

## The Divine Inspiration of the Bible

Up to this point in our study, we have considered the evidences of Christianity on the basis of the validity of the Bible as an accurate *historical document*, the accuracy of which is further supported by evidences of nature and reason. This being so, we will now endeavor to show that we also have tremendous evidence that the *origin*, and the *authority* of the Bible is, in fact, *Divine*.

Many basic facts of Christianity cannot be considered as firmly established until some decides whether or not he believes that the Scriptures are *Divinely inspired!*

Despite the fact that, as we learned in our previous lessons,

- the Bible is *unique* that its collection of historical and religious writings are reliable,
  - that it has had an impact on the world's history,
    - that it writes about science centuries in advance of its time,
    - that it is the greatest poetry, drama, and medical advice book ever written,
- as well as being the greatest book, ever known to man, written on the subject of ethics and practical wisdom, yet, all of this is not sufficient enough evidence to prove whether or not **the Bible is actually the very, Divinely inspired, Word of God!**

No, there is no other book comparable to the Bible because, in addition to the foregoing, the Bible is unique among all the writings of the ancient world for the following reasons:

1. It is the only book of antiquity that gives an account of the creation of all things out of nothing. While there are some ancient theories of the origin, and development, of the universe, however, these books have not been analyzed, or written about, in relation to modern science, as the Bible has, but many books have been written with such themes as "*Genesis and Modern Science*," showing the Bible to be true.
2. The Bible is the only book that gives us a continuous historical record whose "*time-line*" extends from the first man to the present era.
3. The Bible is the only ancient history book that reveals that there is a purpose to its history
4. Of all the religious books of the ancient world, the Bible, by far, contains not only the purest religious literature, but, also, the highest moral standards, of any of them.
5. The Bible is the only religious book which contains detailed prophecies of events to come.
6. The Bible is the only book from antiquity, which not only has the power to convict men of sin, but, also, the power to lead them to the only One who can free them from sin.

The unique character, and power, of the Bible, as well as its incomparable influence for over 3.500 years, can be easily understood if the claim of its writers, that they were simply

recording God's Words to us, is true, however, if, on the other hand, this claim of its writers is not true, and the Bible is not *divinely inspired*, then we are confronted with the greatest mystery, and paradox, in all the history of mankind.

It is easy to see that the Old Testament writers frequently claim to be recording the *very words* of the Lord, making statements such as, "***The Lord spoke and said . . .***"

The Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament, has 680 claims of inspiration; the Prophetical books have 1,307 claims of inspiration; the Historical books have 418 claims of inspiration; the Poetical books have 195 claims of inspiration, which means that the *entire* Old Testament has 2,600 claims of inspiration. In addition to this fact, almost half of the book of Exodus, and almost 90% of the Book of Leviticus, claim to directly quote God's words.

Like the Old Testament books, the New Testament books also claim to, in some of their chapters, directly quote God's words, and, both the Apostles and the early Church, claim that the New Testament writings are authoritative revelations from God, and, the following Scriptural passages are but a few examples of the New Testament's claim of being authored by Divine Inspiration, and Revelation!

Galatians 1:12, "*I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by **revelation from Jesus Christ!***"

1 Corinthians 2:13, "*This is what we speak, not in words taught us by human wisdom but in words taught by the Spirit, expressing spiritual truths in spiritual words.*"

1 Thessalonians 2:13. "*And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe.*"

Ephesians 3:4-5, "*In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.*"

Romans 16:25-26, "*Now to Him who is able to establish you by my gospel and the proclamation of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery hidden for long ages past, but now revealed and made known through the prophetic writings by the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey Him.*"

1 Corinthians 14:37, "*If anybody thinks he is a prophet or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is **the Lord's command.***"

It is evident that the Apostles not only regarded the teachings of the Old Testament as being fully inspired, and without error, but they also regarded their own teachings, which were to make up the New Testament and complete the Old, as being fully inspired as well, its Word having been given by the same Divine inspiration that authored the Old Testament Scriptures.

Note the climatic claim in Revelation 22:18-19, "*For I declare to all who hear the words of the prophecy of this book, and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.*"

There are **over 320 quotations from the Old Testament**, as well as over 1,000 definite references **to** the Old Testament, recorded in the New Testament.

The writers of the New Testament always quoted, or made reference to, the Old Testament in a manner that shows that they regarded it as the **authoritative Word of God**.

[See Romans 15:4; 2 Peter 1:21; and 1 Peter 1:10-12]

The first **11 chapters of Genesis**, which deal with the events from the story of creation to the tower of Babel, is the part of the Old Testament which is most severely criticized, and ridiculed, by modern liberals today and, yet, the New Testament includes more than **eighty quotations** from these very chapters of Genesis.

**Every** writer of the New Testament refers, in his writings, to something recorded in these first chapters of Genesis, and every one of these chapters are alluded to somewhere in the New Testament.

We have already seen that the *evidence for Jesus' innate deity is quite compelling* and, therefore, the fact that Jesus **is** the only Begotten Son of God and that, while He was on earth, He affirmed the Bible's claim for itself, by what He said about it and in the way He used it, is certainly another evidence that the Scriptures are Divinely inspired, and, a careful study of the following Scriptural passages will show that, in fact, He considered the Scriptures to be Divinely inspired:

Matthew 4:4, "*Jesus answered, 'It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'*" [vs.7] "*Jesus answered him, 'It is also written: Do not put the Lord your God to the test.'*" [vs.10] "*Jesus said to him, 'Away from Me, Satan! For it is written: 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.'*"

Matthew 12:17, "*This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah.*"[vs.40] "*For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*"

Matthew 19:4-5, "*Haven't you read,*" He replied, *`that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'`*?"

Matthew 24:37-39 , "*As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man. For in the days before the flood, people were eating and drinking,*

*marrying and giving in marriage, up to the day Noah entered the ark; and they knew nothing about what would happen until the flood came and took them all away. That is how it will be at the coming of the Son of Man."*

Luke 16:29, "*Abraham replied, 'They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.'*"

Luke 17:26-29, "*Just as it was in the days of Noah, so also will it be in the days of the Son of Man. People were eating, drinking, marrying and being given in marriage up to the day Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came and destroyed them all. `It was the same in the days of Lot. People were eating and drinking, buying and selling, planting and building. But the day Lot left Sodom, fire and sulfur rained down from heaven and destroyed them all.'*"

Luke 20:37, "*But in the account of the bush, even Moses showed that the dead rise, for he calls the Lord 'the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.'*"

Luke 24:25-27, "*He said to them, `How foolish you are, and how slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken! Did not the Christ have to suffer these things and then enter his glory?' And beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, He explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning Himself."*

Luke 24:44, "*He said to them, `This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about Me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms.'"*

John 3:14, "*Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the desert, so the Son of Man must be lifted up."*

John 6:32, "*Jesus said to them, `I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven.'"*

John 10:35, "*If he called them 'gods,' to whom the word of God came - and the Scripture cannot be broken."*

Before we endeavor to define what is meant by "*the Divine inspiration of the Bible*," let's take a look at what is NOT meant by defining the following man-made theories of Biblical inspiration:

### **1. THE NATURALISTIC THEORY**

This theory holds that the Bible is inspired in the same sense that great writers and artists are inspired when they produce great works of literature, music, or art.

### **2. THE PARTIAL THEORY**

This theory hold that *parts* of the Bible may be inspired while other parts are not.

### **3. THE DYNAMIC THEORY**

This theory holds that the "*thoughts*" of the Bible are inspired, while the actual words themselves are not. According to this theory, it really doesn't matter what words the Bible uses as long as they convey the meaning of the intended spiritual truth. Now, this theory sounds very "*spiritual*," however, in reality, it is very empty because it is not possible to convey precise thoughts without using precise words.

### **4. THE ENCOUNTER THEORY**

This theory holds that the Bible is a *vehicle* of Divine revelation, but is not itself Divine revelation because it only becomes "*inspired*" when it "*inspires*" the reader, that is, when it becomes a medium through which the reader "*encounters*" God.

It is obvious that each of these theories makes man the sole judge of whether a particular passage from the Bible is inspired or not, in other words, one decides for himself whether or not it is God Who is speaking.

THE ONLY PROPER VIEW OF THE DIVINE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE IS THAT IT IS **COMPLETELY**, AND **LITERALLY**, INSPIRED, ALTOGETHER FREE OF ERROR, AND THAT IT CONVEYS *EXACTLY* WHAT GOD DESIRED TO SAY TO MAN!

The above is the definition of the doctrine of plenary, verbal, inspiration and it is the only doctrine of inspiration which has any real substance.

- "**plenary**" means "*full*,"
- "**verbal**" means "*word-by-word*,"
- "**inspiration**" means "*God-breathed*."

Any lesser theory of Divine inspiration leaves man to his own devices and, in effect, enables him to become his own "*god*."

### THE WRITERS OF THE BIBLE WRITE IN VARIOUS STYLES

The objection is sometimes made that, because each writer of the Bible wrote in his own style, styles which are distinguishable one from the other, this fact is baffling in terms of Divine inspiration.

However, there is no reason why God could not have couched His dictation in the style of the receiving scribe! **Certainly, God has no peculiar "*style*"** because all so-called "*styles*" have their origin in Him, and, since God had to use the earthly language of the human writer as a medium of revelation, why could He not also use the earthly vocabulary, or *style*, of the writer as a medium of revelation?

God not only took every precaution to fully guard all the words of Scripture against error, but He also caused them to fully *fit*...to be completely expressive of...His Divine instructions, and all that He desired to convey to man.

When we speak about Scripture being inspired, we mean that it is "*God-breathed*" and, thus, it is true, appropriate, and meaningful. All of which has to do with the result of inspiration rather than with the method of inspiration, although the words of Scripture are phrased in the language, and experiences, of the prophet who gave them, they, nonetheless, are, ultimately, the very words of God.

<p>Again, the fact that the books of the Bible are written in various styles in no way negates the fact of <b>verbal</b> inspiration!</p>
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The original manuscripts of the Bible were not only perfect in content, but they were also free from any error in every respect. However, because these original manuscripts were made of perishable material, they have vanished, nonetheless, the Scribes, because they thoroughly believed that they were dealing with the very words of God, were exceedingly careful in, and dedicated to, their translation of these ancient manuscripts. Thus, the text of Scripture we have today is *practically identical with the original manuscripts* and there are not more than a dozen verses in the New Testament that "may" have had their meaning affected by any of the variations that have crept into our present day translation, however, absolutely **no doctrine** of the Church is affected as a result of any of these variations!

**THE BIBLE IS THE DIVINELY INSPIRED WORD OF GOD!**