

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

LESSON 10



I will put my
law in their inward parts,
& write it in their hearts....

Jeremiah 31:33

THE BIBLE IS INSPIRED

Scripture Texts: Galatians 1:11-12; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21

What is meant by inspiration? The word means "a breathing in." God's breath, or His life, is upon the Words of the Bible. We may read the Bible, but unless we are inspired by the Holy Spirit, it will be only empty words without spiritual life. The breath of the Almighty is on it and in it. It is an authority of truth higher than the authority of the mind.

In **2 Timothy**, the Bible lays claim to divine inspiration. Every believing man or woman who has taken this statement at its face value has been brought into a rich, firm experience in spiritual growth.

MEMORY VERSE: *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:—2 Timothy 3:16*

DAILY READINGS:

Mon.—**2 Samuel 23:1-7** David claimed inspiration.

Tue.—**Galatians 1:1-17** Paul taught the inspired Gospel.

Wed.—**Galatians 2:1-9** Apostles recognized Paul's inspiration.

Thu.—**1 Peter 1:1-12** The Spirit of Christ inspired prophecy.

Fri.—**Psalms 119:97-112** David's love for God's Word.

Devotional Reading: Ephesians 3:1-12 Paul taught by the Spirit.

Paul's Claim to Inspiration

Galatians 1:11-12 I certify—what Paul is about to say is sure and certain. **The gospel which was preached of me is not after man**—not of man's thinking. **Neither was I taught it**—not learned from human teachers—**but by the revelation of Jesus Christ**—it was revealed to him by Jesus. Paul's **knowledge in the mystery of Christ** was received **by revelation (Ephesians 3:2-5)**. Jesus promised this when He appeared to Paul on the road to Damascus (**Acts 26:16**).

A small part of the Bible—the Ten Commandments—God Himself wrote (**Exodus 31:18; Exodus 32:16**). Other parts, He spoke (**Exodus 25:1; Jeremiah 30:2; Revelation 2:1**). Still other parts were written as the Holy Spirit took control of the thoughts of a man (**Ephesians 1:17-18**).

Inspiration is not revelation, but revelation is inspiration. Revelation is that act of God by which He directly communicates truth not known before. Examples of revealed truth are **1 Corinthians 15** and **1 Thessalonians 4**, the future resurrection; **1 Timothy 4:1-3**, the coming apostasy; and the visions in the Book of **Revelation**. Not all Scripture needed to be revealed. Some was already known. But all, both the revealed and the known, were inspired. Inspiration is the guidance of the Holy Spirit in telling or writing of truth already revealed (**Job 32:8**).

The Bible records both sins and right acts, sayings of Satan and sayings of God. Not all were inspired when done or said. But the RECORD of them is inspired and true. The Holy Spirit selected the writer and the matter to be written and directed in the writing.

All Sacred Scripture Inspired

2 Timothy 3:15-17 The **Holy Scriptures** which Timothy knew are the Old Testament Books. In recommending them, Paul says **All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable . . .** The writings given to Israel for their guidance and which they gathered together and looked upon as God's Word, are the same as our Old Testament upon which Jesus put His approval. These were called the Scriptures or Holy

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Scriptures (**John 5:39; Romans 1:2; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4**). Because they are inspired by God, they are true and **are profitable**. For what? **Doctrine**—for teaching God's will, Jesus Christ, and the way to be saved. **Reproof**—to warn sinners of the result if they do not repent. **Correction**—a standard to bring men back to true doctrine and the right way, as they have a tendency to go astray. **Instruction in righteousness**—to give knowledge of God, His ways, and how to please Him. These are to make **the man of God**—any who belongs to Him—**perfect** and **thoroughly furnished**. Everything is furnished that is needed for a perfect life in Christ. No one is furnished or trained or educated for the good life without knowledge of and belief in the Bible (**Proverbs 9:10**).

Sometimes the word *inspired* is mistakenly applied to a song, poem, or writing not in the Bible. There is a difference between a divine revelation of the mind of God and a divine action on the mind of man. The former is revelation; the latter is spiritual enlightenment or inspiration. We hear it said, "I did not see this before. I am going to walk in this light." That truth has been revealed for centuries, but it just became light or truth to you by the Holy Spirit's inspiration. The Bible is God's public revelation; what He says to us in our daily, private worship is for us and for our needs. God speaks to us through the Bible, prayer, worship, and the conscience. Both individuals and nations are enlightened by its use.

The Holy Spirit Gave the Word

2 Peter 1:20-21 No prophecy of the scripture—no God-given message—is of any private interpretation. We must not give it OUR meaning but let the Giver interpret it for us. **The prophecy came not . . . by the will of man**. We must go to the One with authority. **If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God (James 1:5)**. **Holy men of God spake . . . moved by the Holy Ghost**. This spoken of the Old Testament is equally true of the New. New Testament preachers preached **with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven**. They also wrote it (**1 Peter 1:12**). Two agents here—**holy men** and **the Holy Ghost**. He **moved** them—stirred their desires and guided their thoughts. They wrote as He guided. **The Lord gave the word (Psalm 68:11)**. This is God's way of preserving His Word against destruction.

Those things which we cannot understand, we are asked to accept on faith, and it has been the experience of believers through the ages that when they manifest such faith, the things they could not honestly understand either became clear to them or ceased to be a cause of anxiety and bewilderment.

We must beware of "cunningly devised fables," for such mislead the faithful today when men substitute their own theories for the infallible Word of God.

JUST A THOUGHT

"The principles of the Bible are the groundwork of human freedom."

This lesson is adapted from a lesson by Mary Lehmann.
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