

## Bible 101: Can We Trust the Scriptures?

### **Inspiration**

Wisdomfest 2010

Inspiration is the theological term that we use to refer to God's authorship of the Bible.

#### **I. What is Inspiration?**

Two ideas behind inspiration.

A. God-breathed (*theopneustos*) – thay-AHP-noo-stos

Definition

B.B. Warfield in *Inspiration and Authority*, "What *theopneustos* affirms is that the Scriptures owe their origin to an activity of God the Holy Ghost and are in the highest and truest sense His creation. It is on this foundation of Divine origin that all the high attributes of Scripture are built."

Text

2 Timothy 3:16

"All Scripture is breathed out by God (*theopneustos*) and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness."

Result

Life – When God speaks, life happens.

Genesis 1 – creation

Genesis 2 – mankind

Hebrews 4:12 – the Word

"For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

## B. Dual-authorship

### Definition

The Bible is both the word of man and the Word of God! It is not mere dictation.

Each are affirmed without denying the other.

### Text

2 Peter 1:19-21

And we have something more sure, the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, <sup>20</sup>knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. <sup>21</sup>For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

1 Thess. 2:13

And we also thank God constantly for this, that when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men but as what it really is, the word of God, which is at work in you believers.

Deut. 18:18-19

<sup>18</sup>I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their brothers. And I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak to them all that I command him. <sup>19</sup>And whoever will not listen to my words that he shall speak in my name, I myself will require it of him.

Jeremiah 1:1-2, 9

<sup>1</sup>The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, one of the priests who were in Anathoth in the land of Benjamin, <sup>2</sup>to whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign.

<sup>9</sup>Then the LORD put out his hand and touched my mouth. And the LORD said to me, "Behold, I have put my words in your mouth."

Isaiah 1

Isaiah delivers his prophecy and declares (v. 20), "the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Matthew 1:22

Quotes Isaiah 7:14 as "what the Lord had spoken by the prophet."

Matthew 4:4

Jesus quotes from Deuteronomy to resist the temptation of the Devil and Jesus himself calls the OT the "words that come from the mouth of God."

Matthew 19:5

Jesus quotes the writer of Genesis and attributes the text as God's words even though the Genesis writer doesn't attribute them to God. On the same OT text Mark 7:9-13 refers to it as "the commandment of God," what "Moses said," and the "word of God."

Acts 1:16

Peter says that the words of Psalm 69 and 109 were spoken "by the Holy Spirit beforehand by the mouth of David."

Acts 2:16-17

Peter cites the words "spoken by the prophet Joel" (past tense), and then he inserts "God declares" (present tense). God is presently speaking (living and active) through past spoken human words.

Hebrews 1:1

<sup>1</sup>Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets...

## Result

### The word of man – style, language, genre

The Bible was written over a period of roughly 1,500 years by more than 40 authors in 3 three languages (Hebrew, Greek, and Aramaic) and across three continents (Asia, Africa, and Europe). The backgrounds of its writers are poets, kings, peasants, philosophers, doctors, fisherman, IRS agents, statesmen, farmers, and more. It includes historical records, letters, songs, geographical details, family trees, legal documents, and census counts. It is multicultural and diverse because of the history it covers and the backgrounds, incomes, and cultures of its human writers and subjects.

### The Word of God – reliable, true, timeless

“The Bible reveals to us that God is sovereign over history and works in history for individuals, family lines, and nations. What makes the biblical account of history so unique is that it does not merely tell us of people, events, and ideas, but it also explains their theological meaning in relation to God. Therefore, the historical record of the Bible is written with the primary purpose of revealing who God is through his work in history so that we can see our lives as inextricably connected to him in every way and only meaningful when understood in light of him” (Mark Driscoll, *A Book You’ll Actually Read: On the Old Testament*, p. 15).

### Final definition encompassing both aspects of inspiration:

The Bible is a divinely accurate and authoritative book resulting from a process whereby Spirit-moved men wrote God-breathed words using human means such as language, style, personality, and genre.

## **II. How Do We Know the Bible is Inspired?**

### A. The Bible says so.

1. Explicit statement – 2 Timothy 3:16
2. Jesus and his followers believed it.

#### a. Jesus –

The OT was the Bible Jesus read, believed, and taught because the NT was not yet written. Some examples:

- Jesus began his public ministry by quoting Isaiah and then stating that his ministry was the fulfillment of the OT prophecy (Luke 4:16-21).
- Jesus affirmed OT scripture many of which are commonly rejected today, such as...
  - The Genesis 1 and 2 account of creation (Matt. 19:4-5; Mark 10:6-8),
  - Cain and Abel (Luke 11:51),
  - Noah and the flood (Matt. 24:37-39; Luke 17:26-27),
  - Abraham (John 8:56),
  - Sodom and Gomorrah (Luke 17:28),
  - Miracle of manna (John 6:31-38),
  - Healing of Naaman (Luke 4:27),
  - Wilderness serpent (John 3:14),
  - Moses as lawgiver (Matt. 8:4; 19:8; Mark 1:44; 7:10; 10:5; 12:26; Luke 5:14; 20:37; John 5:46; 7:19),
  - Jonah in the belly of a big fish (Matt. 12:39-41).
- Jesus also looked to the OT in times of crisis,
  - Temptation (Deuteronomy),
  - Suffering (Psalm 22),
  - Death (Psalm 31).
- Jesus settled debates using the OT,
  - Resurrection (Matt. 22:23-33)
  - Sabbath breaking (Matt. 12:1-8)

b. Peter –

Example 1 – 2 Peter 1:19-20

And we have something more sure (context: his eyewitness of the transfiguration), the prophetic word, to which you will do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, <sup>20</sup>knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. <sup>21</sup>For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

Peter viewed the Bible as more reliable than his own eyes.

Example 2 – 2 Peter 3:15-16

<sup>15</sup>And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, <sup>16</sup>as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures.

Peter viewed Paul's letters as Scripture.

Other examples from Acts already cited regarding the OT.

c. Paul –

Example 1 – 1 Thess. 2:13

Then churches accepted Paul's letters as the Word of God.

Paul viewed his own letters as Scripture.

Example 2 – 1 Timothy 5:17-18

Paul quotes Luke and refers to as "Scripture" in the same way he would the OT.

Paul viewed Luke's Gospel as Scripture.

Other examples including major citations throughout Romans.

B. There are good reasons.

For the sake of brevity, I'm going to stick with prophetic fulfillment. I am in debt to Mark Driscoll giftedness to condense this massive topic.

- Seven hundred years before Jesus' birth, Isaiah promised that Jesus' mother would be a virgin who would conceive by a miracle (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18–23).
- Seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, Micah promised that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem (Mic. 5:2; Luke 2:1–7).
- Seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, Hosea promised that Jesus' family would flee as refugees to Egypt to save his young life (Hos. 11:1; Matt. 2:13–15.).
- Four hundred years before the birth of Jesus, Malachi promised that Jesus would enter the temple. Since the temple was destroyed in AD 70, this prophecy could not be fulfilled anytime after AD 70 (Mal. 3:1; Luke 2:25–27).

- Five hundred years before the birth of Jesus, Zechariah promised that Jesus would be betrayed for thirty pieces of silver (Zech. 11:12–13; Matt. 26:14–15).
- One thousand years before the birth of Jesus, David promised that lots would be cast for Jesus' clothing (Ps. 22:18; John 19:23–24).
- One thousand years before the birth of Jesus (and hundreds of years before the invention of crucifixion), David promised that Jesus would be crucified (Ps. 22:16; Luke 23:33).
- Seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, Isaiah promised that Jesus would die and be buried in a rich man's tomb (Isa. 53:8–9; Matt. 27:57–60; Luke 23:46).
- One thousand years before the birth of Jesus, David promised that Jesus would resurrect from death (Ps. 16:10); seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus, Isaiah also promised that Jesus would resurrect from death (Isa. 53:10–12; Acts 2:25–32).

Considering enormity of the promises made, recorded, and fulfilled – only God could make all this happen.

### **Some Implications**

1. The Bible reveals God's heart.

Isaiah 55:8, “<sup>8</sup>For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the LORD.”

We CAN speak for God on subjects he has spoken his heart through the Bible.

Our society is no friend to absolute claims or moral judgments. But God has spoken! We can therefore be absolutely sure when God is absolutely sure, even if our culture is not sure at all and rejects all claims of absolute surety. God has clearly spoken on divorce, homosexuality, submission (to husbands, to wives, to children, to elders, to government), pre-marital sex, pornography, theft, money, morality, and worship – to name only a few.

God's revealed Word is authoritative!

2. The Bible brings saving wisdom.

2 Timothy 3:14–15 –

<sup>14</sup>But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it <sup>15</sup>and how from childhood

you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture...

Paul is referring to the LXX...

Psalm 19:7 –

The law of the Lord is perfect, reviving the soul;  
the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.

God's Word brings wisdom. Wisdom to what end?

The primary goal of God's inspired Word, OT and NT, is to reveal Jesus for the salvation of men.

Gordon Fee, "Paul urges Timothy's loyalty, not only to himself and his own past, but also to the Scriptures, because they, too, lead to salvation. But salvation lies not in the Scriptures themselves, but only as they are properly understood to point to Christ. Always for Paul salvation is through faith in Christ Jesus" (NIBC, *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*, p. 279).

"Unlike the first Adam, Jesus Christ is the Last Adam who passed his test in a garden and in so doing imputed his righteousness to us to overcome the sin imputed to us through the sin of the first Adam. Jesus is the true and better Abel who, although he was innocent, was slain and whose blood cries out for our acquittal. When Abraham left his father and home, he was doing the same thing that Jesus would do when he left heaven. When Isaac carried his own wood and laid down his life to be sacrificed at the hand of his father Abraham, he was showing us what Jesus would later do. Jesus is the greater Jacob, who wrestled with God in Gethsemane and, though wounded and limping, walked away from his grave blessed. Jesus is the greater Joseph who serves at the right hand of God the King, extends forgiveness and provision to those of us who have betrayed him, and uses his power to save us in loving reconciliation. Jesus is greater than Moses in that he stands as a mediator between God and us, bringing us the New Covenant. Like Job, innocent Jesus suffered and was tormented by the Devil so that God might be glorified, while his dumb friends were no help or encouragement. Jesus is a King greater than David, who has slain our giants of Satan, sin, and death, although in the eyes of the world he was certain to face a crushing defeat at their hands. Jesus is greater than Jonah in that he spent three days in the grave and not just a fish to save a multitude even greater than Nineveh" (Mark Driscoll, *A Book You'll Actually Read: On the Old Testament*, p. 39).



Acts 4:12 – “And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.”

John 14:6

<sup>6</sup>Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

The claims of Jesus are truly God’s claims...the way to God is only Jesus.

End with Psalm 119:97-104 (page 514)