



Lecture # 8 Part 1

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
The use of nonscientific language

The use of a variety of literary devices

Hyperboles may also be found (e.g., [Colossians 1:23](#); [John 21:25](#)).

Hyperboles:

- a) Rhetoric.-obvious and intentional exaggeration.
- b) an extravagant statement or figure of speech not intended to be taken literally, as "to wait an ..."
- c) exaggeration: deliberate and obvious exaggeration used for effect, e.g. "I could eat a million of these"

Synonyms: [exaggeration](#), [overstatement](#), [overemphasis](#), [magnification](#), [inflation](#), [embellishment](#).

[Colossians 1:23 \(NASB\)](#)

²³ if indeed you continue in the faith firmly established and steadfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel that you have heard, which was proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, was made a minister.

[John 21:25 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁵ And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written.

And Jesus Himself used the device of *satire* ([Matthew 19:24](#) with [Matthew 23:24](#)).

Satire:

- a) use of wit to criticize behavior: the use of wit, especially irony, sarcasm, and ridicule, to criticize faults
- b) A **satire** is the use of irony, sarcasm and humor to criticize or show the ignorance of people. (noun)

[Matthew 19:24 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁴ "Again I say to you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God."

[Matthew 23:24 \(NASB\)](#)

²⁴ "You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!"



Lecture # 8 Part 1

In a word, then, the claim for inspiration, as understood in the light of the character of the inspired record itself, reveals that “**inspiration**” must not be viewed as a mechanical or wooden process. It is, rather, a dynamic and personal process that results in a divinely authoritative and inerrant product—the written Word of God.

THE EXTENT OF INSPIRATION

Some have suggested that the Bible is true as a whole but not necessarily in every part (see section # 2 discussion). They argue that Scripture can always be trusted on **moral matters**, but is not always correct on **historical matters**. They say the Bible can always be relied on in the **spiritual domain**, but not always in the **scientific area**. They came to this conclusion because they believe that “**it is the intention of the Holy Spirit to teach us how one goes to heaven, and not how the heavens go.**”¹⁷

This position is inadequate for **5 major reasons**.

Inspiration includes everything the Bible teaches.

1. The Bible teaches only truth (John 17:17), but it contains some lies, for example, Satan’s lie (Genesis 3:4; cf. John 8:44) and Rahab’s lie (Joshua 2:4).

John 17:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ "Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.

Genesis 3:4 (NASB)

⁴ The serpent said to the woman, "You surely will not die!

John 8:44 (NASB)

⁴⁴ "You are of *your* father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

Joshua 2:4 (NASB)

⁴ But the woman had taken the two men and hidden them, and she said, "Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they were from.

Inspiration covers the Bible fully and completely in the sense that it records accurately and truthfully even the lies and errors of sinful beings. **The truth of Scripture is to be found in what the Bible *reveals* not in everything it *records*.**

Unless this distinction is held, it may be incorrectly concluded that the Bible teaches immorality because it narrates David’s sin (**2 Samuel 11:4**),



Lecture # 8 Part 1

2 Samuel 11:4 (NASB)

⁴David sent messengers and took her, and when she came to him, he lay with her; and when she had purified herself from her uncleanness, she returned to her house.

That it promotes polygamy because it records Solomon's ([1 Kings 11:3](#)),

1 Kings 11:3 (NASB)

³He had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines, and his wives turned his heart away.

Or that it asserts atheism because it quotes the fool as saying "there is no God" ([Psalm 14:1](#)).

Psalm 14:1 (NASB)

¹The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God." They are corrupt, they have committed abominable deeds; There is no one who does good.

In each case the interpreter of Scripture must seek the *commitment of the writer* of the particular passage in question. The important thing for the interpreter to keep in mind is not what the writer *seems* to say, not what he refers to, nor even whom he quotes, but what he *really affirms* in the text.