

AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

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INTRODUCTION

The Bible has always been subject to attack and criticism throughout the ages and probably always will be. Defending the authenticity and reliability of the Bible from an historical and theological perspective is something every believer may be challenged to do at some time. The historical question centers upon whether our 20th Century Bible's critical Greek and Hebrew texts is a faithful reproduction and translation of the books produced by the original authors. The answer is a resounding YES!

No other book from antiquity comes to the modern world with greater evidence for its authenticity than does the Bible. Both the kind and amount of evidence that supports the fidelity of the present critical text of the Bible is greater than any other book from the ancient world.

From a theological perspective, the question is whether the documents are genuine and authentic - that is, do they come from the alleged periods and authors - and possess the persistent claim to divine inspiration. Upon examination of the facts, one can rightly agree with all 66 Books of the Bible that proclamation itself to be the Word of God. All archeological and theological evidence confirm that claim.

Apart from the claim of divine inspiration one must also address whether the Bible represents the *complete* canon of scripture. One statement should suffice as a summary for these questions. All 66 books of the Protestant Bible known today represent the *entire* and *complete* canon of inspired Scripture, handed down through the centuries without substantial change or any doctrinal variation.

INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

The Bible itself claims to be the very *breath* of God. It is therefore proper that the Scriptures be allowed the opportunity to testify on their own behalf. Critics argue that this is circular reasoning, but as we shall see, that criticism is unwarranted and unjustifiable.

Theological inspiration is the condition of being under the *Divine Influence of God*.

2 Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is given by *inspiration of God, <theopneustos>* and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

Strong's #2315 θεοπνευστος *theopneustos* (teh-op'-nyoo-stos) is the Greek adjective combined from two other Greek words terms: θεος *theos* (teh'-os) which means God and πνεω *pneo* (pneh'-o) which means breath blown, breathed out or wind. Theopneustos literally translates as **God breathed**, given under inspiration of God. Here's the definition of adjective theopneustos ...

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2315 θεοπνευστος *theopneustos* (theh-op'-nyoo-stos)

from [2316](#) and a presumed derivative of [4154](#); TDNT-6:453,876; adj; *God-breathed*, i.e. *inspired by God*:—

NAS-inspired by God (1).

AV-given by inspiration of God 1; 1

1) inspired by God

1a) the contents of the scriptures

The term *theopneustos* **does not imply** a particular *mode* of inspiration like divine dictation from God, nor does it imply any suspension of the normal cognitive functions of the human authors. **It does imply** something different from what we know as poetic inspiration or a sudden idea. All Sacred Scriptures from both Old and New Testaments are “God Breathed” and a direct expressive of the mind of God. The term *theopneustos* implies “breathed out” of the mouth of God as opposed to “breathed in” to the mind of man.

Matthew 4:4

But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that **proceeds from** the mouth of God.'"

2 Peter 1:19-21

- 19 And so we have the **prophetic word confirmed**, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts;
- 20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of **Scripture is of any private interpretation**,
- 21 for prophecy **never came by the will of man**, but holy men of God spoke as they were **moved by the Holy Spirit**.

We see that inspiration is the process by which the Holy Spirit moved the writers to record God-breathed writings. We see **both the writer and the writings** are inspired by God. There is no notion given to suggest that most or some of the writings are inspired while others are of human origin. All Scripture, 100% of every verse of Scripture is the inspired Word of God. Not 99%, not even 99.99% but 100%, every word of every verse accurately reflects the mind of God.

Has man made some typographical errors in reproducing the infallible and divinely inspired word of God? Yes, in some instances there are archeological findings that show what we call *typo* mistakes made from manual reproductions of the Word of God. There are a few spelling mistakes and minor transpositions of words and letters but nothing that would or should taint authenticity and reliability of the ancient manuscripts. It must be noted that ancient transcribers reproduced the manuscripts by hand, there were no paper copying machines in antiquity. There are also more than 5,000 Greek and 8,000 Latin manuscripts recovered as well as many more in other languages that attest to the integrity of the New Testament. The Old Testament was meticulously preserved by ancient Scribes and Masoretes and their preservation of the texts

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continues to this very day. The entire process of God communicating to His creation “from God to man” begins with this matter of Divine Revelation.

GOD SPOKE TO THE PROPHETS.

Hebrews 1:1-2

- 1 God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,
- 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

In times past God spoke to the prophets by angels, (Gen 18, 19) by dreams, (Dan. 7, Num. 12) visions, (Isa. 1; Ezek. 1, 8, 11, 43; Hos. 12:10) miracles (Ex 3:2; Judg 6:37; Jonah 1, 4) nature (Ps 19) audible voices (1 Sam 3:4) casting lots, (Prov 16:33) study (Dan 9) and through human conscience, that small still voice within.

2 Samuel 23:2

"The Spirit of the LORD spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue.

Jeremiah 1:9

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.

REVELATION FROM GOD

Revelation involves the origin and giving of truth. It is *Divine Disclosure* not human discovery. This may take the form of a *person*, Jesus Christ, or a *proposition* as in Scripture. God discloses revelation; man is *illuminated* by God as a gift of the Holy Spirit to understand, discover or interpret that disclosed truth.

Every Word of the Bible is the Word of God...

2 Timothy 3:16

All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

... Taught by the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 2:13

These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the **Holy Spirit teaches**, comparing spiritual things with spiritual.

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... Written

Matthew 4:4

But He answered and said, "[It is written](#), 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

... About Jesus

Luke 24:27

And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, [He expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself](#).

Luke 24:44

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](#)."

John 5:39

"[You search the Scriptures](#), for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are [they which testify of Me](#).

Hebrews 10:7

Then I said, 'Behold, I have come-- in the volume of the [book it is written of Me](#)-- to do Your will, O God.' "

... Infallible

John 10:35

"If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the [Scripture cannot be broken](#)),

... Irrevocable

Matthew 5:18

"For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, [one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled](#).

Luke 24:44

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."

Acts 1:16

"Men and brethren, this [Scripture had to be fulfilled](#), which the [Holy Spirit spoke](#) before by the mouth of David concerning Judas, who became a guide to those who arrested Jesus;

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... Completely Inerrant

John 17:17

"Sanctify them by Your truth. [Your word is truth.](#)

Matthew 22:29

Jesus answered and said to them, "You are mistaken, not [knowing the Scriptures](#) nor the power of God.

Psalms 19:7

The [law of the LORD is perfect](#), converting the soul; the [testimony of the LORD is sure](#), making wise the simple;

Psalms 119:160

The [entirety of Your word is truth](#), and every one of [Your righteous judgments endures forever](#).

Hebrews 6:18

that by two immutable things, in which it is [impossible for God to lie](#), we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us.

Titus 1:2

in hope of eternal life which [God, who cannot lie, promised](#) before time began,

... Has Final Authority

Matthew 4:4, 7, 10

4 But He answered and said, "[It is written](#), 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

7 Jesus said to him, "[It is written again](#), 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"

10 Then Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! [For it is written](#), 'You shall [worship the Lord your God, and Him only you shall serve.](#)'"

Matthew 21:42

Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the Scriptures: '[The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone](#). This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes'?"

Mark 11:17

Then He taught, saying to them, "[Is it not written](#), 'My house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations'? But you have made it a 'den of thieves.'"

Acts 17:2

Then Paul, as his custom was, went in to them, and for three Sabbaths [reasoned with them from the Scriptures](#),

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... The Gospels and New Covenant Epistles are Scripture

Jesus Himself is the key to the inspiration and canonization of Scripture. Jesus confirmed the canonization of the Hebrew canon of the Old Covenant...

Matthew 5:17-18

17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

18 "For assuredly, I say to you, till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle will by no means pass from the law till all is fulfilled.

...and it was Jesus who established by His promise that the Holy Spirit would direct the Apostles into "all truth."

John 16:13

"However, when [He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth](#); for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

The fulfillment of this promise is the canonization of the New Covenant as stated in Second Peter 3:16.

2 Peter 3:16

as also [in all his epistles](#), speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which [untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures](#).

Revelation 22:9

Then he said to me, "See that you do not do that. For I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren the prophets, and of those who [keep the words of this book](#). Worship God

Revelation 22:18

For I testify to everyone who [hears the words of the prophecy of this book](#): If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book;

Ephesians 3:5

which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been [revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets](#):

Hebrews 1:1-2

1 **God**, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,

2 has in these last days [spoken to us by His Son](#), whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

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Hebrews 2:3-5

- 3 how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be **spoken by the Lord**, and was **confirmed to us by those who heard Him**,
- 4 God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?
- 5 For He has not put the world to come, of which we speak, in subjection to angels.

The Writings of Luke, who was not an Apostle is quoted as Scripture...

1 Timothy 5:18

For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," (Deuteronomy 25:4) and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages." (Luke 10:7)

Peter considers Paul's epistles as Scripture...

2 Peter 3:16

as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.

Paul claims authority for his own writings...

1 Timothy 4:11

These things **command** and **teach**.

Titus 2:15

Speak these things, **exhort**, and **rebuke with all authority**. Let no one despise you.

Galatians 1:1

Paul, an apostle (not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead),

Galatians 1:12

For **I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it**, but it came through the **revelation** of Jesus Christ.

2 Thessalonians 3:14

And if anyone does not **obey our word in this epistle**, note that person and do not keep company with him, that he may be ashamed.

2 Peter 3:2

that you may be mindful of the **words which were spoken before by the holy prophets**, and of the **commandment of us, the apostles** of the Lord and Savior,

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... Commanded to be circulated, collected and read in the churches

2 Peter 3:15-16

15 and account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation-- as also our beloved brother Paul, [according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you,](#)
16 as also [in all his epistles](#), speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also [the rest of the Scriptures](#).

Colossians 4:16

Now when this [epistle is read among you](#), see that it is [read also in the church](#) of the Laodiceans, and that [you likewise read the epistle](#) from Laodicea.

1Thessalonians 5:27

[I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read](#) to all the holy brethren.

EVIDENCES FOR INSPIRATION OF THE BIBLE

The question of whether or not the Bible is the Word of God is a matter of evidence. Other such books, such as the Koran and the Book of Mormon, claim to be the Word of God, and they contradict the Bible. God cannot contradict Himself, and His Word cannot contradict itself, yet these books contradict one another.

What evidence proves the Bible's claim to be the Word of God and repudiate the claims of these other books? After all, any book demanding obedience because it is the Word of God, as the Bible indeed demands, must provide authenticity to support its claim of Divine Authority.

INTERNAL EVIDENCE

Prima Facie: On its surface the Bible appears to be an inspired book come from God.

The Testimony of the Holy Spirit: The Word of God is confirmed to the children of God by the Spirit of God.

Romans 8:16

The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

The Transforming Ability of the Bible: The conversion of an unbeliever into a believer built up in faith. God's Word possesses the dynamic, transforming power of God. Believers grow by studying the Word of God.

1 Peter 2:2

as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

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Unity of the Bible: The Bible contains 66 books, written over a period of 1400 years by about 40 authors using several languages containing hundreds of topics. The Bible contains an amazing unity of theme - Jesus the Christ. A single problem -sin- and a single solution -Jesus, our Savior- unify the pages from Genesis through Revelation.

EXTERNAL EVIDENCES OF THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE BIBLE

History

Much of the Bible is historical and as such is subject to historical and archeological investigations and finds. There has never been an archeological find that ever contravened a Biblical reference. Confirmation of the Bible's accuracy in factual matters lends credibility to its claims of divine origin and spiritual authority.

Prophecy

Fulfilled prophecy is a compelling evidence for the inspiration of Scripture. No prophecy of the Bible concerning events to this present day has gone unfulfilled. Hundreds of predictions, some given hundreds of years in advance have been literally fulfilled. There are two general categories of prophecy, Messianic and Non-Messianic.

Non-Messianic Prophecy

Succession of Great World Kingdoms. Daniel 2:37-42: Interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the metallic man. Daniel accurately foretold of the precise succession of the world empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome.

King Cyrus of Persia. Isaiah 44:28 - 45:7: This prophecy is by far one of the most specific predictions of the Old Covenant in foretelling King Cyrus by name some 200 years before he was born. Fulfillment is recorded in Ezra 1:1-4.

The prophecy concerning Josiah. 1 Kings 13:2 is another such case where the LORD God prophesies by name the person to perform His service long before he was born. Fulfillment is recorded in 2 Kings 23:15-17.

Return of Israel to it's Land. Isaiah 11:11: The Lord will for a "second time" reach out His hand and gather His people again. This was fulfilled in the 1948 restoration of Israel. The first occurred under Ezra and Nehemiah in the 6th century BC. Israel was sent into exile when the Roman armies sacked Jerusalem and destroyed the temple in 70 AD. The Jewish people remained in exile nearly 2000 years and their nation did not exist. Millions have returned and rebuilt their country and in the 1967 Six-Day War Jerusalem once again became a united Jewish city.

Closing of the Eastern Gate. Ezekiel 44:1-3: The Eastern Gate, where Jesus made his triumphant entry the Sunday before His crucifixion, (Matthew 21) would be shut because the LORD had entered by it. In 1543 the gate was walled up as Ezekiel had predicted and remains that way today, waiting to be reopened when Jesus returns.

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The Destruction of Tyre. Ezekiel 26: 3-14: Tyre, located in the Eastern Mediterranean, was once a heavily fortified and flourishing port city of the ancient world. Yet, the prophet Isaiah predicted her utter destruction hundreds of years in advance. King Nebuchadnezzar destroyed the city but the prophecy was not complete until the time of Alexander the Great when it was utterly laid waste. The city was never rebuilt and in fact is used today as a place “to spread fishing nets” just as the Bible predicted.

The Desolation of Edom (Petra). Jeremiah 49:16-17: The ancient city of Petra was conquered in 636 AD by the Muslims and exists today as a deserted place and tourist attraction. Once an impregnable fortress carved out of rock and protected by a narrow passageway, it remains a “wounded city” just as the Bible predicted.

Increase in Knowledge and Communication. Daniel 12:4: We now live in the Information Age where technological advancement, transportation and information is growing at an unprecedented rate. Daniel refers to this period as the “end times.”

Messianic Prophecy

On the next page is a chart with a **partial listing** of some of the major prophecies concerning Jesus. Most predictions were well beyond any human ability to modify or fake fulfillment. If Jesus were a mere human, He could not control where and how he was to be born, do miracles, know precisely how He would die and rise from the dead.

It is **mathematically inconceivable** that one man could engineer and fulfill these predictions. The mathematical probability of Jesus fulfilling only 48 of the more than 300 prophecies is 1 in $10^{157(1)}$.

It is **logically improbable** and **morally implausible** that an all-powerful and all-knowing God would allow His plans for prophetic fulfillment to be ruined by someone who just happened to be in the right place at the right time. God cannot lie (Titus 1:2) nor break a promise (Heb 6:18). Jesus is the prophesied Messiah. (Ac 2:22-36)

¹ p. 108. Science Speaks. Stoner, P.W.

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Messianic Prophetic Chart

| EVENT | PROPHECY | FULFILLMENT |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|--|
| Messiah | Gen 3:15, Isa 7-11 | Gal 4:4 |
| Virgin Birth | Isa 7:14, 8:8b, | Mt 1:18-25; Lk 1:26-35, Lk 2:1-19, Jn 8:41 |
| City of Bethlehem | Mic 5:2 | Mt 2:1-6 |
| Names | Isa 9:6 | Lk 1:35 |
| Mannerism | Isa 11:1-5 | New Covenant |
| Ancestry | Gen 12:1-3 | Mt 1:1, Gal 3:16 |
| Redeemer | Gen 49:10 | Lk 3:23, 33-34; Mt 1:1-3; Heb 7:14 |
| House of David | 2 Sam 7:14 | Mt 1:1, 22:42-45, 21:19 |
| Coming of Christ | Zech 12:10 | Jn 19:37, Rev 1:7 |
| 1st Coming | Isa 61:1-2a | Lk 4:17-20 |
| Messenger | Isa 40:3; Mal 3:1 | Mt 3:1-3 |
| Anointed by Holy Spirit | Isa 11:2 | Mt 3:16-17 |
| Miracles | Isa 35:5-6 | Mt 9:35, 11:4-5; Gospels |
| Authority over Temple | Mal 3:1 | Mt 21:12-23, 23:16-35; Jn 2:19-21 |
| Rejected by His people | Ps 118:22 | 1 Pet 2:7; Mt 21:42; Mk 12:10 Lk 20:17; Ac 4:11 |
| Calvary Event | Isa 53: 2-12 ² | Mt 26-27; Mk 15-16; Lk 22-23; Jn 18-19 |
| Crucifixion | Ps 22:16 Zech 12:10 | Lk 23:33 Jn 19:34 |
| Year of Crucifixion | Dan 9:24-26 | 33 AD |
| Casting lots for garments | Ps 22:18 | Jn 19:23-24 |
| Resurrection | Ps 16:10; 2:7 | Ac 13:33-35; 2:30-32; 17:2-3 |
| Ascension | Ps 110:1; 2:4-6; 68:6 | Eph 4:8; Mt 22:43-44; Ac 2:34-45 |
| 2nd Coming | Isa 61:2b-11 | impending |

² Before the time of Jesus it was common for Jewish interpreters to teach that Isaiah 53 spoke of the Jewish Messiah. Only after early Christians began using this text apologetically with great force did it become in rabbinical Judaism, an expression of the suffering Jewish nation. p. 611, Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics, Geisler, Norman L. (Baker)