

What Does the Bible Say About the Inspiration of the Scriptures?

Everything depends on one question. Is the Bible the word of men, or the word of God? If it is only a collection of human writings, however wise, then it carries no more authority than any other book, and we are free to take it or leave it. But if it is the word of God, then it speaks with His authority, and we are not free to argue with it. The Bible does not leave us guessing about which it is. It tells us plainly where it came from, and Jesus and His apostles tell us the same. Let us listen.

The Bible Claims to Be God-Breathed

The Bible claims to come from God Himself. Paul wrote, *"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness"* ([2 Timothy 3:16](#)). The word translated inspiration means breathed out by God. The Scriptures are not man's best thoughts about God. They are God's own words, breathed out through the men who wrote them.

That is a bold claim, and the Bible makes it from cover to cover. Again and again the prophets said, *"Thus saith the LORD."* They did not offer their opinions. They delivered a message that was not their own. David said it of himself, *"The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue"* ([2 Samuel 23:2](#)). The words came out of David's mouth, but they began with God.

Holy Men Spoke as They Were Moved

How did God's words come through men? Peter explains it. *"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"* ([2 Peter 1:21](#)). The Scriptures did not begin in the minds of the writers. They were moved, carried along, by the Holy Spirit, so that what they wrote was what God intended.

This is why Peter also says that no prophecy of Scripture *"is of any private interpretation"* ([2 Peter 1:20](#)). It did not come from the prophet working things out on his own. It came from God, through the Spirit, to the writer, and down to us on the page. The men were many, and they wrote across many centuries, but behind them all stood one Author.

Inspired Down to the Words

God gave more than ideas. He gave the words. Paul said the apostles spoke *"not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth"* ([1 Corinthians 2:13](#)). Jesus had promised this very thing. He told the apostles that the Holy Spirit *"shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you"* ([John 14:26](#)), and that He would *"guide you into all truth"* ([John 16:13](#)).

This is why the exact words matter, and Jesus treated them that way. He once settled an argument on a single word, and said, *"the scripture cannot be broken"* ([John 10:35](#)). He said that not one small letter or mark would fail, that *"one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled"* ([Matthew 5:18](#)). A book inspired only in its general ideas could not be trusted that closely. The Bible can be trusted down to its words, because God gave the words.

Jesus and His Apostles Spoke for God

If we follow Christ, we must hold what Christ held about the Scriptures. He met every temptation with *"It is written."* He called the Scripture the word of God and prayed to the Father, *"thy word is truth"* ([John 17:17](#)). He never corrected the Scriptures or set them aside. He submitted to them and fulfilled them.

The apostles spoke with the same authority, because the same Spirit taught them. Paul told one church, *"the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord"* ([1 Corinthians 14:37](#)). He thanked another that when they heard his preaching they received it *"not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God"* ([1 Thessalonians 2:13](#)). And Peter placed Paul's letters alongside the Old Testament, warning that the unstable twist them *"as they do also the other scriptures"* ([2 Peter 3:16](#)). The New Testament stands with the Old as the word of God.

So the Word Is True, Complete, and Enduring

Because the Bible is God's word, three things follow.

It is true. God cannot lie, so His word cannot fail. The psalmist said, *"Thy word is true from the beginning"* ([Psalm 119:160](#)).

It is complete. God has given us everything we need. Peter wrote that His divine power *"hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness"* ([2 Peter 1:3](#)), and Paul said the Scriptures make the man of God *"perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"* ([2 Timothy 3:17](#)). The faith was *"once delivered unto the saints"* ([Jude 3](#)), delivered once and for all. We are not waiting on further revelations. What God meant to say, He has said, and it is written down.

And it endures. *"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever"* (Isaiah 40:8). Jesus said, *"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away"* (Matthew 24:35). Empires rise and fall, and still the word of God stands.

What We Must Do With It

All of this lays a weight on us. If the Bible is the word of God, then we have no right to add to it, take from it, or pick through it for the parts we like. John closed the Bible with a warning against adding or taking away (Revelation 22:18-19), and Paul said that even if an angel preached another gospel, *"let him be accursed"* (Galatians 1:8). The word is not ours to edit. It is ours to obey.

And it is the standard we will be measured by. Jesus said, *"the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day"* (John 12:48). On that day no one will be asked what he preferred to believe. He will be asked what God said, and whether he obeyed it.

So open it, and read it as what it is, the voice of God to you. Do not sit in judgment on it. Let it sit in judgment on you, and then do what it says. A book breathed out by God was not given to be admired. It was given to be believed and obeyed.

Every Scripture reference in this study links to the King James Version. Open it and read for yourself.