

How We Got the Bible 2025

The Bible's Inspiration

We believe in **THE HOLY SCRIPTURE**: accepting the writings of the Old and New Testaments as the very Word of God, verbally inspired in all parts and therefore wholly without error and altogether sufficient in themselves as our only infallible and authoritative rule of faith and practice (Church website)

Necessity of Inspiration

Without inspiration we could not have a reliable revelation from God in written form. God communicated with men in a language man can understand. God does not communicate with us through some mystical means. When we speak we use words. Words have specific meanings depending on their use, the context, the subject matter, etc. When we speak to each other we are forgiving if someone uses the wrong word or incorrect grammar. When we write we need to use words precisely and as accurately as possible. Regardless of his efforts man will make mistakes. God provided a means of transferring His thoughts to paper in a language we could understand that was without error.

What Bible Inspiration Is Not

The Bible's inspiration is not revelation.

The Bible's inspiration is not intuition, or the thoughts of ancient philosophers.

The Bible's inspiration is not illumination whereby God gave men a deep insight into His truth.

The Bible's inspiration is not literary (elevated thought) as in a Shakespeare or other inspired artist.

The Bible's inspiration is not thought inspiration in that the Bible contains God's thoughts.

The Bible's inspiration is not doctrinal inspiration. That is to say, when the Bible speaks on doctrine it is correct but when it speaks on science, archeology, history etc. it could be wrong.

The Bible's inspiration is not 'mechanical dictation', meaning that the process did not involve suspending the personalities of the writers.

What is Biblical Inspiration?

Inspiration is the action of God the Holy Spirit whereby He enabled divinely selected men, in keeping with God's purpose and their personalities, vocabularies, and backgrounds, to make a pure and accurate record of God's revelation that is inerrant in the autographs and as such is as reliable, as authoritative, and as much the Word of God as though God had penned it with His own finger.

Inerrancy: Inerrancy means that when all facts are known, the Scriptures in their original autographs and properly interpreted will be shown to be wholly true in everything that they affirm, whether that has to do with doctrine or morality or with the social, physical, or life sciences. (Inerrancy, pp. 294) [Example Mk 2:24-26 / 1Sa 21:1-6](#)

Infallible: 1. Not fallible; not capable of erring; entirely exempt from liability to mistake. 2. Not liable to fail, or to deceive confidence; certain. (Webster's 1828 American Dictionary of the English Language)

We believe in the plenary, verbal inspiration of the Bible. What does that mean and what does the Bible say about its own inspiration?

It was verbal in that the Holy Spirit guided in the choice of the words. It was plenary inspiration in that it extended to every portion of the Bible.

2 Peter 1:16-21

1. **The Bible is not of human origin.** 2Peter 1:16-21. These verses deny all human sources for the Word of God. Verse 19 says we have a more sure word of prophecy. More sure than what? More sure than the human, eye-witness, experience of the transfiguration he mentions in verses 16-18. How do we know we have a more sure word? Verse 20 emphatically tells us that no prophecy of the scripture is of any human origin. On first reading it may appear that v. 20 is saying what the Roman Catholics teach and that is you cannot interpret the scripture for yourself but the Church will interpret it for you. But that is not what this passage is teaching. Remember to keep the scripture in context. Verse 21 quickly adds, "For (because) the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man:" Man did not write what he wanted to write. It was not of his will. It was not Moses' idea or opinion to put the Law upon the people. I would submit to you that the Bible authors could not have written what they wanted to write.

Bible example: Numbers 22-24. *22:38; 23:5, 12, 16, 26; 24:13. (See also Dt. 18:18-20; Is. 51:16; Jer. 1:9; Lk 1:68-70; Ac. 1:16; 3:21)

2. So if it was not of the will of man from where did the prophecy come? What was the source of the words these men wrote down? The Bible teaches that **the Holy Spirit is the source.** Acts 1:16; 2Pe. 1:21; 2Tim 3:16.

If man was not the source of Scripture than who was? In verse 21 the Bible clearly says, "holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." The word *moved* is the only verb describing how the Holy Spirit used these men. The word *moved* means 'born along'. Like a ship born along by the wind. (Acts 27:15, 17)

2Tim. 3:16 "All scripture is given by inspiration of God,..." Inspiration = *theopneustos* (thēh-op'-nyoo-stos) = *God-breathed*. *Theopneustos* is a compound to two Greek words: *theos*, meaning "God," and *pneustos* (from *pneuo*- "to breathe, to blow") which, depending on context, can mean "air, breath, or spirit." The literal translation is "God breathed." The emphasis is on how God gave the words not on how man received the words. "All scripture is God-breathed." It is important to note that man did not write the words and then God breathed upon those words. But these men were 'born along' as the Holy Spirit breathed out,

or exhaled, the words. God breathed out the very words and had men write them down. What the original Bible authors wrote was not just the thoughts of deeply religious men, nor was it their words or their will or their interpretation. The Scriptures are the breath of God. Paul says the Scriptures are:

- God's speech. (Ga. 3:8, 22; Rom. 9:17)
- God is the author of what is written. (Acts 13:32-35)
- The entirety of Scripture is God's speech. (Rom. 3:2)

All throughout Scripture the Bible claims to be written by God. So often does it refer to God speaking we almost don't notice it. In the Old Testament alone:

And God said = 30 times

Saith the Lord = 803 times

God spake = 9 times

The Lord hath spoken = 31 times

The Lord spake = 142 times

The Lord said = 220 times

The Lord God said = 4 times

The angel of the Lord said = 10 times

The angel of the Lord spake = 1 times

And the Word of the Lord came to...saying = 18 times

Thus speaketh the Lord = 6 times

This equals a total of 1,274 instances. There are 23,145 verses in the O.T. That means on average the Bible claims to be written by God, on average, every 18 verses in the O.T. (See Haggai.)

What about the inspiration of the New Testament?

Hebrews 1:1 In the Old Testament God spoke in many ways to the prophets. God became man, John 1:1, 14, The Word became man and dwelt among men. Jesus Christ, the Word Himself, spoke to man Himself. Divine teachings are preserved in the N.T. Jesus' authoritative teachings are preserved and he commissioned his disciples to pass them along. Mk 13:9-11; Mt 28:18-20; Lk 24:44-49; Ac 1:8; Jn 14:26; 15:25-16:3; 20:21; 17:20.

Peter recognizes Paul as writing Scripture: 2Pe 3:15-16

Paul quotes Luke as Scripture: 1Ti 5:18 (Lk 10:7)

The doctrine of inspiration must also be applied to the teachings of individual writers. The Old Testament Law, for example, was not Moses' idea. Moses was not trying to make things difficult for the Israelites. The Law was not Moses' idea. The words of Paul were not simply his ideas. (1 Co. 7:6, 10, 12, 25. These are not merely the opinions of Paul but the inspired, God-breathed, words put into Paul's mouth.)

3. The Bible asserts that **the writings, not the writers, are inspired**. 2Tim. 3:16, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God,..." It is the writings, not the writers that are inspired. Scripture clearly reveals to us the failures and sin of many of the Bible writers. Moses, Paul, John, etc. were not always, everywhere inspired. The writers themselves

were not inerrant. The God-breathed writings were without error. The word *scripture* in v. 16 is the word *graphé*. It means all of the writings in full. This word is found 51 times in the N.T. In every case it refers to the scriptures as a whole. All scripture, in its fullness, is inspired of God. This is where the Bible teaches the 'plenary' inspiration of the scripture. Plenary is a Latin word that means full, entire, complete.

In v. 15 the Bible says, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures..."

The Greek word here for 'scriptures' is the word *grammata*. This word is found 15 times in the N.T. and 9 of those times it is translated *letters*. (Lk 23:38; Jn 5:47; 7:15; Acts 28:21; Rom. 2:27, 29; 7:6; 2Co. 3:6; Gal. 6:11). Every word (every letter) was inspired by God.

The Inspiration of Scripture Extends to Every Word

Ezekiel 26:7-13 In 585 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar laid siege for 13 years to the city of Tyre and destroyed the mainland. He did not destroy those who fled to an island ½ mile away. 240 years later, Alexander the Great used the rubble and made a causeway to the island and conquered the island. Verses 8-11 use the pronoun 'he' referring to Nebuchadnezzar. In v. 12 the pronoun changes to 'they'. This would indicate the prophecy taking place in two stages, especially with the ability of hindsight.

Heb. 2:6-8, the writer is keying in on the word 'all' from Ps. 8:6.

Gal. 3:16 'seed', not 'seeds'. (Ge. 12:7; 13:15; 17:9) Paul stresses the word is singular, not plural.

C.H. Spurgeon

"I believe in the verbal inspiration of Scripture; hence, I can see how there can be instruction for us even in the proper names of persons and of places. Those who reject verbal inspiration must in effect condemn the great apostle of the Gentiles, whose teaching is so frequently based upon a word. He makes more of words and names than any of us should have thought of doing, and he was guided therein by the Spirit of the Lord, and therefore he was right. For my part, I am far more afraid of making too little of the Word than of seeing too much in it. (February 8, 1884, AGES Software • Albany, OR USA • Version 1.0 © 1997 Hartland Publications • Rapidan, VA USA)

The Writers of Scripture

The Bible speaks of the writers as the agents of the Holy Spirit. The scripture came through their agency, not their origin. Acts 1:16. The Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of His agent, David. 1Peter 1:6-12 (**11**); Acts 15:28; 1Co. 2:13. The writers understood that the Holy Spirit was the source. They spake as they were moved or 'born along'. Question: Does that statement imply the loss of those men's personalities when they wrote? Does 'born along'

mean 'mechanical dictation'? The scripture bares out that the Holy Spirit used the writers personalities, experiences, histories, styles, vocabularies and research. Inspiration is truly a miracle.

If you acknowledge that inspiration allows the Holy Spirit to use these men as individuals it solves a number of issues.

1. Content differences between parallel accounts. Mt. 4:18-22 / Lk. 5:2-11; Mt. 6:9-13 / Lk. 11:2-4. (Mt 3:16/Mk 1:10; Mt. 14:1/Mk 6:14) How do you account for 'additions', 'subtractions', or 'transpositions'? The Holy Spirit employed these men as agents but allowed them freedom in conjunction with their individuality. (Not as author Lee McDonald says that Matthew and Luke were "...changing or adapting their sources to fit their own aims.")

Mt 27:37 THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Mr 15:26 THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Lu 23:38 THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.

Joh 19:19 JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS

"THIS IS JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS"

2. Verbal differences. The Holy Spirit employees the vocabulary of the authors. Matthew was a tax collector so it makes sense that he refers to money in 20 verses while money is referred to only 6 and 12 times in Mark and Luke respectively. By one scholars count, Luke uses 261 words not found anywhere else in the N.T. Luke's occupation was that of a doctor. Also quotation marks, ellipsis, brackets and footnotes were not used in biblical writing. Inspiration does not guarantee verbatim quotation. Inspiration guarantees that every word written is the word the Holy Spirit breathed out in that passage. The Holy Spirit has the liberty to breathe out a quotation verbatim or to breathe out a paraphrase.
3. Stylistic differences. Ezekiel v. Amos or Hebrews v. James.
4. The writers expressing their own experiences, views or research, i.e. Ecclesiastes.

What is The Inspired Scripture?

Assertion: We do not have any inerrant manuscripts or any inerrant translations. Is there a difference between not having an inerrant translation and not having a reliable translation? Yes, a great difference.

Scripture teaches that all of its contents, down to the letter, are breathed out by the Spirit of God. It denies that any of it is from any human source. It asserts that the Holy Spirit is the source.

All of our Bible is inspired. But not all of the content came through revelation. Sometimes it was through man's experience and opinion, but never-the-less, through inspiration. All the passages carry equal weight and are binding. "All scripture is given by inspiration..."

There are statements in the Bible that may not be true, i.e. Satan's statements. It is still inspired. The Bible is *inerrant* and *infallible*.

What does that mean as pertaining to copies? Do we have inerrant copies? Do we have reliable copies? What is the inspired Scripture?

Technically, scripturally, inspiration extended to the original manuscripts or autographs. The Bible does not claim inspiration to copies or translations. The Bible does not teach double inspiration or perpetual inspiration.

"Concerning the fact of difference between the Revised and the Authorized Versions, I would say that no Baptist should ever fear any honest attempt to produce the correct text, and an accurate interpretation of the Old and New Testaments. For many years Baptists have insisted upon it that we ought to have the Word of God translated in the best possible manner, whether it would confirm certain religious opinions and practices, or work against them. All we want is the exact mind of the Spirit, as far as we can get it. Beyond all other Christians we are concerned in this, seeing we have no other sacred book; we have no prayer book or binding creed, or authoritative minutes of conference; we have nothing but the Bible; and we would have that as pure as ever we can get it. By the best and most honest scholarship that can be found we desire that the common version may be purged of every blunder of transcribers, or addition of human ignorance, or human knowledge, that so the word of God may come to us as it came from his own hand." (C.H. Spurgeon, Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, vol. 27, pp. 439. AGES Software • Albany, OR USA • Version 1.0 © 1997 Hartland Publications • Rapidan, VA USA)

"Where in the Bible does God guarantee that any translator of the Bible, anyone who copies the Bible, anyone who preaches the Bible, or anyone who teaches the Bible, will be infallibly correct?

There is no such Scripture. The doctrine of infallibility of the translation in the King James is not a Bible doctrine; it is a manmade scheme by some partly ignorant and some partly influenced by bad motives." (John R. Rice, *Sword of the Lord*, March 30, 1979, pp. 3)

"Now to the latter we answer; that we do not deny, nay we affirm and avow, that the very meanest translation of the Bible in English, set forth by men of our profession, ... containeth the word of God, nay, is the word of God. ... No cause therefore why the word translated should be denied to be the word, or forbidden to be current, notwithstanding that

some imperfections and blemishes may be noted in the setting forth of it. For what ever was perfect under the Sun, where Apostles or Apostolic men, that is, men endued with an extraordinary measure of God's spirit, and privileged with the privilege of infallibility, had not their hand? (The King James Translators, The Translators to the Reader, pp. XIX.)

The word 'inspired' needs to be confined to the original works. However, you can confidently say your bible is the inspired Word of God, in so far as a translation is free from copyist, printer's, and translator's errors, what we have reflects the inspired Word of God.

The extreme care of the copyists, the number of manuscripts and the ancient age of the manuscripts gives us assurance that what we have is the Word of God.

A translation may be called accurately the Word of God and may be relied upon to be accurate and authoritative even though it is not inerrant.

If you have any question about whether your Bible is the Word of God just read it.

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