

Sunday, April 10, 2016—Overview of Inspiration

Presuppositions

- God exists. (Psalm 14:1)
- God has magnified his word above his own name. (Psalm 138:2)
- God's word is eternally settled in heaven. (Psalm 119:89)
- God through the process of inspiration has communicated his word to mankind. (I Tim. 3:16 & II Peter 1:21)
- God's words were written down so that they could be made eternally available to men. (I Peter 1:23)
- God promised to preserve that which he inspired. (Psalm 12:6-7)

Three Types of Revelation

- *Natural Revelation*—is the revelation that God has provided of Himself in creation as well as in man. All men have access to the revelation that God has placed in creation.
- *Special Revelation*—this is what Hebrews 1:1 is referring to; God making Himself known to particular people in specific ways throughout Scripture (Genesis 18, Matthew 16:17, Galatians 2:2)
- *Written Revelation*—is not something that God has placed innately in man, or in nature, as a testimony. It is not a special time when God communicated with somebody, but it is what God caused to be written down.

Inspiration

- With revelation the information comes from God to man; in inspiration the information moves from man to paper. Man writes that which God wants written down.
- II Timothy 3:16—the Greek word for scripture is *graphē*, and it means “that which is written down.” Inspiration has to do with what is written down. Inspiration is not God just giving the information to man. That is revelation. But inspiration is man putting the thing on paper, and the issue is what is written down on that paper.
- *Webster's 1828 Dictionary* offers the following relevant meanings for the English word inspiration:
 - 1) The act of drawing air into the lungs; the inhaling of air; a branch of respiration, and opposed to expiration.

- 2) The act of breathing into anything.
 - 3) The infusion of ideas into the mind by the Holy Spirit; the conveying into the minds of men, ideas, notices or monitions by extraordinary or supernatural influence; or the communication of the divine will to the understanding by suggestions or impressions on the mind, which leave no room to doubt the reality of their supernatural origin.
All Scripture is given by inspiration of God. 2 Timothy 3:16.
- Please note that in 1828, the definition of the English word inspiration had nothing to do with the original writings. Rather it was referring to the supernatural process whereby God the Holy Spirit infused into the minds of men the ideas of almighty God.
 - Then the dictionary gives II Timothy 3:16 as the verse to illustrate the concept. In other words, inspiration is the supernatural process whereby God the Holy Spirit moved upon human authors to have them record in writing those aspects of God's revelation (written revelation) that He wanted mankind to possess forever (Isaiah 30:8).
 - II Peter 1:21—it was the supernatural force of God the Holy Spirit that caused the prophets of old to speak.
 - Job 32:8—the giving of the Scripture is not the only thing God did by inspiration. *Něshamah* is the Hebrew word translated inspiration in Job 32:8 and it occurs 24 times in 24 verses in the Hebrew text supporting the KJB. It is variously rendered as 'breath' seventeen times, 'blast' three times, 'spirit' two times, 'inspiration' one time and 'souls' one time.
 - Given the fact that Job was the first book of the Bible written, it is not possible that Elihu is using the word inspiration here in reference to the giving of the Scriptures as in II Timothy 3:16. Rather, Elihu is referring to the fact that there is something unique about man; via inspiration, God has given mankind the capacity for understanding.
 - Job 33:4—mankind was created by “the breath of the Almighty.”
 - Genesis 2:7—Adam and, by extension, all of humanity owes their very existence to the breath of God.
 - Genesis 1:27-28—this helps explain how God created man in his own image.
 - Please recall the second definition of the English word inspiration presented above, “the act of breathing into anything.” Life was brought to Adam through an act of inspiration on the part of God.
 - Psalm 33:6—God used the same process to create the heavens and all the hosts thereof.
 - Genesis 1:3, 6, 9, 11, 14, 20, 24, 26, 28, 29
 - The testimony of Scripture is that God inspired at least three things:
 - The creation of heaven and earth.

- The creation of man.
- The giving of the Scriptures.
- II Timothy 3:16—God exercised the same supernatural force to inspire His word that He utilized when He created heaven, earth, and mankind.
- Inspiration is the supernatural process whereby God recorded in writing (*graphē*) those aspects of His revelation that he wanted mankind to possess forever (Isaiah 30:8).
- Hebrews 4:12-13—this understanding of inspiration helps one understand how the word of God can be “quick and powerful.” God literally breathed His own life into His word just as He did into mankind and all of creation.

Self-authenticating Nature of Inspiration

- II Timothy 3:16—**all scripture is given by inspiration of God.** That is the Bible’s claim for itself. That is what the Bible says about itself, and that is the boast that it makes for itself. “*Pas graphē theopneustos*” are the Greek words, and they simply mean “all scripture is inspired of God”. “Pas” is the word for “all, every.”
- Luke 24:44-46—“And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. 45) Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures (*graphē*), 46) And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:”
- The word translated “scriptures” in verse 45 is the same word translated “scripture” in II Timothy 3:16; *graphē*. The Lord Jesus Christ called all three parts of the Hebrew Bible the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms (our Old Testament), Scripture.
- Therefore, our Lord’s attitude toward the entire Old Testament was that all of it was scripture and inspired by God.
- I Timothy 5:18—“For the scripture (*graphē*) saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward.” This verse is comprised of quotations from both the Old and New Testaments.
 - Deuteronomy 25:4—“Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn.”
 - Matthew 10:10 and Luke 10:7—“The labourer *is* worthy of his reward.”
- Now, do you see what Paul did? He quoted a passage out of Deuteronomy, (the words of Moses), and then he quoted a passage out of the Gospels (the words of Christ), and he called them both scripture. Paul did not make any distinction between them. So, they are both scripture – the Old Testament and the New Testament. When he says “all scripture” he is literally talking about “all” or every part of it.
- II Corinthians 14:37—the things Paul wrote are also the commands of the Lord.

- II Peter 3:15-16—Peter calls everything Paul wrote in “all his epistles” scripture or *graphē*.
- Notice how in all of these verses the Bible self-authenticates its own inspiration. In II Timothy 3 Paul teaches you that all scripture is given by inspiration of God. Then, in Luke 24, the Lord Jesus Christ names the threefold division of the Hebrew Old Testament and calls it scripture. Later, Paul in I Timothy 5 quotes both the Old Testament and Gospels and calls them scripture. Finally, in Corinthians 14, Paul claims that the things he is writing are also the “commandments of the Lord.” Finally, in II Peter 3, Peter informs his readers that everything Paul had written was scripture as well. All parts of your Bible, both Old and New Testaments, are *graphē* or that which was written down by God Almighty.
- II Timothy 3:16—once again, the Greek word for “scripture” is “*graphē*”. Our word “graph” comes from that word. “*Graphē*” means “to write down, something that is written down”. Now it is very important that you get this point. What does the verse say is inspired? Scripture is inspired; the writings are inspired. The thing that is written down on the page is the thing that is inspired. You want to be careful to notice that the verse says that the “writings” are inspired, not the “writers”.

God’s Attributes and the Written Word

- There is no difference between what God says and what the scriptures say.
 - Roman 9:17—**For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh**, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth.
- Romans 9:17 is a quotation of Exodus 9:16. If you go back and look at the context of Exodus 9 it says, “Thus saith the LORD God of the Hebrews” in verse 13. Exodus 9 says that Jehovah God said that unto Pharaoh, but Romans 9 says that “scripture saith unto Pharaoh.” That is an illustration of the power and the authority of the written word of God. It can be used interchangeably with Jehovah God. God the Holy Spirit wrote both verses.
- God attributes His own attributes to His word.
 - Galatians 3:8—**And the scripture (*graphē*), foreseeing** that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed.
- Does God possess the ability to foresee the future? Yes. Paul gives an attribute of God to the scripture – “**The scripture, foreseeing** that God would justify the heathen . . .” The written word of God has the ability to foresee the future. It foresees that God is going to justify the heathen, and therefore it says it “preached before the gospel unto Abraham.”
- Tell me something – did Abraham have a bible? No, Abraham did not have a bible. Five hundred years passed before Moses ever wrote any of that stuff down. He did not have a bible. Therefore, the scripture is doing something that cannot be done. Abraham did not have a bible to preach to him. So, how could the scripture preach to him? God preached to him! And Paul says that the scripture did it!

- Do you know what Paul is saying? He is saying that the scripture and God are one. They are equal. Now that is how close that connection is between them. You just cannot get around the connection; it is that close. If that book is not that close to God and it is not God's word, then the whole thing is just a bunch of baloney; it's a lie.
- John 1:1—in your Bible there is a connection between the written and the living Word that you do not want to miss. *They are both called the "word of God"*
 - Revelation 19:13—And he *was* clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: **and his name is called The Word of God.**
 - Hebrews 4:12—For **the word of God** *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.
- Brother Jordan offered the following summation regarding God's design in inspiration:
 - "The living Word, (the Lord Jesus Christ), and the written word are that close. God attributes his own attributes to his word, and the reason for that is that he is demonstrating that word to be the final authority. It is what he says. *When you are dealing with God's word, you are dealing with God himself.* And if you are going to deal with God, you will have to deal with his word. That is God's design and inspiration." (Jordan. *MSS 101*, Lesson 1)
- Once again we see that the Bible is not like any other book. God attributes his own attributes to his word.