

**Module** : The Primacy of the Word of God  
**Session 1** : The Word of God is the Nature of God  
**Focus** : God and His Word Are One



## **DABAR, LOGOS, RHEMA**

The Old Testament was written in Hebrew. The New Testament was written in Greek (some parts in Aramaic).

The Old Testament Hebrew word translated 'WORD' is **Dabar**

**Dabar** = dabār = speech, matter

The word 'dabar' implies words spoken – where the fulfillment of what is spoken is pregnant within the word spoken. Sometimes this word is translated 'works'. It is as though in the moment of the speaking, there is a reckoning that the deed attendant with that word is already fulfilled or done.

Two New Testament Greek words translated 'WORD' are '**logos**' and '**rhema**'.

**Logos** = **Intelligence**, word as the expression of that intelligence, discourse, saying, thing; the **expression of thought** (Vines)

**Rhema** = that which is spoken, a statement or word; an **utterance** (individually, collectively or specifically); by implication a *matter* or *topic*

## **LOGOS**

The logos could represent the entire truth of the Bible as a whole - Scripture in its entirety.

### **2 Tim. 2:14-16**

- 14 Remind *them* of these things, and solemnly charge *them* in the presence of God not to wrangle about words, which is useless *and leads* to the ruin of the hearers.
- 15 **Be diligent** to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, **accurately handling the word ('logos') of truth.**
- 16 But avoid worldly *and* empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness.

The logos of the Word of God must be accurately handled or 'rightly divided' (KJV), particularly by leaders and those who preach and teach the Word.

The terms 'rightly dividing' (KJV) or 'accurately handling' (NASB) is the Greek word 'orthotomeo'.

**Rightly dividing = orthotomeō =** to make a straight cut, to dissect (expound) correctly, to cut straight, to cut straight ways; to proceed on straight paths, hold a straight course, equiv. to doing right, to make straight and smooth, to handle aright, to teach the truth directly and correctly, to handle correctly, skillfully

**2 Tim 2:15** Do your best to present yourself to God as an approved worker who has nothing to be ashamed of, handling the word of truth with precision. (ISV)

**Aside :** In our study of the 'Logos' we must always seek to know the Person of Christ, who is the author of the Scriptures. As we study 'truth', our study must not be so much an academic exercise that is cold and clinical – as we engage the truth of the Word of God by reading and studying it, it must always culminate in us knowing Christ, the person of TRUTH. Jesus is the Truth (John 14:6). Truth is not much a set of teachings or principles as much as it is the revelation of the person, viz. Christ.

**Cf. Jer. 2:8** "The **priests** did not say, 'Where is the LORD?' **And those who handle the law DID NOT KNOW ME;** The rulers also transgressed against Me, And the prophets prophesied by Baal And walked after things that did not profit.

'Handle' = **tapas** = lay hold of, to seize; to capture; to wield in a skillful way.

As we 'HANDLE' the Word of God, may our reading, studying and listening to it draw us into a more intimate relationship with Christ.

**John 5:39** "You **search the Scriptures** because you think that **in them you have eternal** life; it is these that **testify about ME**"

#### **1 John 1:1-4**

- 1 What was from the beginning, what **we have heard**, what we **have seen with our eyes**, what we have looked at and **touched with our hands**, concerning the **Word of Life--**
- 2 and the life was manifested, and we have seen and testify and proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and was manifested to us--
- 3 what we have seen and heard **we proclaim to you also**, so that you **too may have fellowship with us**; and indeed our **fellowship is with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.**
- 4 These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete

## **R H E M A**

The 'rhema' of the Word, as distinct from *logos*, is exemplified in the injunction to take "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," Eph. 6:17. Here the reference is not to the whole Bible as such as in 'logos', but to the individual scripture which the Spirit brings to our remembrance for use in time of need, a prerequisite being the regular storing of the mind with Scripture (Vines).

If 'logos' is represented by a well, then rhema would be the bucket of water drawn from the well. It is a timely Holy Spirit inspired word from the logos – a specific word that applies in a specific situation for a specific person or audience.

Some analogies worth considering:

### **Logos**

The Orange

Entire Piano

Entire Human Body

### **Rhema**

The vitamins in the juices of the orange

One Note/key sounded

One part performing a specific function

Rhema is always dependent on logos. Rhema emits from logos. Without logos, you cannot have rhema. One might speak from the logos of God and to the hearers it is heard as a rhema Word from God.

**1 Pet 4:11** If anyone speaks, *let him speak as the oracles ('logion') of God (KJV)*

**1 Pet 4:11** Whoever speaks, *is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances ('logion') of God (NASB)*

**Rom 10:17** So faith *comes* from hearing, and **hearing by the word ('rhema') of Christ.**

**We might apply a 'rhema' word to what many call 'PROPHETIC PREACHING'.** Not all presentations of the Word of God is necessarily prophetic in nature. 'Preaching' here is used for one who has been commissioned by God to speak on His behalf. This speaking might at times be presented to the hearers as biblical truth that has been researched, studied and arranged for presentation. Because 'prophecy' has the dimension of 'inspiration' and 'revelation', prophetic preaching, even if the word has been researched and arranged systematically, has the following features:

- The word preached becomes 'rhema' for that specific audience at that specific point in time. That word may be universally applied by all believers, but for the specific audience for which it was prepared, it has a very unique and spiritual relevance and applicability for that time.
- Actual words, scriptures, illustrations, ideas, voice intonations, and even body gestures may be divinely inspired.

LOGOS is also the description given for Jesus Christ, the Son.

**John 1:1-4**

- 1 In the beginning was **the Word**, and **the Word** was with God, and the **Word was God**. (*Logos*)
- 2 He was in the beginning with God.
- 3 All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.
- 4 In Him was life, and the life was the Light of men.

**Rev 19:13**      *He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called **The Word of God**.  
(logos)*

**THE WORD OF GOD IS THE NAME OF THE LAMB**

The Word of the Lord is God Himself.

**John 1:1-2**

- 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
- 2 He was in the beginning with God.

God cannot be God apart from His Word. The Son came into an earth-based context to reveal the brilliance and nature of all that there is in God. Sonship is the only conduit or medium that can accurately and fully express all of God. This patterned Son, Jesus Christ, came as the “Word made flesh”. Incarnating the Word is then the only way we can give expression to the nature of God. We put the nature of God on display by our love for and obedience to the Word of God. God cannot be defined or appraised apart from His Word. God and His Word are indissoluble.

We, the apostolic community, stand with the Lamb on Mount Zion (a place of perfection and brightness-light – a representation of the church). We have the name of the Lamb and the name of His Father on our foreheads.

**Rev 14:1-2**

- 1 Then I looked, and behold, **the Lamb** was standing on Mount Zion, and **with Him** one hundred and forty-four thousand, **having His name** and the **name of His Father** written on **their foreheads**.

The 144 000 is not a literal number but a symbolic representation of an apostolic community fixated on becoming like Christ, the Lamb in all respects and functioning with His mentality (forehead). The Son of God is depicted here as the lamb. We, His sons, have His name and the name of His father on our foreheads.

The term ‘Name’ depicts two things : 1. Nature ; 2. Purpose or prophetic destiny.

**Name** = **onomazō** = to *name*, that is, *assign an appellation*; by extension to *utter, mention, profess*: - call, name.

'Name' implies far more than a mere term used to identify a person and so distinguish one from another. It denoted the **nature, character and essence** of the person, as well as pointing to **function and destiny**.

**Examples :** Jacob's ('Supplanter/deceiver) name was changed to Israel (One who has power with God) indicating a change in character and identity. Joseph ("God adds") was renamed Barnabas (Son of Encouragement) highlighting the nature of his apostolic function. So then the **name of a person bears reference to identity and destiny. Identity is crucial to fulfilling destiny.**

Rev. 19 indicates the name of the Lamb is the WORD OF GOD.

**Rev 19:7-13**

- 7 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for **the marriage of the Lamb** has come and His bride has made herself ready."
- 8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright *and* clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.
- 9 Then he said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he said to me, "These are true words of God."
- 10 Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."
- 11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it **is called Faithful and True**, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.
- 12 His eyes *are* a flame of fire, and on His head *are* many diadems; and He has a name written *on Him* which no one knows except Himself.
- 13 *He is* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and **His name is called The Word of God.**

The name (i.e. nature and purpose) of the Son and Father comes to us through engagement with and obedience to the Word of God. It is only through the Word of God that the Father and the Son are revealed – (see John 14 below).

**John 14:19-26**

- 19 "After a little while the world will no longer see Me, but you *will* see Me; because I live, you will live also.
- 20 "In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.
- 21 "He who **has My commandments and keeps them** is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by **My Father, and I will love him** and will **disclose Myself** to him."
- 22 Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, what then has happened that You are going to disclose Yourself to us and not to the world?"

23 Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him."

'Having' and 'keeping' the commandments of God positions you to access unique expressions of the love of the Father and Son (v.21), as well as being privy to certain disclosures of God of Himself to you.

**Disclose = emphanizo =** to manifest, exhibit to view; show one's self, come to view, appear, be manifest; to indicate, disclose, declare, make known

Consider how God revealed Himself to Abraham as 'Jehovah Jireh' because of his obedience to the command of God to him to sacrifice his son Isaac – see Genesis 22. Every act of obedience has potential to unlock to you profound aspects of God's person and power to you. Your love for God is measured by your obedience to His word and as you consistently obey Him, He will His presence Himself authoritatively in your life (v.23) and progressively unveil and disclose more and more of Himself to you.

### THE WORD OF GOD IS THE NATURE OF GOD

**Psalm 138:2** I will bow down toward Your holy temple And give thanks to Your name for Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For **You have magnified Your word according to all Your name.**

Note here that God magnified His Word ACCORDING TO HIS NAME.

The **KJV** frames Psalm 138:2b as follows: "For You have magnified Your word **above all** Your name".

The word 'above' is somewhat misleading in that it communicates the idea that the Word is ranked above the Name of God. No part of God is inferior or of lesser worth, value and weight, than another part of God. In fact the notion that there are 'parts' of God and that these are seemingly disconnected is false. God is coherent within Himself. He is a complete entity. So the NASB framing of this verse seems more accurate: the Word of God is magnified ACCORDING to all His name. His name depicts His nature and character. His Word is not above this but in accordance with it. So then His Word is His name, nature and character.

Consider these translations:

<b>ESV</b>	:	for you have exalted <b>above all things your name and your word.</b>
<b>NirV</b>	:	You have honored <b>your name and your word</b> more than anything else.
<b>NIV</b>	:	for you have <b>exalted above all things your name and your word.</b>
<b>NLT</b>	:	for Your promises are backed by all the honor of Your name.

Whilst the Hebrew word 'AL', translated 'according' (NASB) or 'above' (KJV) does suggest something as having prominence over another – but only the particular context will reveal this emphasis. In Psalm 138:2, the general sense is 'according to' and not so much 'above'. Brown-Driver-Briggs – (Hebrew scholars) offers the following synonyms for the Hebrew 'al' (these are applicable in Psalm 138:2): "on the ground of, according to, on account of, on behalf of, concerning, beside, in addition to, together with".

### **QUESTIONS AND ISSUES FOR PERSONAL REVIEW AND GROUP DISCUSSION**

1. Explain the meaning of the Old Testament word 'Dabar'.
2. What is your understanding of the Greek terms 'logos' and 'rhema'? Describe the interrelationship between them.
3. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. Explain.
4. One may speak from the logos but the hearers hear it as rhema. Demonstrate this from Scripture.
5. Studying the truth of the 'logos' should always culminate in intimate knowledge of Christ, the person of truth. Discuss this statement.
6. The 'name' of the Lamb is the 'Word of God'. What is the significance of the term 'name' in Scripture and how does this shape our understanding of the Lamb's name as the Word of God?
7. Whose name should we as sons of God have engraved into our mentality and thought (foreheads)? Discuss this and demonstrate it using a practical example.
8. According to John 14, what is the primary means by which the Father and the Son reveal or disclose themselves progressively to us?
9. Illustrate your answer to question 8 by demonstrating the process in the life of Abraham in Genesis 22.

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