



THE DOCTRINE OF THE SCRIPTURES

Matthew 24:35 – “Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.”

Isaiah 40:8. – “The grass withereth, and the flower fadeth: but the word of our Lord shall stand for ever.”

I. THE NEED FOR THE SCRIPTURES

“What is truth?” asked Pilate, and his tone inferred that the search for it was vain and hopeless. If there is no authoritative guide to knowledge about God, man and the world, then Pilate was right. But there is no need to grope in doubt and skepticism, for there is a Book—“the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.” 2 Timothy 3:15

A. SUCH A REVELATION IS TO BE DESIRED

The God who created the universe must be a God of wisdom, and a God of wisdom will certainly have a purpose for His creatures. “The world by wisdom (philosophy) knew not God.” Truths that tell man how to pass from earth to heaven, must be sent down from heaven to earth. In other words, man needs a revelation.

B. SUCH A REVELATION IS TO BE EXPECTED

In nature we have a revelation of God that may be grasped by reason. But when man is bound by sins and burdened in soul, nature and reason are powerless to give light and relief. If there is a good God, it is reasonable to expect that He will grant a personal revelation of Himself to His creatures.

C. SUCH A REVELATION WOULD BE WRITTEN

1. God chose to preserve His Truth in a Book.
2. Books are the best method of preserving truth in its integrity and transmitting it from generation to generation.
3. Memory and tradition are very untrustworthy.
4. Therefore God acted with the greatest wisdom, and also in the normal way, in giving His revelation to men in book form.
5. In no other way, so far as we can see, could He have imparted to mankind an infallible standard that would be available to all mankind and that would continue intact throughout the ages and from which all people could procure the same standard of faith and practice.
6. It is reasonable to expect that God would inspire His servants to record truths which could not have been discovered by human reason.

7. And finally, it is reasonable to believe that God has providentially preserved the manuscripts of the Bible Scriptures and led His church to include in the canon only those books that had their origin in Divine inspiration.

II. THE BIBLE – ITS NAMES AND TITLES

A. "THE BIBLE"

Our English word *Bible* comes from the Greek words *biblos* (Matthew 1:1) and *biblion* (diminutive form) (Luke 4:17), which mean "*book*". Ancient books were written upon the biblus or papyrus reed, and from this custom came the Greek name *biblos*, which finally came to be applied to the sacred books. See Mark 12:26; Luke 3:4; 20:42; Acts 1:20; 7:42.

The Bible is not merely *a* book, however. It is THE BOOK – the Book that from the importance of its subjects, the wideness of its range and the majesty of its Author, stands as high above all other books as the heaven is high above the earth.

B. "THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS"

Luke 22:20; 1 Corinthians 11:25; 2 Corinthians 3:6, 14; Hebrews 9:15; 12:24.

The word *Testament* means *Covenant*, and is the term by which God was pleased to designate the relation that existed between Himself and His people. The term *Covenant* was first of all applied to the relation itself, and afterward to the books which contained the record of that relation.

By the end of the second century we find the "Old Covenant" and the "New Covenant" as the established names of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures; and Origen, in the beginning of the third century, mentioned "the divine Scriptures, the so-called Old and New Covenants."

The Old Testament deals with the record of the calling and history of the Jewish nation, and as such it is the Old Covenant. The New Testament deals with the history and application of the redemption wrought by the Lord Jesus Christ, and as such it is the New Covenant.

C. "THE SCRIPTURE," AND "THE SCRIPTURES"

The Old Testament is also called "The Scripture" (Mark 12:10; 15:28; Luke 4:21; John 2:22; 7:38; 10:35; Romans 4:3; Galatians 4:30; 2 Peter 1:20), and "The Scriptures" (Matthew 22:29; Mark 12:24; Luke 24:27; John 5:39; Acts 17:11; Romans 1:2; 2 Timothy 3:15; 2 Peter 3:16). These terms mean that the Scriptures are "Holy Writings". By the early Christians, the most common designation for the whole Bible was "The Scriptures". 2 Peter 3:16; Luke 10:7 compared with 1 Timothy 5:18; 1 Corinthians 14:37

D. "THE WORD OF GOD"

Of all the names given to the Bible, "The Word of God" (Mark 7:13; Romans 10:17; 2 Corinthians 3:2; 17; Hebrews 4:12; 1 Thessalonians 2:13) is doubtless the most significant, impressive, and complete. It is sufficient to justify the faith of the weakest Christian. It gathers up all that the most earnest search can unfold. It

teaches us to regard the Bible as the utterance of divine wisdom and love – as God speaking to man.

III. THE INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

A. WHAT IS MEANT BY THE TERM “INSPIRATION”.

This question is best answered by Scripture itself. It defines its own terms. Let us turn, then, "to the Law and to the Testimony".

In 2 Timothy 3:16 – "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God".

The word "inspired" means literally "God-breathed." It is composed of two Greek words – *theos*=*God*; and *pnein*=*to breathe*. The term "given by inspiration" signifies, then, that the writings of the Old Testament, of which Paul is here speaking, are the result of a certain influence exerted by God upon their authors.

The meaning of the word "breathed", as here used, is brought out very forcibly by the comparison of two other words translated in the same way. The one is the Greek word *psuchain*=*to breathe gently*; while in 2 Timothy 3:16 the term denotes a forcible respiration. The other is the Hebrew word *ah-ayrh*=*to breathe unconsciously*, while 2 Timothy 3:16 denotes a conscious breathing.

Inspiration then, as defined by Paul in this passage, is the *strong, conscious inbreathing of God into men, qualifying them to give utterance to truth. It is God speaking through men, and the Old Testament is therefore just as much the Word of God as though God spake every single word of it with His own lips.* The Scriptures are the result of divine inbreathing, just as human speech is uttered by the breathing through a man's mouth.

B. 2 PETER 1:21

"For not by the will of man was prophecy brought at any time, but being borne by the Holy Spirit, the holy men of God spoke". (This is a literal rendering, and brings out the sense more clearly.)

The participle "moved" may be translated "when moved," so this passage teaches that holy men of God wrote the Scripture *when* moved to do so by the Holy Spirit.

Further, the participle is passive, and denotes "to be moved upon". This distinctly teaches that the Scripture was not written by mere men, or at their suggestion, but by men *moved upon*, prompted, and who were driven by the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

This declaration of Peter may be said to intimate that the Holy Ghost was especially and miraculously present with and in the writers of the Scriptures, revealing to them truths which they did not know before, and guiding them alike in their record of these truths, and of the transactions of which they were eye and ear witnesses, so that they were enabled to present them with substantial accuracy to the minds of others.

The statements of the Scriptures regarding Inspiration may be summed up as follows: Holy men of God, qualified by the infusion of the breath of God, wrote in obedience to the divine command, and were kept from all error: whether they revealed truths previously unknown or recorded truths already familiar. In this sense, "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God", the Bible is indeed and in truth the very Word of God and the books of the Bible are of divine origin and authority.

IV.THEY PROVE TO BE INSPIRED

A. LIBRARY OF SACRED BOOKS

This great library of Sacred Books, which we call the Bible, is really the Word of God, His Revelation to mankind.

B. HISTORICAL, INTERNAL, AND EXPERIMENTAL

The writer of the story had been explaining three different kinds of evidence—the Historical, the Internal, and the Experimental.

C. LESSON OF THE CHEMIST

Then he told how he once sent a boy to the chemist's to get some phosphorus.

1. The boy brought back a little packet; was it phosphorus?
2. The boy reported that he went to the shop and asked for phosphorus;
3. that the chemist went to his shelves, took some kind of stuff from a jar, put it in the little packet, gave it to him, and that he had brought it straight back.
4. That was the historical evidence that the packet had phosphorus in it. Then the gentleman opened the packet.
5. The substance inside looked like phosphorus and smelled like phosphorus.
6. That was the internal evidence.
7. Then he put a light to it—"See how it burns!" that was the experimental evidence. Intellectual defenses of the Bible have their place; the best argument is the practical one. The Bible has worked. It has influenced civilization, transformed lives, brought light, inspiration and comfort to millions. And its work continues.