

THE BIBLE

Part 4 of 6

THE BIBLE AND INSPIRATION

Inspiration is from the Greek word inspired (theopneustos), and means God-breathed. Inspiration includes the entire Bible. Paul said to young Timothy, “All scripture is given by inspiration of God (God-breathed), and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect (complete) throughly furnished (equipped) unto all good works” (II Timothy 3:16-17).

The Scriptures were not the product of any man’s will. The Holy Spirit moved upon select individuals to enable them to speak and write the Word of God. He used their personalities, backgrounds, experiences, vocabularies, perceptions, and insights to write the Word of God. But every word in its final product was the Word of God. Peter describes for us this process, “Knowing this first, that no prophecy (prophecy here refers to a message not a prediction) of the scripture is of any private interpretation (of one’s own origin). For the prophecy (message) came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved (carried along) by the Holy Ghost” (II Peter 1:20-21).

To illustrate the process a little clearer, we will note the prophet Jeremiah. Jeremiah said, “Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child. But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak. Be not afraid of their faces: for I am with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD. Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth” (Jeremiah 1:4-9). This was God’s process of inspiration for the writers of Scripture.

There are too many views of inspiration, which I feel, are incorrect, but this must be addressed at a later date. The view that I have stated, I feel sure is the correct view of inspiration.

THE BIBLE AND SCIENCE

The Bible was not written from the scientific point of view, and the person who attempts to deal with it as if it were a textbook on science will be sadly disappointed. Written long before the rise of modern science, it was intended primarily not for scientists and intellectuals, but for the common people. Its language is that of the common people, and its subject matter is primarily religious. Had it been written in the language of modern science or philosophy it would have been unintelligible to the people of earlier ages, and in fact would also be unintelligible to multitudes in our own day. While I certainly have no desire to disregard the scientific accomplishments of our day, but rather to accept them and use them to the full, I must point out that it has been said by those who know a great deal more about science than I, that textbooks on science have to be rewritten at least once every generation. Also, scientific research is so rapidly progressing in our day that most books on subjects of science are obsolete within ten years. But, in the Bible we have a book which has had no revision for multiplied centuries and still appeals to the heart of people today as strongly as in those centuries past.

Although many criticize the Bible as being unscientific, it reveals some of the basic principles of science centuries before scientists understood them. The Bible spoke on subjects of science long before they were ever debated. To me, this is one of the most amazing evidences of the divine inspiration of the Bible; it is not a science book, but it is scientifically accurate. In our next lesson, we will study this subject in greater detail.

Jerry W. Arnold
All Rights Reserved