

# The Holy Spirit and The Inspired Word

by J. T. Smith

We begin our study of this subject with a question. Is the Bible a product of human reasoning; or a volume that is uniquely inspired? It is my belief that it is a volume that is uniquely inspired. Paul said in II Timothy 3:16-17 “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” In the days of the patriarchs and during the Mosaic dispensation, God revealed certain things directly and by angels. There was no written word involved in many instances. Let’s turn our attention to the:

## Inspiration of the Bible

The Bible was written by one of three classes of men. They were either *wicked bad men*; *good men* who were speaking by their own volition and *not by inspiration*; or they were *good men* who were speaking the *inspired word of God*. Let consider these three classes of men.

Of course no one would even suggest that *wicked bad men* could have authored the Bible. There are too many principles that are involved for good that evil men could not have known, much less have encouraged others to do, for it to have been written by such men.

Could it have been written by good un-inspired men? There could be no such person that would bear these contradictory characteristics. They would not be *good men* if they lied. But, if they claimed to be presenting a *message* that was *God-breathed* but was not, then they lied. Luke said, Acts 2:4 “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” If they were not speaking the inspired word by the power of the Holy Spirit, why did they lie about it? The word “inspired” means, *God-breathed*. The word spoken by men, then, did not originate with man, but was *God-breathed*.

The only alternative that remains is our third statement. These men were *good men* who desired to do God’s will and were *speaking the inspired word* by the power of the Holy Spirit. There is no other explanation. There is no way that some forty different writers could have written the different books of the Bible having been from different cultures and spanning a period of some 1600 years – never having met one another – with such complete harmony. Those who deny that the word is *God-breathed* cannot explain how there can be such harmony in sixty-six books without there being one contradiction, in fact.

The object of inspiration is commonly to reveal some new truth – intended to direct the mind in a supernatural way – to write and speak certain things with unerring certainty. The penmanship was human, but the authorship was Divine.

There can be no explanation for the close harmony of the Bible than to recognize the fact that the words came from God. This is known as verbal inspiration. Some have suggested that the thoughts came from God to the apostles and others who received revelation. That is, only the thoughts were given to them and they spoke what they decided to speak in view of the thought that was given. However, this denies the words of Christ and the apostles. Christ said, “For it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you” (Matthew 10:20). Paul said, “These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual” (I Corinthians 2:13). Paul also said in I Thessalonians 2:13 “For this reason we also thank God without ceasing, because when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you welcomed it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe.” And, I Corinthians 14:37 teaches, “If anyone thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord.”

## Holy Spirit and the Old Testament

These things were not only spoken concerning the New Testament, but also the Old Testament. Jesus endorsed the Old Testament. “Then He said to them, “These are the words

which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me' ” (Luke 24:44).

The apostles also endorsed the Old Testament as inspired of God. “For prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (II Peter 1:21). Even those in the Old Testament affirmed that they were speaking the inspired word of God. David said, “The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue” (II Samuel 23:2).

Jeremiah told God that he would not be able to go to Jerusalem and prophesy to the people as He had requested because, “I am a youth.” But we read in Jeremiah 1:7-9, “But the LORD said to me: ‘Do not say, ‘I am a youth,’ for you shall go to all to whom I send you, and whatever I command you, you shall speak. Do not be afraid of their faces, for I am with you to deliver you,’ says the LORD. Then the LORD put forth His hand and touched my mouth, and the LORD said to me: ‘Behold, I have put My words in your mouth’.”

Noah was a preacher of righteousness, according to II Peter 2:5. Christ used the Spirit, by which He was raised (Holy Spirit), to preach through Noah to the spirits in bondage to sin. “By whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. There is also an antitype which now saves us – baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (I Peter 3:19-21). Hence, Peter said that Christ went *by* the Spirit *that raised Him from the dead*, and preached unto the spirits in prison (bondage to sin) *when* the longsuffering of God waited *while* the ark was a preparing. So Christ went by the Spirit and used Noah, a preacher of righteousness, to preach to the people while the ark was being prepared.

Just here, I want to make a point that should be very obvious to every Bible student. God has never worked a miracle on a person by the Holy Spirit that that person might be saved. He has always, ever since the Garden of Eden when He made man as a free moral agent with freedom to make choices, used miracles to prove Himself or those whom He sent. He has always insisted that those who observed the miracles exercise their freedom of choice. But let me emphasize it again, God never did perform a direct operation on man by the Holy Spirit to save him in the Old Testament, New Testament nor today, to make him better or to save him.

### **Holy Spirit in the New Testament**

Christ was conceived by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:18). The Holy Spirit descended in the form of a dove at the baptism of Jesus (Matthew 3:16) Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil (Matthew 4:1-11). He Cast out demons by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:28). Then Peter related in Acts 2 that the Holy Spirit’s coming was prophesied by Joel (and quotes from Joel 2). Jesus also promised the Holy Spirit to those who believed on Him (Mark 16:17-20). He was to come and guide the apostles into all the truth (John 16:13). He would not speak from Himself, but would bring to the remembrance of the apostles all that Christ had said unto them (John 14:26). Paul said, “But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God” (I Corinthians 2:10).

To say that the Holy Spirit did not have His part in inspiration in bringing the very words that were spoken by the apostles is to deny what the Bible says about the function of The Spirit. Thus today we have the verbally inspired Old and New Testaments.