

INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

Int.

1. Aim: To show what the Bible teaches about inspiration.
2. Inspiration is claimed by the Bible:
 - a. II Tim. 3:16-17
 - b. II Pet. 1:20-21
 - c. Jn. 14:16, 26
 - d. Jn. 16:12-13
3. The Bible claims that every word is inspired. That means that God directed these men as they wrote the words of the Bible.
4. The Bible is the message of God expressed in the words of men.
 - a. If one accepts this as true then the Word is accepted as the authority of God.
 - b. If one rejects these claims then there will be doubts and controversy over what authority we should obey.
5. Often people who claim to believe in inspiration but do not understand the Biblical view of inspiration. We will look at:
 - a. What does the Bible claim for inspiration?
 - b. Do we have an inspired Bible today?

Discussion

I. WHAT DOES THE BIBLE CLAIM ? [What is inspiration?]

A. Definitions of terms

1. **Scripture** = [Graphe] Denotes that which is written - "A writing or thing written thus the holy scriptures, or the sacred books." Thayer p. 121 The words of the Bible are the very words of God. They are God-breathed !
 - a. This would include the Old Testament writings - more than 3,000 times in the O.T. the claim is made that the scriptures are the word or words of God
 - (1) II Sam. 23:2 "The spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue."
 - (2) Jer. 1:9 "Then the LORD put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me: "Behold, I have put My words in your mouth."
 - (3) The scriptures are exalted as the word of God some 175 times in **Ps. 119**
 - b. The use of the Old Testament in the New testament shows that the Old Testament is indeed inspired of God.
 - (1) In the Gospel accounts, the Old Testament is quoted about 70 times
 - (2) John the Apostle in the Book of Revelation quoted extensively from the book of Daniel.
 - (3) Both Paul and Peter quoted from the Old Testament.
 - (a) Acts 2:16 ff. - Pentecost, quote from Joel
 - (b) Romans 10:16-21. - quote from Isaiah
 - (4) This extensive usage of the Old Testament in the New proves beyond a shadow of a doubt that Christ and the Apostles acknowledged that the Old Testament was inspired of God.
 - (5) If this is not the case then Christ and the Apostles quoted from unreliable works.

- c. Scripture would also include the N.T. - By the time Paul wrote this a large part of the N.T. was already written and accepted as sacred writings.
 - (1) Peter classed Paul's writings as "scripture" - II Pet. 3:15-16
 - (2) Paul quoted from Luke [Lk.10:7b] and called it scripture" [I Tim. 5:18b]
- d. Scripture refers to the contents of the Bible or the writings themselves.

2. **Inspiration** = [Theopneustos]

- a. English word = derived from the Latin term "inspiratio"
 - (1) In = meaning in or into
 - (2) and Spiro = meaning to breathe.
 - (3) So it came to mean breathing of divine influence. But it also today includes many different sources of inspiration. This is the English Word.
- b. GREEK WORD = means God Breathed, or the breathe of God --- Inspiration, therefore, as it relates to the Bible, may be defined as the divine inbreathing of God into man which enables him to receive and communicate divine truth without error.

3. **REVELATION**

- a. It means to uncover, unveil, or reveal = "Revelation literally means an unveiling, the lifting of an obscuring veil, so as to disclose something that was formerly hidden."
- b. All revelation is inspired but not all inspired material is revelation.
- c. Revelation has to do with that which could not be known by man except by direct communication from Jehovah.

- d. Revelation refers to the content. God has made known something; He has unveiled, uncovered something for mankind.
- e. Inspiration refers to the method that has kept the revelation free from errors and mistakes
- f. Ill. Moses wrote about the creation even though he was not there. This is a case of revelation and inspiration. But Moses also wrote about things that happened to the people in the wilderness while he was there. He did not need a revelation of these events, for he experienced them. God inspired him so that he would not make any errors in recording these events.
- g. Paul - Gal. 1:11-12
- h. Amos wrote of what "He saw concerning Israel in the days of Uzziah king of Judah" (Amos 1:1)
- i. Not all of the Bible is Revelation, but it is all inspired.

B. The Bible claims to be the verbally inspired word of God.

1. Inspiration, therefore, as it relates to the Bible, may be defined as the divine inbreathing of God into man which enables him to receive and communicate divine truth without error."
2. The expression "Thus saith the Lord" is recorded over 3,000 times in the Bible.
3. The word of God is infallible. - Ps. 19:7 "The law of the Lord is perfect..."
4. The Scriptures are inerrant. This means there are no errors in the Bible. When God originally directed the writers of the Bible they did not make any mistakes. This is not to say that the scribes down through the years have not made a few minor mistakes in copying. But these are very minor and insignificant.

5. The scriptures are plenary inspired.
 - a. This means that they are inspired in whole. Every word is from God.
 - b. There are some who believe in partial inspiration. But this is not what the Bible teaches.
 - c. Matt. 5:17-18 - a **Jot** is a small Hebrew letter - the **Tittle** is a small mark which means something to that word in the Hebrew

6. The scriptures are verbally inspired. This means that the scriptures are a language deposit in written form from God. - Mt. 4:4

7. The Scriptures are sufficient. They furnish us with all things that pertain to life and godliness. - II Pet. 1:3, II Tim.3:15-17

8. The inspired scriptures are authoritative. This means that they are our only standard of authority. - Heb. 1:1,2 I Cor. 4:6, Gal.1:6-9

II. False views of Inspiration

A. Partial inspiration.

1. This view concludes that only parts of the Bible are inspired...eg.
2. Some people believe the moral teachings of the Bible are inspired but the scientific and historic sections are creations of the human mind.
3. The problem that faces the individual that believes this way is the fact that one would need an inspired interpreter to tell what parts of the Bible are inspired and which are not.
4. The Bible says "All scripture is given by inspiration of God...." 2 Tim. 3:16

B. Natural inspiration.

1. This view once again concludes that the writers of the Bible were only inspired in much the same ways as are men inspired today...eg. an artists, a novelist, an inventor..etc.
2. However, once again this position has its flaws in the fact that it brings the Bible down to the realm of Human production, and cannot explain the various elements of the Divine nature that is so often mentioned throughout the pages of the Bible.
3. It would mean that the writers of the Bible are liars for they claimed to be guided by the Holy Spirit.

C. **Mechanical dictation.**

1. This theory teaches that the writers wrote down the words as God spelled them out to them. If this is the case they were no more than secretaries taking down dictation from the Holy Spirit.
2. The problems that arise with this theory is the overwhelming evidence that supports the view that the authors were allowed to write in their own writing styles and vocabulary.
 - a. There are different levels of Greek in the N.T. books.
 - b. The grammar and vocabulary of Luke and Hebrews are far superior to some of the other parts of the N.T.
3. Inspiration did not involve the suspension or suppression of the human faculties - it did not interfere with the free exercise of the distinctive mental characteristics of the individual.
 - a. If a Hebrew was inspired, he wrote in Hebrew, or Greek in Greek.
 - b. If he was an educated man, he wrote as a man of education.
 - c. But if he was an uneducated man then this showed in his way of writing.
 - d. If his mind was logical he reasoned as Paul did.
 - e. If he was emotional then wrote as John wrote.
4. There is evidence that some of the writers did research before producing their books - Luke 1:1-4 - He did research about the life of Christ

D. **Thought inspiration.**

1. The basis of this theory is the idea that the Holy Spirit gave the author's the basic thoughts and ideas and allowed them to express those ideas in their own words, without any divine guidance whatsoever.
2. The problems arise from this theory of inspiration are the facts that many scriptures depend for their meaning upon the tense or meaning of a single word:
 - a. Consider John 1:1
 - b. Often the Bible writers had to write about things they did not understand.
 - c. Consider....I Peter 1:10-11.
 - d. And those who wrote concerning the prophecies. Isa. 53:9; Psa. 22:16-18.
3. The only way to communicate is with words - and that is how the Holy Spirit communicated the will of God to the writers of the Bible.
4. The words, as well as the thoughts, of the writers were inspired.
5. Jesus promised this very type of inspiration when he said that the Holy Spirit would teach the apostles "How" and "What" to speak. Lk. 12:12

E. Here is an example of Inspiration -- "...**These are the True Sayings of God.**" Rev. 19:9b

1. True as used here means genuine or authentic.
2. Thus these words originated, not with the one employed to utter them, but with God. They are inspired words.
3. This is true of the entire Book and all the Bible.

III. DO WE HAVE AN INSPIRED BIBLE TODAY?

- A. Some doubt that we have an inspired Bible because of translation.
 1. Many claim that since inspiration only applied to the original autographs that we today do not have an inspired Bible to read.
 2. It is true that we do not have an inspired person to make a translation today.
 3. But does this mean that we do not have an inspired Bible today?
 4. Only a few people could read the original manuscripts since the Bible was originally written in Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic.

- B. It is true that we do not have an inspired translator today, but that is far from saying that we are without inspired translations today.

- C. It is not true that people today are without access to an inspired Bible.
 1. People have a mistaken view of what inspiration really is:
 - a. Inspiration means that God breathed into the scriptures his will.
 - b. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God..." II Tim. 3:16
 - c. I Cor. 2:13 "Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth:..."
 - d. The inspiration was into the text of scripture.
 - e. God breathed into the scripture his truth through the words that the writers were prompted to write.
 - f. These words were the vessels to reflect the message of God.

2. What difference would it make if the Spirit used Hebrew, Greek, English or German?
 - a. It would not matter what language the Holy Spirit chose to reveal God's truth.
 - b. Inspiration would be in the message not the nationality of a certain language.

3. An accurate translation should portray the same truth as the original.
 - a. In the Greek or Hebrew they had a certain word to express a certain idea.
 - b. In translation into another language the words are to reflect the same meaning.
 - c. When this is accomplished then the message is as much inspired as the original.
 - d. The test of any translation is, does it reflect fully and accurately the mind of the Spirit as revealed through those chosen by the Lord to make known his will to man?

D. Translation does not destroy inspiration!

1. In the 2nd & 3rd century B.C. the Hebrew O.T. was translated into Greek.
2. This is called The Septuagint.
3. Jesus quoted from that translation in Mt. 22:32. It was from Ex. 3:6
4. Of that passage he says "But concerning the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was spoken to you by God, saying," Mt. 22:31
5. The translation from Hebrew to Greek did not alter the fact that the message was the word of God.

E. Get a good Translation

1. The Best available is the ASV.
2. The KJV is a good one - the NKJV is more readable for many today
3. Some of the new modern speech translations are not reliable / accurate translations. T.E.V. N.I.V. Phillips, Paraphrases. CEV

Conclusion

1. The Scriptures are the verbally inspired word of God.
2. These words are the words of eternity for they are eternal. When the heavens and the earth shall have passed away, the Bible will still be in existence. - I Pet. 1:24-25
3. The Bible is the only book which can be read over and over again with increasing interest; the only book which can be studied a lifetime without being perfectly mastered by man; the only book which answers the greatest questions of life - and such could not be the product of men unaided by divine power.
4. Of all the books in the world the Apostle John in the book of Revelation shows only two books by which we are going to be judged:
 - a. The Book of revelation --- the Bible
 - b. The Book of life -- Rev. 20:12
 - c. Since these are the only two books that matter we ought to be very interested in both of them.
 - d. If we obey the book of Revelation then our name will be in that Book of Life.

5. If you are not a child of *God* then your name is not found in the *Book of Life!* - Rev. 21:27
6. If you as a child of *God* have not been living right then your name has been blotted out - Rev. 21:27
7. Why not prepare and be ready. Why wait for tomorrow when tomorrow might not be?

Bibliography

The Book of Books - Kimball - p. 24

Harding Graduate School Lectures - 1971

File on Bible Inspiration

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