices they find inconvenient. If they truly followed Sola Scriptura consistently, they would practice baptism for the dead, holy kiss, footwashing, and other clearly biblical practices.

### **A. Baptism for the Dead**

**1 Corinthians 15:29:** > “Else what shall they do which are **baptized for the dead,** if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?”

**The Biblical Fact:** - Paul mentions baptism for the dead matter-of-factly - He doesn’t condemn it or call it heresy - He uses it as evidence for the resurrection: “If there’s no resurrection, why practice baptism for the dead?”

**The Protestant Response:** Protestants have invented dozens of creative interpretations to explain this verse away: - “It was a pagan practice Paul was referencing but not endorsing” - “It means being baptized to fill the ranks of dead believers” - “It’s a symbolic reference” - Etc.

**The Problem:** If the Bible is clear and sufficient, why do Protestants need elaborate interpretive gymnastics to avoid a practice Paul clearly references? **The simplest reading is that early Christians practiced baptism for the dead, and Paul accepted it.**

**Why Protestants Don't Practice It:** Because it doesn't fit their theology. They've **rejected a biblical practice** because it conflicts with their tradition—ironically proving they don't actually follow “Scripture alone.”

## **B. Laying on of Hands for the Gift of the Holy Ghost**

**Acts 8:14-20:** > “Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) **Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.**”

**Acts 19:5-6:** > “When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when **Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them;** and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.”

**The Biblical Fact:** - The Samaritans were baptized but did NOT receive the Holy Ghost until apostles laid hands on them - This happened AFTER Pentecost, proving laying on of hands continued in the apostolic church - Paul laid hands on believers in Ephesus for them to receive the Holy Ghost - The pattern is clear: baptism + laying on of hands by proper authority = receiving the Holy Ghost

**The Protestant Response:** Most Protestants teach you automatically receive the Holy Ghost when you believe or when you're baptized—no laying on of hands needed.

**The Problem:** **The Bible clearly shows laying on of hands by apostles was required to receive the Holy Ghost.** If Protestants truly followed “Scripture alone,” they would practice this. Instead, they've invented a theology that contradicts what Acts explicitly teaches.

**Why Protestants Don't Practice It:** Because they don't have apostles with authority to lay on hands. Admitting this practice is biblical would expose that they lack proper priesthood authority—so they reinterpret or ignore these passages.

## **C. Anointing with Oil**

**James 5:14-15:** > “Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and **let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord:** And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up.”

**The Biblical Fact:** James commands sick believers to call elders for anointing with oil and prayer.

**The Protestant Response:** Some Protestants practice this; most don't. Many say “the oil was medicinal” or “this was for the apostolic age.”

**The Problem:** The text doesn't limit it to the apostolic age. It's a clear biblical command many Protestants ignore.

#### **D. The Devastating Conclusion**

**The Protestant Inconsistency:** - Protestants claim "Scripture alone" - Yet they **selectively obey** Scripture based on what fits their theology - They dismiss inconvenient biblical practices as "cultural," "symbolic," or "no longer applicable" - **By what authority?** Not Scripture—by tradition and personal interpretation

**The Irony:** Protestants accuse Catholics and LDS of adding "extra-biblical tradition." But Protestants have their own tradition—it's just **unacknowledged**. They use tradition to: - Determine which biblical practices to follow - Decide which commands are cultural vs. timeless - Interpret which passages are literal vs. symbolic

**The Question Protestants Cannot Answer:** If you truly believed in Sola Scriptura, why don't you: - Practice baptism for the dead (1 Cor 15:29)? - Require laying on of hands by apostles to receive the Holy Ghost (Acts 8:14-20, Acts 19:5-6)? - Anoint the sick with oil (James 5:14)? - Accept living apostles and prophets who still give revelation today (Eph 4:11-14)?

**The Answer:** Because you **don't actually follow Scripture alone**. You follow Scripture **as interpreted and filtered through Protestant tradition**.

Which proves Sola Scriptura is a myth.

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#### **E. Even OT Israel Needed Continuing Revelation to Apply Scripture**

**Numbers 15:32-36 - The Sabbath-Breaker:** > "And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day... And they put him in ward, **because it was not declared what should be done to him**. And the LORD said unto Moses, **The man shall be surely put to death...**"

**The Devastating Implication:** - The Israelites **already had the written Sabbath command** (Exodus 20:8-11) - They knew not to work on the Sabbath - **But they didn't know how to apply it to a specific case** - They needed **direct revelation through Moses** to determine the appropriate response

**The Principle:** Even with written Scripture, **non-inscripturated guidance "fine tunes" Scripture's application** to specific situations.

**Application to Today:** - The Bible gives general principles - But we need **living prophets** to apply them to modern situations: - Medical ethics (cloning, IVF, life support) - Technology (AI, social media, genetic engineering) - Contemporary challenges (gender ideology, drug policy)

**If ancient Israel with the law of Moses still needed prophetic guidance, how much more do we?**

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## F. Old Testament Reformations Used Non-Inscripturated Traditions

**2 Chronicles 29:25 - Hezekiah's Reforms:** > “And he set the Levites in the house of the LORD with cymbals, with psalteries, and with harps, **according to the commandment of David, and of Gad the king's seer, and Nathan the prophet:** for so was the commandment of the LORD by his prophets.”

**The Problem:** - Hezekiah followed commands from David, Gad, and Nathan - **These specific commands are nowhere found in Scripture** - Yet the text says they were “the commandment of the LORD”

**Josiah's Reform (2 Kings 22-23):** - Found the lost book of the law (likely Deuteronomy) - Consulted **prophetess Huldah** for interpretation (2 Kings 22:14-20) - Relied on her prophetic words, **not just the rediscovered text**

**The Principle:** Major religious reforms in the OT relied on **non-inscripturated prophetic tradition**, not Scripture alone.

**No one accused Hezekiah or Josiah of violating a “sufficiency principle.”**

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## G. Statistical Summary: Protestant Selective Obedience

Biblical Practice	Biblical Command	Protestant Practice	LDS Practice
<b>Baptism for the dead</b>	1 Cor 15:29	✗ Rejected/ignored	✓ Practiced in temples
<b>Laying on of hands (Holy Ghost)</b>	Acts 8:14-20; Acts 19:5-6	✗ Rejected (claim automatic at belief/baptism)	✓ Practiced after baptism
<b>Anointing sick with oil</b>	James 5:14-15	✗ Mostly ignored	✓ Practiced by priesthood holders
<b>Living apostles/prophets</b>	Eph 4:11-14 (“till we all come to unity”)	✗ Claim “ceased after NT”	✓ Quorum of Twelve Apostles
<b>Apostolic succession</b>	Acts 1:20-26; 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6; Titus 1:5	✗ Rejected	✓ Priesthood authority restored

**Conclusion:** Protestants claim “Bible alone” but ignore or reinterpret at least **5 clear biblical practices** because they don't fit Protestant theology.

**This is NOT Sola Scriptura—it's selective obedience based on tradition.**

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## **H. The Priesthood Problem: “Priesthood of All Believers” Misinterprets 1 Peter 2:9**

**The Protestant Doctrine:** Protestants teach the “priesthood of all believers,” claiming all Christians are priests with equal authority. This supposedly eliminates the need for ordained ministerial priesthood.

**The Key Verse:** > “But ye are a chosen generation, a **royal priesthood**, an holy nation, a peculiar people...” (1 Peter 2:9)

### **Why This Interpretation Fails:**

**1. Scholar John Elliott’s Research:** Protestant scholar John Elliott demonstrates that 1 Peter 2:9 emphasizes **election and holiness**, not priesthood as an authority structure. The passage is about: - Being chosen by God - Being set apart as holy - Corporate identity as God’s people - **NOT** about individual priestly authority to perform ordinances

### **2. The Priest-Laity Distinction Remains in the New Testament:**

**Jude’s Warning Against Korah-like Rebellion:** > “Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the **gainsaying of Core [Korah].**” (Jude 11)

**Context:** Korah rebelled against Moses’ priesthood authority, claiming “all the congregation are holy” (Numbers 16:3). God destroyed Korah for this rebellion.

**Jude uses Korah as an example of judgment** against those who reject proper authority. This indicates: - A **continuing ordained ministerial priesthood** exists in the New Covenant - Rejecting priesthood authority is compared to Korah’s rebellion - **Not everyone has equal priesthood authority**

**3. The Existence of Christ as High Priest Requires a Priesthood:** - Hebrews extensively describes Christ as our **High Priest** (Heb 4:14-16, 7:1-28, 8:1, 9:11) - A High Priest presupposes a **priestly order** - If all believers are equally priests, the concept of “High Priest” becomes meaningless

**4. Specific Priesthood Offices in the NT:** - **Elders** (presbyters) ordained by laying on of hands (1 Tim 4:14, 5:22; Acts 14:23) - **Bishops** (overseers) with specific qualifications (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:7-9) - **Deacons** with specific qualifications (1 Tim 3:8-13) - These aren’t generic “believers”—they’re **ordained offices**

**5. Incompatible with Sola Scriptura’s Implications:** If everyone is equally a priest with authority to administer ordinances: - Who can baptize? Can anyone baptize themselves? - Can a 5-year-old baptize an adult? - Can anyone administer communion? - Can anyone ordain others to ministry?

**The chaos this produces contradicts “God is not the author of confusion” (1 Cor 14:33).**

**The LDS Solution:** - **Aaronic Priesthood** (lesser): Administers outward ordinances (baptism, sacrament) - **Melchizedek Priesthood** (higher): Spiritual gifts, Holy Ghost, sealing ordinances - **Proper authority through ordination** by those who hold priesthood keys - **Biblical pattern restored** through Joseph Smith

**The Verdict:** Protestant “priesthood of all believers” misinterprets 1 Peter 2:9, contradicts NT warnings against Korah-like rebellion, and creates practical chaos. A continuing ordained ministerial priesthood is biblically necessary—incompatible with sola scriptura’s individualistic approach.

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## **6. THE CHURCH AUTHORITY ARGUMENT: Even Critics of Rome Recognize a Church Was Needed**

**Thesis:** Church authority was necessary to organize the biblical canon and preserve Christian teachings. However, that authority was later lost through apostasy and restored through the LDS Church—not perpetuated through Rome.

### **The Undeniable Reality**

#### **Arguments Protestants Cannot Refute:**

**1. No Biblical Passage Teaches Sola Scriptura** Even Protestant scholars admit this. Geisler and MacKenzie: “Sola Scriptura is not formally stated or taught anywhere in Scripture.”

**2. It’s Logically Circular** Using the Bible to prove the Bible’s sole authority is circular reasoning.

**3. The Canon Problem** Church authority determined the canon; therefore, church authority has authority beyond the canon.

**4. The Divisions Problem** Sola Scriptura has produced 33,000+ denominations, not unity.

**5. Historical Novelty** No Christian believed Sola Scriptura for 1,500 years.

**Recognition Without Full Agreement:** > “Sola scriptura is a **blueprint for anarchy**... The result of sola scriptura has been a chaos of conflicting interpretations and the **splintering of Christianity** into tens of thousands of rival sects.” >> **Source:** Catholic Culture, “Sola Scriptura: A Blueprint for Anarchy”

**The LDS Distinction:** We can recognize that church authority was essential for organizing the biblical canon and preserving early Christianity—without agreeing with every subsequent development. The church that organized the canon later fell into apostasy through the loss of priesthood keys and corruption of essential doctrines. The true church with proper priesthood authority was restored through Joseph Smith.

**Why This Matters:** Protestants must either: 1. Accept that they need church authority (which contradicts Sola Scriptura), OR 2. Explain by what authority they trust the biblical canon (circular reasoning)

The LDS position resolves this: We accept that church authority existed and was necessary—and that it has been restored.

**Sources:** - Catholic Culture, “Sola Scriptura: A Blueprint for Anarchy” - Various Catholic and Protestant sources referenced throughout

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# PART II: THE LDS SOLUTION—LIVING PROPHETS AND CONTINUING REVELATION

## Why the LDS Position Is the ONLY Coherent Solution

**The Problem:** - Sola Scriptura doesn't work (proven above) - The church that organized the biblical canon later fell into apostasy and lost priesthood authority

**The Solution:** A restoration of the original apostolic pattern: **living apostles and prophets** who receive continuing revelation from God, just as in the New Testament church.

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### 1. THE BIBLICAL CASE FOR LIVING PROPHETS

#### A. God Works Through Prophets—Always

**Amos 3:7:** > “Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.”

**LDS Interpretation:** God's pattern throughout history: He reveals His will through prophets. If God is still active (which Christians affirm), He must still have prophets.

**The Question:** If God spoke through prophets in the Old Testament and apostles in the New Testament, why would He suddenly stop in 100 AD? That makes no sense.

**Source:** - LDS Church, “Amos 3:7” (*New Era*, March 2012)

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#### B. The Church Was Built on Apostles and Prophets

**Ephesians 2:20:** > “And are built upon **the foundation of the apostles and prophets**, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone.”

**Ephesians 4:11-14:** > “And he gave some, **apostles; and some, prophets;** and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: **Till we all come in the unity of the faith**, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine...”

**Key Points:** 1. Christ gave **apostles and prophets** to the Church 2. Their purpose: bring believers to **unity of the faith** 3. They protect against being “tossed to and fro” by false doctrine 4. These offices exist “**till we all come in the unity of the faith**”

**Question:** Have we achieved unity of the faith? **Answer:** No. 33,000+ Protestant denominations prove we haven't.

**Conclusion:** We still need apostles and prophets.

**Protestant Objection:** “Apostles and prophets were only for the foundation period of the church. Once the NT was written, they ceased.”

**LDS Response:** 1. The text doesn’t say that. It says they exist “till we come to unity”—which hasn’t happened 2. This is an extra-biblical assertion (ironically violating Sola Scriptura) 3. If apostles were only for the foundation, why did they replace Judas (Acts 1:20-26)? 4. Buildings need foundations, but they also need **ongoing maintenance and leadership**

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#### **D. The Berean Argument: “The Bereans Checked Paul Against Scripture!”**

**Acts 17:11:** > “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and **searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.**”

**Protestant Claim:** “The Bereans checked Paul’s teaching against Scripture alone. This proves Sola Scriptura!”

#### **Why This Fails—Four Devastating Counters:**

**1. They Were Checking Paul’s ORAL Teaching Against Scripture** - Paul was teaching them **orally** (apostolic tradition) - They compared his oral tradition to written Scripture - This proves **Scripture + Oral Tradition**, NOT Scripture alone - If Sola Scriptura were true, Paul wouldn’t have needed to teach them—they could’ve just read the Bible

**2. They Had an Authoritative Teacher (Paul)** - The Bereans weren’t reading Scripture alone in isolation - **Paul (an apostle with authority) was teaching them** - They were verifying his apostolic teaching matched OT prophecy about the Messiah - This proves **authoritative teaching + Scripture**, not Scripture alone

**3. The “Scripture” Was Only the Old Testament** - The New Testament wasn’t written yet - If “Scripture alone” were sufficient, the Bereans wouldn’t have needed Paul at all - But they DID need Paul to explain how Jesus fulfilled OT prophecy - **Scripture + Apostolic Teaching = Complete Truth**

**4. The Bereans Accepted Paul’s Authority** - **Verse 12:** “Therefore **many of them believed**” - They believed because Paul’s apostolic teaching matched Scripture - They submitted to Paul’s authority after verifying it - This is the **exact pattern LDS members follow:** verify prophetic teaching against Scripture, then accept living revelation

**The LDS Parallel:** Just as the Bereans verified Paul’s apostolic teaching against Scripture, LDS members verify prophetic teaching against Scripture—but they also accept continuing revelation through living apostles and prophets.

**The Berean example proves:** - The Bible should be studied carefully ✓ - Apostolic teaching should align with Scripture ✓ - Living apostles with authority are needed to teach truth ✓ - **Scripture alone is NOT sufficient** ✓

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## C. The Promise of Restoration

**Acts 3:19-21:** > “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when **the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord**; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive **until the times of restitution of all things**, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began.”

**Key Phrase:** “the times of restitution of all things”

**LDS Interpretation:** - “Restitution” = restoration of what was lost - This prophecy points to a future restoration of apostolic authority, priesthood, and truth - This is precisely what happened through Joseph Smith

**The Great Apostasy:** - After the death of the apostles, the church fell into apostasy - Priesthood authority was lost - Essential doctrines were corrupted - Acts 3:21 prophesies a **restoration** before Christ’s return

**Protestant Objection:** “Jesus said the gates of hell would not prevail against His church (Matthew 16:18).”

**LDS Response:** 1. The church (believers) continued to exist, but **apostolic authority** was lost 2. God preserved a remnant of believers, but they lacked priesthood keys 3. The Reformation attempted to fix problems but didn’t restore authority 4. A restoration was necessary, not just reformation

**Sources:** - LDS Church, “Why Was a Restoration Necessary?” (Scripture Central) - FAIR, “The Times of Restitution Are Now”

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## 2. THE LDS STRUCTURE OF PROPHETIC AUTHORITY

### A. The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve Apostles

**The Structure:** - **First Presidency:** President (the Prophet) + two counselors - **Quorum of the Twelve Apostles:** Twelve apostles with equal authority - All are **prophets, seers, and revelators**

**Authority:** - The President of the Church holds all priesthood keys - Only he receives revelation for the entire Church - The Twelve Apostles collectively hold the keys and can exercise them when the prophet dies - **Succession:** The longest-serving apostle becomes the next prophet

**Biblical Parallel:** This mirrors the New Testament pattern: - Jesus called Twelve Apostles - Peter was given keys (Matthew 16:19) - After Judas’s death, Matthias was chosen to fill the vacancy (Acts 1:20-26) - The apostles made binding decisions for the Church (Acts 15)

**Sources:** - Wikipedia, “Quorum of the Twelve Apostles (LDS Church)” - LDS Church, “How Is a New Prophet or Apostle Called in the Church?”

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## **B. Personal Revelation Within Proper Spheres**

**The LDS Teaching:** - **The Prophet** receives revelation for the entire Church - **Local leaders** (bishops, stake presidents) receive revelation for their areas of authority - **Individual members** receive personal revelation for themselves and their families - **No one** receives revelation that contradicts higher authority

**Why This Works:** - Avoids chaos (everyone claiming “the Holy Spirit told me” with contradictory messages) - Maintains order and unity - Preserves individual agency (members can receive personal guidance)

**Biblical Support:** - 1 Corinthians 14:33: “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints” - Hebrews 13:17: “Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls”

**Sources:** - LDS Church, “Prophecy and Personal Revelation” (*Ensign*, April 2016) - LDS Church, “Personal Revelation: The Teachings and Examples of the Prophets” (General Conference, 2007)

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## **C. The Gift of the Holy Ghost for All Members**

**The LDS Teaching:** Every baptized member who receives the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost can receive: - Personal revelation - Spiritual guidance - The spirit of prophecy (Revelation 19:10: “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”)

**Key Distinction:** - Personal revelation confirms truth and guides individual decisions - It does NOT replace prophetic authority or establish new doctrine for the Church - The Holy Ghost testifies of truth taught by the prophets

**Why This Is Superior to Sola Scriptura:** - Sola Scriptura: Scripture alone, interpreted by fallible individuals → chaos - LDS Model: Scripture + living prophets + personal revelation through the Holy Ghost → unity with individual confirmation

**Source:** - LDS Church, “The Gift of Prophecy” (LDS Living)

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## **3. WHY LIVING PROPHETS SOLVE THE PROBLEMS SOLA SCRIPTURA CANNOT**

### **A. Solves the Canon Problem**

**Sola Scriptura Problem:** Who decides what’s Scripture?

**LDS Solution:** - The First Presidency and Quorum of the Twelve, as prophets and apostles, have authority to determine what is scripture - They can receive new scripture (Doctrine and Covenants, Pearl of Great Price) - They can clarify and correct existing scripture (Joseph Smith Translation)

**Example:** The Eighth Article of Faith: “We believe the Bible to be the word of God as far as it is translated correctly; we also believe the Book of Mormon to be the word of God.”

- Acknowledges biblical transmission problems (proven in the infallibility debate)
  - Provides additional scripture (Book of Mormon) as a second witness
  - Authorizes prophetic correction (JST)
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## **B. Solves the Interpretation Problem**

**Sola Scriptura Problem:** Who has the authority to interpret Scripture when Christians disagree?

**LDS Solution:** Living prophets provide **authoritative interpretation**.

**Example:** - Debate: Is baptism necessary for salvation? - Protestant answers: Depends who you ask (Baptists say yes, many evangelicals say no) - LDS answer: The prophet has clarified this through revelation (baptism by proper authority is essential)

**The Difference:** - Protestants: “My interpretation vs. your interpretation” (no resolution) - LDS: “The prophet has spoken” (authoritative resolution)

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## **C. Solves the Unity Problem**

**Sola Scriptura Problem:** 33,000+ Protestant denominations prove it produces division.

**LDS Solution:** One Church, one prophet, one unified set of teachings.

**Why It Works:** - All members sustain the same prophet - All receive the same teachings through General Conference - All follow the same curriculum and doctrines - Disagreements are resolved by prophetic authority, not endless debate

**Contrast:** - Protestant pastor: “Here’s what I think the Bible means” (his opinion) - LDS prophet: “Thus saith the Lord” (revelation from God)

**Ephesians 4:11-14 fulfilled:** Apostles and prophets exist “till we all come in the unity of the faith”—LDS members have doctrinal unity that Protestants can only dream of.

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## **D. Solves the “Dead Letter” Problem**

**The Issue:** The Bible was written 2,000+ years ago. It doesn’t address: - Modern medical ethics (cloning, genetic engineering, IVF) - Technology (social media, AI) - Contemporary moral issues (gender ideology, drug legalization)

**Sola Scriptura Problem:** Protestants must extrapolate from ancient texts to address modern issues, leading to wildly different conclusions.

**LDS Solution:** Living prophets receive continuing revelation to address contemporary challenges.

**Examples:** - **1890:** President Wilford Woodruff received revelation to discontinue plural marriage (Official Declaration 1) - **1978:** President Spencer W. Kimball received revelation extending priesthood to all worthy males (Official Declaration 2) - **Modern guidance:** Prophets address issues like pornography, same-sex marriage, social media use, etc.

**Why This Is Biblical:** - Amos 3:7: God reveals His will through prophets - John 16:12-13: "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth"

**Continuing revelation** is the biblical pattern, not a one-time deposit of truth.

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#### **4. ANSWERING OBJECTIONS TO LIVING PROPHETS**

**Objection 1: "Revelation ceased with the apostles. Hebrews 1:1-2 says God spoke 'in these last days' through His Son."**

**LDS Response:** - Hebrews 1:1-2 says God spoke through Jesus—it doesn't say revelation ceased - "Last days" began with Christ's mortal ministry and continue until His return - Hebrews 1 contrasts the superior revelation through Christ with the incomplete revelation through OT prophets - It does NOT teach that revelation through apostles and prophets ended

**Biblical Evidence for Ongoing Revelation:** - Acts 13:1: "Now there were in the church that was at Antioch certain **prophets and teachers**" (present tense, ongoing role) - Acts 21:9: "And the same man [Philip] had four daughters, virgins, **which did prophesy**" - 1 Corinthians 14:1: "Follow after charity, and **desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophesy**"

If prophecy ceased, why would Paul command believers to desire it?

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**Objection 2: "We don't need new revelation. The Bible is sufficient. 2 Timothy 3:16-17."**

**LDS Response:** Already refuted this in Part I. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 does NOT teach Sola Scriptura or sufficiency.

Additionally: - If the Bible were sufficient, why do Protestants write millions of books interpreting it? - If the Bible were clear, why 33,000+ denominations? - Sufficiency is a claim, not a reality

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**Objection 3: "LDS prophets have made mistakes or changed teachings. True prophets don't err."**

**LDS Response:**

**1. Biblical Prophets Were Fallible:** - **Moses:** Struck the rock in anger instead of speaking to it (Numbers 20:10-12) → barred from the Promised Land - **David:** Committed adultery and murder (2 Samuel 11) - **Peter:** Denied Christ three times (Matthew 26:69-75) - **Paul:** Persecuted Christians before conversion (Acts 9:1) - **Jonah:** Disobeyed God and fled (Jonah 1)

**Key Point:** Prophets are fallible men called by God. Their authority doesn't depend on personal perfection.

**2. Prophets Can Speak as Men vs. as Prophets:** - LDS teaching: When a prophet speaks "thus saith the Lord," it's revelation - When he speaks on personal matters, it's his opinion - This distinction is biblical: Nathan initially told David to build the temple (his opinion), then God corrected him (2 Samuel 7:1-17)

**3. Progressive Revelation:** - God reveals truth "line upon line, precept upon precept" (Isaiah 28:10, 2 Nephi 28:30) - Earlier revelations can be clarified or expanded by later revelation - This doesn't mean prophets "erred"—it means God reveals more over time

**Example from the Bible:** - OT law: "An eye for an eye" (Exodus 21:24) - NT teaching: "Turn the other cheek" (Matthew 5:39) - Did Jesus correct an error, or did He provide higher law? **Higher law.**

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**Objection 4: "Deuteronomy 18:22 says if a prophet's prediction fails, he's a false prophet."**

**LDS Response:**

**Full Context (Deuteronomy 18:20-22):** > "But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak... that prophet shall die. And if thou say in thine heart, How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, **if the thing follow not, nor come to pass**, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken, but the prophet hath spoken it presumptuously: thou shalt not be afraid of him."

**Key Phrase: "speaketh in the name of the LORD"**

This applies to predictions made as direct revelation from God (e.g., "Thus saith the Lord, X will happen"). It does NOT apply to: - Personal opinions - Conditional prophecies (e.g., Jonah's prophecy that Nineveh would be destroyed—it wasn't, because they repented) - Misinterpretations of private inspiration

**Biblical Example:** - Jonah prophesied: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown" (Jonah 3:4) - It didn't happen (Jonah 3:10) - Was Jonah a false prophet? **No**—the prophecy was conditional

**Application to LDS Prophets:** If an LDS prophet says "Thus saith the Lord" and it fails, that's a problem. But if a prophet expresses a hope, makes a conditional statement, or offers personal insight, Deuteronomy 18:22 doesn't apply.

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## 5. THE BOTTOM LINE: Why LDS Prophetic Authority Is the ONLY Solution

### The Comparison:

Issue	Sola Scriptura	Early Church Authority	LDS (Living Prophets)
<b>Canon Problem</b>	No solution (circular reasoning)	Church councils determined it	Prophets determine it + can receive new scripture
<b>Interpretation</b>	Every man his own interpreter (chaos)	Church councils interpreted	Living prophets with priesthood keys
<b>Unity</b>	33,000+ denominations (failure)	Unity existed (later lost through apostasy)	True doctrinal unity under prophet
<b>Modern Issues</b>	Extrapolate from ancient texts (guesswork)	N/A (authority was lost)	Receive new revelation (biblical pattern)
<b>Authority Source</b>	None (self-refuting)	Apostolic succession (later lost)	Restored priesthood through Joseph Smith

**The Verdict:** - Sola Scriptura is **logically incoherent** and **practically disastrous** - Church authority was **essential** for organizing the canon and preserving early Christianity - That authority was **later lost** through the Great Apostasy when priesthood keys were not passed on - LDS prophetic authority is the **restoration of the biblical pattern**: living apostles and prophets receiving revelation from God

## PART III: CONCLUSION—THE CHOICE IS CLEAR

### For the Protestant Reader

You've been taught Sola Scriptura your entire life. But the evidence is overwhelming:

1. **The Bible never teaches it.** (Even your own scholars admit this.)
2. **It's logically circular.** (You can't use the Bible to prove the Bible's sole authority.)
3. **The Church determined the canon.** (If you accept the Bible, you're trusting church authority.)
4. **It has produced catastrophic division.** (33,000+ denominations is not "unity of the faith.")
5. **The early church never practiced it.** (They followed Scripture + Tradition + Apostolic Authority.)

**You have two real options:**

**Option 1: Remain Protestant** Continue defending the indefensible. Ignore the contradictions. Accept that your denomination is one of 33,000+, all claiming to follow the Bible alone, all teaching different things.

**Option 2: Embrace the LDS Restoration** Accept that church authority was necessary to organize the biblical canon, but that authority was later lost through apostasy. God has restored the biblical pattern through living prophets and apostles. Receive the fulness of the gospel, priesthood authority, temple ordinances, and continuing revelation. Have doctrinal unity, authoritative interpretation, and divine guidance for modern challenges.

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## **The Biblical Pattern Is Clear**

**God's Pattern Throughout History:** - **Old Testament:** God spoke through prophets (Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah, etc.) - **New Testament:** God spoke through apostles and prophets (Peter, Paul, John, etc.) - **Today:** God speaks through living prophets (President and apostles of the LDS Church)

**Amos 3:7:** "Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets."

**Question:** If God worked through prophets for 4,000 years, why would He stop now?

**Answer:** He didn't. The LDS Church is the restoration of apostolic authority.

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## **The Challenge to Protestants**

### **Can you answer these questions?**

1. Where does the Bible teach Sola Scriptura?
2. If the Bible alone is sufficient, why do you need pastors, commentaries, and theology books?
3. If the Bible is clear, why do Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, Pentecostals, and others disagree on essential doctrines?
4. How do you know which books belong in the Bible without trusting church authority?
5. If apostles and prophets were only for the foundation of the church, why does Ephesians 4:11-14 say they exist "till we all come in the unity of the faith"?
6. If revelation ceased with the apostles, why does the Bible command believers to prophesy (1 Corinthians 14:1)?

**You cannot answer these questions within the framework of Sola Scriptura.**

But the LDS restoration provides clear, biblical answers to all of them.

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## The Invitation

God has restored His church through living prophets. The same authority that existed in the New Testament exists today:

- Apostles and prophets (Ephesians 2:20, 4:11)
- Priesthood authority to administer ordinances (Hebrews 5:4)
- Continuing revelation (Amos 3:7, John 16:12-13)
- The fulness of the gospel (Acts 3:21)

You don't have to remain in confusion, division, and doctrinal chaos.

**The Book of Mormon's Promise (Moroni 10:3-5):** > "I would exhort you that when ye shall read these things... that ye would **ask God, the Eternal Father, in the name of Christ, if these things are not true**; and if ye shall ask with a sincere heart, with real intent, having faith in Christ, **he will manifest the truth of it unto you, by the power of the Holy Ghost.**"

Test it. Read the Book of Mormon. Ask God if it's true. If it is, Joseph Smith was a prophet, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is true, and you've found what you've been searching for.

**Don't settle for the broken system of Sola Scriptura.**

**Embrace the restoration.**

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All Scripture quotations from the King James Version (KJV) unless otherwise noted.

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**Document Created:** November 12, 2025 **Research Method:** Comprehensive web search of Catholic apologetics, Protestant theological sources, early church fathers, historical councils, and LDS doctrinal teachings **Target Audience:** Protestant/Evangelical believers in Sola Scriptura **Purpose:** Unapologetically demonstrate Sola Scriptura is false and LDS prophetic authority is the biblical solution