



Lecture # 7 Part 2

THE CHARACTER AND CONTENT OF INSPIRATION

THE NATURE OF INSPIRATION

The use of variety of expression

The use of individuality and personalities

The use of non-biblical documents

Jude cited a non-canonical saying about the prophecy of Enoch (**v. 14**).

Jude 1:14 (NASB)

¹⁴ *It was also about these men that Enoch, in the seventh generation from Adam, prophesied, saying, "Behold, the Lord came with many thousands of His holy ones,*

The use of non-biblical sources should not be thought incongruous with inspiration because it is to be remembered that **"all truth is God's truth."** The God **"who said, 'Light shall shine out of darkness' "** (**2 Corinthians 4:6**) is able to speak truth through a pagan prophet (**Numbers 24:17**), an unwitting high priest (**John 11:50**), and even a stubborn donkey (**Numbers 22:28**).

2 Corinthians 4:6 (NASB)

⁶ For God, who said, **"Light shall shine out of darkness,"** is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

Numbers 24:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ "I see him, but not now; I behold him, but not near; A star shall come forth from Jacob, A scepter shall rise from Israel, And shall crush through the forehead of Moab, And tear down all the sons of Sheth.

Numbers 22:28 (NASB)

²⁸ And the LORD **opened the mouth of the donkey,** and she said to Balaam, "What have I done to you, that you have struck me these three times?"

John 11:50 (NASB)

⁵⁰ nor do you take into account that it is expedient for you that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish."

The use of nonscientific language

Inspiration certainly does not necessitate the use of scholarly, technical, or scientific language. The Bible is written for the common men of every generation, and it therefore uses their common, everyday language. The use of observational, nonscientific language is not **unscientific**, it is merely **prescientific**. The Scriptures were recorded in **ancient**



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times by ancient standards, and it would be **anachronistic (out-of-date, wrong chronology)** to superimpose *modern* scientific standards upon them.

It is no more unscientific to speak of the sun standing still ([Joshua 10:12](#)) than it is to refer to the sun rising ([Joshua 1:15](#)).¹³

[Joshua 10:12 \(NASB\)](#)

¹² Then Joshua spoke to the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the sons of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, "O sun, stand still at Gibeon, And O moon in the valley of Aijalon."

[Joshua 1:15 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁵ until the LORD gives your brothers rest, as *He gives you*, and they also possess the land which the LORD your God is giving them. Then you shall return to your own land, and possess that which Moses the servant of the LORD gave you beyond the Jordan toward the sunrise."

Contemporary meteorologists still speak daily of the times of "sunrise" and "sunset." The Scriptures say that the Queen of Sheba "came from the ends of the earth" ([Matthew 12:42](#)). Because "the ends of the earth" was only several hundred miles away, in Arabia,¹⁴ it is apparent that this is another example of the use of phenomenal language.

[Matthew 12:42 \(NASB\)](#)

⁴² "The Queen of the South will rise up with this generation at the judgment and will condemn it, because she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and behold, something greater than Solomon is here.

In like manner, on the Day of Pentecost there were people "from every nation under heaven" ([Acts 2:5](#)).

[Acts 2:5 \(NASB\)](#)

⁵ Now there were Jews living in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven.

These nations are identified in [Acts 2:9–11](#), and they do not include all the world literally (e.g., North and South America are excluded).

[Acts 2:9-11 \(NASB\)](#)

⁹ "Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia,

¹⁰ Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the districts of Libya around Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and proselytes,

¹¹ Cretans and Arabs—we hear them in our *own* tongues speaking of the mighty deeds of God."



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Thus, universal language is used in a *geographical*¹⁵ sense and is to be taken phenomenally to mean “**the then-known world.**”¹⁶ The Bible was written to a nonscientific people in a prescientific age, **and it is not reasonable for one to say the Bible is scientifically incorrect; it is merely scientifically imprecise by modern standards.** But, in sacrificing scientific precision, the Bible has gained a perfection by its universality and simplicity of style.

The Bible also uses round numbers (e.g., [1 Chronicles 19:18](#); [1 Chronicles 21:5](#)).

[1 Chronicles 19:18 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁸ The Arameans fled before Israel, and David killed of the Arameans 7,000 charioteers and 40,000 foot soldiers, and put to death Shophach the commander of the army.

[1 Chronicles 21:5 \(NASB\)](#)

⁵ Joab gave the number of the census of *all* the people to David. And all Israel were 1,100,000 men who drew the sword; and Judah was 470,000 men who drew the sword.

It may be imprecise from the standpoint of a contemporary technological society to speak of 3.459265 ... as three, but it is not incorrect for an ancient non-technological people. Three and fourteen hundredths can be rounded off to three. That is sufficient for a “**cast metal sea**” ([2 Chronicle 4:2](#)) in an ancient Hebrew temple, even though it would not suffice for a computer in a rocket.

[2 Chronicles 4:2 \(NASB\)](#)

² Also he made the cast *metal* sea, ten cubits from brim to brim, circular in form, and its height was five cubits and its circumference thirty cubits.

But one should not expect scientific precision in a prescientific age. The Bible speaks correctly in the language of its day in the mode of understanding of the people of that day. The Bible must be judged by the very nature of the divine revelation. The revelation came from God through men speaking human language and living in a cultural context. To be meaningful it had to come in the language of the prophets and apostles and employ the cultural background of figures, illustrations, analogies, and everything else associated with linguistic communication. **No artificial or abstract theory of inerrancy that imposes modern scientific or technical precision upon the Scriptures is warranted.**