

Begin memorizing 2 Peter 1:20-21:

“Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophets own interpretation. For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.”

Bible Study #10

The Bible: Part 2

The Bible is God’s Word. If we don’t study God’s Word, how can we know who He really is or how He wants us to live our lives? How would we understand His love or how to extend that love to others? Learning God’s Word and then putting it into practice is the foundation of our faith and the core of our relationship with God.

PRAY before you start! Answer the questions briefly and in your own words.

Inspiration

The word "inspiration" means "God breathed." Therefore, when we say that the Bible is inspired, we are saying that it is authored from God; that God moved through the personality and abilities of the biblical writers in such a way that what they wrote was without error and was correct in all that they addressed. Therefore, the Scriptures are the product of both men and God. The writings are the words of God written by men who were the means by which the Scriptures were transmitted. The result is the inspired, inerrant, and authoritative work that conveys God's truth. This is why it says in the Bible, which we learned in our last lesson, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

The process of inspiration was not a mechanical dictation where the apostles heard a voice and wrote down what they heard. Nor does it mean that they went into some sort of a trance and God wrote through them without their knowledge. Instead, the writers were free to write what they wanted as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. In fact, the writings reflect the personality and style of the various writers. Yet, the personality and style of the writers did not degrade the quality or authority of the biblical writing. The word “moved” in our memory verse literally means “carried along.” This phrase “carried along” is used elsewhere in the Bible in reference to the transporting of a paralyzed man,

and just as a paralyzed man cannot walk by his own power so too the prophets did not write the Scriptures by their own power.

The Bible presents itself as the inspired word of God from beginning to end. It does not justify its claim. Instead, it simply assumes it. But, how can we make a case for the inspiration of Scripture? Perhaps the best way is to mention prophecy. The prophecies in the Bible are numerous and the Bible speaks about fulfilled prophecy in a matter-of-fact way.

- “But all this has taken place that the Scriptures of the prophets may be fulfilled.” Then all the disciples deserted Him and fled," (Matt. 26:56).

- "Brothers, the Scripture had to be fulfilled, which the Holy Spirit spoke long ago through the mouth of David concerning Judas, who served as a guide for those who arrested Jesus," (Acts 1:16).

The prophecies of the Bible are not vague generalities like some of those given by modern fortune-tellers: “A handsome man/woman will soon come into your life.” Such predictions as these, or those of horoscopes, are susceptible to easy misinterpretation, or multiple interpretations. Bible prophecies are specific in their details and the authentication and genuineness of the prophet rests on them. Scripture itself makes it clear that fulfilled prophecy is one of the evidences of the supernatural origin of the words of its prophets (Jer. 28:19). Furthermore, Deuteronomy 18:20-22 tells of what was to be done with false prophets when their prophecy goes unfulfilled: But a prophet who presumes to speak in my name anything I have not commanded him to say, or a prophet who speaks in the name of other gods, must be put to death. You may say to yourselves, "How can we know when a message has not been spoken by the LORD?" If what a prophet proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him.

There are a number of fulfilled prophecies in the Bible, here are just a few pertaining to Jesus; we discussed more in lesson 6:

- **His side pierced**

Prophecy: Zech. 12:10, "And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one mourns for an only son."

Fulfillment: John 19:34, "Instead, one of the soldiers pierced Jesus' side with a spear, bringing a sudden flow of blood and water."

• **Details of the Crucifixion of Christ**

Prophecy: Psalm 22:1, Psalm 22:11, 16-18, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?...Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help. Many bulls surround me; strong bulls of Bashan...Dogs have surrounded me; a band of evil men has encircled me, they have pierced my hands and my feet. I can count all my bones; people stare and gloat over me. They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing."

Fulfillment: Luke 23:33, "When they came to the place called the Skull, there they crucified him, along with the criminals -- one on his right, the other on his left." And, John 19:33, "But when they came to Jesus and saw that He was already dead, they did not break His legs." And, John 19:23-24, "When the soldiers crucified Jesus, they took his clothes, dividing them into four shares, one for each of them, with the undergarment remaining. This garment was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom. Let's not tear it, they said to one another. "Let's decide by lot who will get it." This happened that the scripture might be fulfilled which said, "They divided my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing." So this is what the soldiers did."

• **Birth of Jesus in Bethlehem**

Prophecy: Micah 5:2 "But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."

Fulfillment: Matt. 2:1, "After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem."

Of course, critics rarely accept the prophecies. Sometimes they say that the Bible was written to make it look like the prophecies were fulfilled. But this would mean that the biblical writers were liars, intent on deceiving people. If that is the case, then what would motivate them to carry out such lies, to risk their own lives, to be cast out of their communities, suffer loss of property and family? This also does not account for when these accounts were written—which can be verified .

Inerrancy

Because the Bible is inspired, it is also inerrant. This means that the Bible is without error, in the original documents and that everything that it addresses is without error in fact or understanding. Nowhere do the Scriptures say, "The Bible is inerrant in all that it affirms." But, the Bible does clearly and emphatically teach two truths from which this

conclusion of inerrancy is inevitable.

First, the very words of Scripture are the revelation of God—as learned through our memory verse in the last lesson (2 Tim. 3:16). The word “Scripture” means “writings.” Over and over the writers of the Bible were commanded to record very “words” of God (Ex. 24:4, Rev. 22:19). David confessed on his deathbed that “the Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue” (2 Sam. 23:2); Jeremiah was told, “Do not diminish a word” of God’s prophecy (Jer. 26:2); Paul claimed to teach “words . . . which the Holy Spirit teaches” (1 Cor. 2:13).

Second, the Bible emphatically teaches that everything that God utters is true and completely without error. Jesus said to the Father, “Your word is truth” (John 17:17). The psalmist declared, “Your word is truth” (Ps. 119:160). The writer of Hebrews stated, “It is impossible for God to lie” (Heb. 6:18); Paul told Titus that “God . . . cannot lie” (1:2); Proverbs assures us that “every word of God is flawless” (30:5).

The very character of God as true demands that when He speaks He must speak the truth. At the same time, the Scriptures are the very utterance of God. Therefore, from these two clearly taught truths of Scripture one conclusion logically follows: Everything the Bible teaches is the unerring truth of God.

Thus inerrancy follows logically from inspiration. If the Bible is God’s Word, then it must be without error.

Some examples of inerrancy:

The Bible is not a scientific book, but what it says scientifically is accurate (even though many of these truths were not known at the time of their writing):

- The spherical shape of the earth (Isaiah 40:22).
- The earth is suspended in nothing (Job. 26:7).
- The stars are innumerable (Gen. 15:5).
- The existence of valleys in the seas (2 Sam. 22:16).
- The existence of springs and fountains in the sea (Gen. 7:11; 8:2; Prov. 8:28).
- The existence of water paths (ocean currents) in the seas (Psalm 8:8).
- The water cycle (Job. 26:8; 36:27-28; 37:16; 38:25-27; Ps. 135:7; Ecc. 1:6-7).
- The fact that all living things reproduce after their own kind (Gen. 1:21; 6:19).
- The nature of health, sanitation, and sickness (Gen. 17:9-14; Lev. 12-14).
- The concept of entropy, that energy is running down (Psalm 102:26).

Furthermore, no archaeological discoveries have ever proven anything in the Bible wrong. It is accurate as a historical record.

1. What is meant by saying the Bible is inspired?
2. According to Deut. 18, what was to be done with false prophets?
3. True or False, the Bible has many prophecies, just not many that have been fulfilled.
4. True or False, it was prophesied that Jesus would be born in Nazareth.
5. What does the word inerrant mean?
6. True or False, not everything in the Bible is inspired, just parts of it—the rest are just stories.
7. What does the word “Scripture” mean?
8. Are the Bibles that we read today 100% error free?

9. True or False, the Bible claimed that the Earth was round thousands of years before Columbus proved it.
10. Can God lie? How do you know?
11. What was one of the details of Christ's crucifixion that was prophesied?
12. Where was I told I could find more information about why I can trust the Bible?

Memory Verse: