

The Bible The Men God Used

Since I am not a handyman, when I need something done around the house I seek to find an individual with the correct qualifications. The Lord knew that Peter had the qualifications needed to open the door to the Gentiles, but it was Paul who had the qualifications to develop them. Each had their own work. When it came to writing the epistles or recording events such as the gospels, the experiences or biographies of people, God used men of high spiritual character. He describes them as “holy men” (2 Pet. 1:21); “holy prophets” (Lk. 1:70; Acts 3:21; Eph. 3:3-5; 2 Pet. 3:2; Rev. 22:6), and in the Old Testament they were known as:

- a) “A man of God”, indicating he was chosen and characterized by that which is of God. (1 Kgs. 12:22)
- b) “A servant” of the Lord, indicating he was faithful to God irrespective whether his message was received or not. (1 Kgs. 14:18)
- c) “A messenger” of the Lord, indicating he was sent from God with a particular message for a particular people, at a particular time. (Isa. 42:19)
- d) “A seer” or “prophet” (chozeh), indicating that his insight was from God. (2 Sam. 24:11; Isa. 30:9-10). There were several Hebrew words, another being “Nabiý” (Gen. 20:7).
- e) “A man of the Spirit”, indicating that he spoke by the spirit of God. (Hos. 9:7; Mic. 3:8)
- f) “A watchman”, indicating his responsibility before God toward the people. (Ezek. 3:17)

There have been many sacred works given to fallen man but I suggest none has been more honorable and needing more of the controlling power of the Holy Spirit than that of being God’s penman in the writing of the scriptures. The responsibility was great for these were the oracles of God, many of which were the very words of God, and all was material which He deemed of eternal importance. How did God cause these men to write, and to what extent were they inspired? Several observations are to be made:

- a) They were not robots mechanically being used by the Holy Spirit. Indeed, their own characteristics, background, and experiences, etc., were all brought into play. In the building of the Tabernacle Bezaleel was highly skilled, but to do this work required more than human skill. He had to be “filled with the Spirit” (Ex. 31:2-3; 35:30-31), and without Him they could never have done what they did.
- b) Balaam is another example of a man speaking under the power of God. It is recorded: “The Lord put a word in Balaam’s mouth” (Num. 23:5), and that which God gave him to say is in Numbers 23:7-10.
- c) Caiaphas spoke without realizing he was God’s mouthpiece when he said: “It is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation” (Jn. 11:50-51).
- d) Of the writers it is stated: “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost” (2 Pet. 1:21). They were “moved” and the word is translated “brought” (Acts 14:13); “upholding” (Heb. 1:3), thus indicating they were brought along by the Spirit and He upheld them. Putting it in New Testament language, they were “led by the Spirit” (Rom. 8:14; Gal. 5:18).
- e) We must never state that God gave the doctrine and broad outlines, and left the men free to express the truths in their own words. Such would make some parts of divine origin and other parts of human origin. This would leave the door wide open to debate, for while the concepts were inspired, how do we know the men fully understood the idea and infused it with their own understanding? To do so is to deprive them of their authority apart from the impossible task of mere man determining what was of God, and what was of man. God is too particular to let that happen so that:
 - i) Every word as originally given were inspired.
 1. “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth.” (1 Cor. 2:13)
 2. “He whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God.” (Jn. 3:34)
 3. “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.” (Rev. 22:19)
 4. The smallest letter “jot” and the ornamental crowns “tittle” were inspired so that not one would pass away. (Matt. 5:18; Lk. 16:17)

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The prophecy was not of private interpretation, that is, it did not originate with man, nor was it a continual experience of the prophet. The scriptures were given as the sovereign God determined, and it was only when God was pleased for any man to record material that was of eternal value, the man was caused to write it. For instance, Ezekiel starts by telling of that which happened in the thirtieth year (Ezek. 1:1); then “in the sixth year, in the sixth month, in fifth day” (ch. 8:1). See other dates in chapter 20:1; 24:1; 29:1, 17. Note that between chapter 19:1 and verse 17 there is a seventeen year gap. Causing men to write was not continuous.

Neither was it passed from father to son. The revelation never went beyond the recipient. God selected the family of Aaron to be priests, but no family were selected to be prophets.

When we read the scriptures we are reading that which God determined would be of value for His purposes, the restoration of fallen man to Himself, and man’s spiritual development.

**May God grant us good understanding as He, by His Holy Spirit, deigns to guide us into all truth.
John 16:13**

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