

Inspiration

What is inspiration?

Inspiration appears twice in the English AV Bible.

Job 32:8 But [there is] a spirit <07307> in man: and the inspiration <05397> of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

2Ti 3:16 All scripture <1124> [is] given by inspiration of God <2315>, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

The original Greek word translated *inspiration* is:

2315 θεόπνευστος *theopneustos theh-op'-nyoo-stos*

from **2316** and a presumed derivative of **4154**; adj; TDNT- 6:453,876; {See TDNT 643 }

AV-given by inspiration of God 1; 1

1) inspired by God

1a) the contents of the scriptures

4154 πνέω *pneo pneh'-o*

a root word; v; TDNT-6:452,876; {See TDNT 643 }

AV-blow 6, wind 1; 7

1) to breathe, to blow

1a) of the wind

This is the root word for *pneuma* (spirit) and together with God, means inspired.

4151 πνεῦμα *pneuma pnyoo'-mah*

from **4154**; n n; TDNT-6:332,876; {See TDNT 643 }

AV-Spirit 111, (Holy) Ghost 89, Spirit (of God) 13, Spirit (of the Lord) 5, (My) Spirit 3, Spirit (of truth) 3, Spirit (of Christ) 2, human (spirit) 49, (evil) spirit 47, spirit (general) 26, spirit 8, (Jesus' own) spirit 6, (Jesus' own) ghost 2, misc 21; 385

Notice that Inspiration is made up of the two words: God, and breath/wind/ spirit. It literally means God's breath or spirit.

The original Hebrew word translated inspiration has a similar meaning.

05397 נשמה *neshamah nesh-aw-maw'*

from **05395**; n f; BDB-675b {See TWOT on 1433 @@ "1433a" }

AV-breath 17, blast 3, spirit 2, inspiration 1, souls 1; 24

1) breath, spirit

This is the Hebrew word for inspiration. Besides being translated inspiration, it was also translated breath and spirit. Its synonym is ruwach. In Job 32:8, quoted above, once again it is literally God's breath or spirit.

07307 רוח *ruwach roo'-akh*

from **07306**; n f; BDB-924b {See TWOT on 2131 @@ "2131a" }

AV-Spirit or spirit 232, wind 92, breath 27, side 6, mind 5, blast 4, vain 2, air 1, anger 1, cool 1, courage 1, misc 6; 378

1) wind, breath, mind, spirit

Scripture is from the Greek word "graphe" which is where we get our word "graphic" from. It means a writing.

2Ti 3:16 All scripture <1124> [is] given by inspiration of God <2315>, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

But going back to this verse, the words in square brackets are added by the translators. Read without the added words, the passage says "All scripture given by inspiration of God, and profitable for ...". Obviously not all writings are inspired of God. What the verse is really saying is that all writings which are inspired are profitable for

So what writings are inspired? How does inspiration work? What is inspired Scripture?

What Writings are Inspired?

The Inspired Writings Include the Old Testament

What did Christ consider was inspired? Christ read from the Scriptures in the Jewish synagogues, and in his ministry, quoted from those same Scriptures. It is the same Scriptures that we have in our Bibles making up the Old Testament.

"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes?" (Ps 118:22, 23) (Matthew 21:42)

"And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me." (Lu 24:44) These were the three divisions making up the old testament.

The Inspired Writings Include the New Testament

The New Testament contains four “Gospels” telling about the life of Christ, the book of Acts giving a history of the early church. Then there are Paul’s writings which make up the bulk of the New Testament. Paul claims inspiration in the verse quoted below. The apostle Peter also testifies to the inspiration of Paul’s writings in his epistles. There are also the books written by James, the brother of Christ, the epistles of John and Jude, and a book of prophecy by the apostle John.

1Th 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the *word of God which ye heard of us*, ye received [it] not [as] the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe.

In like manner, in 2 Timothy 3:16, the apostle Paul is not referring to any and every writing. His meaning should be interpreted according to the context. He is talking to Christians who know what is inspired. He is talking about that which Christians would consider is Scripture. He is reminding his readers that the things he is writing is inspired, and the Scripture he is quoting, and the Scripture they already have and are using is inspired by God, and thus is profitable for these things he then mentions.

The interpretation often heard that "All scripture given by inspiration of God," means that some Scripture is not inspired, is a very slender peg to hang a doubt upon. The apostle means simply, "I present to you the Living Oracles, the Scriptures, all given by inspiration of God, and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." ... {BEcho, August 26, 1895 par. 2}

Apocrypha not Included

Some writings appearing after the collating of the Old Testament and before Christ, and some appearing during the days of the apostles and after their death were clearly in opposition to teachings in the writings of the apostles. They contained teachings of gnosticism, witchcraft, wild fabricated stories of strange miracles Christ supposedly worked as a child like a wizard, etc.

The Catholic church initially inserted them in their Bibles, separate from the other writings, for historical reference, but not officially considering them as part of “Canon”, until after Martin Luther’s German Translation.

How Does Inspiration Work?

2Ti 3:16 All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

2Pe 1:21 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.

The Revelation of (2)Jesus Christ, which (1)God gave unto him, to shew unto his (5)servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his (3)angel unto his servant (4)John. (Revelation 1:1)

In the passage from 2 Peter 1:21, quoted above, we find that the Scripture came to us through the working of the Holy Ghost upon the minds of men. In the next passage just quoted, however, we can

trace the exact route and the agencies involved of this communication of God with men. God gave the revelation to Christ, who gave it to His angel, who gave it to John, who was to communicate it to the messengers of the churches, who were to communicate it to their flocks.

Notice that in this passage, the Holy Spirit does not fit into the line of communication as a separate individual, yet we are told “holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost”. We are led to conclude that the *communication - whether of life, light, blessings, power, glory, or thoughts* from heaven to earth, is itself called the Holy Spirit, and is communicated through the various agencies mentioned.

Another example of this is seen in the vision of Daniel.

And it came to pass, when I, even I Daniel, had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning, then, behold, there stood before me as the appearance of a (1)man. And I heard a man's voice between the banks of Ulai, which called, and said, (2)Gabriel, make this man ((3)Daniel) to understand the vision. (Daniel 8:15-16)

Christ, called here a “man”, is telling Gabriel to make known the Scripture to Daniel, who was to make it known to us. These are examples of the inspiration or communication of the Scripture from God to men through agencies. 2 Peter, quoted above, calls this being “*moved by the Holy Ghost*”.

Jacob was shown this truth in a dream in Bethel. In this dream, we can see that angels are the messengers between heaven and earth.

And he (Jacob) dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. (Genesis 28:12)

Jesus highlights this teaching in his comments to Nathaniel.

And he saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Hereafter ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man. (John 1:51)

Illustrated in Zechariah 4

The oil with which the wise virgins filled their lamps represents the Holy Spirit. "The angel that talked with me came again," writes Zechariah, "and waked me, as a man is wakened out of his sleep, and said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof: and two olive-trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof . . . Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive-trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive-branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves? And he answered me and said, Knowest thou not what these be? And I said, No, my lord. Then said he, These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth." {RH, July 20, 1897 par. 5}

The **anointed ones** standing by the Lord of the whole earth, **have the position once given to Satan as covering cherub**. By the holy beings surrounding his throne, the Lord keeps up a constant communication with the inhabitants of the earth. The golden **oil represents the grace** with which God keeps the lamps of believers supplied, that they shall not flicker and go out. Were it not that this holy **oil** is poured from heaven **in the messages of God's Spirit**, the agencies of evil would have entire control over men. {RH, July 20, 1897 par. 6}

From the two olive trees the golden oil was emptied through the golden pipes into the bowl of the candlestick, and thence into the golden lamps that gave light to the sanctuary. So **from the holy ones that stand in God's presence his Spirit is imparted to the human instrumentalities** who are consecrated to his service. **The mission of the two anointed ones is to communicate to God's people that heavenly grace which alone can make his Word a lamp to the feet and a light to the path.** {RH, January 16, 1908 par. 5}

Concerning the two witnesses, the prophet declares further, "These are the two olive-trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth." "Thy Word," said the psalmist, "is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." [Revelation 11:4; Psalm 119:105.] **The two witnesses represent the Scriptures** of the Old and the New Testament. {GC88 267.1}

See "How God Speaks"

Not Verbal but thought inspiration

"It is not the words of the Bible that are inspired, but the men that were inspired. Inspiration acts not on the man's words or his expressions but on the man himself, who, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, is imbued with thoughts. But the words receive the impress of the individual mind. The divine mind is diffused. The divine mind and will is combined with the human mind and will; thus the utterances of the man are the word of God." (Manuscript 24, 1886; written in Europe in 1886.)

How do we understand this verse:

Ps 12:6 The words of the LORD [are] pure words: [as] silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times.?

Note: Even though the thought was embodied in human language by men according to their background, education, etc. It is still the word of God, just as much as Jesus was still divine though he was embodied in human flesh.

The Scriptures Contain a Revelation of His Will to Man

2Ti 3:15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16) All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. Psalms 119:105

Scriptures are the Only Infallible Rule of Faith and Practice.

Ps 119:160 ¶ Thy word [is] true [from] the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments [endureth] for ever.

“We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:” (2Pe 1:19 AV)

“For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.” (Ps 33:4 AV)

Thought Questions:

1. What is the meaning of infallible?
2. Give some examples of how the Scriptures are a rule of faith and practice in your life.

Appeal

Some sit in judgment on the Scriptures, declaring that this or that passage is not inspired, because it does not strike their minds favorably. They cannot harmonize it with their ideas of philosophy and science, "falsely so called" (1 Timothy 6:20). **Others for different reasons question portions of the Word of God. Thus many walk blindly where the enemy prepares the way. Now, it is not the province of any man to pronounce sentence upon the Scriptures, to judge or condemn any portion of God's Word.** When one presumes to do this, Satan will create an atmosphere for him to breathe which will dwarf spiritual growth. When a man feels so very wise that he dares to dissect God's Word, his wisdom is, with God, counted foolishness. When he knows more, he will feel that he has everything to learn. And his very first lesson is to become teachable. "Learn of me," says the Great Teacher; "for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:29). {1SM 42.3}

In our day, as of old, the vital truths of God's word are set aside for human theories and speculations. **Many professed ministers of the gospel do not accept the whole Bible as the inspired word. One wise man rejects one portion; another questions another part.** They set up their judgment as superior to the word; and the Scripture which they do teach rests upon their own authority. Its divine authenticity is destroyed. Thus the seeds of infidelity are sown broadcast; for the people become confused and know not what to believe. There are many beliefs that the mind has no right to entertain. In the days of Christ the rabbis put a forced, mystical construction upon many portions of Scripture. Because the plain teaching of God's word condemned their practices, they tried to destroy its force. The same thing is done today. The word of God is made to appear mysterious and obscure in order to excuse transgression of His law. Christ rebuked these practices in His day. He taught that the word of God was to be understood by all. He pointed to the Scriptures as of unquestionable authority, and we should do the same. The Bible is to be presented as the word of the infinite God, as the end of all controversy and the foundation of all faith. {COL 39.1}