

# Biblical Inspiration



# Meaning of Inspiration

- The word inspiration comes from the Greek word *theopneustos* and is used only once in the New Testament (1 Timothy 3:16). In that text, it refers to the Old Testament writings as being God breathed (breathed out by God).

# Biblical Inspiration

- The revelation of God through inspiration (God breathed) has to do with what God has said.
- How did God speak to Adam? To Noah? To Abraham? To Moses? To David? To the Prophets?
- God spoke audibly, through visions, dreams, physical appearances, and **through Scripture (had men write down His message).**

# God is True = Scripture is True

- Because God is true (Romans 3:4); Scripture is God breathed (2 Timothy 3:16); therefore, All Scripture is true (John 17:17).
- Therefore, Scripture is authoritative.

# All of Scripture is Inspired by God

- **Verbally Inspired** – in word form
- **Plenary** – complete – all Scripture is inspired, not just parts of it
- **Inerrant** – Error free

# Revelation Through Words

- God spoke to man (e.g., the prophets) through words that they could understand.
- So when the prophets spoke or wrote what God said –they wrote and spoke exactly what God wanted to be said.

# Speaking the Words of God

- **2 Samuel 23:2** “The Spirit of the LORD speaks by me; his word is on my tongue.
- **Jeremiah 1:9** 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.

# God Speaking Through Scripture

- **1 Corinthians 2:10** these things God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God.
- **1 Corinthians 2:11** For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him? So also no one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God.



# God Speaking Through Scripture

- **1 Corinthians 2:13** And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who are spiritual.

# God Speaking Through Scripture

- **1 Timothy 3:15** 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.

# God Speaking Through Scripture

- **1 Timothy 3:16** All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,
- **1 Timothy 3:17** that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

# God Speaking Through Scripture

- **1 Peter 1:20** knowing this first of all, that no **prophecy of Scripture** comes from someone's own interpretation.
- **1 Peter 1:21** 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.**

# Writers Could Not Omit One Word

**Writers could not omit one word – (Jeremiah 26:2; Revelation 22:18,19)**

**Jeremiah 26:2** “Thus says the LORD: Stand in the court of the LORD's house, and speak to all the cities of Judah that come to worship in the house of the LORD **all the words that I command you to speak to them; do not hold back a word.**

# Writers Could Not Omit One Word

- **Revelation 22:18** I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: **if anyone adds to them**, God will add to him the plagues described in this book,
- **Revelation 22:19** and if anyone takes away from the **words of the book of this prophecy**, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

# Biblical Prophecy: Proof of Inspiration

Old Testament Prophecy	Old Testament Reference	New Testament Reference
He would be called Emmanuel	Isa. 7:14	Mt. 1:23
He would be born of a virgin	Isa. 7:14	Mt. 1:22, 23
He would be born in Bethlehem	Mic. 5:2	Mt. 2:5, 6; Lk. 2:4, 5
Murder of infants	Jer. 31:15	Mt. 2:16-18
He would be born of a woman	Gen. 3:15	Lk. 2:7; Gal. 4:4
He would be from the tribe of Judah	Gen. 49:10	Heb. 7:14; Rev. 5:5

# Biblical Prophecy: Proof of Inspiration

Old Testament Prophecy	Old Testament Reference	New Testament Reference
He would be from the line of Abraham	Gen. 12:3, 7; 17:7	Rom. 9:5; Gal. 3:16
He would be from the house of David	2 Sam. 7:12, 13	Lk. 1:31-33; Rom. 1:3
John the Baptist would be His forerunner	Isa. 40:3-5; Mal. 3:1	Mt. 3:1-3; Lk. 1:76-78; 3:3-6
He would speak in parables	Isa. 6:9, 10	Mt. 13:10-15
He would be the rejected cornerstone	Psa. 118:22, 23	Mt. 21:42
He would be forsaken by His disciples	Zech. 13:7	Mt. 26:31, 56



# Appendix (Inspiration Case Evidence)



# Revelation => Inspired Writing

- **Creation cries out that there is a God.**
- The **heavens declare the glory of God**, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork (Psalm 19:1).
- For his invisible attributes, namely, **his eternal power and divine nature**, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. **So they are without excuse.** (Romans 1:20).

# Revelation => Inspired Writing

- God spoken and He has spoken all the words in the sixty-six books of the Bible.
- Biblical revelation was transmitted through the mind of men and communicated with their pens on paper

# Revelation => Inspired Writing

- **Ephesians 3:1** For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—
- **Ephesians 3:2** assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace **that was given to me for you,**
- **Ephesians 3:3** how the mystery was **made known to me by revelation,** as I have written briefly.

# Revelation => Inspired Writing

- **Ephesians 3:4** When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ,
- **Ephesians 3:5** which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

# Revelation => Inspired Writing

- For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace which was given to me for you; that **by revelation** there was **made known to me** the mystery, **as I wrote** before in brief. By referring to this, **when you read you can understand** my insight into the mystery of Christ”  
(Ephesian 3:1-4)

# Revelation => Inspired Writing

- In the before mentioned (Ephesians 3:1–4), we see that God revealed His message to Paul and when he wrote that message down – he expected the readers to understand exactly what God had revealed to Him.

# The Holy Spirit Guided Men

- The biblical record reveals that both God the Holy Spirit and man were jointly involved in the writing of Scripture.
- Hear Peter: "Brethren, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the **Holy Spirit foretold by the mouth of David** concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus (Acts 1:16).



# The Holy Spirit Guided Men

- Again, “who **by the Holy Spirit, through** the **mouth of** our father **David** Your servant, said...” (Acts 4:25a).
- Lastly, hear Paul: “The **Holy Spirit rightly spoke through Isaiah the prophet** to your fathers...” (Acts 28:25b).

# God Said

- The biblical record is obviously referring to the exact words of God since it can be observed that the Bible has such phrases as: “**God said**” (46x), “**Lord said**” (218x), “**Thus saith the LORD**” (413x), “**The Lord said**” (219x), “**The Lord spake**” (147x) and “The word of the Lord came” (92x). These expressions would seem to mean that God’s words were to be communicated exactly.

# God Said

- The prophets and apostles were under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit when they penned the 66 books of the Bible.
- God probably spoke to the mind of the prophet and apostles e.g., “The word of the Lord came to me, saying...” (Jeremiah 1:4).

# Every Word Inspired

- Jesus emphasized the importance of every single word in Scripture by basing His entire argument on the verb tense in the sentence (Matthew 22:31, 32) and by indicating that "not the smallest letter or stroke shall pass from the Law until all is accomplished" (Matthew 5:18). These ideas dismiss the assertions that only the thoughts of God are expressed in Scripture.

# Holy Spirit Was Promised to Speak Through the Apostles of Jesus

- “I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. “But when He, the **Spirit of truth**, comes, **He will guide you** into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and **He will disclose to you** what is to come. “He will glorify Me, for He will take of Mine and **will disclose it to you** (John 16:12-14).

# Holy Spirit Was Promised to Speak Through the Apostles of Jesus

- We glean that the Holy Spirit brought back to their remembrance the Words of Jesus when He was with them and revealed new knowledge to them as well. Their oral and written messages were infallible because they spoke and wrote as they were directed by the Holy Spirit.

# Case Evidence

- For the duration of this presentation we will present arguments which support some kind of “dictation” (not mechanical) and the plenary verbal view.
- We will provide case evidence and make a determination as to which view the case falls under.
- \* Dictation does not have to involve the “mechanical” control of a person.

# The Case of Genesis

- This book is ascribed to Moses, however, it contains some events which occurred 2500 years before he was born. How could Moses have written about events in which he was, in some cases, about 2500 years removed, and even more, certain events which only God (and perhaps angels c.f. Job 38:4-7) was present e.g. the creation of the world.



# The Case of Genesis

- This would seem to suggest that the words which Moses penned were dictated to him in some way. He would have to have an omniscient point of view. Observing that it is written from an omniscient point of view is important because he mentions details as if he were present.

# The Case of Genesis

- Furthermore, while we have creation stories and flood stories that have been captured throughout history – none are exactly like what Moses recorded. How could he have recorded such details without being under the guidance of the Holy Spirit?

# The Case of Genesis

- When a secretary or court reporter writes or types the words being spoken – they are not viewed as “machines”. They still possess personality, but they must still write the words that they hear – exactly as they hear them. This must have been the case when Moses wrote the book of Genesis. Surely, God did not leave it to him to use only the oral traditions (history) that had been passed down through the years.

# The Case of God and the Ten Commandments

- “Then God spoke all these words, saying” (Exodus 20:1). Obviously, God had Moses write his message down word-for-word.

# The Case of Balaam

- Balak wants Balaam to curse the people of God. But, Balaam appears to be compelled only to speak those things which God allows.

# The Case of Balaam

- “Then the LORD put a word in Balaam’s mouth and said, “Return to Balak, and you shall speak thus.” (Numbers 23:5).
- “He replied, “**Must I not be careful to speak what the LORD puts in my mouth?**” (Numbers 23:12)
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# The Case of Balaam

- Could Balaam have spoken anything other than what God put in his mouth? We would have to conclude that he could not but speak what God “made” his mouth to speak.

# The Case of the Inspired Donkey

- And **the LORD opened the mouth of the donkey**, and she said to Balaam, "**What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?**" Then Balaam said to the donkey, "Because you have made a mockery of me! If there had been a sword in my hand, I would have killed you by now." **The donkey said** to Balaam, "**Am I not your donkey on which you have ridden all your life to this day? Have I ever been accustomed to do so to you?**" And he said, "No."  
(Numbers 22:28-30).



# The Case of the Inspired Donkey

- One would have to conclude that the donkey is under the direction of the Holy Spirit. “Oral dictation” has to be the means.

# The Case of the Prophets

- Obviously, dictation to a greater degree since they are speaking and writing about things which, in some cases, they did not have a clear understanding about.
- Peter writing along these lines observed:

# The Case of the Prophets

- As to this salvation, **the prophets who prophesied** of the grace that would come to you **made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know** what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow (1 Peter 1:10-11).

# The Case of the Prophets

- The above makes it clear that the prophets wrote about things which they did not have a perfect understanding and in some cases – no understanding. Again, this would seem to point to some kind of dictation.

# The Case of Jeremiah

- “The word which came to Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Write all the words which I have spoken to you in a book. “Thus says the LORD, ‘Stand in the court of the LORD’S house, and speak to all the cities of Judah who have come to worship in the LORD’S house all the words that I have commanded you to speak to them. **Do not omit a word!**”

# The Case of Jeremiah

- Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah, and Baruch **wrote on a scroll at the dictation of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD which He had spoken to him**. And they asked Baruch, saying, “Tell us, please, how did you write all these words? Was it at his dictation?”

# The Case of Jeremiah

- Then Baruch said to them, “**He dictated all these words to me, and I wrote them** with ink on the book” This is the message which Jeremiah the prophet spoke to Baruch the son of Neriah, **when he had written down these words in a book at Jeremiah's dictation**, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah, king of Judah, saying” (Jeremiah 26:2; 30:1,2; 36:4, 18; 45:1).

# The Case of Jeremiah

- Did not Jeremiah have to communicate exactly what God had revealed to him? Likewise, did not Baruch have to write exactly what Jeremiah said to him?



# Case of the Apostles

- “But when they hand you over, do not worry about how or what you are to say; **for it will be given you in that hour what you are to say.** “For it is not you who speak, but it is the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you (Matthew 10:19-20).

# Case of the Apostles

- If the apostles were not to think or worry about what they were going to say, one would have to conclude that some kind of oral dictation was going to take place when they spoke.

# The Case of John on the Isle of Patmos

- John could have written only what was revealed to him by God since the things which he wrote about had not come to pass yet. Furthermore, John was instructed to write what Jesus told him, yet in verses 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22 of the book of Revelation, the text says, “hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

# The Case of John on the Isle of Patmos

- Obviously, John was guided by the Holy Spirit to write Jesus' instructions to the churches. One could conclude that John wrote word-for-word that which the Holy Spirit guided him to write.

# Plenary Verbal Case Evidence

- “Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile an account of the things accomplished among us, just as they were **handed down** to us by those who from the beginning were **eyewitnesses** and servants of the word” (Luke 1:1,2).

# The Case of Luke

- To some extent Luke gathered information from eyewitnesses, as it related to the life of Christ. As he stated in the second document which he wrote concerning Jesus, while referring to the first: “The first account I composed, Theophilus, about all that Jesus began to do and teach, until the day when He was taken up to heaven” (Acts 1:1,2a)

# The Case of Luke

- Luke, as a historian, researched the information which he presented in his writings. However, one must also acknowledge that some of the information presented could only have been written with the aid of the Holy Spirit. And dare we say, he was “guided” along as he used the information which he researched.

# The Case of Luke

- The end product of Luke's labor was still the very word of God. Obviously, in Luke's case dictation was not the main means by which he recounted the life of Jesus and the history of the early church (Luke-Acts).



# The Case of Luke

- While Luke used some other materials in his writing of Luke-Acts, the Holy Spirit guided the writing process and therefore, the end result was without error.

# The Case of Paul's Words

- There were obvious cases when individuals wrote to Paul and once he received the **uninspired letter** (1 Cor 7:1) – he (Paul) responded to the uninspired letter by writing an **inspired letter** which was personal, yet ultimately guided by the Holy Spirit, thus inspired by God.

# The Case of Paul's Words

- This is the only way one could explain his “judgement calls” (1 Cor. 7:25); “memory slips” (1 Cor. 1:14-16) and request for personal items (2 Tim. 4). For example, could not the Holy Spirit allow him to remember those whom he baptized in Corinth? But, this provides proof for the plenary verbal inspiration view. God used Paul's personality and experiences to write Scripture (i.e., scriptural letters).

# The Case of Paul's Words

- Paul affirmed the fact that he was writing under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. “If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment” (1 Corinthians 14:37).

# The Case of the Gospel Writers

- Also, the fact that each gospel writer wrote about the exact same event differently points to the fact that not all (or not even most) of Scripture was dictated. Note the example below.

# The Case of the Gospel Writers

- And above His head they put up the charge against Him which read, "**THIS IS JESUS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**" (Matthew 27:37)
- 
- The inscription of the charge against Him read, "**THE KING OF THE JEWS.**" (Mark 15:26)
- 
- Now there was also an inscription above Him, "**THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.**" (Luke 23:38).
- Pilate also wrote an inscription and put it on the cross. It was written, "**JESUS THE NAZARENE, THE KING OF THE JEWS.**" (John 19:19).

# The Case of Tertius

- “**I, Tertius, who write this letter**, greet you in the Lord” (Romans 16:22).
- This last case seems to represent both dictation and plenary verbal view. When one takes note of the greetings at the end of his letter to the Romans, one sees the personal nature of this letter and yet, the need for Tertius to write exactly what Paul dictated to him.

# Conclusion

- The doctrine of inspiration is an extremely complex matter. Therefore, total comprehension from a human perspective is not possible. One can only assess the evidence of the revelation which has been made available and draw a reasonable conclusion.



# Conclusion

- The evidence supports the view that the Bible is plenary (totally and completely) verbally (every single word) inspired. The fact that God instructed men to write exactly what he told them without omitting one word indicates that portions were dictated.

# Conclusion

- But, that doesn't mean that they were mechanical robots during their writing. Because we see the emotional and heart of the writer, we must conclude that God used their whole personality and experiences. Because it is divinely written – it lacks error.

# Conclusion

- The message of God to man was in the very words which holy men wrote. God instructed Moses to write: "You shall not add to the word which I am commanding you, nor take away from it" (Deuteronomy 4:2). Surely, this applies to the whole of God's communication to man – the Bible.

# Conclusion

- The evidence shows that portions of the Bible were dictated in some way to the writers so that the very words of God would be expressed.

# Conclusion

- It is our contention that inspiration involved God's directing the words of the writers, so that they were exactly the words that He wanted to be written down. At times these words were very specific; at other times the words were more general.

# Conclusion

- God breathed out His word to holy men whose minds were carried along by the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 27:15–17).

# Inspiration Illustrated

- The proper view of inspiration may be seen in the concluding illustration. Woodwind instruments come in different shapes and produce different sounds. If one was to blow into a trumpet, saxophone and tuba, there would be three distinct sounds made. Even if the same song were played and the same notes were played – each instrument would never sound like the other.

# Inspiration Illustrated

- If we were to imagine God as the blower and the Bible writers as the instruments, we can see how God used the different human instruments with different personalities to write a unifying message. So, even though the same God spoke, He blew through about forty different human authors, who wrote His message.



# Inspiration Illustrated

- Thus, even though the humans were speaking, it was still God speaking through them. That is the only conclusion one could conclude based on the evidence. Humanly written, but divinely inspired—through and through.