

**Θεόπνευστος and its Implications for the Concept of
Scripture in 2 Timothy 3:14-17**

by

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

The idea of scripture is a complex and often an elusive concept to define in its origin, nature and authority especially since the idea is embedded in layers of ideological conception over the centuries of its existence. However, these intricacies in understanding the concept of scripture is not limited to the Christian Scripture alone but evident in probably all the scriptural religions of the world. This study, therefore, investigates the concept of Christian Scripture in 2 Timothy 3:14-17 as it seeks to understand the relationship between the usage of the Greek terms *ἱερά γράμματα*, *γραφὴ*, and *θεόπνευστος* and their implications on the concept of scripture judging from the selected pericope. This study further seeks to observe how these words and the text in question have contributed to an understanding of scripture especially as it relates to the debates on its inspiration and authority.

A double methodological approach was deployed to examine the chosen pericope of this research. The historical-grammatical exegetical method was used to comprehend the historical and literary contexts of the text. Then also the ideological texture, a component within the socio-rhetorical critical approach was used to sample the ideology of the text, its readers and its generation of interpreters. The body of this study, therefore, includes a general introduction, a survey of definitions of the concept of scriptures, various conceptions of scripture in different religious traditions, and an evaluation of the concept of the Christian Scripture in the various periods in the history of the Christian Church. A basic understanding of scripture was arrived at using both the historical-grammatical method and the ideological texture of the socio-rhetorical approach.

The findings of this research are therefore as follows; *ἱερά γράμματα* used in the pericope is a representation of the Jewish Scripture, while the author of the Pastoral Epistles (early 2nd century CE), used *γραφὴ* for the combination of the Jewish Scripture and the emerging scripture of the Second Testament at the time. Thus, the use of *γραφὴ* is most likely a reference to the Septuagint in addition to the emerging Second Testament writings and not the autographs as some have suggested. This however unveils that the scripture the term *θεόπνευστος* was used to qualify in the pericope is not identical to the present scripture in the form of the Roman Catholic Bible nor the

Protestant Bible. Findings on the *hapax legomenon*, θεόπνευστος, however at best remains inconclusive. Thus, this study in view of the grammatical construction of the given context, suggests θεόπνευστος not to be seen as the crux of the passage regarding inspiration as such interpretation was made rather popular and convincing as a result of the ideological ploys of generation of interpreters. Therefore, the term θεόπνευστος is rather taken to describe the practical, useful and functional nature which biblical texts had on ancient, biblical community which led to scripturalization of such texts.

Finally, this study upheld the relational definition of the concept of scripture as communities which produced these texts were also responsible for their scriptural status and authority. The Christian Scripture is therefore seen as the Church's book and as the testimony of these communities about God

OPSOMMING

Die idee van die Skrif is 'n ingewikkelde en dikwels ontwykende konsep om te definieer in terme van oorsprong, aard en gesag, veral omdat die idee oor die eeue van gebruik ingebed is in lae van ideologiese opvatting. Hierdie verwickeldhede in die verstaan van die Skrifbegrip is egter nie net tot die Christelike Skrif beperk nie, maar is tipies van Skrifgodsdienste van die wêreld. Hierdie studie ondersoek die konsep van die Christelike Skrif in 2 Timoteus 3: 14-17, deur die verband tussen die gebruik van die Griekse begrippe *ἱερά γράμματα*, *γραφή* en *νεόπνευστος* en die implikasies daarvan vir die begrip Skrif beoordeel aan die hand van die geselekteerde perikoop. Hierdie studie poog verder om die bydrae van hierdie woorde en die betrokke teks tot die verstaan van die Skrif te verreken, veral hoe dit verband hou met die debatte oor die inspirasie en gesag daarvan.

'n Dubbele metodologiese aanpak is gebruik om die gekose perikoop van hierdie navorsing te ondersoek. Die grammaties-historiese eksegetiese metode is gebruik om die historiese en literêre kontekste van die teks te begryp. Daarmee saam is die ideologiese struktuur, 'n komponent in die sosio-retoriese kritiese benadering, gebruik om die ideologie van die teks, die lesers en die generasie van interpreteerders te verken. Die hoofdeel van hierdie studie bevat dus 'n algemene inleiding, 'n oorsig van die definisies van die Skrifbegrip, verskillende opvattinge van die Skrif in verskillende godsdienstige tradisies, en 'n evaluering van die konsep van die Christelike Skrif in die verskillende tydperke in die geskiedenis van die Christelike kerk. 'n Basiese begrip van die Skrif is sodoende geformuleer met behulp van sowel die grammaties-historiese metode as die ideologiese struktuur van die sosio-retoriese benadering.

Die bevindinge van hierdie navorsing is soos volg; *ἱερά γράμματα* wat in die perikoop gebruik word, is 'n voorstelling van die Joodse Skrif, terwyl die skrywer van die Pastorale Briewe (vroeë 2de eeu nC), *γραφή* gebruik het vir die kombinasie van die Joodse Skrif en die opkomende Skrif van die Tweede testament destyds. Die gebruik van *γραφή* is waarskynlik dus 'n verwysing na die Septuagint benewens die opkomende geskrifte uit die Tweede Testament en nie die *autographa* soos sommige voorgelê het nie. Dit lê egter bloot dat die Skrif waarvoor die term *θεόπνευστος* gebruik is in die perikoop, nie identies is aan die huidige Skrif in die vorm van die Rooms-Katolieke Bybel of die Protestantse Bybel nie. Alhoewel bevindings oor die

hapax legomenon, θεόπνευστος, soos hierdie studie aantoon altyd weer aanvegbaar is, is hierdie woord volgens die grammatikale konstruksie egter nie die kern van die inspirasiegedeelte nie, maar is verhef tot primêre belang as gevolg van die ideologiese idees van generasie van tolke. Daarom word die term θεόπνευστος eerder gesien dat dit die praktiese, bruikbare en funksionele aard van inspirasie in 'n antieke gemeenskap verteenwoordig, wat gelei het tot die hantering van sulke tekste as Skrif. Uiteindelik het hierdie studie die relasionele definisie van die Skrifbegrip bevestig, aangesien gemeenskappe wat hierdie tekste voortgebring het, ook verantwoordelik was vir hulle skriftuurlike status en gesag. Die Christelike Skrif word dus gesien as die boek van die kerk en as getuienis van hierdie gemeenskappe oor God.

DEDICATION

To my son, Richard Oluwadimimu Adebayo, who endured the most, the pain and peril my absence caused throughout the course of this academic programme.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

For a very long time, scriptures¹ have been viewed as normative, that is, a standard by which the lives of people and communities are judged. The Christian scriptures for the most time are used to determine the moral lives of believers, but also inform their worldview and perspective in many ways. It is part of popular belief that the scriptures possess these powers because they are infused and associated with divinity. Yet the concept of scripture and its nature remain complex in our time as opinions vary on the definition of the term. While some advocated a relational definition for the concept of scripture, others are of the view that it should be defined by its inherent quality.

The definition of what a scripture is, is indeed tricky and elusive. Any attempt to define scripture proves slippery and often leads to counter suggestions. A starting point is to note that the Latin word for scripture means a “written thing” just as the Greek counterpart means “writings”, whether sacred or secular (Hultgren 1984:134); yet, this does not seem to advance further clarity given the complexities involved in giving an account of the word “scripture”.

Another pertinent question concerns the sacred nature of scripture. Is this common assertion made because God is the subject matter? However, it should be noted that there are several other books with the same subject matter yet they were never regarded as scripture. Or is it the divine origin responsible for its designation as scriptures? In response to this, there are other books such as the Apocrypha, for example, which have even laid claim to divine origination but still are not seen as scriptures. Thomas Shoemaker (Shoemaker, 2019) suggested that, if it is a revelation of God that makes writings scripture, then one needs to enquire why the revelation of God in different religious traditions are at odds with one another? Why are there so many divergences in the dictates of scriptures from different religious traditions if they are but revelation of the divine? So the question persists, what is scripture?

¹ Scripture without the title case is used to refer to scripture as a common noun as a concept found in many religions. But it is in the title case when made to refer to a specific religion such as Christianity.

A careful look at the Second Testament² documents will suggest that the status of these writings is not a point of concern at the time and this could be responsible for lack of dedication by its writers in defending or establishing such a status. Yet in the modern times, their readers have raised questions and queries about their statuses and how they ended up being part of Scripture.

1.2 EARLIER STUDIES: BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW

In the last few decades, the way scriptures have been perceived, has been changing noticeably especially with regards to the term's nature and function. There is a gradual move away from a view that makes the scriptural status of a book a function of inspiration or divine origination to a more academically accountable view of perceiving scripture as a relational phenomenon.

1.2.1 What is Scripture?

Several attempts have been made by various scholars since investigations into the concept of scripture were revived in recent years, to give an account of scripture. These attempts could be grouped into two categories; the first are the centuries-long attempts which conceived of scripture as writings of divine origination. One of the adherents of such a view, Miller (1952:88), defined scriptures as “those genuine, authentic, and inspired books which, taken together, form Holy Scriptures”, revealing that the books' authenticity and inspiration (divine origination) is what made them scriptures. John Frame noted that these books have the highest authority and greatest ground of certainty, and belief in them is seen as a presupposition for God's people (1994:127). From this point of view, the use of the term “scriptures” especially in the Second Testament is seen as an inheritance from Judaism and not an invention, and as drawing its origin from divine inspiration and as possessing in all their extent of divine authority (Warfield, 1970:170). According to this perspective, a book can only be scripture if its source is of divine origin.

² The researcher prefers to refer to what is popularly called Old and New Testament as First and Second Testament respectively, except in such instances where they are found in a direct quotation. This is because he is sensitive to the opinion of other religions such as Judaism.

A second category includes much more recent attempts and has to do with conceiving of the notion of scripture as a relational concept. Smith (1993:17-18), for example, asserted that “Scripture is a bilateral term. By that we mean that it inherently implies, in fact names a relationship...no text is a scripture in itself and as such”. He further explained that it is people – a given community – that make a text into scripture or keep it as scripture by treating it in a certain way. Therefore, scripture is a human activity. This was further supported by Thomas Shoemaker as he identified the common trend of scriptures from different traditions as the conviction of each text’s community. Such a community sees such a text as different from every other text. Different reasons determine why religious groups sanctify a particular work (text) as special but as long as successive generations accept and adhere to it, the text becomes scripture. This is how scriptures are handed over from generation to generation and eventually become sanctified and powerful.

Such studies on the nature of scripture form the broader background against which this investigation on scriptural notions in 2 Tim 3:15-16 is conducted.

1.2.2 Scripture in 2 Timothy 3:15-16

The use of two different words for “scripture” (ἱερὰ γράμματα in verse 15 and γραφή in verse 16) in the passage has been a topic of discussion for scholars with each one proffering different reason for these words’ occurrence. Some viewed it as of no consequence, while others saw it as of great importance and distinction.

Opinions of most scholars consulted are united as they claimed that ἱερὰ γράμματα is a reference to the First Testament. Although Hendricksen (1957:300) quite some time ago already revealed that γράμματα has the primary meaning “that which can be drawn or traced” which could mean a character, letter, script, in summary the English equivalent of the alphabet, he nevertheless acknowledged that this did not in any way constrain it from referring to the First Testament in this text. Spencer (2014:128-129), Dibelius and Hans (1972:119), Hultgren (1984:134), and Perkins (2017:218) are all in agreement with him in this respect. Meanwhile, Donald Guthrie (1969:162) offers a contrary opinion as he queried the reason responsible for the use of ἱερὰ γράμματα in this form to describe the scriptures. He provided three possible answers; one, a

technical use to draw attention to the way Timothy learnt to read; two, to stress the character of Timothy's learning and; three, to cover the range of other literature such as apocalyptic and even some Christian books. However, the phrase *ἱερά γράμματα* need not only be explained as a phrase standing on its own. In fact, it seems reasonable for the author to have a specific purpose in using the phrase, *ἱερά γράμματα*, here in contrast to the more usual phrase, *γραφή*, in the next verse.

In the process of analysing *γραφή*, Guthrie (1969:163), presents the view that it could mean any writing, but emphasized that the uniform Second Testament use of the term with reference to the First Testament should determine the meaning in this particular passage. Contrary to this, Hendricksen was of the opinion that Paul intentionally made use of the expression *γραφή*, which was distinct from *ἱερά γράμματα* used in verse 15. According to Hendricksen, the reason of the change in vocabulary for scripture is simply that Paul wishes to draw a distinction between the First Testament (verse 15) and every other writing that could be called divinely inspired scripture (verse 16). This implies that "all scripture, in distinction from 'sacred writing' (verse 15) means everything which, through the testimony of the Holy Spirit in the Church, is recognized by the Church as canonical, that is, authoritative" (Hendricksen, 1957:301).

These divergent, contrary views on the term "scripture" present a dilemma. To an extent, these views even present a contradiction that needs to be resolved. Guthrie sees *ἱερά γράμματα* as a combination of First Testament and other sacred writings, while Hendricksen categorically interpreted the same phrase as referring to only the First Testament. Meanwhile, Guthrie interpreted *γραφή* as unmistakably First Testament but again Hendricksen's interpretation offered a contrasting position as he emphatically referred to *γραφή* as the entirety of "whatever has right to be called divinely inspired scripture" (Hendricksen, 1957:301) making the First Testament just one item on such list. This research therefore seeks to establish if there are any clear, quantifiable parameters that could be put to use in an attempt to resolve this confusion.

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

2 Timothy 3:14-17 is a passage frequently used in instances where the authority, inspiration and canonicity of the Christian scriptures are debated. Scholars such as Sandra Schneiders (1999:46) are of the opinion that when people say the Bible is inspired, most of them intend to affirm the divine influence on the writer, the text, the reader, the reading, or some combinations of these in virtue of which the text is rightly regarded as sacred scripture. But she argues that the mode of biblical inspiration is not about a description of divine operation; rather it is a phenomenology of the human experience of divine revelation mediated by the revelatory scripture. She rejects claims to plenary verbal inspiration and divine dictation theory as they are theologically untenable. She insists that the Church never considered inspiration the grounds or the criterion for including a writing in the canon but that once a book was canonized, it was regarded as inspired.

The aforementioned brief description of the state of the discussion therefore raises certain questions in need of clarification, for example, what was the contextual, socio-historical understanding of θεόπνευστος? What role did θεόπνευστος play in the recognition of what is known as scripture in the first century CE? Why did the author of 2 Timothy make use of the unique adjective θεόπνευστος while speaking of the scriptures in verse 16? Is there a connection between the uncommon use of the term, θεόπνευστος and the rare use of [τὰ] ἱερά γράμματα for scriptures in verse 15? Why will the author employ two different words for “scriptures” ([τὰ] ἱερά γράμματα and γραφή) in verses 15 and 16, or did he intend some sort of wordplay? What does the use of θεόπνευστος and [τὰ] ἱερά γράμματα which both appear to signify divine origination, signify for a definition of inspiration? What does it mean when we acknowledge a text as scripture, in other words what makes a text *scripture* according to 2 Timothy 3:15-16? What exactly does the word “scripture” mean here? Is it the First Testament as William Hendriksen (1976:300) pointed out when he stated that, “Paul uses the expression ‘sacred writings’ here in verse 15, but ‘all scripture’ in verse 16, for the simple reason that he wishes to draw a distinction between the OT (v. 15) and whatever has a right to be called divinely inspired scripture (v. 16)”? And if [τὰ] ἱερά γράμματα refers specifically to the First Testament as he claimed, then what part of the First Testament – the canonical or does it also include the non-canonical (Apocryphal) part of the First Testament? Could πᾶσα γραφή by implication or in

principle include the Second Testament writings, hence the difference in the Greek words applied to the word scripture? What implications do these have for what has been designated as scriptures (canonicity)? That is, what is the link between inspiration and canonicity? How has this passage influenced the debate and validation for canonicity? Finally, the outline of verse 16 reveals that scriptures are intended to be used for authoritative purposes. Therefore, what kind of authority do the scriptures possess? Or better still, what manner of authority has been accorded to them? If possible, where does the origin of the authority of the Christian scriptures lie?

It is rather unfortunate that several commentaries in focusing on *πᾶσα γραφή* concentrate rather on the scope of coverage of these words, attempting to unravel their probable reference to a passage of scripture, or any and every passage of scripture rather than to consider the play on words with regard to *πᾶσα γραφή* and *[τὰ] ἱερὰ γράμματα*. Scholars, such as Hendriksen (1976: 300-301), Hanson (1968:42-43), Lens and Griffin (1992:234) and others are of the view that the words *[τὰ] ἱερὰ γράμματα* and *θεόπνευστος* are rare words which made their singular appearance here in the Second Testament. Hanson (1968:42) interpreted the presence of *[τὰ] ἱερὰ γράμματα*, which according to him in the best MS authority has no article, as the most un-Pauline phrase in the Second Testament. He regarded it rather as Philo's regular manner of referring to the Septuagint. Lens and Griffin (1992:234), again, points to Josephus' use of it to refer to the First Testament. I.H Marshall (2004:794) sees the occurrence of *θεόπνευστος* here in the passage as coined by the author of the Pastoral Epistles. He however attempted to trace the origin and noted its usage in connection with Hellenistic manticism in which the spirit is said to have inspired prophets and poets but not the word. He concluded that the author of the Pastoral Epistles must have used it to denote the authority of Scripture as originating in God.

Also, although the focus of most scholars on the passage has been on the correct rendering and translation of the opening phrase in verse 16, whether it should be "all inspired scripture is useful" or "all scripture is inspired and useful". As important and relevant as such differences of opinion and decisions may be, the main research questions or focus of this investigation is the nature of the scriptures explicitly mentioned in 2 Timothy 3:15-16, and the possible reasons for their indication by the two different word sets. In addition, questions about how its notion of inspiration affects the texts' status when it comes to canonicity are also addressed. In so doing, this

research adopts the second rendering of the first phrase in verse 16, which sees inspiration as a quality of scriptures.

1.4 HYPOTHESIS

The researcher³ intends to study three important (sets of) words in 2 Timothy 3:15-16 (θεόπνευστος, [τὰ] ἱεράγρᾶμματα and γραφή) within their socio-historical context in order to offer a more accountable interpretation of these terms in the context of discussions about scripture. An investigation of these words in their literary and historical context could prove profitable in the quest of seeing the links between this passage and the canon. In order to answer the question on the understanding of the concept of the Christian Scriptures, one must investigate how the early Church and the NT writers understood or saw scriptures.

1.5 METHODOLOGY

The researcher took advantage of textual and exegetical methodology to address this research problem. This research involves exegetical study of the passage. For the purpose of the exegesis of the passage, this work will adopt the fourfold question approach developed by Lens and Griffin (1992:235-6). These questions embrace what Paul meant by his use of “scripture” both in verses 15 and 16; what “all scripture” stands for; establishing an acceptable rendering of πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος; and finally, the meaning of θεόπνευστος. More specific to methodological approach, the researcher applied a two-fold approach – the ideological-texture and the historical-grammatical approaches. The ideological-texture of the socio-rhetorical approach represents the main, overall and overarching approach employed to frame the debate on the issues of power and influence in and surrounding the text and its interpretation. The identification of the ideological texture can be considered an offshoot of the broader ideological-critical approach of the later 1990’s.⁴ While the historical-grammatical approach is employed specifically as a preferable option for the

³ The author of this research project prefers to refer to himself as the researcher in the text of the entire work.

⁴ See e.g. Schüssler Fiorenza’s (1988) ground-breaking work in this regard.

exegesis of the particular text of 2 Timothy 2:14-17 especially in giving a contextual interpretation of the keywords to be investigated. The ideological-texture method of the socio-rhetorical approach will further be used to raise questions about scripture and inspiration. According to Soulen (2001:84), ideology refers to a society's social structures marked by patterns of dominance and subordination, such as, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, and the likes. Ideological texture questions also will include pertinent issues raised by Wilfred Cantwell Smith (1993: ix) and others, as to the nature of scripture, how scripture came to possess power, and why much is invested in the notion of scripture. In short, an ideological-texture method frames the outer perimeters of the investigation, while the specific focus of the exegetical work is well served by the historical-grammatical method. These two methodologies complement each other and do not pose a contrast in aim but each offers a required focus (both concerns about power relations in and around texts as well as the exegetical study of texts) for executing this project.

Part of the researcher's work of investigating this passage in 2 Timothy includes carrying out a literature review to investigate the opinions of scholars on the passage and the topic under consideration.

1.6 DELIMITATION OF RESEARCH

Although this work relates its findings to canonicity and inspiration, the theological deliberation into details of the doctrines' inspiration and canonicity is beyond the scope of this work. Also, as fascinating and appealing venturing into comparative study of authoritative scripture in the various traditions might be, it is not the intent of this work to get involved in comparative studies but to focus on the Christian tradition of authoritative scripture as far as and in as much as expressed in the chosen passage of the Second Testament. It should also be noted that the focus of the work is exclusively on 2 Timothy 3:14-17 as it makes efforts to investigate the intent and meaning of the periscope, therefore reference could be made to other passages only in as far as relevant to this project, and then only in passing and for the purpose of corroboration.

1.7 MOTIVATION FOR AND AIM OF STUDY

The researcher grew up in an evangelical tradition, he was groomed in the belief of the verbal, plenary inspiration of the scripture. In the evangelical tradition, the bible is seen as possessing normative authority by which Christians have categorized human actions as either holy, honourable, good or as evil, ungodly, and bad. This has led to several philanthropic acts as well as many acts of discrimination, segregation, hatred, divisions and even wars through the course of history. This research relates critically to such notions as to whether the Christian Scripture is supposed to be absolute and binding, as it has been presented to believers generally, in spite of the power concerns involved in the creation and recognition of such terminology.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPT OF SCRIPTURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to plot in a more detailed manner what scripture came to mean, how it has been conceived over the centuries, and to get a sense of how the concept developed historically. Whenever people speak of scripture what comes to mind, and what exactly does scripture mean or stand for? Another significant aspect of consideration is finding out if the scripture has had the same degree of relevance throughout the centuries of its enduring existence.

A survey of books and journal articles that have been written encapsulating the word “scripture” in their title surprisingly uncovers that several of them primarily or in the entirety focus on the interpretation of scripture. The gap or difference between books written on such exegetical interests in scripture when compared with those written on the concept or the phenomenological interests in scripture, is startling. This shows the considerable effort scholars, Churchmen or -women, and other writers have put into trying to understand what the scripture says rather than what it is. Another discovery, apart from the tons of extant literatures primarily on scriptural interpretation, is the extent to which the word, scripture, was frequently taken for granted to mean the Christian Scripture, that is, the Bible, without consideration of the applicability of the term to sacred texts of other world religions. In many of such books, the word scripture was virtually made synonymous to the Christian Scripture. Although the focus of this research is not to survey all other available scriptures from every other religious tradition, but rather to concentrate on the Christian Scripture, this notable frequency in taking for granted every other scriptural tradition except Christian’s when referring to scripture nevertheless enables one to see how often the concept of scripture has been taken for granted and stereotyped.

2.2 IN SEARCH OF A CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION

This stereotype does not only stop at the word “scripture” being taken for granted as a reference to the Christian Scripture, but the word “scripture” frequently if not always is often taken to mean something transcendental to what it semantically means. The word scripture has become like a metaphor that is banalized. This is made more evident because “scripture” means “a writing” or “something written” (Combrink, 1996:107). So, if the word scripture, is to be taken literally on what it means (which rarely ever has been the case), it will be a reference to anything written down or any form of writing with no special religious or divine attachment to it. It is of course possible to refer to authors such as A.A. Bouquet (1954:20) who was of the view that at a point in history (the inception of the introduction of writing) anything that was written was deemed sacred (having qualities that are supernatural). This perception is said to be largely due to the rarity of people who could decode anything written. Such notions are said to have extended till the early 19th century. The objection to this view however, is that there are no evidence in antiquity attesting to the fact that writing was once restricted to the sphere of religion alone.

Although according to Karl Prenner (2012:555) one could say writing made the process of orality, that is, oral tradition more permanent as the process of putting religious literature into written form also led to the emergence of sacred scriptures claiming to be revelation. Prenner however introduced a word of caution as he pointed out that the fixation of religious texts does not by itself transform these documents to sacred scripture as other religious text from India and the Ancient Near East has revealed. For the process to be completed there is a need for the acceptance and application of these texts by a religious community for the purposes of self-conception and conduct of life.

However, this view could be boosted considering the number of authors who has overtime argued for the primacy of the oral nature of scripture over the written. Harold Coward (1988:161) has consistently insisted that the perception that scripture must be in written form is inadequate. Rather he argued that in almost all the major religions of the world, the oral scripture has the same power and sometimes even more than the

written scripture. He therefore described as narrowness the common idea of associating scripture mainly with that which is written. He further stated that the outcome of the studies on various religions has advanced three common grounds for scripture, one of which is the primacy originally given to oral form of scripture. It was this that eventually led to the need to have scripture which was originally in the oral form to be written to safeguard them. In most of the world religions, for example Hinduism, Islam, and Buddhism⁵, the notion of scripture began with the oral and some even to this date have remained oral in various degrees. In these traditions, the written form was merely introduced simply to enable reflections on the oral and prevent loss of the oral form.

2.2.1 Etymology of “Scripture”

As highlighted above, the word “scripture” has a long history coming from languages of the Ancient East and nations who once dominated the religion. From the Greek, it was denoted by the Greek word γραφή having γραφαί as its plural which was an equivalent of the Hebrew word, *ketub*, קְטוּב (plural, *ketuvim*, קְטוּבִים) which generally means any piece of writing. The European counterparts have it as *Schriftin* German, *scriptura* in Latin (possibly where English developed the word scripture from), and French, *ecriture* (Graham, 1987:53). Graham (1987:54) believed the plural αἱ γραφαί, “the writings” was also used for portions of the Second Testament such as Gospels and the Pauline epistles in the early Christian usage, while the singular counterpart γραφή is for particular passages, although he later admitted to the ambiguity with which those uses occur.

On a different note, Wilfred Smith (1993:13) pointed out that the Second Testament writers prefer the usage “Scriptures” in the plural rather than the singular usage prevalent in the modern day whenever reference is made to the Bible. He concluded that the plural usage must have been due to the obvious fact that the different books

⁵ Although Coward (1988:161) was also of the view that arguably the Scriptures of Judaism and Christianity could be said to first exist in oral forms before they were gathered and written out but not as in the case of the other religions)

of Scripture were never combined as one book all along especially at this time under consideration—they still appeared individually. He also noted that during the Reformation while the printing press was eventually able to print the Bible as one volume, it was referred to in the singular and only returned to the plural in the contemporary usage of the word to refer to the different traditions of scriptures of different religions (Smith, 1993:14). In his words, he surmised, “The 19th century begun. . . with the Western word ‘Scripture’ designating the Bible, whereas in the 20th century it has come to designate not only it but also the Bhagavad Gita, the Buddhist Sutras and so on” (1993:10). Meanwhile, Jan Bremmer (2010:331-357) in the process of figuring out these usages came to the conclusion that there is no uniformity of the plural or singular usage of the term “holy scriptures” among the Church Fathers as they were seen to be random in the usage of the term. He also noticed a progression towards two kinds of usages of “divine scripture” and “holy scripture.” In his view Christians seemed to advance the concept that the Jews took from the Egyptians the concept popularly known in Egypt back then as the “divine book”, but later referred to theirs as “holy book”⁶. These changes from plural to singular and from singular back to plural are significant as they also point indirectly to the evolution that the term scripture has gone through down the centuries. These changes also influence the perception towards scripture especially its claim to divine origination changing from a transcendent view to a positivist one. Smith (1993:11-12) noted that initially the scripture’s claim to divine origination was virtually impregnable (especially during the Reformation and shortly after - a period where it was referred to in the singular) but transitioning through the Darwin and Huxley controversies through the early twentieth century, the concept of scripture witnessed a de-transcendentalisation and emergence of the plural form as the term was no longer unique to either the Jewish or Christian Scriptures but applied to other communities’ texts also. With this development, the monopoly and the uniqueness of the Christian text on the general concept of what can be named scripture began to wane. In accordance with the line of thought on scripture,

⁶Bremmer (2010:331) had earlier explained that according to his discovery the attribution of holiness to books originated in the Greek culture around 450BCE. He also traced that it was in Egypt that the book of the scribes was first called “the book of the gods” or “divine books.” Then this concept later appeared in both the Letter of Aristeas and 1 Maccabees.

Julio Treballe Barrera (1998:128-132) therefore, identified three basic characteristics of sacred scripture which he itemized as follows; a sacred book, sacred language, and a sacred style. He argued that the link between language and organized religion is very strong and could be seen exemplified in the use of Latin by the Western church in the Christian tradition, as well as the case of Arabic and the Quran. This was also obvious in the use of Hebrew in writing the Torah. Religious language is said to be marked by its own tone, intensity, timbre, melody and rhythm.

In an attempt to arrive at an understanding of the word “scripture”, studies have revealed that it could be broadly categorised into two; those using a sociological approach to the concept of scripture and those holding a metaphysical approach to the concept (Smith, 1993:11-12). These two broad classifications are the focus of the next few pages.

2.2.2 Metaphysical Approach to the Concept of Scripture

This approach is also known as the transcendental view of scripture. Its perception of scripture is that it is primarily from God (it feels and sees the scripture to be divine). This concept of scripture can further be subdivided into the following two aspects:

2.2.2.1 Scripture as God’s Word

This is the millennia long held view of the scripture. The Christian Scripture is believed to have been given by divine inspiration and are synonymously known as the Word of God. Lee McDonald (2017:39) wrote, “The Scriptures are authoritative religious texts that religious people believe have their origin in God and identify God and the will of God, including the identity of the people of God and what they are to believe and live.” According to him, scripture does not only have its origin in God but it also includes discerning God, the will of God and believers live by its code. In William Graham’s view (1987:51), the scripture is the manner through which God’s Word was revealed to humanity and God’s laws are therefore expressed. A great majority of religious people—Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, and so forth perceive their various scriptures as a revelation from God. From Kelsey’s perspective (1975:89-94), Judaism

and early Christianity's description of scripture must include a combination of it been written; of divine origination; which passes on God's will and truth; and functions as regulation for the people. Therefore, Jews in antiquity reckoned with Scripture as inspired of God and designated it as writings that "defile the hands" (McDonald, 2017:41). To refer to Scripture as defiling the hands according to Lewis (1991:170) signifies the preciousness of its worth not that it is filthy.

2.2.2.2 Scripture as an Icon

The concept of scripture perceived as an icon is closely linked to the concept of scripture as God's Word discussed above. In fact, a careful examination revealed traces and possibilities of the perception of scripture as an icon to have been the origin of conceiving scripture as God's Word. The scripture in its text and physical entity is seen as an icon useful in bridging the physical and the transcendent world and this accounts for the power it wields. Donna Parmenter (2009:299), in categorising the Scripture as an icon, takes it to be an earthly representation of a heavenly prototype. The root of this type of reasoning is ancient, and basically found in the Ancient Near Eastern mythology. The mythology has to do with a divine record which resides with the gods possessing creative power and through which cosmic order is maintained. This record is often said to be revealed to certain humans in order to be active in ordering the world (2009:301). This idea is closely linked with the introduction of the development of alphabetical system and writing. This view has been known to not only be ancient but also persistent in the Ancient Near East, making it a legacy probably inherited by Judaism, Christianity and Islam (Graham, 1987:50). The ideas of this celestial book also include the belief that it contains details of each human's destiny, foreknowledge about future events, a record of human deeds and it goes by different names, some call it the "Tablet of Destinies," others "the Law of Earth and Heaven"; some see it as "Tablet of Wisdom" or "the Tablets of the God" and even "Book of Life" (Widengren, 1950:11). Ancient Near East monotheistic religions often treated scripture in the manner of these books. However, a word of caution from William Graham (1987:51) will be in order at this point, as he asked for restraint in easily and quickly taking the position of a close link between the view of scripture as an icon and as

God's revealed word due to the fact that the precise relation between these two concepts needed to be further clarified and established. Yet, it is undeniable that some of the ideas and concepts in the so-called heavenly book are replicated in scriptures of the Jews, the Christians and the Muslims.

2.2.3 The Sociological Approach to the Concept of Scripture

This second category of the view of scripture is different from the metaphysical in that while the metaphysical approach is engrossed in the idea of scripture as originating from and in God (either authoritatively revealed or a copy of the heavenly prototype), the sociological approach sees scripture as "bilateral term" (Smith, 1993:17), which means it involves a relationship. It viewed the concept of scripture as primarily issuing from the relationship humans create or develop with a particular text and not necessarily meaning such texts are issued from God or gods. This view could be neutral on God's involvement. Advocates of the view can either agree that God was involved or deny any involvement of God, what is primary is it is human relationship to a particular text. Miriam Levering (1989:1-2) also agreed with Smith's definition of scripture as a relational term, she however added that to be truly scripture these texts were crystallised and transmitted to the next generation. Once this passing on is successful, people tend to begin to have certain expectations of the text as it has been categorised differently from all other texts in their possession. It was this relational nature of scripture and the expectation it accrues, that Graham (1987:5) puts so clearly when he stated that:

The sacrality or holiness of a book is not an a priori attribute of a text but one that is realized historically in the life of communities who respond to it as something sacred or holy. A text becomes 'scripture' in active, subjective relationship to persons, and as part of a cumulative communal tradition. No text, written or oral or both, is sacred or authoritative in isolation from a community. . . A book is only 'scripture' insofar as a group of persons perceive it to be sacred or holy, powerful and portentous, possessed of an exalted authority, and in some fashion transcendent of, and hence distinct from all other speech and writing.

This statement so obviously and succinctly opens up the possibility which is a reality that what is scripture for a particular group of people can be mere, ordinary text for another different set of people. This also exposes the reason of the tension between different religious traditions and their claims which are grounded in the texts they have chosen to scripturalize. It is also intriguing the thought that people (communities) make or choose and endorse scripture and these scriptures they made in turn eventually make them as they strive to live by its standards or codes.

This discovery also implies that the scriptures has no distinguishing characteristics of themselves, but such characteristics belong not only to the text but also the communities. Conclusively, scripture is therefore a human activity (Smith, 1993:18) as it is a result of a special manner in which a community chose to treat a particular text. Graham (1987:6) therefore postulated that Scripture is “not a literary genre but a religio-historical one.”

In an attempt to conclude what Scripture is defined as, it will be good to note the attempt made by Dale Martin (2017:71-76), who rather than give a definition of what scripture is, approached it from the perspective of what the scripture is not from the Christian tradition. He categorically stated that the text, i.e., the physical form of the texts (in the form of manuscripts and versions of the Christian Scripture available) are not Scripture. He argued this on two grounds. One, the Protestants' claim of inspiration is based only on the original manuscripts or autographs which no one is in possession of anymore. Two, some quotations of the First Testament in the Second Testament are not verbatim, as they are often implied. An example of this was when the writer of Mark quoted a portion of the First Testament in 1:2-3 as coming from Prophet Isaiah while, it was only the last portion of the quote that was from Isaiah. The quotation was a conflation of about three texts coming from Exodus, Malachi and Isaiah. Another example also is the change from plural to singular of the quotation from Psalms 69:25 in Acts 1:20 which was done to suit the replacement for Judas Iscariot.

Martin (2017:74) also argues that scripture is not canon. Canon according to him represents the standard through which books were given a highly unique status and especially since Christians seemed not to be able to come to a unanimous agreement

about the boundaries of the canon. He took note of how modern Christians have rejected one of the ancient texts which some of the Second Testament writers perceived as Scripture, for example, 1 Enoch. Meanwhile they accepted a popular story of the woman caught in adultery in John 7:53-8:11, despite the almost general consensus of historical critics all around the world that the story was not originally part of John's Gospel. He therefore deduced that the boundaries of the canon cannot be taken seriously, since there is the opportunity to bring into it, texts from other centuries as long as the Church sanctioned it and at the same time alienate other texts such as 1 Enoch.

The problem with this view of scripture propagated by Dale Martin is he made scripture just an idea of God speaking without an exactness of what is written. Also by agreeing that the Church made John 7:53-8:11 Scripture, he is contradicting himself as he had initially stated that the canon is not the same as Scripture, but if by the virtue of the Church making the story of the adulterous woman into part of the canon, he referred to the action of making it Scripture, then he is simply saying that the canon is Scripture. Marcus J. Borg (2002:28) who is of a contrary view reasoned that it was the Church act of canonization that made the writings sacred Scripture. Although Graham (1987:6) slightly differed in opinion to Borg as he acknowledge the Church leaders and council roles confirming the boundaries of Scriptures but he insisted that recognition of scripturality is not from these acts but rather the interaction and relationship of the community of the particular group of people which in this case would have to be the Church community had with the writings.

Smith (1993:ix) might have advanced Martin's argument that scripture is not a text when he wrote, "On close inquiry, it emerges that being scripture is not a quality inherent in a given text, or type of text, so much as an interactive relation between that text and a community of persons." This might resemble a direct validation of Martin's proposal but Smith was actually attempting to establish with the quote above that scriptures do not necessarily need to be in a written form or associated with a text before they can be formally accepted and reckoned with as scripture.

2.3 SCRIPTURE IN VARIOUS RELIGIONS

It will be simply impossible to describe within the scope of this research the totality of what scripture is in the different religions of the world. That will be completely beyond the scope of this research which aim, and focus is streamlined more towards the concept of Scripture in Christianity and is focused on a specific Second Testament text. Yet a very brief broad overview is provided here for the concept of scripture in some of the world religions, Christianity included. Daniel Silver (1990:4) while writing on the common factor most of the world religions share – scripture – made the point that scripture became a very important and crucial part of religion at a point when the rise of urbanity coincided with the spread of literacy. After this point in time several of the major religions of the world produced their sacred writings and ascribed to them high authority. In addition to this, although Wilfred Smith (1993:56) gave the progression of the development of scripture as from the Jews, the Christians, Mandaens, the Zarathushtrians, the Manichees and finally Islam. But the overview given here will rather focus on the Jewish, the Christian, the Islamic, the Hinduist and the Buddhist concepts of scripture. This is so, because the researcher is of the opinion that these selected traditions have a contemporary broader followership and are therefore more relevant to the contemporary people due to their broader appeal.

2.3.1 Judaism

Israel's romance with Baalism before the exile could have signalled the Israelites' perception about the equality of revelation they received from Yahweh with other religions. They must have thought of all religions as in the same light as the relationship they had with God (Coward, 1988:29). But after the exile, they developed an exclusivist approach to religion which was later loosen up during the classical and medieval period as some of their scholars agreed that their scripture was uniquely for Jews claiming it cannot be taken to mean God's sole instrument of revelation of his truth to everyone (Combrink, 1996:110). So briefly, the Jews have as their Scripture the *TaNaK*, a representation of the Torah, the *nabiim* and the *kethubim*. They (Jews)

are of the view that the combination of these three represents the revelation from God, although initially these sections of their Scripture have various degrees of authority with the Torah recognised as the highest authority.

Meanwhile Julio Treballe Barrare (1998:153) argued that the Hebrew Bible could be used as a sample in distinguishing between canonical books (authorized for religious teaching and practice) and inspired books (assumed to be written by divine inspiration). He explained that some canonical books are not seen as inspired, for example, Megillat Ta'anit and Qoheleth while to be inspired meant such writings must be held as canonical. Therefore, "sacred scripture can be understood as a collection of books which combines equally the conditions of canonicity and inspiration"

2.3.2 Christianity

Udo Schnelle (2007:1) described the Christian Scripture, the Bible as the term the church, theology and society gave to the collection of the First and Second Testament canon recognized by the church. The word *byblos* or *byblion* where it came from is most likely a derivative of the Phoenician city of Byblos from where most of the papyrus used for writing in the 6th century BCE came from. Combrink (1996:112) meanwhile argued that though Christianity inherited the Hebrew Scripture, its primary focus and faith was in the person and works of Christ. Smith (1933:46-47) equated what Jesus is to the Christian to what the Qur'an is to the Muslims, namely a perfect, complete revelation of God. This focus on Christ made his words to be of the uttermost importance in the early Church. Harnack (1925:xvi) made reference to the frequency of quotations made by the early Church fathers in the second century CE about Jesus which was quoted from books now known as the Second Testament books. These books because of their focus on the person and work of Christ were quoted more than books belonging to the First Testament which were already known or reckoned with as scripture at the time. This ultimately led to the establishment of the Second Testament. The combination of both the First and Second Testaments is the sum of what is today referred to as the Christian Bible. Just as the Hebrew Scripture is seen

and received as a revelation from or of God by Jews, so also the Christian Bible is viewed by Christians.

2.3.3 Islam

Scripture in Islam is often seen as more central than it was in either Judaism or Christianity (Combrink, 1996:113). Smith (1993:47) sees the Qur'an as the culmination of the gradual process of consolidation of scripturalization in the Near East. By this he does not mean Scriptures ended with the Qur'an, but that the peak of it was witnessed in the influence the Qur'an has. The Qur'an is a recitation of the direct revelation that was given through Prophet Muhammad by God (Coward, 1988:82). The Qur'an is held in highest regard, higher even than Muhammad the prophet through whom it was received because the Qur'an is seen as a direct revelation of the fullness of God. Islam is not just one of the major world religions with a scripture, its view of its scripture is more exalted and radical than Christianity and Judaism (Graham, 1987:79). Qur'an is a verbal noun which means "to recite" (Graham, 1984:364). It is normally spoken of as al-Qur'an which is a proper noun signifying a collection of Muhammad's revelations (Graham, 1987:88).

2.3.4 Hinduism

Hinduism bears great contrasts to other religions of the book when it comes to its concept of scripture. Although the Veda is known as its scripture but there is the belief that it has no author (Coward, 1988:105). In Hinduism, the oral form of scripture is much more valued than the written because adherents are of the belief that words are divine and powerful (Combrink, 1996:114). Their belief also in the reliability of oral transmission is formidable, so this is passed on from a generation to the subsequent ones. Its advocates in Iran and India are of the belief that putting the sacred word into writing is seen as a sign of mistrust. Therefore, the sacred writings in Hinduism are represented by a cosmic tree symbolic of the eternal branches penetrating the skies while the roots and leaves grow in the earth in the form of texts and sacred songs (Barrera, 1998:129).

2.3.5 Buddhism

Although Buddhism is said to have the largest portion of scripture for any religion, yet the scripture in Buddhism is not seen as a revelation. Its scripture is written in several different languages (Combrink, 1996:115). However according to Julio Barrera (2016:133) the Japanese Buddhists have a similar view of their scriptures which as the TaNAK laid claims to defiling the hands.

2.4 PERCEPTIONS OF SCRIPTURE IN CHRISTIAN HISTORY

It would have been a useful exercise to trace the general conception of scriptures throughout the centuries and millennia till the present time, but that is simply beyond the scope of this research as the research is limited to the Christian Scripture by the reason of the periscope attached to it – 2Timothy 3:14-17. Therefore, the work concentrated on the perception of Christians towards their Scripture. According to Elsie Stern (2013:199), until the 1970s most scholars who endeavour to pursue a study and an understanding of scripture have often done so under the influence of the

Protestant model of Scripture. One thing everyone seem to forget is that the concept of scripture existed long before the Reformation although the Reformation is one of the eras that radically changed how scripture was viewed within the Christian community. What follows below is a brief survey of the periods and transitions that scripture especially the Christian Scripture has passed through to this point in history. Just as James Sanders (1987:5) stated, the bible is a product of human history.

2.4.1 A Time before Scriptures

There have not always been scriptures, including the Jewish or the Christian Scripture. The Bible in its present form was a product of a later development in history. James Barr (1983:1) refers to the time without scripture as the time of the scripture itself. By this he meant that this is the period the scriptures were being formed, most of the stories that featured in scripture, this period was the time of their formation. He attested to this when he argued that a considerable amount of information, presently available that form parts of the scripture, were already in existence at the time or were already in the process of being formed (Barr, 1983:8).

One can easily see that the scribes seem to be a group of people who gained great relevance in the Second Testament period. Silver (1990:60) opined that this is so because there was no need for them prior to this time, since the Pre-exilic era was a time where there was no scripture. Hence there was no use or need for scribes or scribal authorities because there was nothing to work with.

The query this fact raises which will still be discussed in the body of this research later is, in addressing the contemporary clamour among believers and their leaders to live according to the Scripture in order to live godly lives. Can the people of this present age in all fairness claim that those who lived at that time when there was no scripture lived godly lives although there was no scripture? And if they did live godly lives then of what importance and significance is the introduction of the scriptures? And if the conclusion is that they never succeeded in living godly and acceptable lives by the

standard of religion then why are the records of their lives being emulated by modern Christians? There are no easy answers to these questions.

Another intriguing inquiry made by Jeremy Silver (1990:5) was, for what reason would Judaism and other religious traditions have to incorporate written texts after they all seemed to have survived and flourished well without a written scripture. This could only be answered in recognition that the scripture is centre piece in shaping the teachings of a religion and it is an artefact of literate societies which naturally and inevitably must come to be.

2.4.2 Perception of Scripture in the Second Testament

The mention or reference to “Scripture” in the Second Testament is common and can virtually be seen in constant use all over the books of the Second Testament. Γραφή features 49 times with reference to scriptures, while the perfect tense in the passive voice γέγραπται (it is written) appeared 65 times also in reference to scriptures in the Second Testament (McDonald, 2017:64). These references often come with different formulae, for example “it is written”, “the scripture says,” “the scriptures say,” “according to the scripture” and so on. In other instances, the First Testament scripture is quoted without any of these aforementioned prefixes. This is often seen in the case of the book of Hebrews as the writer at times embed quotations within the text without signalling that it is scripture as was common practice (McDonald, 2017:300-301). These numerous occurrences of Scripture or Scripture related word established that there was a concept of scripture already in existence in the Second Testament. From these statements it is also obvious that Christianity inherited from Judaism a large portion of its scripture (Gamble, 1985:38). What is doubtful and uncertain though, is if it receives a definite boundary to what it refers to as scriptures, this is because the definite nature and the content of what it receives and frequently refers to as Scripture remains ambiguous. At the time of the Second Testament’s writing it is not certain if the canon of the First Testament has been decided. James Barr (1984:49) also argued that the exactness of the definition or limit of scripture in the First Testament remained

undefined until some decades later. He probed further when he argued that though the word “scripture” made several appearances in the Second Testament, it does not mean nor is it identical to what contemporary Christians recognized today as Scripture. This is true in certain perspectives; one, what the writers of the First Testament refer to as Scripture does not necessarily include and it is not likely to include what is today known as the “New Testament.” It is primarily the First Testament writings that that age refers to as scripture. Two, the identity and content of the First Testament is not likely to be identical to what contemporary Christians has as their First Testament (which is popularly called Old Testament by Christians). This contention about the identity and content of the scripture of the people of the first century CE later became obvious in the early Church.

There also is the problem of citation. The manner and instances of how quotations from other literatures are used in the Second Testament is questionable especially to its relation to scripture of the First Testament. Paul and the author of the book of Jude took liberty in citing quotations from books that are not part of the known First Testament in the contemporary time. Lee McDonald (2017:67) has nevertheless argued that the fact that an ancient biblical writer of the Second Testament cites a book does not necessarily mean that the literature referenced is Scripture rather it portrayed it as authoritative. Yet this does not absolve the question of what Jesus and the First Testament authors knew as Scripture.

2.4.2.1 Identity of Scripture in the Second Testament

Due to the uncertainties revolving around the determination of what Jesus and the writers of the Second Testament meant when they referred to scripture, there is therefore need to investigate further what this is as the concept is key to the pericope of the entire research (2 Timothy 3:14-17). There are two main views on the time when the content and limits of the Jewish Scripture which was known as scriptures in the Second Testament was ascertained. These two views have been named as the minimalist - a view that it was around the 2nd – 4thcenturies CE that a final decision was reached on the boundaries of the books in the First Testament - and the maximalist - all decisions on the boundaries of the First Testament were finalized by

the 2nd century BCE (Dempster, 2016:322-3). Two events can easily be categorized alongside these two categories in the bid to address this controversy; the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls and a quotation from Josephus in his book *Against Apion*.

2.4.2.2 Discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls

The discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls made some decades ago have brought some clarity to the issues surrounding scriptures, one of such discoveries made revealed that out of the estimated 960 scrolls found at Qumran only about 200 of them are copies of the books in the First Testament, while the other 700 are non-biblical manuscripts. Notable, is the fact that out of the over 200 copies of the biblical scrolls, none contain (parts of) the book of Esther nor the book of Nehemiah (McDonald, 2012:4). Not only are the scrolls found in this ratio but there is no form of distinction between the biblical and non-biblical scrolls found at Qumran. This discovery has serious implication for the 1st century CE, as it could imply that the books later recognized as scripture in the First Testament were not at this time distinguished from the Apocrypha and possible the Pseudepigrapha or other books. If this had been achieved at the time in question, there would most probably have been at least some form of distinction or demarcation between the biblical scrolls and the non-biblical scrolls.

McDonald (2012:44) further compounded this when he revealed that some of these books – which eventually did not get recognition to be part of the First Testament were cited or inferred to by both the writers of the Second Testament and the early church fathers as if they were Scripture.⁷ Early church fathers such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Clement of Rome were all said to have cited Apocrypha and Pseudepigrapha literature in their writings and treated them as if they were scripture (McDonald, 2012:80). In his own words, “An examination of the Apostolic Fathers (ca AD90-140) shows conclusively that the writers often appealed

⁷Mark 10:19 quoted from Sirach 4:1; Exodus 20:12-16; Deuteronomy 5:16-20. 2 Timothy 2:19 from Sirach 17:26; Number 16:5. Romans 1:24-32 from Wisdom 14:22-31. Romans 5:12-21 from Wisdom 2:23-241 Corinthians 2:9 from Ascension of Isaiah 11:34. Jude 14 from 1 Enoch 1:9. 2 Peter took a number of passages from 1 Enoch 2:4 and 3:6. Hebrews 1:3 is taken from Wisdom of Solomon 7:25-26 and James 4:5 seemed to be a citation from an unknown scripture (McDonald, 2012:78-9).

to the Apocryphal and Pseudepigraphal literature in much the same way that they appealed to the scriptures of the Hebrew Bible.” This therefore draws attention to the fact that there was still no finalized conclusion at the time those early church fathers, especially of the second century CE, made such citations or else why will a church father cite and regard as scripture a book he knows is not scripture.

Another item is the exclusion of the Books of Nehemiah and Esther from the scrolls found at Qumran. The reason responsible for this is difficult to fathom. It is however unlikely that it was excluded on the grounds that it was not scriptures because other scrolls that are both later not considered scripture were found in the majority.

2.4.2.3 Josephus in *Against Apion*

Josephus wrote this book, *Against Apion*, around 90CE to the Emperor Caligula as a polemic to defend the Jews against claims made by Apion about the Jews. In the book he stated that the books of the Jews were not numerous, and their holy books were already determined (Barclay, 2006:28-32)

Naturally, then, or rather necessarily – seeing that it is not open to anyone to write of their own accord, nor is there any disagreement present in what is written, but the prophets alone learned, by inspiration from God, what had happened in the distant and most ancient past and recorded plainly in their own time just as they occurred – among us there are not thousands of books in disagreement and conflict with each other, but only twenty-two books, containing the record of all time, which are rightly trusted. Five of these are the books of Moses, which contain both the laws and the tradition from birth of humanity up to his death, this is a period of a little less than 3000 years. From the death of Moses until Artaxerxes, king of the Persians after Xerxes, the prophets after Moses wrote the history of what took place in their own times in thirteen books; the remaining four books contain hymns to God and instruction for people on life. From Artaxerxes up to our own time every event has been recorded but this is not judged worthy of the same trust, since the exact line of succession of the prophets did not continue. It is clear in practice how we approach our own writings. Although such a long time has now passed, no one has dared to add, to take away, or to alter anything; and it is innate in every Judean right from birth to regard them as decrees of God, to remain faithful to them and, if necessary, to die on their behalf. Thus, to date many have been seen, on many occasions, as prisoners of war suffering torture and all kinds of death in theaters for not letting slip a single word in contraventions of the laws and records associated with them.

The criteria for selection and eventual closure of the Hebrew Bible as presented by Josephus here seem to be time (death of Moses to the time of Artaxerxes) and language (those books written in Hebrew). This writing of Josephus presents some problems and contradictions to what the minimalist view previously stated, and the Qumran evidence shows. First, how can Josephus claim there was no disagreement yet there were traces of disagreement till the second and third centuries about the Hebrew scripture? Also, he claimed that these matters were so certain that the Jews knew exactly which books to die for. This statement does not seem to represent the situations concerning boundaries of the Hebrew scripture of the first century CE. The implication of Josephus declaring a closed canon which is known by every Jew, is that for such to have been the case in the 1st century CE, it would have meant that the canon has been closed for some decades or centuries which is not likely (Gordis, 1971:xxxiii). Scholars are divided on the claims of Josephus; while some uphold these claims, others have raised questions of actual reflection of the time and the agenda Josephus must have had in saying something as this. Among such scholars is John Barton (2007:58-59) who argued that Josephus could have an agenda in excluding books which other Jews believed are scripture. If this is true this will portray Josephus as speaking for a particular class of Jews not all of them. McDonald (2007:154) also followed the same trend of thought as he opined that Josephus might only be portraying an emerging view which was not yet generally accepted at the time. Timothy McLay (2007:52) is of the view that the evidence is overwhelmingly contrary to Josephus' claims to take Josephus testimony at face value. He argued that with the "alternative views of scripture at Qumran, the texts preserved in the LXX, and the historical context" all show that contemporary Jews of the time have multiple views of what the Scripture contains. He claimed Josephus arrangement was too "neat and tidy" and does not reflect the human nature given the history of the time.

The dispute on when the contents of the First Testament was finalized and agreed upon has remained unresolved this long so also with it is the identity of scripture in Jesus times and in the Second Testament. In spite of all these uncertainties, certain facts remain incontestable, such as that the Second Testament writers held scriptures as of high authority. Jesus had high regard for the First Testament as he quoted from

it frequently, since he and his disciples are Jews, they probably imbibe the culture and reverence contemporary Jews of the time have for the scripture. He was recorded to have quoted Deuteronomy 15 times, Isaiah 40 times, and Psalms 13 times. He reportedly used 23 out of the 39 books in the First Testament. He however never cited Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentation, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Ezra and Nehemiah (McDonald, 2012:56). Jesus and the Second Testament writers' usual way of referring to the Scripture has been "Law", "Law of Moses", "Law and the Prophets" and only in one instance in the Second Testament was the scripture referred to as "Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms" (Luke 24:44). This reveals that while the Law and the Prophets seemed to be recognized fully in the first century CE, the Writings do not share the same recognition and authority yet. Smith (1993:53) was also of this same view as he referred back to the time the Second Testament was being written and categorically claimed that at the time "the Old Testament as one knows it today was only partially in mind, had only partially coalesced." Eyberslan (1966:iv) tried to give a timeline to the recognition of each section of the Hebrew TaNaK, stating that the Law obtained recognition around 400BCE, the Prophets 330-300BCE and the Writings at 150BCE. McDonald (2012:58) suggested 500BCE for the Pentateuch, 200BCE for the Prophets and a portion of the Writings being recognized in mid-2nd century BCE. Yet what stood out is that the Writings were not yet recognized in the time of Jesus except for the Psalms.

2.4.3 Perception of Scripture in Early Christianity

The confusion and uncertainties brought about by the inability to figure out the identity and boundaries of the scripture of the First Testament, which was the initial scripture of the church, spilt over into the age of the church fathers. Melito, the Bishop of Sardis was recorded as having to travel to the East just to clarify the content, boundary and identity of the Church's scripture in about 180CE. Yet the list he came back with omitted Nehemiah and Esther but adds Wisdom of Solomon (McDonald, 2017:317-8). This is further evidence that these matters were not resolved even late into the second century CE. The matter pertaining to the content of the canons of the two Testaments

persisted till late in the 4th century. This is further corroborated by A.C. Sundberg (1964:24) when he stated that in the first few centuries CE, the scriptures used by both Jews and Christians were just a category of religious literature without borders or definite bounds. This uncertainty and fluidity in the identity and use of the scripture in the early church led to the church valuing and using as scriptures some of the books – Apocrypha –that never made it to the final First Testament canon which was fashioned after the Hebrew Bible (Rosenbaum, 1985:16). Arguments concerning the identity and borders of the scripture were still evident till the time of the Reformers. All these were discussed in brief so that this research would not get entangled in canonical debates and to register that the present nature of the Christian Scripture has not always been as well formulated as they presently are.

A major addition to the concept of scripture in early Christianity is the recognition of the Second Testament as part of the Christian Scripture. Traces of this development started probably very late in the first century CE and lasted until the third century CE, as the core of what is known as the Second Testament – the Gospels and Pauline letters –were frequently quoted in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers rather than citing the texts of the First Testament (Barton, 1997:25). Barton further argued that although in the early part of the 2nd century scriptural status was not yet accorded to these writings; they were however cited by the early Church Fathers with great authority attached to them. This is clearly seen in the statement credited to Ignatius where he made a contrast between his writings and the writings of the apostles, “I do not order you like Peter and Paul. They were apostles I am a convict” (Trall 3:3 cited in Hill, 2016:83). Eventually during the early Church period, the First and Second Testaments were deliberated upon and canonized.

This portion of the research is mainly about what the people of the early Christian era thought about the scripture and how it was conceived at this period. This part of the research therefore peruses the perception of some key figures (not an exhaustive list as that will be too extensive for a work of this nature) during the era under consideration.

2.4.3.1 Clement of Rome

He lived as the Bishop of Rome in the late 1st century and was believed to have had contacts with some of the apostles and he was one of the first non-canonical writers. He commented on the holiness of the scriptures in his writings and described them as given by the Holy Spirit (1 Clement 45:2-3 cited in Hill, 2016:55)

2.4.3.2 Irenaeus (ca 130-202CE)

He is of the view that the Christian Scripture and tradition are authoritative because they are both apostolic. And he held the view that Scriptures are perfect as they were reckoned with to have been spoken by the Word of God and the Spirit of God (Att. 2.28.2 cited in Hill, 2016:55, 73). He took the scripture as the rule of faith and by this he meant “a flexible summary of God’s identity and of God’s action, its beginning, turning point, and its anticipated outcome” (Soulén, 2009:79).

2.4.3.3 Justin Martyr

He lived and worked in the early 2nd century and referred to the memoirs of Jesus’ apostles as he was reported as seeing them filled with power, grace and the Spirit of God (Dial 9.1 in Hill, 2016:47)

2.4.3.4 Clement of Alexandria (ca. 150-211CE)

He believed the scripture is in no need of proof because its nature as Scripture means it is an irrefutable demonstration of the divine (Clement of Alexandria FTC 85, translated by Fergusson).

2.4.3.5 Origen (ca. 185-254CE)

He was a contemporary of Irenaeus and was known as a brilliant theologian of his time and the first systematic thinker of Christian antiquity. He had an intense focus on scripture and its interpretation (Reno, 2006:21-22). Origen was of the opinion that a careful study and pondering over Scriptures will reveal the Scripture as words of God not words of man as it grants access to the divine breath that inspires it (Butterworth, 1973:45). He believed that the Scripture is the divine word and his works seemed

influenced by Plato and therefore he fed Greek ideas into his understanding of Scripture (Reno, 2006:34-35).

2.4.3.6 Eusebius

He was one of the church fathers who lived in the early 4th century CE, and was of the view that the Scriptures are sacred and inspired, and that they demonstrate the truth as of those who also preached it from the beginning (Hill, 2016:53).

2.4.3.7 Gregory of Nyssa (ca. 335-394CE)

Gregory was also a 4th century author who asserted that the church was not at liberty to choose what it pleases to believe but made the Holy Scripture the rule and measure for anything and everything the Church believes (Quasten, 1984:284).

2.4.3.8 Augustine of Hippo (354-430CE)

The bishop of Hippo who is often referred to as Augustine of Hippo, is better understood in his doctrine of Scripture if he is viewed through the lens of Christ. He recognized scripture as divine literature. His view of scripture is within the wider spectrum of the doctrine of salvation. His usual practice is to create a juxtaposition between Christ the Incarnate Word of God and the words of Scripture. He is of the view that the latter will come to an end and be folded up in the former who will live forever. He viewed Scripture as having authority linked up with Christ. He believed Scripture, though words of men, were the chosen instrument of God in revealing himself to humanity and that Scripture is of nobler authority especially after the demise of its human authors. The Scripture to him is of the highest normative authority (Bright, 2006:40-45). On the identity of the books of the First Testament, he argued that Apocrypha do not have canonical authority though they recorded some truth. Because they were not part of the books kept in the temple, they therefore could not be part of the Scripture (Hill, 2016:81). His view of books with canonical authority and their selection was based on if they had been kept in the temple or not.

A survey of what several of these church fathers had to say about scripture revealed that they all have a high view of scripture as the word of God divinely inspired. For the

entire patristic tradition, scripture is seen as writings which were used by God as a means of communication in which God encodes the divine economy. How they arrived at this concept is not known but possibly it may have been transferred and inherited from the way the Jews viewed their Scriptures. Also, there was no consensus among the Church fathers about what the doctrine of inspiration is all about.

2.4.4 Perception of Scripture in Middle Ages and Reformation

From the time of Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274CE), Scripture continued to be associated in its origin as from God. He sees sacred scripture as handing over divine revelation, so to him Scripture is the “traditioning” of divine revelation. He believed God is the author of Scripture (Candler, 2006:60-72).

One of the major issues of contention that eventually led to the Reformation is the Roman Catholic claim that the both tradition and Scripture were “tributaries of one deposit of divine revelation” (Horton, 2006:83). Few centuries later after Aquinas came the Reformation with its leaders, the likes of Martin Luther, John Calvin and others. The years after the Reformation, the Protestant orthodoxy took Scripture not only to be central criterion for faith but further to be the central source for doctrine (Barr, 1983:2-3). The Reformation’s influence was huge in differentiating between the tradition and the Scripture which as earlier stated, the Roman Catholic saw almost as of equal authority (Horton, 2006:84). The Reformers’ views were not based on pre-theological or philosophical foundation of existing ideas, it was rather radical in propagating and crystallizing what they believed was the content of Scripture not what existing structure has to say. They were more interested in assuring wavering consciences that hearing the Scripture is synonymous to hearing God speak. They reinforced that Scripture has their authority from God not from the texts (Horton, 2006:84).

The Protestants interpreted the Scripture as God’s word in two ways; as Law and as Gospel. Scripture to them not only revealed God, but it was also God’s address. Neither the Reformers nor their Protestant successors viewed the Christian Scripture

as just a book of timeless truth or as propositions awaiting assent, but to them Scripture is regarded as an authoritative sermon God preached and an urgency for performative action was brought to Scripture by Protestants and their scholastic heirs. No longer was Scripture viewed as related to divine thought, ideas or truth but as God's direct message which needed to be expedited upon urgently (ibid, 85). The Reformers gave a radical redefinition to Scripture as they argued that the text created the Church and not vice versa (Ridderbos, 1957:42). John Webster (2003:63) further buttressed this idea when he analysed the Reformers perception of the church relationship to Scripture as the church merely receiving the canon, because the church's only responsibility in the creation of Scripture was that it merely heard the voice of the Shepherd. According to Mickey Mattox (2006:98), Luther was responsible for the formulation and advancement of the concept of the *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone), thereby giving superior authority and relevance to the Christian Scripture that could be arguably said it never possessed prior to this time.

It was at this moment in history also that Martin Luther produced his German translation of the bible and removed the Apocrypha from its place where the Church has always placed it, and put it in the appendix as he reckoned that they were not Scripture. He however was against 2 Maccabees because it commends prayer for the dead, and because Luther felt it encourages sales of indulgences by the Church (McDonald, 2012:58). Most of the modern Bibles of today were greatly influenced by Luther's decision. As a result of these actions of the Reformers, Christianity ended up with three variations of the First Testament. The Protestant Bible consists only 39 books of the First Testament while the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox consist 46 and 48 respectively (Dempster, 2016:322). People who came after Luther, Calvin and their contemporary Protestants in the 16th and 17th centuries continued to hold as valid the divine origin of Scriptures on the basis of such ideas as "truthfulness, certainty, infallibility, perfection, sufficiency, and perspicacity" of scripture (Kolb, 2016:113).

During the Reformation, Scripture was given a position of unique authority over the Church and the individual, and in this quest the Reformers and the Orthodox

theologians who came after them were able to ascribe great importance to the writings of the past. The entirety of the Reformers' work could be depicted as a successful attempt in removing the relational view (sociological approach) to the concept of Scripture which was an underlying factor in scriptural understanding all the years prior to their time. This relational view was what characterizes the relationship of the Roman Catholic Church with the Scripture all those centuries. It was responsible for placing Scripture and tradition at par. It was because the Church fully understood the role it played in making Scripture authoritative. This was what Luther and his contemporary Reformers stripped away from the Church and thereby forcing the Church to come to terms and adjust to the new role ascribed to the doctrine of Scripture as Donald Prudlo (2006:142) recorded the Church adjusted and reacted to this criticism in what was called a Counter Reformation, where the Roman Catholic view of scripture was reconsidered.

In spite of the original high view of scripture acclaimed throughout Church history from the beginning of the early church, the fact that tradition and Scripture were still seen as equal till the time of the Reformation points to the fact that the Scripture has not always played an ultimate decisive role in Christianity as it has been made to appear to have been today. Although it has been valued, respected and regarded as authoritative, it has not been seen as supreme. Scripture seemed from the time of the Reformation to assume new status of supreme authority and relevance. The Reformers seemed to have been responsible for tightening the looseness around Scripture and gave it a new outlook which was then circumstantially helped and advanced by the advent of the printing press.

2.4.5 Perception of Scripture in the Modern Times

Harry Gamble (1993:36), in his thought on Scripture in the modern era, described the concept as highly divisive and that it led to the division within the Church into Catholic and Protestants while still producing more sectarian offshoots in Protestantism. The Scripture in the modern time is seen as a literary device which ought to be analysed

and studied just as any other literature. This same trend is seen in other religions such as Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism. Another characteristic of the modern view of Scripture pointed out by Harold Coward (2000:12) is that people of this period tend to spend more time in studies about scripture than the actual reading of the scripture itself.

These developments have their roots in the works of Schleiermacher who is often seen as the father of modern or liberal theology as he not only acknowledged the role of the authors of Scripture but also the role and influence of the interpreters. Harold Dewolf (1959:48) reported that Schleiermacher's followers made a break from the classical understanding of Scripture as divinely given revelation and focused on the human authorship of Scripture, in which the Bible was seen as the product of the fallible humans who were "conditioned and limited by their times and their individual peculiarities though also rising frequently to great heights of expression under the illumination of God's self-disclosing presence"

Since the Bible is no longer viewed in this context as the word of God in the strict sense, liberal theologians therefore are suggesting that the readers of the Scripture must be prepared to discriminate between the words of God and the words of men (Franke, 2006:159). Yet the liberal theologians continually attempt to maintain the importance of Scripture in spite of holding onto a view that makes the Scripture no longer words of God, by claiming that attention is still being given to Scripture as historical documents instead (Miller, 1981:36). Schleiermacher in his view of inspiration of Scripture argued that the doctrine is not scriptural despite the two passages which seem to account for it in the Second Testament. He sees the use of θεόπνευστος in the passage of 2 Timothy 3:16 as ambiguous, and that it must have been a reference to a figurative use (Hensley, 2006:173).

The above brief historical account represents the present terrain of events and disposition towards the Scripture in the contemporary time. Although this is not to say there are no more contrary voices especially voices of adherents of the metaphysical

approach to Scripture. Certain leading theological voices or figures⁸ have maintained and defended the divine origination of the Scripture, are still being heard.

2.5 SCRIPTURE AND CANON

There seems to be an overlap in the identity of canon and Scripture. This overlap has often brought confusion as they are at times used interchangeably by some scholars. McDonald (2017:98) attempted to differentiate between the two and resorted to saying that canon is not Scripture since he is of the opinion that Scripture is a concept involving that a divine status is given to a writing which is believed to be of God and declares the will of God to the people. Canon, again, is said to be Scriptures collected, fixed and declared authoritative by the Church council. Michael Holmes (2008:406-7) clarifies this further and better when he argued that canon cannot exist without Scripture, but scripture can exist without canon, especially bearing in mind that canon is just a list of Scripture. This also explains the reason behind certain Scriptures such as Sirach, Wisdom of Solomon (for the Hebrew Bible) and 1 Clement, Didache, Shepherd of Hermes (for the Christian Bible) which functioned as Scriptures in the early church but did not eventually make it to be part of the canon.

Bruce Metzger (1987:v) is of the view that the word, canon, originates from Judaism especially in its usage and what it described in Christian times. Meanwhile, Peter Bahr (2008:251) unpacked this concept further as he described canonization as bound up with power. He argued that seldom does a canon appear simply as a result of the success of tradition in perpetuating themselves. Rather a canon is usually the result of a subtle or open interference on the part of an institution, such as a school of textual criticism, a synod, or a council. This was further corroborated by Philip Davies (2002:36) in his statement of the two fundamental observations about canonical

⁸A.A Hodge and B.B. Warfield affirmed what has been called the great catholic doctrine of Biblical Inspiration "that the scriptures not only contained, but are the word of God, and hence all their elements and all their affirmations are absolute, errorless, and binding on the faith and obedience of men" (1881:231)

formation as, one, a cultural phenomenon, and two, a natural process in literate societies.

Canon and Scripture, apart from being both scriptures, also share a similarity as they were both decided on by their respective communities to have the status they possess. In the case of canon, its content of course was decided by church councils whose decisions centuries ago influence greatly the understanding and boundaries of scripture in the contemporary time.

2.6 CONCLUSION

This brief survey of the various stances towards scripture (especially the Christian Scripture) throughout the ages reveals that although scripture has been an enduring concept, the value place on it differs from age to age. So also, the fluidity and the fixity of its nature varies from generation to generation. Overall this survey of the concept of scripture reveals that scripture is a relational subject but that, at the same time, transcendent beliefs are considered to be entwined in it.

CHAPTER 3

A HISTORICAL-GRAMMATICAL EXEGETICAL ANALYSIS OF 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the last chapter a brief historical overview was provided of various perceptions and conceptions of the term “scripture.” This overview, albeit very brief, spanned the writing of the First Testament to the modern-day contemporary understanding of the concept of Scripture. This present chapter presents a historical-grammatical analysis of the pericope identified earlier, 2 Timothy 3:14-17. The aim is to arrive at a meaning for the concept of Scripture and to consider the implications that θεόπνευστος may have on the concept of Scripture. Since there is no monopoly of interpretation ascribed to one particular methodology and no one can claim one particular methodology as providing the authentic interpretation of a given text (Green, 1995:9), therefore, the researcher as earlier stated adopts a two-fold research methodology in attempting to interpret and understand this text; first, a historical-grammatical approach and then second and as the overarching approach, the ideological texture approach. This chapter focuses on the first methodological approach—the historical-grammatical approach, while the next chapter will take on the ideological texture approach.

Grant R. Osborne (1991:41) defines exegesis as the drawing of meaning out of a text, while the historical-grammatical method of exegesis is interested in both the situation of the text—history in the text and history of the text—and entering into the linguistic world of the text (Hayes and Holladay, 1982:42-54). In an exegetical work these two concepts are brought together, since texts are created in a historical and sociological framework. This work incorporates the different aspects of a linguistic study which is a contribution of grammar, semantics and syntax studies to arrive at an exegetical outcome of the pericope.

3.2 INTRODUCTORY ISSUES PERTINENT TO THE PASTORALS

The historical background of the Pastoral Epistles among which is 2 Timothy and the pericope of this research, has been and is still greatly debated to this date. The controversies over their authorship and date has not been limited to any group of scholars in particular but cuts across scholarship on both sides of the divide—liberals and conservatives. Yet the knowledge of who authored a book and what time it was written, both go a long way in helping to understand the message of the book.

3.2.1 Authorship and Date

The three letters referred to as Pastoral Epistles namely 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy and Titus, were labelled together in the early codices—Sinaiticus and Alexandrinus— as “to Timothy A, to Timothy B, to Titus” (Perkins, 2017: xvii). It could further be noted that in the contemporary canon the last four epistles attributed traditionally to Paul, with an exception of Hebrews⁹, were all personal letters written to individuals this category of personal letters includes Philemon. Guthrie (1970:584) noted that the term “Pastoral Epistles” was not the original designation for these epistles but was first coined in the 18th century by Berdot and was later popularized by Anton. However, Hendriksen (1964:4) was of a contrary view as he acclaimed Anton as first to use the term. Perkins (2017:xviii), after conducting an investigation into history of codices, reveals that some codices do not have these three letters referred to as Pastoral Epistles. Codices such as Codex Vaticanus, Codex P⁴⁶, even Marcion popularly referred to as a heretic does not include them in his canon.

Although the three Epistles bore the Pauline greetings in their first few lines, thereby attempting to identify Paul as the author of these three epistles, such internal evidences have come to be hotly contested in modern times. Hendriksen (1964:4) attempted to give an account of how the Pastoral Epistles fared in the modern time. He noted that apart from the earlier rejection by Marcion, which could easily be

⁹ The controversy regarding the authorship of Hebrews lingered even from the early Apostolic Fathers and it was generally placed before the four personal letters in most of the early Churches.

attributed to how the contents of the Pastoral Epistles contradicted Marcion's form of asceticism, the main query about their authorship started with the rejection of Pauline authorship for First Timothy by F. Schleiermacher (1807). Also F.C. Baur (1835), some three decades later included Second Timothy and Titus in this authorship dispute. Baur questioned and rejected their Pauline authorship due to inconsistencies he seemed to have noticed and he thus believed that such rejection should not only be limited to only First Timothy since the three letters were attached together from the very beginning.

The objections to Pauline authorship and the present day controversies over the books' authorship hinge on the following; one, the vocabulary used in the Pastoral Epistles are similar but altogether too different from those used by Paul in the other ten Pauline Epistles, thereby making it inconsistent that Paul could have written this set of epistles. Guthrie (1975:615) elaborates on this when he said Pastoral Epistles contain one third of words that are not Pauline and 175 words not found anywhere in the Second Testament – these words peculiar to the Pastoral Epistles are known as *hapax legomena*. Two, the style of writing, presentation and expression of the author's thoughts are also said to be different from that of Paul. Three, the theology sounds un-Pauline as the cross of Christ no longer holds a position of central importance while good works seem to. Four, an advanced and complex ecclesiastical structure was in place in the Pastoral Epistles such that could not have been in place during Paul's lifetime; and lastly, there is no historical record such as is found in the Book of Acts of a second release of Paul from Roman prison before final incarceration and also no historical records of some of the trips implied in these epistles (Hendriksen, 1964:6-29).

There are three major proposals often provided by scholars on the authorship and dating. These three options have been reoccurring over the years. Some scholars are of the opinion that Paul wrote the Pastoral Epistles before 62CE and therefore these epistles were still part of the history recounted in Acts of the Apostles while others scholars are of the view that the writing of these letters took place between 62 and 67 CE and therefore shoots beyond the history accounted for and recorded in Acts of the

Apostles as these events must have taken place after Acts of Apostles was abruptly concluded without the completion of the story of Paul. The third and last alternative is that these epistles are pseudo-Pauline writings, which were written after the death of Paul but the author remains unknown (Walker, 2012:128). The last option could likely put the date of the epistles to as far as the second century CE.

The researcher could not just simply ignore the gravity or weight of these objections levelled against the traditional Pauline authorship of these epistles. Therefore, the researcher also presented in this section an overview of the counter response proffered by defenders of traditional Pauline authorship. Firstly, according to Guthrie (1975:613) the amount of historical data witnessed in the Pastoral Epistles is quite unlike what other pseudepigrapha books have. The historical data, maybe genuine or seemingly genuine, differentiate the Pastoral Epistles from pseudepigraphic writings thereby weakening the claim of a Pseudo-Pauline author. Secondly, though there are objections that the historical data provided do not fit into Paul's history recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, the book of Acts of the Apostles did not conclude Paul's story but stopped abruptly midway therefore leaving room for such post-Acts of the Apostles' activities as insinuated in the Pastoral Epistles. Thirdly, they argued that the objections arising from the author's reference to church officials and a supposed advanced form of church organization cannot be a basis for rejecting Pauline authorship, although such evidence has the tendency of proving Paul's familiarity with church structure as completely impossible. The discrepancy could not actually be proven because Paul in his greetings to the Philippian church in Philippians 1:1 also made mention of bishops and deacons. And, Acts 20 records Paul's farewell to the elders of the church in Ephesus at Miletus. Both incidences unveil that Paul although not engrossed with church structures, knew about them, and therefore, the focus on church structure in the Pastoral Epistles should not be a reason for rejecting Pauline authorship. Fourthly, critics of the traditional view of authorship have also reasoned the shift of focus in Pauline theology in the Pastoral Epistles. This shift of focus evidenced on the Pastoral Epistles on themes constant within Pauline theology in the other Pauline letters, could be said to be expected as Paul in the case of the Pastoral Epistles was writing not only to individuals but his associates in ministry for many years. He ought not to discuss

with them doctrines (which they are already familiar with and adhered to) as he would have in the case of a Church, he was still in the process of growing. Lastly, as response to the differences evidenced in the Pastoral Epistles' vocabulary and literary style; one could see such differences remain a puzzle especially when compared with other recognized Pauline Epistles. This has been a cause for concern and has made popular the view that the Pastorals might be of 2nd century CE origin as most of the vocabularies used are said to be common in the second century CE (Towner, 2006:16, 17). A counter response to this could be seen in the words of Guthrie (1975:613) when he stated that though these words are common in the second century CE but they were also in use in the first century CE. The difference in the use to other Pauline letters was attributed to the possible use of an amanuensis by Paul while writing (Mounce, 2000:15-26).

This research views the counter response of advocates of a traditional Pauline authorship as strong and reasonably, but not formidable enough to refute the numerous questions and queries which spring from those holding a non-Pauline authorship of the epistles, and definitely not strong enough to jettison a non-Pauline authorship argument of the Pastoral Epistles. This thesis therefore holds to a non-Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles due to these reasons, some of which were earlier advocated for in the objections raised against Pauline authorship. The omission of these epistles in the P⁴⁶ which is the earliest codex of Pauline writings and also in Codex Vaticanus leaves a lot of questions unanswered. If these epistles are not found in the earliest discovered (possibly oldest) codex of 2nd century CE, then maybe it does not have the popularity clout to be included as it might have been written late when compared with other Pauline epistles. Also, the heavy presence of the *hapax legomena* found in these epistles suggests they are not Pauline epistles. Although several scholars have attempted to hold the difference in the age of Paul and the focus of the writing when compared with other Pauline writings responsible for such numerous occurrences of non-Pauline words, this cannot answer for such unfamiliar vocabularies suddenly attributed to a familiar author. Not only is the heavy presence of the *hapax legomena* disturbing, but so also the new meanings adopted for known words. The impact of this was later discovered in this work regarding the use of γραφή,

as this common Second Testament term was not excluded from such influence as one could sense a departure from the generally common biblical use of the word in the Pastoral Epistles. In drawing the curtain on the subject of authorship and date although the controversy of the date and authorship of the Pastoral Epistles is ongoing and remains inconclusive, the researcher for the sake of this research nevertheless will take a stance in holding unto non-Pauline authorship dated somewhere between the late 1st century CE to the early 2nd century CE and written by a possible disciple of Paul. A disciple who is in possession of Paul's fragmentary notes and very familiar with Paul's method of writing therefore can be seen as a compiler of Paul's extant fragments to further edify and give identity to a newly formed Church, which is in need of its separate identity as it was at that moment separate from Judaism and is forging its own different path. The presence of a new liturgical and organizational structure for the church different from the ones in Judaism, the heavy presence of the *hapax legomena* in these works, and also some known common words being accorded new meanings suggests identity markers for grooming a new organization – the church. Since the author of these three epistles remains unknown, this research work takes the author and recipient of these works to be the literary Paul and the literary Timothy rather than the historical Paul and Timothy.

3.2.2 Occasion and Message of Second Timothy

Frequently when discussions are held about the historical background of these three books they are addressed altogether at the same time and collectively called Pastoral Epistles.¹⁰ On rare occasions have scholars and commentators treated the books separately and independently. This research however narrows the comments and focus to Second Timothy henceforth.

¹⁰A title P.H. Towner has said needed to be discouraged (2006:58-89) because that was not ascertained from the beginning but M. Winter (2013:232-50) argued that it should be retained as the pastoral intent of the letters is similar to methods found in the writing of contemporary philosophers of the time.

Second Timothy has been regarded out of the three as the one with the least problems when it comes to authenticity (Towner, 2006:35). This could be as a result of its robust historical details as seen with the epistles. Donald Guthrie (1990:23) singled 2 Timothy out as the epistles among the Pastorals with the highest incidence of historical details. Baugh (2002:479) and others like him who held unto a Pauline authorship for 2nd Timothy suggest that Paul is at the closing phase of his life in prison and is in a reminiscent mood as he reflects on his journey of faith. He therefore uses the epistle to pass on to Timothy his last thoughts and encouragement. But the researcher taking his point of view from the later dating of the book rather views the book as a later robust compilation of Paul's fragmentary private letters with an aim of edifying the new church and giving it marked identity to survive outside the umbrella of Judaism which has been cast off after the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 CE. Therefore, this makes the compiler responsible for most of the vocabulary as he wove the Pastoral Epistles around the three fragment pieces of Paul's genuine notes (Harrison, 1921:118-121).

3.2.3 Recipient

With the theory that the books were woven around the genuine notes, the historical Timothy and Titus might have been the recipients of the genuine notes of Paul, which was initially in fragments, but they cannot be the recipients of these woven and packaged epistles. These epistles were fashioned in a way to help give the Church a footing outside Judaism as to continue its existence. Therefore, as earlier suggested one can probably only refer to the recipient as the literary Timothy. Therefore, the references to Timothy in this work does not necessarily refer to the historical Timothy but the literary Timothy whose name was taken to be the recipient of this missive.

3.3 AN EXEGESIS OF 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17

This section of this work intends to investigate exegetically using the grammatical method to understand what this biblical text is all about in an effort to determine the usages of the key works and what they stood for in the text.

14. σὺ δὲ μένε ἐν οἷς ἔμαθες καὶ ἐπιστώθης, εἰδῶς παρὰ τίνων ἔμαθες, 15. καὶ ὅτι ἀπὸ βρέφους [τὰ] ἱερὰ γράμματα οἶδας, τὰ δυνάμενά σε σοφίσαι εἰς σωτηρίαν διὰ πίστεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. 16. πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, πρὸς ἐλεγμὸν, πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν, πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, 17. ἵνα ἄρτιος ᾖ ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος, πρὸς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθὸν ἐξηρισμένος.

The importance of this biblical text which is the pericope for this research project cannot be overstated, especially not so far as its reference to the concept of scripture in the Christian tradition is concerned. This text represents one of the greatest pillars of support for the doctrine of the Scripture and most especially for conservatives. Paul J. Achtemeier (1980:22), while writing on passages that are of great importance to the Christian concept and understanding of Scripture, noted that 2 Timothy 3:16 is the most notable. Kevin Smith (2010:95) refers to the particular text as “the most definitive biblical text on the nature, function, and purpose of Scripture.”

As crucial as this biblical text is to the concept of Scripture—a concept from which every other Christian doctrine seems to sprout —this passage is however not exempted from controversies. Although the controversy involved in the understanding of this biblical text may not be included in the frontline of foremost biblical controversies, it is nevertheless credible and deserving of investigation. Some of the rough edges this work seeks to resolve involve the proper understanding and relationship of ἱερὰ γράμματα and γραφή, in both verses 15 and 16 of the text; and, the proper translation of πᾶσα - is it to be translated “every” or “all”? Should the proper translation of πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος be attributive or predicative? What exactly does the *hapax legomenon* θεόπνευστος popularly translated as “God breathe” really mean? And what is it a referent to? These and other questions steer the exegetical discussion of 2 Timothy that follows below.

3.3.1 Verses 14-17

The author of the Pastoral Epistles is known to use σὺ δὲ (“but as for you”) sometimes in his work as “attention-getting device” (Towner, 2006:580). This is reflected in 2 Timothy 3:10; 1 Timothy 6:11 as he contrasted Timothy (the recipient) to the other types of norms that seemed to have been in existence. It is a marker that is meant to differentiate Timothy from other existing structures. This section under consideration also started with the last of such markers. Wenstrom (2015:1) describes it as a post-positive conjunction. He argued that δὲ was used here instead of the strong adversative ἄλλα probably because the author was not contrasting groups of people that are fundamentally different but rather segments within the same group. This is what therefore introduces this pericope which has to do with the inference to Scripture and θεόπνευστος.

This section where this contrast was made is said to be carefully constructed as it is structured as follows: fundamental instruction (v. 14a); reasons for obedience to the instructions; an argument for Scripture founded on its nature and use; and purpose of Scripture (Towner, 2006:580). Hence, this section attempts to study the various portions of this passage.

v. 14 σὺ δὲ μένε ἐν οἷς ἔμαθες καὶ ἐπιστώθης, εἰδὼς παρὰ τίνων ἔμαθες,

σὺ δὲ apart from being an attention-getting, post-positive contrast, σὺ is a nominative of address which at the same time identified Timothy with the σὺ as the subject of the imperative μένε. Larry Perkins (2017:217) is of the view that its link with δὲ signifies the beginning of a new topic. Nathaniel Parker (2016:12) reinforced this idea as he suggested that in 2 Timothy 3:14 the author shifts to another major portion of this passage.

The σὺ δὲ expression contrasts the recipient Timothy with the prevailing spirit of the age that was described in the previous verses of the chapter, especially to the false teachers who were described by the author of the Pastoral Epistles as increasing in

their own wickedness. This contrast was immediately followed by a command to Timothy.

μένε ἐν οἷς ἔμαθες καὶ ἐπιστώθης

Μένε was understood by Parker (2016:13) as the verb “continue”, which was translated in John 15 as “abide” or “remain,” therefore he interpreted it as a reference to Timothy living out what he must have learned from Paul and other people who were instrumental in bringing him up in faith such as his mother, Eunice and grandmother, Lois.

However, μένε is the active, second person, singular present imperative of the verb μένω. An imperative is recognized to be the mood for command. In this instance the present active imperative according to Jeremy Duff (2005:81) in contrast to its aorist counterpart, which is undefined, is used to express a process. This means that whatever is commanded is to be done continuously or repeatedly. Therefore, in this case it could be simply translated as “continue” or “keep remaining”. Equally important also is how Westrom (2015:2) interpreted it as a customary present imperative with the aim that Timothy continuously make a habit of conforming to the teaching he received from Paul, his mother and his grandmother.

Ἐνοῖς could either be translated as “in which things” (Towner, 2006:58) or “in those things which” (Westrom, 2015:2). The words ἔμαθες καὶ ἐπιστώθης are both aorist indicative verbs of μανθάνω and πιστόω respectively. Although while ἔμαθες is aorist active indicative, ἐπιστώθης is in the aorist passive indicative form of the verb. The verb, μανθάνω according to the Greek-English Lexicon (Danker, 2000:615) could mean either to gain knowledge or skill by instruction, to learn; or to make an acquaintance of something; and could also be to come to a realization with the implication of learning through experience or practice. This could further be buttressed by implying that the information Timothy acquired from Paul and his parentage (mother and grandmother) was by observing and experiencing the way they lived (Westrom,

2015:2) as the use of *μανθάνω* did not specify if the instructions are acquired formally or informally.

The *καὶ* connective introduces *ἐπιστώθης* (the aorist, passive, indicative, second person, singular of *πιστόω*) which as several other words in the Pastoral Epistles is also a *hapax legomenon* although it was used frequently in Greek literature (Perkins, 2017:217). Perkins is also of the opinion that it ought to be translated as “you have pledged yourself.” Other scholars for example, Wenstrom (1015:3) translated it as “became convinced of,” while Lock (1978:109) “wert assured of” or “confirmed by experience.” The passive voice suggests that Timothy as the subject is the receiver of the action of the verb from an unexpressed agency probably the Holy Spirit, while the verb indicates that Timothy has been faithful to the things he was taught.

εἰδὼς παρὰ τίνων ἔμαθες,

The word *εἰδὼς* is an adverbial participle which is the perfect, active, nominative, singular, masculine of the verb *οἶδα*. It means to know, be intimately acquainted with (Danker, 2000:693) and could also mean “to know for certain” (Wenstrom, 2015:4). It is said to be a causal participle as it indicates the reason for the action portrayed by the finite verb in this case the imperative verb *μένε* (Perkins, 2017:217). Timothy is therefore to continue in the things he has learnt and was convinced of based on the first-hand knowledge he has from whom he received these things. The combination of the genitive plural of *τις* and *παρὰ* therefore signified the source of knowledge, which in this case would have to be Paul, the mother of Timothy, Eunice, and the grandmother of Timothy, Lois.

Therefore, the translation of verse 14 appeared to be, “But you continue in those things which you learnt and have confirmed by experience, because you know from whom you learnt.”

ν. 15. καὶ ὅτι ἀπὸ βρέφους [τὰ] ἱερὰ γράμματα οἶδας, τὰ δυνάμενά σε σοφίσαι εἰς σωτηρίαν διὰ πίστεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

This particular verse comprises of a connective conjunction καὶ, another conjunction ὅτι, the preposition ἀπὸ, βρέφους which is the genitive, singular neuter form of βρέφος, an adjective ἱερὰ which is the accusative, plural form of the neuter adjective ἱερός, also there in is the accusative plural form of the neuter noun γράμμα, and οἶδας verb second person, singular perfect active indicative of οἶδα. Also included in this verse is δυνάμενά the present, middle singular nominative feminine participle of δύναμαι, the accusative second person singular pronoun of σὺ, σοφίσαι the aorist infinitive verb of σοφίζω (make wise, instruct), σωτηρίαν the accusative singular of the feminine noun σωτηρία. Διὰ a preposition, πίστεως the genitive singular of the feminine noun πίστις; ἐν another preposition, Χριστῷ a dative singular of masculine noun/adjective, and finally Ἰησοῦ the genitive singular of the noun Ἰησοῦς.

The above paragraph dealt only with the parsing of verse 15 in Greek, this eventually leads to the next section where the significance of this verse is looked into in terms of its various constituent segments.

καὶ ὅτι ἀπὸ βρέφους [τὰ] ἱερὰ γράμματα οἶδας,

According to I.H. Marshall (2004:785), the καὶ ὅτι is of great importance as it does not only serve as a connective but also introduces another clause dependent on the εἰδῶς in verse 14. Therefore, καὶ and ὅτι serve in giving more details about the ambiguous clause in the previous verse. This affirms that Timothy had been familiar with the sacred Scriptures from the time he was a little child. The use of the neuter noun βρέφους in other instances it appeared in Scripture either refers to a foetus or a babe for example in Acts 7:19; 1 Peter 2:2; and Luke 1:41, 44; 2:12 (Liddell and Scott, 1975:329), with the exception of Luke 18:15 where the ages of the children brought to Jesus could not be ascertained. Here also, one might not be at liberty to limit the meaning of βρέφους to the foetus or a newly born babe as the likelihood of being able to expose a foetus to sacred Scriptures seems remote. With the preposition ἀπὸ, this

therefore means ‘from childhood or from infancy.’ Marshall noted (2004:789) that the way the usage of βρέφους was structured here has the implication that the writer portrayed Timothy’s family as having been saved as Christians before Timothy was born. If this could be established, it would give more support to the argument for a second century date of origin for the Pastoral Epistles.

The [τὰ] ἱερὰ γράμματα used here in the text was an anarthrous noun which means the definite article was a later addition. The absence or presence of the article although does not alter much of the meaning of ἱερὰ γράμματα. More important, perhaps, is the rarity with which the adjective ἱερὸς was employed in the LXX and in the Second Testament. Towner (2006:582) claimed the individual usage of the word was seldom put to use except in the case when it is used in a compound word. The only other place where it appeared as a substantive in the Second Testament was in 1 Corinthians 9:13 and is seen as a *hapax legomenon*, yet this combination used with γράμματα is frequently seen in the work of Philo and Josephus (Towner, 2006:582).

The word ἱερὸς as early as in Homeric literature could mean “powerful” or “holy”. It is believed that there is a possibility that it shared links to the pre-Greek, Indo-Germanic word “*ais*” which is a reference to God (Kittel and Bromiley, 1965:222). The term ἱερὸς, which has come to mean “holy” or “sacred”, is associated with words such as θεῖος, ἅγιος, ὄσιος, σεμνος and ἄσυλος in common Greek usage. Although one thing ἱερὸς seems to have in common with them all is that they all define a concept of holiness. But ἱερὸς is markedly different from them all as it does not have the connotation of personal holiness, nor can it be negative in meaning as some of them can be (Kittel and Bromiley, 1965:222). Rather it has two senses: one, it connotes something, or someone filled with divine power of a deity, and, two it expresses something devoted to a deity. This consecration could originate in primal law, natural factor, or divine and human definition and institution. It is therefore closely linked to the sacral and cultic process in the Greek world (Kittel and Bromiley, 1965:223). This must have informed its avoidance and replacement by the similar word ἅγιος, as witnessed in the LXX and the Second Testament writers.

Meanwhile, γράμματα on the other hand means that which is inscribed or engraved, at the same time in the widest sense could be translated as that which is written. This is not limited to alphabets but also include symbols, pictures and so forth. In the Eastern world it was used at times for a royal letter or decree (Kittel and Bromiley, 1965:761-763).

As earlier stated, the combination of these two words formed another *hapax legomenon* in the Pastoral Epistles as γράμματα is not the common nor usual word for Scriptures in the Second Testament. Since no other usage such as this has been found in the Second Testament, scholars and interpreters tend to turn to its usage in the first-century CE especially as it is frequently used by Josephus and Philo to refer to the Scriptures of the First Testament. This further strengthens the argument of the second-century CE authorship for the Pastoral Epistles - an author who has the knowledge of the usages of ἱερὰ γράμματα as a term denoting the Jewish Scriptures. Several scholars including Hendriksen, Dibelius, Hultgren, Perkins, and others are of agreement that ἱερὰ γράμματα was a reference to the Jewish Scriptures. The researcher also agrees that ἱερὰ γράμματα, although seldom used, is a reference to the Jewish Scriptures, although this raises the question of the reason the writer of the Pastoral Epistles introduced this specific term to denote the Jewish Scripture.

The use of οἶδας, according to Perkins (2017:218), shows that the knowledge that is implied is cognitive, and this knowledge is certain knowledge (Wenstrom, 2015:9). This means that the literary Timothy has been exposed, with all certainty to the Jewish Scriptures from infancy.

The rest of the reading in verse 15 is therefore the one able to instruct you through faith into the salvation of Jesus in Christ. The διὰ πίστεως signifies means, while the propositional phrase εἰς σωτηρίαν represents purpose. The reading of verse 15 therefore is “that from infancy you have known the sacred writings (scriptures), which are able to make you wise through faith into salvation of Jesus in Christ.”

V. 16. πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, πρὸς ἐλεγμὸν, πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν, πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ,

The main controversies in the entire pericope under consideration emerged variously in verse 16. At this juncture, the researcher seeks to find answers to questions such as the proper reading of πᾶσα γραφή, the identity of γραφή in this passage and in the Pastoral Epistles, the role of θεόπνευστος as either predicative or attributive, and the meaning of θεόπνευστος. Verse 16 has been reckoned with among scholars as difficult to interpret because it has alternative readings which are neither smooth nor satisfying. This is further complicated as the context has not also been of much help (Buttrick, 1955:506).

The first task here is to determine how πᾶσα should be translated. It could easily be translated as “all” or “every” depending on the context, but since the context of 2 Timothy 3:14-17 is not crystal clear, this supposedly easy translation therefore became problematic. Towner (2006:587) argued that the choice between the two options is determined by what γραφή refers to, is it a text of Scripture or the entire Scripture that reference is made to. Perkins (2017:219) also agreed that it could either be translated as an inclusive (all Scripture) or distributive (every Scripture). The several usages of the number of the word γραφή in the Second Testament do not help either as Second Testament writers are fond of using the plural and singular of γραφή without a formalised, stable form. Prior to this point no format has been consistently used when γραφή or γραφαὶ refers to the entire Scripture or a passage in Scripture. To further complicate things, Towner (2006:587) also notes that there is no other precedence or occurrence in the Second Testament where the phrase πᾶσα γραφή is used which could assist in further guidance on this particular note. Since the usage of γραφή in this passage (either as a text of Scripture or as the entire collection of Scriptures) cannot be conclusively decided, the research tilts to translate πᾶσα as “all.” Although either translation should not make much of a difference as ordinary if isolated from the grammar and the syntax “all” and “every” could have had the same connotation. This is in agreement with the point of view advocated by Hendricksen (1970:301) when he summarily dismissed the implication of the differences between the two renderings of

πᾶσα. This research however reveals that Hendricksen should have taken precautions as either rendering could change the dynamics of the passage depending on what other words intertwined in the sentence meant.

To press further on this matter, the syntax of the adjective πᾶσα with γραφή according to Marshall (2004:792) produces three suggestive meanings. One, it could be translated as “all scripture” representing all of the First Testament or Jewish Scripture; or two, it could mean “every passage of scripture” referring to particular texts; and lastly, it could mean, “every kind of inspired writing.” This includes texts not recognized as Scripture yet. Although he argued that only the first two options are valid, as he ruled out the possibility of the third option as it seems it goes contrary to the “universal New Testament usage of γραφή.” This research however opts for a possible use of this seeming dead end—the third option. This is only possible though if the usage of γραφή is re-examined especially in the Pastoral Epistles having argued for the fact that they were written in the second century CE. In the view of the researcher only the first option or the third should be regarded as possible translations of πᾶσα as both could allow γραφή take on a broader meaning which the researcher suspected and argued γραφή took on in the Pastoral Epistles. The use of “every” is discouraged by the researcher, because if such reference refers to every particular passage of the Jewish Scripture then it will be difficult to show how every single particular passage of the Jewish Scripture can fully perform the functions broken down as διδασκαλίαν, ἐλεγμόν, ἐπανόρθωσιν, and παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ. In other words, not every single passage of scripture is useful for teaching and at the same time rebuking and correcting and training in righteousness, but the entire Scripture is. Each passage only contributes to these causes.

3.3.2 The Meaning and Reference of γραφή in 2 Timothy 3:16

The next matter of great importance in this passage, given our focus, is the meaning or identity of γραφή in 2 Tim 3:16. Several authors and scholars are vocal in their arguments that γραφή in verse 16 is synonymous to ἱερὰ γράμματα in verse 15¹¹ as these scholars claim that both concepts are references to the Scripture of the First Testament or preferably the Jewish Scriptures. This research, however, seeks to disagree on this particular note. Factual evidence reveals that the word γραφή and its cognates were employed fifty (50) times in the Second Testament (Smith, 2010:97). Although this word has been established earlier to mean writing or anything written, its usage in the Second Testament was exclusively as a technical term for “Scripture.” Smith further made a strong case that regardless of relationship between γραφή and θεόπνευστος, γραφή on its own stands for sacred, inspired writing. This means γραφή does not need the inclusion adjective θεόπνευστος before it could be regarded as sacred scripture, as this was the impression given in almost all the entirety of the Second Testament by its frequent usage and meaning.

Out of the 50 occurrences of γραφή in the Second Testament, 47 of the occurrences refer unambiguously to the Jewish Scriptures (with the exception of 1 Timothy 5:18, 2 Peter 3:16 and this passage under consideration). The meaning of γραφή in the present text is still however to be decided while consideration is given to the other two instances. In 2 Peter 3:15-16, an epistle whose authorship is also caught up in serious controversy and suspected to be of the early second century CE, places Paul’s letters on the same hierarchy as other Scriptures. Therefore, γραφή in 2 Peter 3 included some of the Second Testament writings namely those of Paul in its scope of what is known as Scripture. The question continues to rage if it were not too early at this point in history (that is if 2 Peter was written in the first century CE) to consider some of the Second Testament writings Scriptures equating them with the Jewish Scriptures. Then also significant is the occurrence of γραφή in 1 Timothy 5:18 (the only second and other occurrence of γραφή in the Pastoral Epistles apart from 2 Timothy 3:16), where the author of the Pastorals while quoting Scripture wrote, “For the Scripture says, ‘Do

¹¹Smith (2010); Perkin (2017); Guthrie (1969); Lock (1978), etc.

not muzzle the ox while it is treading out the grain' and 'The worker deserves his wages.'" The latter quotation is nowhere mentioned in the Jewish Scripture but is a verbatim quotation of Luke 10:7 a statement accredited to Jesus. Except if this is a mistake on the side of the author of the Pastoral Epistles, this seems to indicate that the author believed or lived at a time where Scripture is no longer limited to the Jewish Scripture. A reference to chapter two of this research already unveils that in the early second century CE the church was ripe for this kind of understanding. Instances where priority was given to the sayings of Jesus and the writings of the Second Testament authors were seen. These instances were said to be more frequently quoted and in use than even the Jewish Scriptures indicating that they were already authoritative or becoming authoritative at such an early time.

If the postulation that this other occurrence of the mention of Scripture in the Pastoral Epistles has a broader scope and meaning than the other 47 occurrences in the Second Testament is true, then this could radically influence and change the identity of γραφή in 2 Timothy 3:16. Hendricksen (1970:300) several years ago has suggested this but probably because his proposal seemed arbitrary (as it was not grounded in any fact) it has been ignored and taken as speculation by other scholars. He had argued that the author of the Pastoral Epistles (whom he took to be Paul) must have made use of ἱερὰ γράμματα and γραφή in these two verses (v. 15, 16) respectively in an attempt to draw a distinction between ἱερὰ γράμματα which he understood as the Jewish Scripture/First Testament and γραφή now taking a new and broader meaning of "whatever has a right to be called divinely inspired Scripture" in verse 16. He further argued that Paul would have gotten it wrong had he written that Timothy had been instructed in the πᾶσα γραφή from infancy as both Lois and Eunice were only exposed to the Jewish Scripture at the time of his birth. Hendricksen therefore concluded that γραφή in this passage is of a broader scope and spectrum than ἱερὰ γράμματα as it exceeds the limits of the then known Jewish Scriptures.

G.W. Knight (1992:448) was also of the same line of thought but slightly differed in his conclusion. He viewed the usage of γραφή from later historical perspective and applied it also broadly to all other writings that qualified to be scripture later but at the time of

writing the Pastoral Epistles were not in existence. In this way, he was able to include the writings of the Second Testament. This view of pre-empting further additions to the scope of the scripture looks a bit strange though, why would such a need arise in the first place to broaden the scope of Scripture if not that the author was aware of writings that he felt could easily equate with Scriptures and attempts to bring them all (recognised Jewish Scripture and these extant writings) under the same auspices of Scripture?

The researcher's take on the use of γραφή in this text is that as Scripture it has a broader scope than what it usually signifies in the Second Testament writings which is the Jewish Scripture. Here it included other writings probably some of the extant Second Testament writings of the time. This resolution is a product of four factors noticed in the construction of this passage; firstly, the featuring of ἱερὰ γράμματα and γραφή in the same pericope. Although several scholars saw this as synonyms, this researcher does not. The author went through a lot of trouble to introduce a *hapax legomenon* ἱερὰ γράμματα, even when he was probably aware of the fact that previous writers and translators had stigmatised the use of ἱερὸς. Yet he used it as other extra-biblical authors such as Josephus and Philo of Alexandria had used it as a reference to the Jewish Scriptures (which is the only form and meaning given to ἱερὰ γράμματα by authors of the time). Therefore, there is no likelihood that ἱερὰ γράμματα which was the set word for Scripture would mean anything otherwise.

Secondly, the prior broader use of γραφή in 1 Timothy 5:18, to include a quote from the Second Testament, further attests to the fact that the author of the Pastoral Epistles seems to be at home with γραφή, taking on a much wider meaning than other books of the Second Testament (with the exception of 2 Peter) were willing to concede. Therefore, the ambiguity of the use of γραφή in 2 Timothy 3:16 should be resolved by its counterpart usage in the Pastoral Epistles.

Thirdly, the reference to Paul's letter in 2 Peter 3:15-16 as Scripture, affirms the possibility of γραφή's broader usage in 2 Timothy 3:16. One has to bear in mind that the book of Second Peter also is a book whose traditional authorship and date has been enshrouded in controversies meaning scholars who argued for a second century

date for 2 Peter are not wanting. This work therefore hypothesizes that both the Pastoral Epistles and 2 Peter are of second century CE origination which could have made possible such an understanding of γραφή.

Fourthly and lastly, the link of γραφή with θεόπνευστος in verse 16 which ordinarily should not be necessary and could be seen as tautology could indicate that the author was attempting to confer authority on his wider scope of γραφή. As Kevin Smith had earlier stated and the researcher likes to formally quote this time, “regardless of how the relationship between γραφή and θεόπνευστος is interpreted, γραφή alone refers to sacred, inspired writings.” This explicitly shows that the inclusion of θεόπνευστος was neither needed nor necessary in the passage to enable γραφή to be seen as Scripture. In other words, γραφή as Scripture is already an established fact in the writings of the Second Testament. Kern Trembath (1987:6) further gave credence to this stance as he said every Christian or Jew naturally took Scriptures as material coming from God and if this is so then adding the adjective θεόπνευστος to Scripture in this context does not make sense as it presents a reading such as “the material which comes from God comes from God”.

In view of these four underlying factors in the pericope under examination, the researcher therefore concludes that the author of the Pastoral Epistles is already aware of other writings contemporary to him but outside the Jewish Scriptures which later became part of the Second Testament. He made a subtle attempt to incorporate them in the scope and definition of what is known as Scripture and in the process legitimated them as Scripture and to be of equal standing with the then known scripture, the Jewish Scripture. Hence, the understanding of γραφή in verse 16 should be of a scope broader than just the Jewish Scripture or First Testament.

πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος

After the resolution of the identity and meaning of γραφή in verse 16, the next exegetical task facing the interpretation of this passage is to clarify the syntactical function of θεόπνευστος; is it used as a predicative adjective or an attributive adjective? In this reading, four parts of speech in the nominative case are presented; one noun and three adjectives all in the nominative case without a verb therein. This verbless clause therefore provides two possible readings once a copula verb is introduced and they are: “Every inspired Scripture is also profitable for...” Or the alternate reading, “Every Scripture is inspired and profitable for...” Of course, this translation uses “inspired” for θεόπνευστος.

To resolve this impasse, efforts were made to check for a precedent involving a noun qualified by πᾶς followed by two nominative adjectives without verbs from the Bible text, but no parallel has been found (Marshall, 2004:793). Towner (2006:587) also acknowledged that there is no other evidence of an occurrence involving the phrase πᾶσα γραφή in the Second Testament which could have assisted in shedding more light on the usage of the adjectives.

The two possible readings of this verbless clause presented above have each its own implication on the reading. For instance, if the first reading is adopted, that is, “every inspired Scripture is also useful” it connotes that there is a possibility of other Scriptures in existence that are not inspired while there are others which are inspired. Therefore, this will go contrary and will not be consistent with the Second Testament use of γραφή for Scriptures and therefore indicating that each mention or occurrence of scripture (γραφή) must be qualified before it can be agreed to be the authoritative Scripture.

Meanwhile, the second rendering too, “every scripture is inspired and useful” could as well be problematic. Except if there is an ideological agenda, it will be tautology to say Scripture is inspired, as technically the tagging of any writing as “scripture” already had the concept of its divine origination embedded and innate in it, thereby rendering the inclusion of θεόπνευστος in the text as unnecessary.

Yet out of the two readings, the second reading is relatively acceptable as the first alternative reading appeared terribly convoluted. This researcher is in total agreement with Kevin Smith (2010:100) that the rendering “all/every Scripture is God-breathed and profitable” is a more comfortable, more intuitive and the most likely reading of the text.

3.3.3 The Meaning of θεόπνευστος

In attempting to understand and lay the foundation for present and subsequent discussions in this research on the *hapax legomenon* term θεόπνευστος used only in 2 Timothy 3:16, it will be wise to start with a reference to Kern Robert Trembath (1987:5-6) who recognized 2 Timothy as the verse with the only reference to the word “inspired.” He argued that no one knew for certain what the term θεόπνευστος truly meant as it only occurred in this passage in the Bible text and rarely outside it, therefore, giving no one exactly any data to work on in the attempt of interpreting it. To further complicate things, the scope of the Scripture referred to as θεόπνευστος is neither delineated nor delimited.

Starting on this note of presumed ignorance helps as one recognizes that we are in uncharted waters here when one proceeds to attempt to understand this *hapax legomenon*. It has been speculated that this is the first occurrence of it in Greek language with the further likelihood that the author of the Pauline Epistles coined it first (Marshall, 2004:794). But there have emerged other evidences from the Thesaurus Linguae Graecae (TLG) that suggest otherwise. A search on the TLG engine reveals there has been three extra-biblical occurrences of the word in two different documents (Oracubar Sibyllina and Manethe Fragment) before its usage in 2 Timothy 3:16. These earlier usages, however, brought no special understanding to what is presently known about the term.

Therefore, no other option is left in the effort to understand what the word means than to turn to its etymology and try to derive an understanding from this. It is strange though, that the author of the Pastoral Epistles jettisoned the use of similar words that

were already in use at the time that almost have the same understanding yet are not used in the Bible. Such words include ἐπιπέω and καταπνέων or ἐπίπνοια as used by Josephus and the former ones used by Philo. θεόπνευστος is said to be a combination of two words; θεός which means ‘God’ and a verb πνέω which represents “breathing out” with an adjectival suffix, τος (Smith, 2010:99). The identifiable challenge hence is an understanding of the relationship “between the nominal and the verbal roots” (Smith, 2010:99). Towner (2006:589) indicated that some decades ago the verbal adjective, θεόπνευστος was taken to be an expression in the active voice and therefore should be translated as “breathes God” making the grammatical construction sound as if it was Scripture that breathes out God. But recently it is commonly interpreted as a passive notion, easily translated as “inspired by God” or “breathed out by God” portraying God as the agent doing the action of breathing out Scripture. Smith (2010:99) attempted to make sense of this relationship between the nominal and the verbal roots, as he suggested that compound verbal adjectives that start with θεό- and have -τος as their ending always seem to follow a certain pattern of arrangement. In most of such cases, θεός acts as the agent of such verbal action. Therefore, one could responsibly agree to the idea that it was God that breathed out the Scripture. Hence, so far, the translation could be “All/every Scripture is breathed out by God and useful.”

πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, πρὸς ἐλεγμὸν, πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν, πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ

The rest of verse 16 seems straightforward as the author delineates the usefulness of Scripture with the following nouns. The word διδασκαλίαν, is an accusative, singular feminine noun meaning “teaching” (Towner, 2006:590). While ἐλεγμὸν and ἐπανόρθωσιν are both hapax legomena, and both singular in number and are in the accusative case although ἐλεγμὸν is a masculine, a different gender from the other two. While ἐλεγμὸν means a disapproval or rebuke (Perkins, 2017:219). The other word, ἐπανόρθωσιν literally means restoration or amendment and can be translated to mean improvement in some instances (Perkins, 2017:220; Marshall, 2004:795). The fourth noun which specified the usefulness of Scripture is παιδείαν, meaning training

or education. This concept is dominant in the Graeco-Roman culture as it results from the actualization of virtues such as uprightness, self-control, piety, and others, which sum up to what is known as civilization (Towner, 2006:591). Finally, the accusative article links up with παιδείαν.

The repetition of πρὸς for the four prepositional phrases delineating the usefulness of Scripture is not strictly characteristic of Greek but it is significant because it is both for emphasis and at the same time helps enumerate and stress the importance of each of the concepts. Therefore, πρὸς is rhetorically important (Perkins, 2017:219; Towner, 2006:590; Smith, 2010:101). Towner (2006:592) discovered these four prepositional phrases form a chiasmic pattern with a A-B-B-A sequence. The broadest term being διδασκαλίαν and relates to the fourth term παιδείαν in meaning while both ἐλεγμόν and ἐπανόρθωσιν seem negative. Smith (2010:101-102) also in referring to it as a chiasmic quartet argued that the first two διδασκαλίαν and ἐλεγμόν deal with belief, while ἐπανόρθωσιν and παιδείαν (the last two) deal with behaviour.

The translation of verse 16 could be rendered as “all/every Scripture is breathed out by God and useful for teaching, for rebuking, for restoration, for training in righteousness.”

v. 17 ἵνα ἄριστος ἦ ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος, πρὸς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθὸν ἐξηρισμένος.

The author of the Pastoral Epistles concluded his argument on the Scripture on a practical note denoted by the ἵνα clause. Perkins (2017:220) explains that the ἵνα brought in a result clause with its accompanying subjunctive ἦ. The ἵνα introduces the chief purpose which is the making fit and ready of the person of God for every good work. According to Smith (2010:102-3), God’s primary reason in breathing out the Scripture was to equip his people for every good service as explicitly portrayed in the use of the ἵνα clause. Therefore, the use of the four prepositional phrases outlining the usefulness of Scripture is simply stating the intermediate purposes of Scripture. The making fit and preparing of the person of God take prominence as two words ἄριστος

and ἐξηρτισμένος were strategically placed in verse 17 just to emphasize and intensify this.

Conclusively, the rendering of the pericope under examination, that is, 2 Timothy 3:14-17 could be translated as:

v. 14: But you continue in those things which you learnt and have confirmed by experience, because you know from whom you learnt

v. 15: And that from infancy you have known the sacred Scriptures, which are able to make you wise through faith into salvation of Jesus in Christ

v. 16: All Scripture is breathed out by God and useful for teaching, for rebuking, for restoration, for training that is in righteousness

v. 17: So that the person (man or woman) of God might be ready, fit for every kind of good work.

3.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter used the historical-grammatical method to examine the underlying issues in the chosen pericope, after initially setting out to investigate the historical background of the Pastoral Epistles, a corpus where 2 Timothy is prominent. The controversies on authorship, date and recipient are ongoing and inexhaustible at the moment but this research took as its point of departure non-Pauline authorship as there was not enough reason nor evidence to support a Pauline authorship of the Pastoral Epistles. As the research progresses, it also became more evident that certain underlying factors in the chosen pericope could not have complied with the Pauline authorship of the book.

As the work delved into its exegetical findings, it became obvious that the literary Timothy was being admonished to abide in what he has learned from his parentage and what has been learnt from the literary Paul (the supposed author). The research also suggests that ἱερὰ γράμματα, although a hapax legomenon, was used to represent the Jewish Scripture/First Testament writings although such usage is seen

as very unusual in biblical records. The term, γραφή was not introduced into the text as a synonym of ἱερὰ γράμματα but was used distinctly to represent a broader concept from the known and common usage for Jewish Scripture especially in the Second Testament books. The entire arc of argument in this pericope was not an argument for the inspiration of the Scripture but for the usefulness of the Scripture which has as its primary aim, the equipping of the person belonging to God.

CHAPTER 4

A RE-READING OF 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17 THROUGH AN IDEOLOGICAL-TEXTURE LENS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter (Chapter 3) focused on the Greek terms or words used in the pericope under investigation with the aim of understanding what this particular passage was all about. It examined and attempted to understand some key words used in their historical-grammatical context, words such as ἱερὰ γράμματα, γραφή, θεόπνευστος and other related words, including some of the *hapax legomena* employed in the passage. The primary concern of the present chapter, which also provides the over-arching methodology for this research, is to discover the ideological interests at play within the text and also in the history of the text's interpretation by examining the ideological texture of the pericope.

4.2 THE IDEOLOGICAL-TEXTURE APPROACH

For more than a century, scholars were accustomed to the historical critical method of interpreting Scripture. This method of interpreting Scripture argues that a Biblical text is generally read and understood based on its historical context. Until the mid-1900's, Biblical studies was characterized by attempts at the historical construction of the biblical world and historical criticism was the central methodological tool used in this pursuit (Mapfeka, 2016:51-52). Scholars started using other approaches and methodologies for interpreting Scripture as time passed and these approaches succeeded in ending the century-long monopoly of historicism on biblical interpretation. Fernando Segovia (1995:276-282) exposed the weaknesses of the claims of historical criticism which led to its swift demise in the last quarter of the 20th century as follows: first, its inability to analyse a text as text until towards the end of the process. Secondly, its blindness in seeing biblical texts as of a literary, rhetorical and ideological production. Third, its ignorant understanding of a text of Scripture as

univocal and objective in meaning. Fourthly, its presumption of a universal, informed reader or critic. The third and fourth presuppositions led to the underlying stance that the word of God is the judge, standard and guide for Christian life and doctrine. Lastly, is the exaltation of its pedagogical model of interpretation above everything else. All these factors consequently led to the unavoidable fall of historical criticism.

One of the methods of interpretation which emerged after the displacement of the stranglehold that historicism had on biblical interpretation, was socio-rhetorical criticism. Vernon K. Robbins in 1984 was said to be the first person to apply the term “socio-rhetoric” as an interpretive approach in New Testament studies (Harold, 2011:51). Socio-rhetorical criticism is a methodological approach which brings an interdisciplinary interpretive analysis to a text. Robbins (1996:1) used the term “socio” as a reference to the wealth of materials in modern anthropology and the study of sociology, which the application of socio-rhetorical criticism enriches a text with. Socio-rhetorical criticism incorporates the insights acquired from social-scientific approach into its interpretation of a text. In addition, its “rhetorical” aspect studies the way the language in a text is used to achieve the aim of the author. According to David Gowler (2010:194) “rhetorical approaches include a concern for the social nature of reality, the interrelationship between language and human actions and how language attempts to create effects on an audience.” Rhetorical criticism therefore combines an intellectual curiosity to examine the motivation of a speaker, the responses of an audience and the manner the discourse is structured in as well as the environment where communication takes place (Goodwin, 1993:177). This in turn helps readers get a better understanding of a text and its reception (Harold, 2011:50). Huizing (2011:14) is of the same opinion as he acknowledged the discipline of socio-rhetorical criticism as helping in the interpretive measure of making sense of the message of a given text. According to Robbins (1996:21), there are five arenas of textures in a text which socio-rhetorical criticism indulges and examines. The first is known as the ‘inner texture’, this is the study of what the text consists of. It has to do with the meaning and internal aspects of words within a given text. Secondly, socio-rhetorical criticism looks at the “intertext” - the intertext examines the text in relation to other texts and what lies

outside the text itself, also known as the interactive world of the text. The third aspect of socio-rhetorical criticism is comprised of the social and cultural textures. This is an examination of the world in which the language of the text is brought into being. In the fourth texture, socio-rhetorical criticism investigates the ideological texture of texts. The ideological texture has to do with the interests pushed to the fore in the texts and how commentaries and interpreters have interpreted it and then positioned themselves and other groups in relation to the text. Finally, the fifth texture is the sacred texture which figures out the relationship between the divine and the human. This fifth texture is related to the ideological texture and it includes divine beings, divine history, human redemption, ethics and religious community.

An attempt to unravel ideology could be a daunting task as the word is said to have accrued to itself a host of meanings and variety of uses (Eagleton, 2007:13). Ideology is considered a subtle concept in the sense that it involves ideas that people subscribe to in their daily lives yet in several instances they remained unaware that they were playing into the ideas and interests of rulers or other powerful groups (McKenzie, 2013:435). Williams (1987:24) claimed that the generality of texts are in some sort of way ideological and all have relationship with some kinds of vested interests. Also, it is common for a text to be interpreted in light and in favour of a current struggle going on probably between different classes (McKenzie, 2013:435) as each class tries to present its view as the norm. McKenzie (2013:436) considers ideological texture as having its roots in historicism but as a result of its social and political interests it goes as far as taking on the actualities of history. Ideology is reflected in the reciprocity of meaning between the author/narrator and the real reader of a text, and it is an arena where the reader (both implied and real) receive and empower what a text is trying to convey (Robbins, 1996:36, 37). In the realm of socio-rhetorical criticism, an interpretation is not complete until it has an interrelation which must include the author, the reader and the text because language is a product of social interaction among people. Ideological texture therefore, in an effort to bring the author, the text, and the reader into the arena of textual interpretation with presuppositions both explicit and implicit about the author, the text, and the reader.

Finally, a more theologically tailored definition of the ideology of text which is more specific to the early Christian texts and not broad and general as in the case of Marxism was presented by John Elliot. Also, he explained ideology in relation to the Second Testament text as an intertwined system of ideas, beliefs, values or even assumptions which should not necessarily be categorised as true or false but which portray the interests, desires, or needs of a particular group or class at a specific point in history (1990:268). So, the methodology this chapter embarks on seeks to find out the intersection of ideas and also the constellation of such religious ideas.

4.3 IDEOLOGICAL INTEREST(S) OF 2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17

This section of this research attempts to reveal the ideological interests present in the text considered with the hope of finding the meaning inherent in the author, text and the generations of readers that have participated in its history of interpretation as it relates to the concept of scripture and the possible implication of the reference to θεόπνευστος in the passage.

14. σὺ δὲ μένε ἐν οἷς ἔμαθες καὶ ἐπιστώθης, εἰδὼς παρὰ τίνων ἔμαθες, 15. καὶ ὅτι ἀπὸ βρέφους [τὰ] ἱερὰ γράμματα οἶδας, τὰ δυνάμενά σε σοφίσαι εἰς σωτηρίαν διὰ πίστεως τῆς ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. 16. πᾶσα γραφὴ θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος πρὸς διδασκαλίαν, πρὸς ἐλεγμὸν, πρὸς ἐπανόρθωσιν, πρὸς παιδείαν τὴν ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ, 17. ἵνα ἄρτιος ᾖ ὁ τοῦ θεοῦ ἄνθρωπος, πρὸς πᾶν ἔργον ἀγαθὸν ἐξηρτισμένος.

4.3.1 Outline of 2 Timothy

A broad overlook and reading of the book of 2 Timothy will provide an outline similar to one which the researcher adopted as a result of careful reading of the text with insights from Spencer (2014:77-78), Earle (1978:392) and Fruden (1976:627-630). The outline is then as follows:

Salutation (1:1, 2)

Thanksgiving (1:3-7)

Encouragement to Timothy to Suffer for the Gospel (1:8-2:13)

Contrasts in the Church (2:14-26)

True and False Teacher (2:14-19)

Noble and Ignoble Vessels (2:20-21)

The Kind and the Quarrelsome (2:22-26)

Admonition for Timothy to Continue the Ministry of Evangelism in spite of the Last Days and Opposition (3:1-4:8)

Author's Farewell Message (4:9-18)

Conclusion (4:19-22).

This broad view of the passage appears to be a simple, personal letter to a close associate or to a son (if one prefers the term used by the author), with nothing that intrigues the mind. A careful reading of the text, however, links up with the general analysis of early Christian texts given by John Gager (1975:82) which portrays early Christian texts as products of conflict which involves competing views or ideologies. Gager viewed the Second Testament texts as products of the intense struggles during three critical and significant moments of early Christianity. Firstly, texts written during a time of conflict over who between the Church and Judaism was the true Israel; secondly, texts written to differentiate in the conflict over who truly possesses the true wisdom between early Christianity and paganism; and lastly, texts produced as a result of the conflict within Christianity specifically among Christian groups on who truly represents or embodies the authentic teaching and faith of Jesus. Several if not all Second Testament texts were products of such conflicts and therefore are embedded and enriched with ideological interests or agenda.

In the reading of 2 Timothy, especially chapters two, three, and four, one can easily notice that this particular text seems to fall within the auspices of the third category of conflict given above. A tension involving two groups can be noticed at a reading of 2 Timothy especially in sections preceding the pericope under consideration and part of

There are some suspicious constructions in the text and in the manner the author puts the words to use that gave rise to the ideological interest in what he and the text seek to pursue. They are as follows: first, the use and reference of the three major key words in the pericope is ambiguous and these words are ἱερὰ γράμματα, γραφή and θεόπνευστος. As previously stated, this uncertainty has cast further aspersion on the usage of these words and made them appear to have an undisclosed agenda. The preceding chapter has taken each of these words to mean the following: ἱερὰ γράμματα represents the Jewish Scripture or the First Testament, γραφή as per the author's usage in the Pastoral Epistles seems to represent a broader concept of Scripture, perhaps including some of the emerging writings of the Second Testament at the time but certainly not the 66 books in the Bible as we now possess in the contemporary Protestant Bible; and θεόπνευστος has been taken to refer to God's action in breathing out the Scripture. In spite of all this, a further attempt is made here to unravel the ideology behind the strategic use of these words and some others from this pericope.

It must be noted that in the cases of the use of ἱερὰ γράμματα and γραφή, whatever they were eventually taken to mean, either both are synonyms referring to the Jewish Scriptures or the Christian First Testament or they are taken to be different so, one referring strictly to the Jewish Scriptures and the other connoting a broader perspective. Resolving any of this does not answer the question of the boundary lacking in the concept of 'scripture' in this particular text. Apart from the challenge of the inability of scholarship in gaining knowledge of the boundary and content of the term 'scripture' at this point in time, the other challenge is the knowledge of the fact that the concept of Scripture (both ἱερὰ γράμματα and/or γραφή) just seems to be in the process of development and relatively new at the time of Jesus (the early First Century CE) as a search through the LXX confirmed (Pantelia, *Thasaurus Linguae Graecae Digital Library*, July 8, 2019). The Thesaurus Linguae Graecae (TLG) reveals over 50 uses of the word γραφή and its cognates in the Septuagint (LXX), only thirty-five (35) of these were used in the deutro-canonical books, other occurrences were in the Apocrypha. The meaning of γραφή in the Septuagint covers a spectrum range of

meanings including, document, writing of a king, document detailing a prophet life, it was used also as a reference to the Decalogue thrice (reference to the tablets on which the decalogue was written, Ex 32:16 and Deuteronomy 10:4). Nowhere was γραφή in the First Testament made as a reference to Scripture as it was technically meant or represented in the Second Testament except in two instances in two Apocrypha books—2 Esdras 6:18 (“according to Scripture of the book of Moses”) and 4 Maccabees 18:14 (referring to a quote from Isaiah 43 as Scripture).

The above facts reveal that the concept of Scripture (γραφή) as portrayed in the Second Testament was not found at all in the Jewish Scripture, except in the two late Apocrypha books noted above. This leaves the researcher to postulate that the technical definition of γραφή found so prevalent in the Second Testament is most likely a product of the Second Temple period. This realisation, following up the one already made in chapter two given the lack of a definite boundary for the Jewish Scripture in the First Century CE, suggests that there are powerful interests being advocated for in the use and authorisation given to the concept of Scripture. In other words, this further shows that the use of γραφή to designate Scripture, especially the Jewish Scripture in the Second Testament was a recent concept at the time and must have been crafted shortly before the time, possibly during the Second Temple period. Apart from these considerations, Steve Moyise (2012:62) in his series on Scripture argued that the use of Scripture in the Second Testament tends to differ among authors of the Second Testament. He noticed significant differences between 1 and 2 Peter not only in the common controversial areas of vocabulary and style of writing but also in content (with some showing more interest in angels and demons) and most importantly in their use of Scripture. 2 Peter, a book whose author equates the writings of Paul to the same level as the Jewish Scriptures, has an allusive style and made use of books outside the biblical canon as represented today by books such as 1 Enoch, Testament of Moses. Moyise attested that 2 Peter shared these features with the book of Jude whose only significant Scripture quotation is from 1 Enoch. In the same manner, 2 Timothy 3:8 (a section just prior to the pericope under consideration) referred to the story of two brothers, Jannes and Jambres who were said to have opposed Moses—a story which cannot be found in the canonised Jewish Scripture or Christian First

Testament, but was found in a Qumran Document, *Damascus Rule* 5:19 (Moyise, 2012:71, 72). This indicates that during the time of the writing of the Second Testament books, there seems to be a blurry line in identifying what books should be referred to as Scripture as we do not possess these books either quoted or alluded to in the canon, that were later recognized by the Church.

All these discussions provoke the lingering question, that if the limit of what was termed Scripture (both *ἱερὰ γράμματα* and *γραφὴ*) was not known nor yet determined, why then was the author so determined to raise these writings to a level of authority beyond the scope of other writings or documents by attributing divine origin and scriptural status to them? These only suggest that there was an agenda, an interest at play in this text which has also been on for a while possibly since the Second Temple period and a reflection of this could be seen in most of the books of the whole Second Testament, which is, to elevate certain writings to an authoritative and normative scriptural level and status of relevance. The author of the Pastoral Epistles (probably due to the time of writing and his purpose of writing) only took this a step further as he seems to be incorporating other writings of the Second Testament in his scope of Scripture.

The second factor in the pericope that shows ideological interest at play is the relevant and central status awarded Scripture (both *ἱερὰ γράμματα* and *γραφὴ*) in the text. Unique and unparalleled importance was given to scripture in this passage. The Scripture (*ἱερὰ γράμματα* in this case) was said to be part of the instrument and condition applied to the raising of Timothy, which was responsible for making him different from the others he was contrasted with. In fact, the *ἱερὰ γράμματα* in verse 15 was what made Timothy wise unto salvation according to the passage. Apart from this, *γραφὴ* was also portrayed as the instrument through which anyone who desires to be fitted and qualified for the service of good works in the name of God must be made fit and prepared. This sounded normal, but if *γραφὴ* was not a significant concept to be reckoned with in the First Testament and was a product of the Second Temple period and the early first century, does this then mean that people who lived before there was a Scripture never satisfied God with the works they did? Meanwhile

the Scripture (both *ἱερά γράμματα* and *γραφή*) was virtually a record of their story, history and exploits. Also, if the Scripture was this central, how was belief in God sustained when there was no Scripture? Silver (1990:14) pointed out that Judaism was in existence for over a thousand years with no authorized Scripture, yet it enjoyed the most creative period as most of the illiterate prophets put their emphasis on living traditions rather than on a text. Therefore, if a religion can survive this long without a text called scripture why is there a need then to foist upon a religion this very particular concept of scripture and make it all relevant and central to everything in such a religion if not for the ideological purpose of enacting power? This attempt of making scripture an all-important concept simply unveils a clear agenda of the imposition of a set of writings on the people as relevant and central all the time. A look down the Christian history provides evidence that these ideological strategies were very successful.

Thirdly, in this pericope is the friction, the tension between two groups of people or idea explained by John Gager (1975:82) which is the source of all ideological struggles, as one ideology attempts to overcome, discredit and subdue or annul the other. In the passage, Timothy was portrayed as the good servant of God, who walked in God's way by continuing in the lifestyle taught to him by his parentage, teacher (Paul) and nurtured in the Jewish Scripture. Every other person in the service of God and the Church who had not lived as Timothy did, was categorised as evil and walking on a wrong path. In this way, an agenda, an institutionalisation of power of what the standard godly life was meant to be, was perpetuated and encouraged. The intrareligious and interreligious frictions have often stemmed from such kinds of presuppositions and dichotomies.

Fourthly, the passage introduces a *hapax legomenon*, *θεόπνευστος*. A word, whose presence in the text seems to suggest a tautology and whose absence would not have affected the reading of the text. A reading of the pericope in the absence of *θεόπνευστος* καὶ would still have made perfect sense as the reading would be represented thus: "All Scripture is useful for doctrines, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." This makes complete grammatical sense and also theological sense when one takes into consideration the designation already attributed

to γραφή in the Second Testament. According to Kern Trembath (1987:6) γραφή already indicated a material which came from God. This seeming tautology raises the ideological question of the need to include the word θεόπνευστος into this text by the author. What role does it play in this pericope and what agenda or interest does the author of the text desire to push through with its introduction into the passage? This is especially important because the word θεόπνευστος is a *hapax legomenon* which has its only occurrence here in the Scripture, with no prior or subsequent usage in the Scripture which could have helped understand its meaning and usage. Textual criticism of the passage does not indicate that this was a later addition as there was no omission of the word in any of the available Greek variants. Therefore, one can safely say θεόπνευστος was the word of the author of this epistle. Many have claimed that this word means that the Bible is inspired, but if this is true and of great importance, then why is such a crucial and important word making its first and only appearance in this text – a later Second Testament text? Does this mean the question of inspiration of Scripture was not a question that other biblical authors were interested in? If this be so, then such a mindset could either be due to the fact that biblical authors took for granted that these writings were generally taken as authoritative and originating from God or that they never thought about the question of inspiration at all, and therefore have not at the time made a decision about it since it was not a question anyone was asking. This research has however made reference to the Pastoral Epistles' late dating, and that the author was probably attempting to give identity and credence to a newly formed organization which happens to at that moment in time be separated finally from Judaism and was seeking its own roots and identity. If the author wrote under these conditions, then his coining or borrowing of such a rare word as θεόπνευστος in Greek language must have been one way of attempting to ground the newly formed Church now separated from Judaism, in its own convictions and identity, assuring them that whatever they have now begun to refer to as Scripture is also inspired and God breathed. This also could have influenced the broad usage of γραφή to the extent that it may even refer to a quote by Jesus from one of the Gospels in 1 Timothy 5:18, regarding it too now as Scripture. The author must have suggested that for the newly formed and separated Church from Judaism, the sayings of Jesus form

part of its scripture in the same way the Jewish Scripture does. This understanding is slightly different from what is seen in most of the early Second Testament books, whose authors wrote early in the 1st Century CE.

The way the text was crafted seemed not to have θεόπνευστος as the primary focus in the discussion of Scripture but rather to make ὠφέλιμος into the main thrust of the discussion on Scripture. Interpreters down the ages however, consistently made a great fuss about the word θεόπνευστος in the text as if the passage has as its primary focus the adjective, θεόπνευστος. This is one of the main tenets investigated in the ideological analysis and presuppositions of past interpreters in the next section. Finally, then, this text can be viewed as part of those developments of the ideological power ascribed to Scripture.

4.3.3 Analysis, Presupposition and Interpretation of the Text in History

Wilfred Smith (1993:16) in a bid to give a full understanding of scripture and the role it has played in history was of the view that it would be extremely difficult, if at all possible, to discuss scripture and give a historical construction of the concept of scripture without recognising the diversity of fears, feelings, outlooks, concerns and aspirations people have poured and imposed on the text. This dilemma has not only been limited to the formation of these texts alone but covers even the history of their subsequent interpretations to date.

Interpreters in history have often used this pericope of 2 Timothy 3:16 as the prooftext for their doctrine of inspiration of the Christian Scripture. The likes of Karl Barth saw the use of θεόπνευστος in this context to give more than just a piece on the divine origin of Christian Scripture but equates the use of Scripture to be fully God's own words (Runra, 1962:155-156). Others have attempted to foist upon this passage the doctrine of inerrancy of Scripture, which was sharply criticized by James Barr (1984:5) as he accused some scholars of using the passage in a bid to prove ideas of inerrancy and infallibility which the passage has nothing to do with or contribute to. But this has been the manner of the history of interpretation as scholars, churchmen and -women

have tried to use the text to ascribe more power and centrality to use of Scripture in Christendom.

Those who made the passage into a proof-text for the doctrine of inspiration portrayed inspiration as the purpose of the pericope. However, the exegesis and ideological analysis of the text have both proven that the adjective θεόπνευστος is not the focus of the text but rather the adjective ὠφέλιμος. Therefore, such portrayal and interpretation which makes θεόπνευστος the main thrust and purpose of the passage is simply another form of interpretive ideological constraint placed on the text in the course of the history of interpretation.

Another major ideological presupposition foisted on the passage in the history of its interpretation is the popularised interpretation in Christendom which takes for granted the difference between the Christian Bible and the scripture referred to in this text. James Barr (1984:4) explained how some modern interpreters and readers of this passage have taken the scripture mentioned here as referring to the Bible in its present form, whether of the Protestant 66 books-Bible or the Catholic and Orthodox Bibles which have other books in excess of these 66 books. Therefore, the adjective θεόπνευστος cannot be delimited to the 66 books of the Protestant Bible but using the term θεόπνευστος, it denotes the scripture in which the original recipient(s) of the letter were trained in. As was pointed out earlier, this could include books written but not present in the present authorized canon of the church and there is the possibility that it might also exclude some of the books/writings present in the current Church's canon of scripture. At this point one can conclusively agree that an effort to replace the scripture in this passage with our current Bible can become simply a ploy to give more power to another ideology of Scripture. The Bible and the Scripture should therefore be kept separate because the author of 2 Timothy seems to have a specific not generalised set of writings at heart.

Lastly, in the history of ideological presuppositions, analysis and interpretation foisted on this particular passage is, the Scripture gradually attained a status of authority through centuries of interpreting this passage, until it is presently seen as the standard and normative tool through which the lives and moral of people and communities are

judged. Interpreters down the centuries have also extended the use of this text to portray the Scripture as the dominating criterion to determine the nature and extent of the Christian faith (Barr, 1984:3). This opinion received one of its greatest boosts during the Reformation, as the reformers established it and made it rigid. Initially the Roman Catholic Church in the Middle Ages before the Reformation placed Scripture and tradition at the same level of authority possibly because their perception of Scripture was not that of a fixed entity of unequalled power and ultimate authority. The Roman Catholic claimed that Scripture and ecclesiastical tradition were two tributaries of one repository of divine revelation (Horton, 2006:83). This perception of Scripture did not remain the same after the Reformation era. According to Michael Horton (2006:83) the introduction of *sola scriptura* by the Reformers which was interpreted as scripture alone and as the master over tradition was not limited in its mastery over tradition alone but was also somehow seen as antithetical to it. At the heart of the Reformation concern over Scripture was the confidence that the Scripture was not just another noble and enlightened word spoken by humanity. Therefore, neither the reformers nor their Protestant scholastic successors saw Scripture as book of timeless truth, nor a body of mere propositions to be given assent to rather they viewed the Scripture as authoritative because it was God's own "sermon" (Horton, 20006:84-85). This empowering ideology of Scripture whose seed was sown on the pages of the Second Testament several centuries earlier with passages such as 2 Timothy 3:16, became full blown at this time. It eventually led to the Westminster Confession (1991:1-10) which states, "The supreme Judge, by which all controversies of religion are to be determined and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits are to be examined and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in Scripture." This quotation at a superficial level seems to give the Holy Spirit a role in determining those matters of contention mentioned but in fact a careful reading of this confession of faith reveals that such power was bestowed on the scriptures. Therefore, this confession aided in making Scripture the rule of faith, which as stated in chapter two of this work, meant that the Scripture was granted a position of unique authority over both the Church and individuals. The effect of what the Reformers achieved in pushing further the ideology

of Scripture was not limited to Protestants only but it also affected Modern Catholicism in the form of the counter-Reformation as seen in the Council of Trent, where the first agenda item was Scripture, its canonicity and its relation to tradition (Prudlo, 2006:142).

4.3.4 Unmasking the Ideological Interests of the Passage regarding Scripture

2 Peter 1:20-21 and 2 Timothy 3:16 seem to be the main scripture passages in the Second Testament that deal specifically with the phenomenon of what would be called Scripture today, especially with matters pertaining to the inspiration of Scripture. On a more detailed note, while the Second Peter passage was more focused on prophecy, the Second Timothy passage interestingly focuses on Scripture. Since Vernon Robbins (1996b:96) advocated that the starting point when working on the ideological texture of a text is often with people especially the reader, therefore it is important to state here that the researcher was groomed in the evangelical traditions which shares many of the convictions of Fundamentalism when it comes to Scripture and beliefs about its inspiration. But the researcher for long has had questions on the veracity of the things believed and proclaimed in this tradition as they were often pronounced with a tone of finality in the expectation of full compliance while claiming Scriptures as the basis for such conclusions. All along his being an evangelical did not surpass nor interfere with his commitment and determination to finding out the truth, no matter how awful the outcome may be. The sincerity and commitment to this position, is depicted throughout this thesis. The concept of Scripture as seen in the Second Testament and later in the pericope under consideration is still being formed both in the Jewish and Christian traditions at the point in history. Interestingly the concept of Scripture was already being empowered even when the process of formation was still ongoing. This determination by the author of the Pastoral Epistles to elevate and term writings whose limit and scope were not yet determined as Scripture was what triggered the ideological consideration and examination of the passage. This emerging ideology at that point in time will be discussed in the three standpoints below.

4.3.4.1 What was Jesus' Relationship to Scripture?

Prior to this point, it has been established that the word γραφή does not enjoy the status it enjoyed during the time of Jesus and during the writing of the Second Testament in the previous document – the First Testament. The question now is how relevant and central was the scripture during the time of Jesus and that of the writers of the Second Testament? This inquiry is aimed at establishing how the idea of Scripture functioned, keeping in mind that it probably came into being during the Second Temple period, and how this relatively recent development conjured up ideological interest in the sanctifying and empowering of these writings.

Jesus and the Second Testament writers evidently referred numerous times to the Jewish Scripture, and the formation of some of the teachings of the Church was done with reference to the Jewish Scripture. This is often referred to as Christianity inheriting a portion of its Scripture from Judaism (Gamble, 1985:37) although the limit or content of the writings referred to as Scripture at this time in history remains unknown, uncertain and to date, lost in controversies. Although this in the very least suggests that the concept of a Scripture was in existence. A concept whose understanding differs from the way γραφή was used in the First Testament, as the term γραφή was basically relegated to mean merely a writing or a document in the First Testament and has not yet assumed the technical term for Scripture. In the Second Testament, however, it is already used as reference to sacred Scripture. In the words of Daniel Silver (1990:28), "Unlike Moses, Jesus knew what a Scripture was the *Sefer Torah* and the Prophets had become Scripture before his time—and he referred to ideas he had heard from these books. Yet he showed no eagerness to have his own teachings written down and certainly did not expect that later generations would consider his every word sacred, scriptural". The first part of this quote further supports the idea of the existence of a Scripture and revealed in the contrast with Moses that the concept of Scripture has not been a perpetual phenomenon. Further reference would be made to the second part of this quote later.

The availability of Scripture in Jesus' time provides ample opportunity to consider Jesus' relationship to the Jewish Scripture and view the progression of the ideology of

Scripture in comparison to what it was in the Pastoral Epistles. Jesus' estimation of Scripture was fully expressed in Matthew 5:17-18 where he was quoted as saying it was not his intention to abolish the Law and the Prophets (a reference to the Jewish Scripture although probably in the uncompleted form at this time as the 'Writings' were not added) but to fulfil it. This quotation is often celebrated as a passage proving the centrality, permanence, and fixed nature of the scripture. A careful look at this statement however, suggests the possibility that Jesus as an individual person at this time in history was portrayed as someone who had the power to abrogate the Law and the Prophets. The possibility of such a power and authority would have been considered impossible in the contemporary time – a possibility of a man singularly claiming he could abolish Scripture - is not probable in the contemporary time especially considering the level of authority accorded to the Scripture in the present time. This becomes more serious especially when one considers that the audience for this particular speech of the Sermon on the Mount seem to be the crowd of Jews who came to him and who at the time could only have perceived him as a prophet but not as Christ nor as a deity. This further affirms that though the Scripture was already becoming authoritative at this point in time, they nevertheless seem not to have reached the unchallenged status they now possessed. Barr (1984:8-9) also corroborated this while referring to Jesus' use of Scripture. He argued that Jesus did not refer to the law and the prophets as constituting the absolute and final "criterion or source for his teaching" as most references were made to the Jewish Scripture either to show a fulfilment of prophecies or used in a discussion or argument or at times as simply an analogy. Little space or time was given to the actual interpretation of the text of the First Testament by Jesus. Jesus rather went ahead to show that he intends to go beyond the natural meaning and limits prescribed by those documents as the Sermon on the Mount is commonly known for its "you have heard... but I say to you..." statements.

Therefore, Jesus' teachings were not in principle the interpretation of the Jewish Scripture although he acknowledged them as authoritative and often referred to them, but his teachings were of a class of their own. He took the liberty to go beyond the Jewish Scripture and this was not limited to him alone as the stories of his interaction

and criticism of the Jewish religious leaders and teachers revealed. The Jewish teachers and leaders while upholding the authority of the Scriptures seem to be doing the same thing as he was doing, by holding on to their own traditions which they equate with Scriptures and demand obedience to them. This act by the Jewish leaders was portrayed by the writers of the Gospels as evil and negative while Jesus' analogous act was portrayed as awesome and a new thing and the authors of the Gospels even acclaimed that the crowd were often amazed and wondered at this teaching as he taught as someone who has authority not like the scribes and the Pharisees. This only further reveals more how ideological interests and presuppositions are often the product of conflicts and frictions.

4.3.4.2 Did the Scripture Writers Intend to Write Scripture?

The author of 2 Timothy attempted to give validation to Scripture but was he aware his writings will become part of the Scripture he was attempting to validate? This topic of discussion could degenerate into endless speculation, but the researcher attempts to stay focused and brief as much as possible in deliberating on this.

Starting with Jesus, if the claim to divinity and foreknowledge of events attributed theologically to Jesus is for a moment downplayed or had eyes taken off it, then one can confidently agree with Barr (1984:18) that there is no evidence in the Gospels that Jesus wanted his followers to create a sequel of literature to the Jewish Scripture. This supports the second part of Daniel Silver's position quoted above (1990:28), where he argued that Jesus never seems eager or expected his teachings and every one of his words to be written down and given scriptural status. He further stated that some of the authors of the Second Testament would be shocked to see their private letters and some of their correspondence with churches attributed to as Scripture by later generations. If this is true about Jesus and the Second Testament writers, then it becomes extremely important as it raises two major issues.

One, if Jesus was not intending to write scripture nor intended his words to be written down as part of scripture, then his relationship with the Jewish Scripture (where he went beyond it) could not be seen as an attempt to add to Scripture as it has been

popularised over the centuries. Jesus' recorded remarks rather were his normal way to relate to the documents called Scripture. He held the Jewish Scripture as authoritative but not the limit nor the final word nor the criterion to judge all things as he could be seen to bring a level of flexibility into its usage. A second issue that emerges is that, if the authors of Scripture did not have the intention of their writings to become Scripture and possibly were unaware that there was a θεόπνευστος dimension involved in their writings, who then were the powerful people who made these words into Scripture and a rule for all? Ideologically speaking in a way, those who made these writings authoritative as Scripture therefore seem to have more power than the actual authors of these writings. The power to recognize them as Scripture also seem not to be inherent in these writings as often claimed but rather in the perception of the reader who made them so. Silver similarly noted (1990:28) that a consideration and comparison between most of the texts that are now regarded as Scripture and those that were written at the time in question but not accepted (some were earlier accepted and later excluded from the canon) seem to be a little different if at all. The conclusion is that it seems it is the reader of these documents, and in this case, the author of 2 Timothy (especially with his expansionist ideas of γραφή) who portrays them as θεόπνευστος. Therefore in considering how these ideas contributed to the ideological notions vested in scripture, the researcher would like to reinforce the words of Daniel Silver (1990:30) when he wrote, "God did not determine what is scripture; the community did."

4.3.4.3 The Second Century CE Factor

This research already proposed that the letter of 2 Timothy has a 2nd century CE authorship and origins. As earlier stated, one could claim with a level of certainty that while the author of the Pastoral Epistles was making his input on scripture including his bid to expand their coverage or scope as understood from the exegesis of the text, he did not write to create Scripture nor is it likely that he believed his writings would become part of Scripture. Therefore, he must have only thought he was providing validity to the extant Scripture, both Jewish Scripture and the other emerging literature of his time being seen as authoritative and possibly scriptural, in the second century

CE. This argument regarding the setting and understanding of scripture in the early second century CE a time which coincides with the approximate time of writing of the Pastoral Epistles, was carried further along by Zahn, Harnack, and Sundberg (Barton: 1997:3).

In the discussions that ensued over the works of Zahn, Harnack and Sundberg; John Barton (1997:3-26) established that although they differed on many issues and in their various outcomes, they all agreed on the point that as early as the late first century CE and early second century CE there were already voluminous references made by the early Apostolic Fathers to some of the writings which were later seen and recognised as Scriptures of the Second Testament. These references to Second Testament materials were being quoted in a similar manner to the way that the Jewish Scriptures were quoted. They were already seen as authoritative although not yet likely seen as Scripture. A. C. Sundberg (1976:141) in arguing for a distinction between Scripture and canon, he defined Scripture as books accepted by a particular community as holy and authoritative, while canon is a list of books which have the status of Scripture. He therefore agreed that some of those books listed in the Second Testament had become Scripture at this early time but had not yet been a canon. Harnack (1925:xvi) helped further elaborate on this when he wrote that what was counted as inspired in the first century CE was everything a Christian wrote for edification. If this is true, then it sheds further light on the beliefs and opinion of the author of the Pastoral Epistles' social, cultural and religious orientation in the early second century CE. This will also explain why the author of these letters would on the occasions of his reference to Scripture seem to have a broader and wider view which seems to include certain books of the Second Testament probably those books Barton (1997:25-26) refers to as the "core of the New Testament", which was a reference to the Gospels and early Pauline letters.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The concept of Scripture has been shrouded in power plays of various kinds, as there are noticeable interests at work pertaining to these particular texts, over the centuries of interpretation. Whenever one wonders how the Scriptures became so powerful and authoritative, one must acknowledge the role that passages such as 2 Timothy 3:14-17 played – and plays – and contributed to the power struggle and the power the Scripture gathered. So also, one must recognise the key role consistent interpretation favouring the ideology of Scripture over the millennia has played. The Scripture initially was not this powerful nor was it supposed to be the determinant of everything Christian and moral. However, the ideology depicted in the text of 2 Timothy 3:14-17 and its subsequent interpretation which is a reflection of power interests of certain individuals and the Church, contributed immensely to what has now emerged and globally acclaimed as the “Holy Scripture” with all its power and sacredness.

CHAPTER 5

ΘΕΟΠΝΕΥΣΤΟΣ AND ITS CONTEMPORARY IMPLICATIONS FOR THE CHRISTIAN SCRIPTURE

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Earlier chapters of this work have endeavoured to delineate how Scripture has been conceived in relation to the specific text under consideration namely 2 Timothy 3:14-17. Furthermore, previous chapters endeavoured to situate the discussion historically, not only regarding the text itself but also in relation to the history of its interpretation and the discourse that ensued (partly) in relation to the text, about Scripture and inspiration. Certain discoveries and further insights were gained as a result of these investigations; therefore, the focus of this chapter is to see what these insights mean for the contemporary understanding of Scripture especially as it has to do with scriptural inspiration and authority. This chapter, then, will briefly investigate how the contemporary relationship is perceived between 2 Tim 3:14-17 and the Christian scriptures.

In other words, chapter 3 and 4 focussed on discussing the text of the Scripture in the pericope under discussion here, as attempts were made to understand the text using the historical-grammatical and the ideological texture methods to make sense of the argument presented by the writer of the Pastoral Epistles. Linking up with these earlier arguments, the present chapter aims to address the implication of the term θεόπνευστος in the text as it relates to the concept of Scripture, authority of Scripture, recognition of Scripture, the contemporary Bible and its place in the contemporary time

5.2 ΘΕΟΠΝΕΥΣΤΟΣ AND SCRIPTURE

In the bid to understand the relationship between θεόπνευστος and Scripture, a prior understanding of the use of models by the church from its early existence throughout history is needed. Just as John Goldingay (1994:7) argued that the church and its

scholars made use of “models” they developed to help in understanding doctrines, but over time the church’s views have been held captive by the picture of these concepts or models. The church’s scholarship felt the need to continuously hold to these concepts or models and to even defend them. One such model is the concept of Scripture, with revelation, inspiration, and authority all included. A model is therefore similar to a metaphor as it is a construct which helps in the course of understanding certain aspects of the realities that one aims to understand by providing a form of comparison to the object one seeks to understand (Goldingay, 1994:7).

Goldingay was correct on this note, because words or terms such as “authority”, “revelation”, or “inspiration” are concepts used to denote certain qualities of scripture in scholarship but the scripture never generally and solely use them nor define them nor did the scripture wholly take any of this form. An example especially with regards to the model or concept of inspiration is the word θεόπνευστος, having just a single occurrence in the Second Testament, and this singular occurrence is in a later biblical record – a writing whose date and authorship is embedded in controversies. There seems to be no definite, full comprehension of what it means or what it stands for and therefore have been variously translated as “given by inspiration of God” (KJV) or “God-breathed” (NIV). The problem with such models is that over long centuries of interpreting scriptures and in an attempt to consciously defend or sometimes unconsciously defend these models for scriptures, the scriptural texts become overstretched. This master’s research already suggested how the doctrine of inerrancy of scripture was foisted on a passage such as 2 Timothy 3:16 which has almost nothing to contribute in establishing such notions. Also, ideologically, the concept of inspiration issuing forth from the same passage has been overstretched as theologians increasingly attempted to derive the modality of inspiration from such a passage.

This research, however, perceives models as human constructs. The researcher asserts that several of these theological terms already had connotations and presuppositions attached to them, accumulated through the long history of interpretation or reference, the word had. Therefore, in line with Paul Ricoeur’s submission (1981:90-91) “...the analysis of religious discourse ought not to begin with

the level of theological assertions”, this work seeks to understand those biblical terms in their context, away from the biases attached to them over the centuries. Also, as Achtemeier (1980:18) puts it, both conservatives and liberals formulate their own alien constructs of the scriptures when doing their exegetical work.

5.2.1 Approaches of Understanding Inspiration

Although doctrinal issues are beyond the purview of this research, the use of models by the church and her theologians in understanding inspiration has brought about two different approaches of perceiving the subject of inspiration among those who believe the doctrine. They are termed by Kern Robert Trembath (1987:8) as the deductive approach and inductive approach.

Evangelical fundamentalism believes inspiration is unique to Bible writers and that it stopped at the close of the biblical period. Debates about how this conclusion was arrived at, continues to be shallow, since the author of the Pastoral Epistles in 2 Timothy 3 most likely never had the Pastoral Epistles in mind as part of the “Scripture” the text refers to. It has in any case also been suggested that most of the Bible books’ writers were unaware that they were writing Scriptures, especially writers of the Second Testament and potentially a great number of the authors of the First Testament books. Even writers pseudepigrapha books in all probability did not attempt to make their writings part of the canon and thereby becoming Scripture. To insinuate such would allude to the fact that they were aware that there was a canon. Yet this could not be true neither possible as the idea of canon and the debates about it largely arose in the fourth century CE. Therefore, it suggests that the authors of most of the pseudepigrapha were aspiring to have their books recognized and read in the synagogues and early churches as in the case of the Second Testament. As a result, the cessation of the Bible time (if there is anything as such) claimed by the fundamentalists does not necessarily point to the close of the canon. Instead variations in canon suggest that each community chose its scriptures, for example, the Samaritans, the Jews, the Catholic and, the Protestants.

Theologians who believe in the inspiration of the Scripture but uses the deductive approach tend to see their claims of divine origination of Scripture as inviolable. More importantly, still, such claims are not deduced from the reading of the Scriptures, and rather resemble claims whose origins are founded in the Church's beliefs about scripture rather than the testimony of Scripture. Scholars, such as C. Hodge, B.B Warfield, J. Montgomery, and E.J Camell hold such views (Trembath, 1987:8-21). The rigor and vigour exerted by these scholars on the insistence of the divine origination of the Bible portray, or even betray, their work as polemical and suspicious of power plays or a near desperation to authenticate the church's position on the Scripture.

The inductivist approach, however, took inspiration to mean an act of human beings which sees an external element as its source of enhancement and enlightenment. The deductivists in the effort to find this external force took it to be God and from such concluded their claims of the divine influence as source of the Scripture. In contrast, the inductivists put the focus on the familiar agent, that is, the person whose experience of God is said to be inspired (Trembath, 1987:47-53). Augustus Strong (1907:201), one of the early advocates of this approach in the twentieth century wrote, "the chief proof of inspiration...must always be found in the internal characteristics of the scriptures themselves, as these are disclosed to the sincere inquirer by the Holy Spirit". Other proponents of this approach include Bernard Ramm, and William Abraham.

These are the interpretations garnered and systematized by systematic theologians to understand and explain the concept of biblical inspiration. Hence, this work, being a work in biblical studies, attempts to constitute its own understanding of inspiration from the text, especially the insights from the text of 2 Timothy 3:14-17, with the primary focus on the word θεόπνευστος.

5.2.2 θεόπνευστος: An Understanding

This section is divided into three in its approach to understand the usage and the relevance of the word, θεόπνευστος. First, this section evaluates the linguistic nature of the term, and then secondly, the manner of its use in 2 Timothy 3:14-17, and lastly an analogy for understanding its use.

θεόπνευστος is a *hapax legomenon* and therefore not a regular biblical Greek term. Rather, it was found in the philosophic-religious vocabulary of classical Greece and of Hellenism (Vawter, 1972:8-9). It is said to be used for a state where a spirit alien to a body, took possession of it and such a body or person speaks like a divinized person (Vawter, 1972:9). Although rarely used in classical Greek prior to its usage by the author of the Pastoral Epistles, yet it is a term the author borrowed from Hellenism. Ceslas Spicq (1994:195) also advocated this idea when he wrote about “underlying this theological concept ... the tragic and lyric poets are considered to have written under inspiration from the gods, that they are their spokesmen addressing their fellow citizens in the name of divinity”. Despite this Hellenistic perspective, early Christianity has often been found capable of using known terms but in a new way and with a different conception from its original usage. As a result, the word’s original meaning changed, there is a probability of this being the case with the use of θεόπνευστος. When it comes to biblical understanding of words and concepts especially in early Christianity, one has often come to learn that the assimilation of a language does not necessarily mean the assimilation of the idea it formerly or initially portrays in its original context from where such term or concept was borrowed. The above stated proposition is reasonable since the author of the Pastoral Epistles must have had this understanding. As his proximity to events in early Christianity must have made him aware that the Hebrew Scripture was not given as a result of frenzy ecstasy of the prophets or writers. However, some of them passed through several acts of redaction, others came from primary sources (known as pre-text) for example, the books of Chronicles used materials from the books of Kings in its composition; the Synoptic Gospels used materials from Q; Luke and Mathew probably used Mark, whereas the book of Kings used data from the “annals of the kings”. This, therefore, does not help

with the understanding of the term θεόπνευστος, but it instead raises further questions on which of these texts (pre-text, final text, and post-text) θεόπνευστος is to be seen to qualify. This therefore positions this research to create a greater dependence on the context of the text of the pericope for the understanding and usage of the word. Ramm (1961:59) argues also that the idea of inspiration is concursive, in other words, the writers of Scripture were unaware of a divine afflatus but rather were moved by the Holy Spirit. Although θεόπνευστος is a term used in the later and marginal Second Testament writings, the idea runs through the entire Bible, as it is common to assert in the First Testament congruent examples such as Moses receiving the laws from the Lord, and the prophets starting their oracles with the prefix “thus says the Lord”. However, this is not the case with the entire First Testament and such phrases seem to disappear in the Second Testament. Instead the authors of the Second Testament made Jesus the centre of their works. Despite these noticeable differences between the modes of reception of these testaments, inspiration has been attributed to both writings on the either side of the testaments.

The context of 2 Timothy 3:14-17 could be viewed as addressing the practical and functional nature of Scripture. The verses preceding the pericope discussed the godless situation associated with the end times and denounces false teachers and believers. In the progression of the chapter, one could notice a switch in tone as the author addresses the recipient of the letter as he distinguishes between him and the false teachers and believers. The author then attributes the difference noticed in the recipient as a result of the influence the recipient’s parentage and at the same time as the work of the Jewish Scripture in which he was groomed. Paul Achtemeier (1999:93) was in support of this as he emphasizes the function and utility of Scripture when he wrote, “the very ambiguity of the language however, makes one wonder whether the author really intended to make a statement about the inspiration of Scripture at all. It is more likely that the intention is to emphasize the continuing utility of Scripture for religious purposes, even after one has learned the rudiments of the faith from it, a point the context also supports.” The use of καὶ as a paratactical conjunction linking verses 14 and 15 together portrays that the approved lifestyle of the recipient is a product of the knowledge gained from both the people who has influence on him and

the Scripture (Hebrew Scripture). The author therefore further elaborated on the practical function of the Scripture (now γραφή) in verses 16 as he made it known that the Scripture is inspired, useful, can teach, correct, rebuke and train. All these denote uses of Scripture, the question however is; could it be that the author is giving a report of what Scripture has been seen capable of over the period of time and therefore projecting them as good for continual usage in such like manner? Or is the author attempting to give new status to Scripture? This research is of the view that the former is the more likely option. The author in the pericope is reviewing the functional nature of the scripture (he could not have imagined that his own present writing will later be given scriptural status) with his recipient in order to highlight the importance of those writings. The author is not necessarily attempting to formulate a doctrine of Scripture or give a command regarding Scripture. This is probably responsible for what several scholars noted and have written about θεόπνευστος, that according to the grammatical construction it is not the most significant word in verse 16 but the other adjective ὠφέλιμος is.

In other words, the use of θεόπνευστος in this context was to practically reveal and review the potency of Scripture in its ability to transform a life. Thus, the author was not just categorizing certain writings by qualifying them as “God breathed”. His intent, rather, seems to be to report the special influence certain text had and why they should be Scripture. And this cannot be disputed on the grounds of the verbal tense since the only copular verb used was not originally in the text but was a supplement to aid meaning and smooth reading. Therefore, θεόπνευστος in the passage is not a categorical, deciding and defining statement with the initial intention to designate certain writings as Scripture (although this was what was finally achieved) but a reflection of what Scripture does as it helps and transforms people, believers especially, to be edified in God. It signified a function which then led to categorization, and not the other way round – as it has been popularly understood.

This eventually leads to the analogy given by William J. Abraham (1981:37) who initially stated the need to differentiate inspiration from other divine activities as he wrote, “any responsible and coherent account of inspiration must at least begin with

the possibility that there is as much difference between divine inspiration and divine speaking....it must consider as a live option that divine inspiration is a basic act or activity of God that is not reducible to other divine acts or activity.” He therefore used the inspiring relationship between a teacher and the students to argue for an understanding of the concept of divine inspiration. He illustrated that, just as each student in such a class taught by the same teacher is inspired by the teacher but to different levels of inspiration and probably in different directions, so it is also with the divine inspiration of Scripture. According to him for the Scripture to be inspired, it must have already shown evidence in the community to the effect that it is inspiring, the same way as a teacher who has not inspired anyone cannot be said to be inspiring. Scripture is said to be inspired by the nature of influence it has had on people (community). This is further explained in the negotiation and process most of these writings went through before they were eventually given scriptural status and later canonized. This point of view is made clearer only if a relational concept of Scripture is upheld. Thus the term “inspired” or “God breathed” does not necessarily need to connote God speaking verbatim thereby making the understanding of Scripture as God’s word but rather it helped to see the text of Scripture an avenue to encounter God. So it is only within a transformed community (a transformation which must have been mediated by Scripture) that inspiration of Scripture could be discerned. This was further buttressed by Trembath (1987:87) when he asserted that, “all acts of inspiration are retrospectively realized.” The importance of θεόπνευστος is therefore seen in the work it does (or better still the work the writings do) and not necessarily as an argument about the source of the writings as originating from God. Inspiration, thus, is a conclusion reached by human beings. The inspiration of Scripture is revealed in transformed lives and communities. It could therefore be concluded that it was the Church’s desire and the desire of her scholars for authority that metamorphosized the passage of 2 Timothy 3:16-17 to a passage for validation of her authority.

5.3 SCRIPTURE AND AUTHORITY

The relationship between the duo, scripture and authority has endured for centuries. Peter Jensen (2016:479) refers to scripture as the house of authority while Farley and Hooge (2005:76) had earlier stated that scripture as the house of authority “has collapsed despite the fact that many people still try to live in it. Some retain title to it actually without living there; others are antiquarians or renovators, attempting in one way or another to salvage it; still others have abandoned it for new quarters or no quarters at all”. These statements denote the intricate relationship between scripture and authority even up to the contemporary time. Many tend to see the scriptures as authoritative but what type of authority should be accorded scripture especially in a time when the concept of authority is a suspect and when all forms of authority are being critically evaluated. Smith (1993:16-7) in examining the relevance of scripture, noted that it has played a significant role in history, and this role was not just limited to awakening the moral sensibility and also the intellectual vision of individuals or corporate bodies but “in law, family relations, literature, art, economic patterns, social and otherwise.” Yet that the concept of scripture is understood as authoritative is marked by words such as “authority” or “authoritative”, ubiquitously used to qualify it throughout most of human history.

In the bid to understand what type of authority the scripture possesses, Michael Satlow (2014:3-4) spelt out three types of authority that can possibly be attributed to the scripture and they are the normative authority, the literary authority, and the oracular authority. The normative authority dictates behaviour and Satlow believes the scripture in antiquity does not have normative authority for both Jews and Christians as knowledge of scripture is not common due to the limited manuscripts. Therefore, how could the people of the first century CE turn to it for practical guidance. Literary authority of scripture resides in the fact that scriptures were written mainly for the scribes and therefore the scribes often make them models by authoritatively referring to them in newer texts. The oracular authority, Satlow refers to as the commonest authority in antiquity and this type of authority is associated with the biblical authority as it speaks of authority given to a message that speaks of the future and divine realm.

Satlow (2014:3) however claimed that irrespective of the type of authority associated with scripture, it is the receiving communities that “created, read, and copied these ancient texts” who are also responsible for giving these texts their authority.

This must have accounted for the reason why in the first 1500 years of the history of the Church the scripture did not seem to exercise an authority independent of ecclesiastical tradition, as the Roman Catholic Church maintained a balance between tradition of the Church and the scripture (Harrison 1998:94). At this period in history even the interpretation of the Scriptures was fully vested in the authority of the Church’s council. The interpretation of the Fathers and the Church was strictly held to, until reformers such as Luther and others moved the authority of the Scripture above that of the magisterium of the Church. It was then that “Christianity came to be regarded by the Protestant reformers as a religion whose essence was most faithfully represented in a canon of ancient texts” (Harrison, 1998:95). Although the Reformation could be perceived as a movement which stood against the authority of the institution and replaced it with that of the Scripture, the multiplicity of interpretations which this new freedom made possible would eventually undermine the authority of the scripture it attempts to propagate.

Jack B. Rodgers (1983:223) sees an interrelationship between authority of the scripture and the modern claim and understanding of the infallibility of scripture, especially among those who adhere to such claims. He however stated that it is historically irresponsible for anyone to argue that the understanding of the authority of the scripture in the centuries of the Church’s existence entails the scientific and historical modern concept of infallibility that is common today. In taking further the discussion on infallibility of scripture which scholars have made closely associated with its authority, Williams Countryman (1994:2-15) is of the view that scripture is not only fallible in reporting historical and scientific matters but that sometimes it contradicts itself in reporting theological matters as well. Apart from these, he found some passages of scripture also morally repugnant. It could be deduced from his writing that he considered any normative authority for scripture weakened by the horror stories it contained in both of its Testaments. The Second Testament was although

less bloody than the First Testament, yet it has to account for the passiveness and indifference with which it addresses the issues of slavery and the patriarchal silencing of women on its pages. Kenton Sparks (2012:38) while identifying certain as “texts of terror”¹² in the scripture argued that the problem of scripture can be attributed to three related cause; human finiteness, culture, and human fallenness. Countryman (1994:16) therefore, concluded that any view that awards scripture normative authority in its use is due to extrinsic ignorance as people come to scripture with unexamined and preconceived notions about scripture, notions which are absorbed from the environment, Church community, media, evangelists, popular devotional literature and so forth. Thus, it was the modern time which turned scripture to something it has never been before – a standard for all theology and ethics which all Christian teachings must be made compatible to, validated and proven by. “This kind of proof-texting results in an approach to Scripture which at its worst is legalistic in the extreme” (Countryman, 1994:19). This kind of extensive proof-texting of scripture could be traced to the Reformation especially to the Calvinist traditions where strenuous efforts were made “to tie their theology more closely to the letters of Scripture; and the enormous influence of this tradition on English speaking Churches has meant that, in our culture there is a certain feeling that in religion everything ought to be proven by reference to the Bible, preferably with chapter and verse” (Countryman, 1994:18).

Authority as applied to scripture has continued to be a divisive issue with offshoots of varied opinions. Some viewed it as to be strictly followed in a legalist way, others considered it as the essential nature of scripture. Yet the authority of the scripture has over the years been consistently linked to divine origination of Scripture. This has spilt the debate about the uses of scripture further. Kenton Sparks (2012:6) deliberating on the Christian use of scripture came up with three broad groups of Christians. The first are the very conservative ones – who tends to insist on the rigid and simple application of scripture, which eventually robs the scripture of its theological vitality. The second are the very liberal Christians, who through modern and post-modern insights have

¹² A term originally used by Phyllis Trible (*Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Reading of Biblical Narratives*. London: SCM Press) to describe horrific passages where slaughter of many cities and where crimes of genocide were committed at the behest of God in the Christian Scripture.

come to undermine scripture and see it as unworthy of even practical theological use. And lastly, the third group, he called the Moderates or Post-Liberals. They are described as those who “are labouring to take Scripture seriously while admitting that doing theology is far more complicated than simply quoting the Bible”. Francis Borchart (2015:182-183) in a survey of authoritative literature which is significantly made up of scripture, deduced from the findings that it is the capacity to influence belief, action and opinion that seem to give such literature authority. In the investigations into the authoritative writings of the 2nd century BCE and the references these 2nd century BCE writings made to earlier literature, he observed that it was divine origination and revelation, accurate history and a poise towards a good and lawful living that characterize these authoritative writings. But most importantly according to Zahn (2011:99) authority is seen practically as a matter of reception, that is, it is a community or audience that chooses to grant authority to a text or to an individual.

A further look at Jesus and Second Testament authors’ treatment of the Jewish Scripture suggests the kind of authority they felt those writings possessed. Achtemeier (1980:83) commented that the way Jesus and the Second Testament authors’ made use of the Jewish Scripture suggests that those writings were not unalterable especially in their texts, because the biblical authors tend to make use of their traditions or sources with great freedom. Although it is true that the Second Testament authors have a high view and reverence for the Jewish scriptures just as their Jewish contemporaries did, they did not however feel bound by them literally. This could be seen in Jesus’ freedom in rephrasing, contradicting its commands or even at times ignoring parts of the law (Matt. 5:21-45; Mk. 10:2-9; Mk 7:14-19; Matt. 5:38 cf. Lev. 24:20). He also allowed and encouraged his disciples by action to do the same (Lk. 6:1-5; Luke 5:33-38). Also Paul’s freedom and willingness in his writings in playing scripture against scripture (Gal. 3:11-12) or even quote and apply the Jewish scriptures, adapting them in a way to suit his own argument which at times are very different from the original context, that reveals a disregard for the actual, literal letters of the Jewish scripture, as in most cases the message of the referenced texts is harnessed to witness to Christ. Conservative scholars in instances such as these have been guilty of the same offence they have often accused liberal or critical scholars of,

as they always attempt to find constructs to superimpose on such texts just in a bid to show that scriptures are not at a variance with themselves. Therefore, it could be opined that the fixed nature of what is found in a scriptural text is not absolutely about the particular literal text of scripture but how it is interpreted and used. Truly this work will like to submit that the word of God is encountered in scripture and that scripture or Bible is a community's testimony to God and his works.

5.4 CONCLUDING THOUGHTS: A PROPOSAL

As the arguments of this research converges, one is left to ponder the question: in the light of these insights gained, what then is the Christian Scripture and what is the use or role to be assigned to the Christian Scripture? Of what value are these texts for the generality of the population and the people of the Christian faith? It ought to be reinforced at this point of the research, that the Christian Scriptures otherwise known as the Bible in the contemporary time – which definitely is not the same in content and scope as the one the author of the Pastoral Epistles referenced in 2 Timothy 3:15,16, though similar to other books which were printed and published – had a unique history, being an ancient text which was handwritten and copied by hand for almost a millennium. It is also different from other books with the special place it enjoys among the Classics, including the likes of Homer, Shakespeare, most especially as it has been treated and handled reverently with respect over the centuries. It was said to have been regarded as absolute and of central importance and treated as if neglect of it would spell doom and disaster for Christianity in the years after the second world war (Barr, 1973:1). Scripture was later the uniting tool for Christianity and was given a central place with the belief that the more the church grew closer to the Scripture, the more they are likely to grow closer to each other.

It is however difficult to defend the subjective position which views Scripture as originating from God as there is no criterion on which such claims could be evaluated or anchored except the claim of Scripture itself and of people who believe in it. Also, the presence of other scriptures from other religious traditions which are different in

content and beliefs except for their claim of divine origination, suggests that there is no single scripture “originating from God” and further made it difficult to adhere to such belief in divine origination. It is rather objective to hold on to a relational definition of the scriptural concept. This portrays Scripture as a relationship that certain communities shared with certain texts which led to the recognition and endorsement of such texts as authoritative and eventually seen as God’s word to them and then to mankind. Just as Jeremy Punt (2013:114) generally associated scriptures with communities when he wrote, “...sacred scriptures have always been involved in how religious communities identify themselves.”

Also, the proposition that inspiration is limited in scope to the original copies of the manuscripts (autographs) propagated by B.B Warfield (1948:104-105) is nowhere supported in Scripture except if the reference to it is made in connection to the use of γραφή which qualifies θεόπνευστος in 2 Timothy 3:16. The problem with such a position however is that the use of γραφή here is inconclusive and it definitely is not a reference to either the present form of the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, or Protestant scriptures. Rather what is most likely the case, is that γραφή is a reference to the LXX which is the Scripture of the first Christians in the early church not the autographs. This is also the view of William J. Abraham (1981:94).

In spite of all these considerations, the Scripture in its present state is a unique book, a book of encounter. However, to hold that the letters are literally the word of God after taking into account the human frailty and imperfections reflected in its making, its writing, redactions, recognition, transmission, ignores the evidence that there was a time when there was no Scripture, or that it once existed in various forms – as pre text, final text and post text. It also fails to recognize the inconclusive nature of the content and limit of Scripture even when reference was made to it in the pericope, and it is therefore simply unsustainable and illogical to hold to such a claim about the Christian Scripture. The Scripture therefore ought to be esteemed as the church’s book, the testimony of the biblical community about God, a place of encounter as believers can encounter God’s word in it. This makes its interpretation crucial and of utmost importance as it is open to different methods of interpretation and it seems each

method changes noticeably the message of the book because it is the interpreters that give the Scripture its voice. Each interpretive model should there be conducted with the aim to foster unity and in love.

In conclusion, this work suggests that the isolated reading of πᾶσα γραφή θεόπνευστος καὶ ὠφέλιμος has often aided in propagating an ideology of a separate doctrine of Scripture often foreign to what could be found in the text of Scripture as such ideology is divorced from the context of this text. The previous chapters affirm that the adjective, θεόπνευστος, does not carry the weight in the pericope which it has been made to assume over centuries of theologizing and interpretation by the Church and her scholars. The word θεόπνευστος at most remains vague and unfamiliar, and apart from these, it is not the crux of the passage neither of the verse. This study therefore from its findings proposes that the Scripture is very important and unique as it has been a source of comfort, help and blessing to so many individuals and communities even from the history of the Christian church until this very moment, although it has also been open to abuses by its interpreters. The Scripture was first esteemed even from the pages of the Second Testament and this has continued to be the case since the early church fathers through the history of the church. As concept it was further strengthened during the Reformation as the Reformers brought a new perspective to the way it is perceived and its relationship with Traditions. Scripture is therefore seen in this work as the church's book and the testimony of the biblical community about God.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARISING REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 SUMMARY

This study set out to understand the concept of Scripture in Christianity and what role θεόπνευστος played and continues to play in recognizing the nature of Scripture especially in the text of 2 Timothy 3:14-17. The dual methodologies used in work were made clear from the outset of the study. In a bid to achieve the aim of this research, a historical survey of how Scripture was assessed during different periods the Scripture was offered. Scripture was observed as having passed through different stages with different kinds of emphasis place upon it from the time before there was a scripture, through its inception and eventually to the contemporary treatment meted out on it.

The work applied a historical-grammatical exegetical method to the pericope, and suggested a later, non-Pauline authorship and dating for the Pastoral Epistles. It observed that the term ἱερὰ γράμματα was used for the Jewish Scripture while γραφή was used as a term to designate the combination of the Jewish scripture and the emerging Christian writings, a usage probably peculiar to the Pastoral Epistles and a later biblical writing such as 2 Peter.

The deployment of the ideological texture method shows the concept of Scripture as shrouded in power play, with different interests adding different layers of interpretation to the pericope apart from the ideology the passage itself projects.

In the penultimate chapter, the study traced out the relationship between the text and inspiration and also implications for scriptural authority on the basis of the finding of the present research.

6.2 FINAL REMARKS

So many wars have been fought, blood spilt, communities and individuals ravaged on the pretext of believers in various religious traditions trying to please and obey God according to what they understood as the dictate of the scripture they each subscribed to. People have often been segregated, persecuted and ostracized by others who believe they were following the commands of scripture, which is known as the word of God, as Scripture is taken to be authoritative. Several minority groups have been victims of these authoritative interpretations and uses of Scripture. This is how powerful Scripture have been, and this work therefore is an attempt to investigate and examine how Scripture according to the understanding of its concept become so powerful and if it is to be so used.

Although the three Abrahamic religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam – are all known as scriptural religions (that is, religions which received revelation in the form of a sacred book), the concept of scripture is more problematic among Christians than it is among the Jews and the Muslims. This is so because for the latter two religions their Scriptures include a prophetic model¹³ which helped see it as a direct discourse from God to them or to humanity, but the Second Testament which represents the crux of the Christian message is sort of a collection of biographies, letters and other genres, and the writers of these literatures are not prophets as in the case of Judaism and Islam yet such literature is seen as Scripture.

The concept of Scripture has passed through different phases of relevance and meaning. At first the notion was virtually non-existent, thereafter during the Second Temple period or rather close to it, the concept became pronounced. By the first century CE, when Jesus lived and most of the books in the Second Testament were written, its usage has become prominent especially in teaching and in the synagogues. At this time, it was variously quoted and used authoritatively by some Second

¹³ This is not to say that the prophetic model as seen in Judaism and Islam is not also ridden with several possibilities of abuse. The fact is in Christianity it is difficult to see the collections of stories, letters and biographies as the word of God without a “Thus says the Lord”. Meanwhile the prophetic model has often been used aggressively to treat people unjustly, coerce people into actions in the name of God, and ought to be queried if God actually gave certain commands contained therein as they sometimes violates human rights of others and even civility.

Testament authors, yet at this point its limits and boundary has not been fashioned, yet Scripture is viewed already as God's words. This scenario was carried into and apparently expanded in the second century CE. Then it began to take a broader, wider outlook and scope of meaning as suggested by 2 Timothy 3:14-17, as it was no longer limited to the Jewish Scriptures. Portions of the Second Testament writings, especially the core writings of the Second Testament were becoming viewed as authoritative and thus part of Scripture at this time in history. Scripture continued to gain more authority as it was continuously, consistently and more importantly increasingly quoted with authority by interpreters, thereby giving it a place of central significance. Scripture therefore became an instrument of ideological control. To further this agenda, the canon was set at church council meetings and after some debates and controversies the rough edges of the canon was smoothed. Centuries later, the event of the Reformation and the advent of the reformers gave increasing authority and further relevance to Scripture. With the invention of new terms such as *sola scriptura*, Scripture came to completely occupy the central stage, and this position of centrality that Scripture now occupies, is a result of transference of such concept of Scripture through generations from the Reformation till today, which might not have been in the spirit nor intention of the texts on the pages of the Second Testament. In other words at the beginning, Scripture was neither of central importance nor was it as closed as it is presently portrayed to be rather it was often used in the Second Testament to show justification or fulfilment of a point of view but later gained momentum over the years until it then became normative.

Θεόπνευστος, furthermore, is a difficult word to understand, also because it is a hapax legomenon and its understanding has been significantly influenced by the Latin word *afflatus* which means "blowing into" and the Greek ἐπίπνοια which in Latin is translated also as *inspiration*, meaning "breathing into". Both these terms popularized by Philo and Josephus seem to have influenced the Christian understanding of θεόπνευστος and the theological conception of inspiration as Christians rejected the idea that the Holy Spirit took possession of the authors of the Scripture; rather, the writers were enlightened by the Holy Spirit. Understandably the writings do not suggest such influence especially when considering the different genres involved in Scripture. Thus

this study adheres to that which can be observed, examined and determined, and so sees Scripture as defined as a relational concept. As the product of communities who set it apart, Scripture is recognized as different from other writings, a decision which was accepted by subsequent generations, that Scripture is authoritative. Its ascribed sacredness and divine origination reside in the belief of the individuals and/or communities reading it, and to a large extent regardless of its internal claims about itself. The ground on which this study understood θεόπνευστος, which is contextual and consistent with the pericope is in its functional ability, the aftermath of its practical experience. In other words, the author of the Pastoral Epistles in describing the influence of the ἱερὰ γράμματα on his recipient, and reporting the effect of γραφή as of the quality to inspired and profitable for teaching, rebuking and training in righteousness

Therefore this study posits that plenary verbal inspiration, verbal inerrancy of Scripture, limit of the canon, closure of the canon, inspiration only of the autographs cannot be exegetically sustained or supported through this pericope and can only be reckoned with as later ideological concepts foisted on the passage to perpetuate power for certain groups. This passage, which is the main text where Scripture spoke about itself, only claimed in a profound sense that God is responsible for the existence of Scripture. Upholding the relational view of Scripture which undermines the exceeding supernatural nature accorded to Scripture, reinforces the fact that the Christian Scripture is the church's book and it is the testimony of a community about God and evidence of his work in transforming the community. Yet the Scripture is unique in its substance and symbolic in its role as the Scripture though produced by and affected by the community, in turn affects the community.

As a conclusive summary, this study delineates the following: that the meaning of the hapax legomenon, θεόπνευστος is inconclusive and has been clouded in years of ideological interpretation serving different interests of different groups, although this study has chosen to interpret it in the light of its functional understanding; also, that the term ἱερὰ γράμματα is a reference to the Jewish Scripture. In addition, the study presents γραφή as being of a broader scope than just the Jewish Scripture but a

combination of those emerging Christian writings especially the core writings of the Second Testament (the Gospels and the early Pauline letters). It also stresses that γραφή does not represent in scope nor content the contemporary Christian Bibles, neither those of the Roman Catholic nor of the Protestant traditions. This by implication suggests that the adjective θεόπνευστος in the pericope does not cover nor qualify *all* the Christian Scripture as we have them today or covers and qualifies more than the Scripture we have today, bearing in mind some Apocrypha might have been part of what the author refers to as γραφή especially if he was referring to the LXX – or both of the options might be the case. Finally, that the portion of the γραφή which is partly the Jewish Scripture is most probably a reference to the LXX not the autographs.

6.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

No research is exhaustive, unassailable or final in its findings, discoveries, and suggestions. This study however is of the opinion that further studies be carried out to find the link between the concept of scripture and word of God; also research should be done on the possibility of determining the dating of the Pastoral Epistles and 2 Peter while using the concept of these Epistles' understanding of γραφή in their writings.

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