

LESSON 3

THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

Scripture Texts: *Exodus 4:10-13; Jeremiah 1:7; 1 Corinthians 2:13; Acts 1:16; 1 Peter 1:10-11; 2 Peter 1:21; Hebrews 1:1-2*



The Bible is called the Word of God simply because it is just that. God is responsible for its content. The Bible has been proven to be different from other literature and that difference consists of a divine element. There are at least two ways in which a book might come from God. God might speak it or write it Himself and give it to men in its completed form. The Ten Commandments were give in these two ways—spoken by the voice of God and written by the finger of God. The other method is for God to have men write for Him. The Bible freely admits that it was so written by men inspired of God.

MEMORY VERSES: *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."*
2 Timothy 3:16-17

The Meaning of Inspiration

It is not easy to define inspiration in one sentence. There is the idea of inbreathing, in which God imparts enlightenment and direction to the person inspired. The idea of inspiration is not exhausted on the mind of man but extends to the message which is God-breathed. A loose definition of inspiration is that it is the supernatural influence exerted by the Spirit of God on the minds of the prophets enabling them to give expression to the ideas and will of God. Although it is through inspiration that new ideas are received, one may be inspired with new expression of truths previously revealed. Inspiration enables man to express the truth unerringly and effectively under a close supervision of the Holy Spirit. There are differences in degrees of inspiration but not in kind.

The writers of the Bible display much literary genius, but inspiration is more than genius. The Spirit of God moved on the spirits of the prophets to enable them to predict events of the distant future. Ordinary inspiration does not teach such heights. To place the great writers of the literary world in a class with inspired prophets is to ignore the chief qualification of a prophet of God—the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The extent of inspiration is not to be measured by the amount of genius exhibited in the writing.

The Fact of Inspiration

Moses was well aware of his inability to deliver God's message to Israel. He thought himself a poor speaker, and he did not know what to say. God promised both to furnish the message and to help in the delivery of it in Exodus 4:10-12. Jeremiah likewise was aware of his inability, and God put the words in his mouth as we read in Jeremiah 1:7. The Spirit of God spake through the prophets. David was regarded as a Prophet. Various prophecies are found in his psalms. These predictions were not the result of David's foresight but of the inspiration of God. The Holy Spirit spoke through David, using him as His mouthpiece.

Peter said that the prophets of old were able to foresee and to speak as they were moved by the Holy Spirit,

concerning the suffering of Christ in Acts 1:16, 1 Peter 1:10-11, and 2 Peter 1:21.

If the Bible is not really inspired, we must base our faith on something else; and what else is there on which to base our faith? It is not enough to admit that the Bible is divinely inspired, but we must believe it completely. This is the foundation for building a successful Christian life. The Jews accept without question the inspiration of the Old Testament. Christians accept both the Old and the New Testaments.

Within the Bible we see God revealed in His true character. The highest and purest revelation of God ever given to man is seen in the Bible. The fact that the Bible stands out unique in the midst of pagan and heathen philosophies is explained only on the ground of its inspiration. The Bible stands as the highest authority in religion (Hebrews 1:1-2).

The Proof of Inspiration

Acceptance and practice of the teachings of the Bible have worked and will work a transformation both in the individual and in society, which is evidence of its divine power. The Word of God is "quick and powerful." No other book can produce such results as this book produces—transformations in the lives of men and women. Check it out for yourself, and see if it does not prove true in every prophecy. It all falls into place just as the prophets were inspired to write it. It is up to you and me to make our decisions as to whether or not we will put our faith in the Bible, the only Book that can lead mankind to true happiness, purity, and spiritual success. The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost await our answer.

JUST A THOUGHT

"Truth does not need a defender—only an investigator."

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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