

The Bible The Inspiration Of The Scriptures

Introduction

God has always been the communicating God.

- a) In eternity past the Lord was the “Word” (Jn. 1:1-3), a title which signifies communication. It not only indicates what He was, but what He did. While we are not informed about many of the affairs of eternity past, yet the One who became the man Jesus was eternally the revealer of the will of God.
- b) When He created the universe we are informed that the sun, moon, and stars were for “signs” (Lk. 21:25). This is a truth borne out by the Psalmist when He wrote: “The heavens declare the glory of God” (Psa. 19:1) and “His righteousness” (Psa. 97:6). Years later Paul wrote of creation saying: “For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse” (Rom. 1:20). God communicates through nature.
- c) When our Lord was on earth God communicated through His Son (Jn. 15:15). Our Lord used three methods of communication, namely preaching, teaching, and miracles. It has been pointed out that:
 - i) When He was preaching there was the proclamation of the gospel which was generally to the multitudes.
 - ii) When he was teaching it was an exposition of the gospel and it was generally to the disciples.
 - iii) When He performed miracles they were for the illustration of the gospel and they also were for the people in general.
- d) The third method of communication God used and uses today is His Word. Christianity is based on the impregnable rock of Holy Scripture. No other book is comparable with it for no other book is divine in its origin. The scriptures come from God, as Paul preached: “Those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled” (Acts 3:18; 2 Tim. 3:16). Therefore, because they are from God, every doctrine we profess and its accompanying practical living must be based on the scriptures of truth. If there is any surrendering, diverging, or ignoring of the verbal inspiration of the scriptures, then humanity is left like a rudderless boat in a storm swept sea.
- e) Some of the descriptive terms referring to the scriptures are:

Name	Reference	Name	Reference
The Book	Heb. 10:7	The Book of the Lord	Isa. 34:16
The Word of the Lord	1 Sam. 3:1	The Word of God	Lk. 8:11
The Word of Truth	Psa. 119:43	The Scripture	Jn. 7:42
The Scriptures	Matt. 21:42	The Scriptures of truth	Dan. 10:21
The Scriptures of the Prophets	Rom. 16:26	The Holy Scriptures	2 Tim. 3:15
The Statutes of the Lord	Psa. 19:8	The Oracles of God	Rom. 3:2
The Judgments of the Lord	Psa. 19:9	The Testimony of the Lord	Psa. 19:7
The law of the Lord	Psa. 19:7	The Word of Truth	Psa. 119:43

The Bible The Inspiration Of The Scriptures

Except for the time before Moses began writing, the material which God deemed important was protected by the Holy Spirit who likewise, in the New Testament, brought all things to remembrance. God is exceedingly jealous of that which bears His name and perhaps overshadowed the men who lived before Moses to only recall in detailed accuracy that which had been revealed or experienced. When God gave the Law it was written for a permanent record of what was said and all that was agreed to. It is my understanding that just as the Spirit overshadowed Mary and the child was conceived is a mystery, we accept but cannot explain the same with the inspiration of the scriptures. Holy men on their own could not be relied upon to communicate and record without error, therefore, the work of the Holy Spirit was necessary for inspiration and preservation.

When Adam sinned the fellowship between he and God was broken, and in the cool of the day they heard the "Voice of the LORD God" (Gen. 3:8) who spoke to them seeking restoration of the fellowship. The communications from God continued throughout the Old Testament as the prophets constantly repeated: "Thus said the Lord" (see table below). Therefore, it is to be expected that God would continue communicating when the Lord was here (Jn. 5:30; 14:24), and by the Holy Spirit after the Lord went back to Heaven (Jn. 14:26). God spoke, and by inspiration caused truths which were beneficial for the comfort of the saints (Rom. 15:4), warning (1 Cor. 10:5-11), reproof and correction (2 Tim. 3:16-17) to be recorded. The unveiling of new revelation stopped when the scriptures were complete, and there has been no new revelation for almost two thousand years. For the individual who reads and studies the scriptures there is new appreciations or enlightenments, and some were very notable such as Martin Luther and the truth of: "The just shall live by his faith" (Hab. 2:4). However, there has not been, neither will there be new revelations of divine truth, the scriptures are complete.

Unfortunately, the word "inspiration" is very loosely used today, and can refer to an outstanding accomplishment of an individual which can arouse enthusiasm or the emotions. This is not how it is used regarding the scriptures. The inspiration of the scriptures and the compiling of them is not by the spiritual status of the individual, the venerableness of the writings due to antiquity, the importance of the theme, the adherence to Jewish understanding or conformity to an individual or nation. Just as Moses was given the gift of knowledge to know what to do with the man who gathered sticks on the Sabbath (Num. 15:32-35), so these men who compiled the scriptures by the Spirit of God "instinctively" recognized certain writings were from God. Furthermore, inspiration is not the development of any outstanding ability of an individual. It is a work of God from beginning to end. 2 Timothy 3:16 states: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God". The Greek word translated "Scripture" normally means "writing", but because of the context, it is used in a technical term for the Jewish sacred books. Much the same way as we understand that the word "Bible" is an ordinary word, yet to us it has a technical meaning, that is the sacred books of Scripture. Since much of the New Testament had not yet been written, or only recently written, and by the context of that which Timothy would have been brought up learning (2 Tim. 3:15), this verse applies to the Old Testament. However, in 2 Peter 3:16 the writings of Paul are ranked with the other Scriptures and are themselves called "Scriptures". One can also compare this with Romans 16:25, 26; 1 Timothy 5:18; and Luke 24:27. The Greek word for "Scripture" is used over 50 times in the New Testament for the holy Scriptures, and used exclusively toward them.

Statement	Occurrences
The Word of the LORD	255
And the LORD said	163
Thus saith the LORD	413
The word of God	45
The commandments of the Lord	24
And God said	30

The Bible
The Inspiration Of The Scriptures

Statement	Occurrences
The Lord spake	144

The Definition of Inspiration

Inspiration was the work of God in determining and selecting the words, mood, tense, lettering accents, prepositions, repetitions, personal or general terms, etc., for the intellectual and spiritual blessing of humanity. It means that which is recorded, irrespective of the original speaker, has the endorsement of Himself, not by a council of men but by its fidelity and life. Inspiration relates to the reception of divine truth and the accuracy of its translation for God does not change. Consequently, a true translation must strive not to be modern but to be as accurate as possible in the wording, etc., of the language used in the original scriptures.

It must be noted that nowhere in the scriptures are the scriptures presented as the writings of “inspired” men. It is the scriptures which are inspired, not the men. These men recorded events which, under the work of the Spirit, became the “holy Scriptures” (Rom. 1:2; 2 Tim. 3:15). Although God used men, inspiration did not apply to everything they wrote or said. Paul wrote four letters to the Corinthians, but only two of them are inspired by God. John heard “thunders” but was not permitted to reveal what was contained in them, thus showing that inspiration goes only to the revelation that there are thunders, but not to their contents (Rev. 10:4). Furthermore, inspiration did not suspend their natural personalities, idiosyncrasies, or personalities, neither were they in an unconscious state (although God spoke through visions and dreams). They did not record the events and communications in a trance.

The Extent of Inspiration in The Men God Used

The men the Holy Spirit used were “holy men of God” / “holy prophets” (2 Pet. 1:21; Lk. 1:70; Acts 3:21; 2 Pet. 3:2), that is the Old Testament prophets. The same definition is used of those in the New Testament, for they also are designated “holy” (Eph 3:5; Rev. 22:6). By the activity of the Spirit of God they were entirely preserved from error in what they recorded relative to the subject, the words, the form, and the order of the words in which that was expressed. The result was that the end collection of writings contained not only the very words of God, but is truly the word of God, the communications of God produced and exclusively the work of God.

It must be understood these men were not just given a concept from God and left to put it in their own phraseology. They were borne along by the Holy Spirit: “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved (phero, that is to be borne along) by the Holy Ghost (2 Pet. 1:20-21). Paul wrote: “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (1 Cor. 2:13). Perhaps an illustration may help. If an employer told his secretary to write the following: “Gentlemen, we misunderstood your order and will now fulfill it”. What difference would it make if the secretary made a difference in one tiny letter. Consider, “Gentlemen, we misunderstood your order and will not fulfill it”. How different the meaning. The message was clearly given, and the words were plainly spoken, but the secretary being human had made an error. God would not let that happen to the scriptures, but oversaw the very writing of the original scriptures down to the very smallest jot and tittle.

The Extent of Inspiration

There is a danger already hinted at which must be clarified. Some would say that while the doctrine is of God the writers were left to express it in their own words, and that some parts are of divine origin and some of human. The parts which come from God are authoritative and the passages which are of human origin are open to debate. The questions then are: “Where is the line to be drawn as to which is of human origin and which is of divine origin?”, and “Who has the ability to determine such a decision?” That line of demarkation would constantly be changing

The Bible
The Inspiration Of The Scriptures

as is seen in Bibles where the words of the Lord are in “red”. For instance, when the Lord was speaking to Nicodemus, where do His words end, it is at the end of verse 15 or 17, or is verse 11 spoken by Nicodemus in retort to the Lord’s words of verse 10? It is either the acceptance that all is God given or an individual or group of men informing us that which they deem to be non debatable or debatable! To what extent were the original scriptures inspired by God? The following table shows the precise carefulness of God in the selecting of the terminology used in the scriptures. It shows in more detail the extent of inspiration and the solemnity of the work of a translator.

The extent of Inspiration	Reference
The words as originally given.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” (1 Cor. 2:13) • “For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God” (Jn. 3:34) • “And if any man shall take away from the words of this book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Rev. 22:19) • “And Moses told Aaron all the WORDS of the LORD who had sent him, and all the signs which he had commanded him” (Ex 4:28) • “And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these WORDS which the LORD commanded him” (Ex 19:7)
The letters were given by God.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “That from a child thou hast known the holy Scriptures.” The word translated “scriptures” is the word “letters” as in Galatians 6:11 • A superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, Latin and Hebrew (Lk. 23:38)
The smallest letter “jot” or “tittle” are inspired.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one <i>jot</i> or one <i>tittle</i> shall in no wise pass from the law till all be fulfilled” (Matt. 5:18)
The repetition of a word is inspired.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verily verily - “And he said unto him, <i>verily verily</i> I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the son of man” (Jn. 1:51) • Word - “In the beginning was the <i>Word</i> and the <i>Word</i> was with God and the <i>Word</i> was God (Jn. 1:1)
The repetition of a clause is inspired	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line upon line, line upon line - “For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, there a little”. (Isa. 28:10, 13) • Not yet - “For John was <i>not yet</i> cast into prison” (Jn. 3:24); “Ye have <i>not yet</i> resisted unto blood” (Heb. 12:4)

The Bible
The Inspiration Of The Scriptures

The extent of Inspiration	Reference
The inclusion of a single word.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • But - “<i>But</i> now we see not yet all things put under him. <i>But</i> we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour” (Heb. 2:8-9) • Yet - “Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: <i>yet</i> we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted” (Isa. 53:4)
The distinctive meaning of the word used and its usage in various contexts.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Lion” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The animal (Jud. 14:5) • The devil (1 Pet. 5:8) • The Lord (Rev. 5:5)
The tense of the word or clause in context.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “I am” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification (Jn. 5:43) • Stressing eternity (Jn. 8:58) • Indicating deity with that which follows (Jn. 14:6) • Stressing purpose (Matt. 5:17)
The “mood” of a word like the word “if”. “If” indicative, it expresses fact, but “if” subjective, it expresses doubt.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “<i>If</i> ye then be risen with Christ seek those things which are above (Col. 3:1) in this case the word if expresses a fact. • “But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, <i>if</i> we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm on to the end” (Heb. 3:6) This “<i>if</i>” expresses doubt.
The noun being singular or plural.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Now to Abraham and his seed, were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, <i>unto thy seed</i>, which is Christ.” (Gal. 3:16)
A phrase.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yet once more - “And this word, <i>yet once more</i> signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain.” (Heb. 12:27)
The changing of a persons name.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abram to Abraham (Gen. 17:5) • Jechoniah to Coniah (Jer. 24:1; Jer. 22:24, 28) • Simon to Peter (Mk. 3:16)

Since inspiration covers all these aspects of grammar we must not regard anything in the word of God as unimportant. Therefore, for a true translation there must not be incorporated any variation in grammatical construction which is not thoroughly authenticated.

The exactness of grammar in the table above so guards the word of God as to forbid the alliteration or omission of a single phrase or word, the changeable voice, mood, or tense on the number, or even to a “jot” of a letter. Expression such as 1 Cor. 7:25; 2 Cor. 8:10 where Paul gives his judgement or advise are not exceptions, for the views expressed have been met with the Holy Spirit’s approval who has caused them to be recorded.

The Bible
The Inspiration Of The Scriptures

In inspiration and translation God has not left it to man to adjust the language to suit modern irreverence, such as, Eve being called a “Sheila”, or Mary as a young lady of marriageable age, or to speak of the sacrificial blood being “thrown”, or changing the word “propitiation” for “atonement”. These are not translations but irreverence to the utmost.

What Was Inspired?

That which God has included in His Word	References
History	Gal. 1:15-2:1
Customs	Tearing the clothes in grief (Gen. 37:29; 2 Sam. 1:2) A covering of dust and ashes (Job 42:6; Ezek. 27:30)
Pagan writers	Titus 1:12
Happenings in heaven pre-creation	Gen. 1:1; Job 38:4-7; Eph. 1:4; 1 Pet. 1:20
Happenings in heaven post creation	Job 1:6-12; Rev. 4:2-5:14
Inclusions	
The genealogical table of 1 Chronicles	1 Chronicles chs 1-9 - There are almost 386 verses and saying phrases such as: “The son of Elkanah, the son of Jeroham, the son of Eliel, the son of Toah” (1 Chron. 6:34). Was that really necessary? God says yes.
The origins of the nations	Gen. 10:1-32
The origins of languages	Gen. 11:1-9
Events and messages in the life of the Lord, some recorded once, some twice, some three times, and only one four times	The almost repetition of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mark in Matthew • Jude with 2 Peter 2 • Last chapters of Colossians with Ephesians.
Exclusions	
The birth and death of Melchizedek	Heb. 7:1-3
The thunders of revelation	Rev. 10:4

The Bible
The Inspiration Of The Scriptures

Personal communications	References
To individuals, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The letter of Solomon to Hiram • The letter of sympathy from David • The letter from Paul to Philemon • The two personal letters of John To churches To nations To Israel	1 Kgs. 5:2-6 2 Sam. 10:2 Phil. 1:1-25 2 Jn. 1:1-13 Rev. 2:1-3:22 Isa. 23:1; 13:1 Zech. 12:1
Personal thoughts of individuals	References
Jeremiah	Jer. 32:8
Personal failings of individuals	References
Peter Lot's wife Job's wife	Mk. 14:68 Gen. 19:26 Job 2:9
The speech as various individuals	References
Satan Stephen Paul The eunuch Demons Angels	Matt. 4:3 Acts 7:2-56 Acts 26:2-27 Acts 8:26-40 Mk. 3:11 Lk. 2:10
The deceptions of various individuals	References
The deception of David with Uriah The deception of the kings of the North and the kings of the South The deception of Amnon	2 Sam. 11:14-17 Dan. 11:5-40 2 Sam. 13:2-10
The reasons why Israel or the nations were brought under God's discipline	References
Israel and the nations	Amos 1:3 - 2:6

The Bible
The Inspiration Of The Scriptures

The experiences of individuals	References
Jonah being thrown into the sea Peter walking on the sea John on the island of Patmos Paul and his journey to Rome Jeremiah being told to buy the land Solomon and his dream when asking for wisdom Michael's conflict with the Prince of Persia Balaam and the donkey speaking Solomon in his quest for life's purpose	Jon. 1:15 Matt. 14:28-29 Rev. 1:9 Acts 27:1; 28:16 Jer. 32:7-14 1 Kgs. 3:5-11 Dan. 10:13 Num. 22:21-30 Eccl. 1:1-12:14
The timings of certain events	
References	
"And the feast of the Passover was at hand" "Two years before the earthquake" "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day"	Jn. 2:13 Amos 1:1 Rev. 1:10
The manifestation of the fallen nature and humanity	
References	
The lust of David The envy of the Jewish leaders David and his depressions Judas and his love for money Herod and his acceptance of being proclaimed God	2 Sam. 11:2-4 Matt. 27:18 Psa. 42:5 Jn. 12:6 Acts 12:23
Gods providential dealings	
References	
Hardening Pharaoh's heart Sending the flood The falling of Jericho's walls	Ex. 7:13 Gen. 7:11-12 Josh. 6:1-24
The debating of an individual with God	
References	
Abraham Moses	Gen. 18:20-33 Ex. 3:10-4:17

Summary

It is clear that:

- a) Since the scriptures are the inspired Word of God and God is the "living God" (Heb. 3:12; 9:14; 10:31), the scriptures ought also to be "living" (translated "quick") (Heb. 4:12)
- b) Since God is eternal (Deut. 33:27), the scriptures shall "endure forever" (1 Pet. 1:25)

The Bible
The Inspiration Of The Scriptures

- c) Since God knows everything (Heb. 4:13), the scriptures are able to pierce, divide, and ~~to~~ lay open the deepest motives of the heart (Heb. 4:12).

We must be clear, the Bible not only contains the word of God but in its entirety is the word of God. There are those who say that the Bible contains the words of God but it is not in entirety the “Word of God”. This is error. If we limit our belief to the phrase that the Bible contains the word of God, we are implying that certain parts are inspired and others not. I want to state without hesitation that the Bible is the Word of God in the sense that it reveals an accurate record of everything which God intends us to know in regards to spiritual and moral matters. It is “the Word”, in the sense of a communication or message. The Bible also contains the words of God in the sense that they are utterances from Him (Matt. 4:4), and are related to us by a chosen vessel, whither that means is a man such as John, Moses, or the law.

There are also the exclusions leaving us with questions. Our curiosity would like to know the answers to, but which God did not see fit to include in His inspired word.

For instance:

- a) God reveals who wrote Galatians (Gal. 1:1), John’s gospel (Jn. 21:24), Peter (1 Pet. 1:1), but why did he not tell us who wrote Hebrews?
- b) There is the man Melchizedek. He suddenly comes on the scene (Gen. 14:18). Who was he, who were his parents, did he have any family? We are told nothing. Then approximately 1000 years goes by and suddenly he appears again (Psa. 110:4), then not another word for approximately another 1000 years (Heb. 5:10). It can be very irritating not to know but God never deemed it best to include it.
- c) What about those thunderings of Revelation (Rev. 10:4)? Why are we not told about them? We are told about the events which follow the opening of the seals, the blowing of the trumpets, and the pouring of the vials, so why not the thunderings?

They are the scripture of truth given by the God of truth (Deut. 32:4) who is:

- a) The true God (Jer. 10:10)
- b) The God who cannot lie (Titus 1:2) concerning His Son who is the truth (Jn. 14:6), and is given by the Spirit of truth (Jn. 14:17; 15:26; 16:13).

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

Rowan Jennings, Abbotsford, British Columbia