

Scripture - Exodus 20:1-21 ; 31:18 The Ten Commandments

Part 1 - Author: Who Wrote the Bible?

(Divine Inspiration - Plenary, Verbal)

This fall for our Bible study we're going to talk about the Bible. *Don't we always talk about the Bible?* Yes, but this fall we're going to talk about what the Bible has to say about itself and what it contains inside it. So we're going to ask all these big fun hard questions about the Bible that the Bible asks and answers about itself. What is it? Why is it so important? Why is there no other book like it? Should you know it? Should you trust it?

Consider this too as we jump in - as you sit over your Bible to examine it, it is actually the Bible that is standing over you and examining you.

Let's read Ex 20:1-21; 31:18

First question: Who wrote Exodus?
Moses.

Problem: *"The Bible was written by a bunch of people. It's man-made. So why do we have to listen to the Bible? It's just some old guys' thoughts on God."*

Answer: Yes, the Bible was written by people BUT it was inspired by God.

[Divine Inspiration] What does inspiration mean?

You could say you felt "inspired" by a song when you wrote your own bit of music or you felt inspired by a movie or a book when you wrote your own story or you felt inspired by your teammate when you made a good play on the field. That means you were feeling good, you were pretty fired up when you did your work.

Problem: Some say the Bible is inspired but it is still 100% a man-made document. This is what some call romantic inspiration. The

Biblical writers were inspired by their devotion and love to God (like the romantic poets, like artists today). Enraptured with the beauty of God the human authors of the Bible poured forth these words about God and his people. But if that's true then the Bible is just some old guys' thoughts on God.

Answer: But that's not what the Bible claims about itself. It claims to be God's Word coming directly from him. When we say the Bible was "inspired" we mean something more. 2 Timothy 3:16 says, *"All Scripture is breathed out by God."* Paul is talking about the **divine inspiration** of the Bible.

The **divine inspiration** of the Bible means that God's Spirit "breathed into" the writers of the Bible to write what God wanted them to say and nothing else.

[Plenary Inspiration] But, are there parts of Scripture that are more inspired by God than other parts of Scripture?

Problem: Some argue that the Bible is halvesies inspired - the Bible is 50% inspired by God and 50% inspired by man. So the historical stuff or the science stuff that we think they got wrong - that's the human inspired stuff and it could be wrong so it's not all trustworthy.

Answer: Hmm, problem with that is how do you know which is which? What people do is create arbitrary standards that change with the flavor of our culture and so in the end we make the Bible say whatever we want it to say or not say and we create a god in our own image who looks and sounds just like us.

Paul says, *"All Scripture is breathed out by God."* This is what is called the **"plenary inspiration"** of the Bible. Plenary just means

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full, complete. All Scripture is inspired by God so there are no parts that are more or less inspired. **So for example, some Bibles have the words of Jesus in red print - does that mean Jesus' words are more inspired by God than Paul's words or Moses' words or Habakkuk's words? No!**

[Verbal Inspiration] Ok but is every word inspired by God? Is the Bible precise?

Problem: A guy leading a Bible study in college once said the Bible is not 100% accurate in every detail. He said to think of the Bible more like a yard stick - a yard stick may not actually measure a yard exactly but it's good enough to use to build a house. The Bible is like that he said.

Answer: That is not correct. That Bible study leader was wrong. It's not that God gave the writers of the Bible the general ideas of what he wanted them to say and then told them to run with it. God's inspired them to use the words that God wanted them to use. For example listen to Paul in Galatians 3:16, *"Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, 'And to offsprings,' referring to many, but referring to one, 'And to your offspring,' who is Christ."* But not just words, God inspired them to use the tenses of the words he wanted them to use!! Yay grammar. This is what is called **verbal inspiration**.

Problem: But this can lead to a problem in the other direction. Some people misunderstand the divine plenary verbal inspiration of the Scriptures to mean the Bible is 100% a God-made document. This is what some call mechanical inspiration. This view says the human authors went into a trance mode, eyes rolled back, *"What happened, I blacked out, oh did I just write Leviticus?"*

Answer: That's not what the Bible claims about itself. Peter who wrote, 1 and 2 Peter, and was the source of Mark's gospel says that Paul's letters are kind of hard to understand! And when you read Paul he mentions his friends, and suffering he's been through, and his disdain for false teachers. Paul's writing has a different style than Peter's, and Peter has a different style than John, and they're all different from Moses. The Bible is clearly a human document!

We got to get our math right. The divine plenary verbal inspiration of the Bible means the Bible is 100% human and 100% divine. Is that good math? Yes.

The Apostle Peter says in 2 Peter 1:21, *"No prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."* This does not mean God added meaning to Paul's words after Paul came up with something worthwhile to say. It means God breathed his Word through the prophets of the OT and the apostles of the NT. God used the intellect, skills, and the personality of these human authors to write down that which was divine.

So, who wrote Exodus?

Moses.

And, who wrote Exodus?

God.

What other books did Moses write?

Genesis, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy.

Of all five of those books, which did Moses write first?

Exodus!!! Moses and Israel are living and experiencing all this stuff in Exodus themselves. And this stuff in Exodus is

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getting written down at the very beginning of Israel being formed as a nation. It's this ten commandment stuff that is the constitution of the kingdom of Israel - it's what forms them as a nation.

So Moses wrote Exodus first to reveal to all Israel that YHWH is their God who saves and redeems his people. God then inspires Moses to write Genesis to reveal to Israel that the God who saved them is also the one God of all creation and there are no others.

What was the first part of the Bible ever written down?

The Ten Commandments.

Who wrote it down?

God, on those stone tablets he gave to Moses.

How exactly does God's Spirit inspire his prophets and apostles to write the Bible?

That is a mystery! He does not tell us.

Why is it good that the Bible is 100% a man-made document?

That means we can understand the Bible because it's human communication to humans.

Why is it good that the Bible is 100% a God-made document?

That means the Bible is completely trustworthy because it is God's Word to us.

And it's all true. The Bible is not capable of not being true.

And the Bible means what God says it means, not whatever we say it means.

And the Bible is clear enough to understand what God is saying and what he means.

And the Bible is not just "your truth" - it's true for everybody.

And the Bible has everything to do with you.

And you don't need anything more than the Bible to know God.

And together all the books of the Bible tell the one true story about God and about us and about life and death and about this world that is going to end and our need of Jesus and about his life and death and resurrection and the gospel of his salvation and the hope of heaven.

Consider this - if the Bible is true then your life depends on knowing what's inside it, BUT how can you know if it's true unless you know what's inside it?

[Application - Accept It] So to all those who say, "I wish God would just show himself so we could know he's there. I wish I could hear God speak" - that's what the Bible is; that's exactly what God has done in his Word.