



Lecture # 5 Part 2

Scriptural Claims for Inspiration in General

THE CLAIM FOR INSPIRATION

In order to understand what is meant by inspiration as a whole, the biblical claim must be examined and compared with the character and contents of the Bible. The fact of inspiration as claimed in the Bible must be understood in the phenomena of inspiration.

What the Bible says about itself should be understood in light of what the Bible shows in itself. In order to demonstrate the divine authority of the Scriptures, it must be shown that the Bible has a **divine claim** corroborated by a **divine character** and supported by **divine credentials**. For the present, however, discussion is limited to the general claim and character of inspiration (see section # 11 and section #13 later in our discussion).

SOME BIBLICAL DECLARATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS ABOUT INSPIRATION

It is sometimes objected that it is a “circular argument” to refer to **biblical passages** in support of **biblical claims**.

But that objection is unfounded for several reasons.

(1) *Practically*, there is no better place to begin than with what is self-claimed.

(2) *Legally*, a man can testify in his own behalf in a court of law. Why should not the Bible be permitted to witness in its own behalf?

(3) *Logically*, the claim is not being used to *support itself*, but as a point of departure to *study itself*. The claim for inspiration within the Bible itself includes several pertinent characteristics.

It is verbal

The classical text for inspiration in the Bible ([2 Timothy 3:16](#)) affirms that the **writings are inspired**.

2 Timothy 3:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ **All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;**

2 Timothy 3:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ **All (*graphē*) Scripture “is” (verb) inspired (adjective) (*theopneustos*) by God and profitable (*ophelimos*) for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;**

Inspiration extends to the very *words* of Scripture. “Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD” ([Exodus 24:4](#)).



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Exodus 24:4 (NASB)

⁴ Moses wrote down all the words of the LORD. Then he arose early in the morning, and built an altar at the foot of the mountain with twelve pillars for the twelve tribes of Israel.

Isaiah was told to “take for yourself a large tablet and write” ([Isaiah 8:1](#)) and to “inscribe it on a scroll, that it may serve in the time to come as a witness forever” ([Isaiah 30:8](#)).¹

Isaiah 8:1 (NASB)

¹ Then the LORD said to me, “Take for yourself a large tablet and write on it in ordinary letters: Swift is the booty, speedy is the prey.”

Isaiah 30:8 (NASB)

⁸ Now go, write it on a tablet before them And inscribe it on a scroll, That it may serve in the time to come As a witness forever.

The distinct claim of the New Testament is that what had been written by the prophets is God’s word; for example, the gospel of Mark introduces the prophet’s word by the statement “It is written.”²

Mark 1:1-3 (NASB)

¹ The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

² As it is written in Isaiah the prophet: "BEHOLD, I SEND MY MESSENGER AHEAD OF YOU, WHO WILL PREPARE YOUR WAY;

³ THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS, 'MAKE READY THE WAY OF THE LORD, MAKE HIS PATHS STRAIGHT.'"

Some have denied that the Bible actually claims to be verbally inspired by saying, “We need to remind ourselves that the verbal plenary formulation is, after all, only a doctrine—a non-biblical doctrine at that.”³ However, in the light of the repeated general and specific claims that the *words* of the prophets are God’s words, it would be a more consistent view simply to admit that the Bible does claim “**verbal inspiration**” for itself, whether or not that claim is accepted.

The evidence that *the very words* of the Bible are God-given may be summarized briefly as follows:

1. It is the claim of the classical text that the *writings* are inspired ([2 Timothy 3:16](#)).

2 Timothy 3:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness”



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2. It is the emphatic testimony of Paul that he spoke in “*words ... taught by the Spirit*” ([1 Corinthians 2:13](#)).

[1 Corinthians 2:13 \(NASB\)](#)

¹³ which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual *thoughts* with spiritual *words*.

3. It is evident from the repeated formula “*It is written*” (e.g., [Matthew 4:4, 7, 10](#)).

[Matthew 4:4 \(NASB\)](#)

⁴ But He answered and said, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE, BUT ON EVERY WORD THAT PROCEEDS OUT OF THE MOUTH OF GOD.'"

[Matthew 4:7 \(NASB\)](#)

⁷ Jesus said to him, "On the other hand, it is written, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"

[Matthew 4:10 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁰ Then Jesus said to him, "Go, Satan! For it is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD, AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"

4. Jesus said that that which was *written* in the whole Old Testament spoke of Him ([Luke 24:27, 44](#); [John 5:39](#); [Hebrews 10:7](#)).

[Luke 24:27 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁷ Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.

[Luke 24:44 \(NASB\)](#)

⁴⁴ Now He said to them, "These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled."

[John 5:39 \(NASB\)](#)

³⁹ "You search the Scriptures because you think that in them you have eternal life; it is these that testify about Me;

[Hebrews 10:7 \(NASB\)](#)

⁷ "THEN I SAID, 'BEHOLD, I HAVE COME (IN THE SCROLL OF THE BOOK IT IS WRITTEN OF ME) TO DO YOUR WILL, O GOD.'"