

LESSON 20 - BIBLICAL INSPIRATION

How And Why Is The Bible The Inspired Word Of God?

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Why is the Bible called the “Word of God”? How does it compare with what Islam believes about the Qurán? Islam believes the Qurán came from God (Allah) and is an exact copy of a preserved tablet in the presence of Allah. Islam teaches that the Qurán was written before the creation of the earth, even though it’s often dealing with the present. It was given to a *single* person (Muhammad, an illiterate caravan trader) in pieces over a period of 23 years. He received from a *single* spirit *claiming* to be **Gabriel**, the same angel named in the Jewish and Christian Scriptures. By contrast, the Bible is a collection of 66 separate books, poems, and letters that were written over a span of about 1,600 years. It was written by more than 40 different kings, prophets, leaders, and followers of Jesus. Each author lived in a specific place and time and wrote for a specific audience and purpose. However, they also wrote what God *wanted and led* them to write. In this lesson we’ll examine: 1) what divine inspiration is, 2) why to believe the Bible is inspired by God, and 3) why God gave us His Word.

1. What is Divine Inspiration? If the Bible was written by historical humans why do we call this collection of writings the “Word of God”? We do so because all the writings included in our Bible were *divinely inspired* by God. Meaning the authors were *moved and carried along* by the Holy Spirit while writing. They were “breathed into by God.” Since the authors were under supernatural divine influence they were guided to express exactly what God intended them to express. God is the Ultimate Author then, having given His message to humanity *through* the minds and words of chosen and qualified men writing in their own freedom and faithfulness. 2 Peter 1:20-21 says, “*You must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.*” The Bible is a unique collection of the historical writings of men, as well as, a single, unified narrative and direction divinely authored by God.

2. The Bible Is Inspired By God. Woven throughout the Bible is God’s signature of authorship. It’s revealed through its historical reliability, prophetic accuracy, supernatural revelation, profound spiritual wisdom, and its ability to permanently change the hearts and minds of those who read and believe. But beyond these subjective truths, the Bible numerously speaks of it’s own inspiration. In Deuteronomy 18:18 God tells Moses, “*I will raise up for them a prophet like you from among their fellow Israelites, and I will put my words in his mouth. He will tell them everything I command him.*” God didn’t only do

this with prophets. In 2 Samuel 23:2 King David says, *“The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me; his word was on my tongue.”* The Scriptures are numerous called God’s words, precepts, laws, statutes, commandments, acknowledging their divine origin. Psalm 119 provides many examples of this. Jesus confirmed that the Scriptures come from God and even said why: God’s Word is the source of life. In Matthew 4:4 Jesus says, *“It is written: ‘Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”* Interestingly, this is a direct quote from Moses in Deuteronomy 8:3. Jesus is confirming the inspiration of Scripture and the purpose and importance of knowing it. The apostle Paul addresses the Jewish leadership in Acts 7:38 saying Moses *“received [from God] living words to pass on to us.”* We learn from these two verses that God didn’t allow His Word to get lost or corrupted! God’s Word remains intact and able to give life! This is true of both the Old and New Testament Scriptures. In John 12:48 Jesus spoke of His own words saying, *“There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words I have spoken will condemn them at the last day.”* In John 15:3 He told His apostles, *“You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you.”* In 1 Thessalonians 2:13 Paul says of his own teachings, *“And we also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe.”* 1 Peter 1:23 says, *“For you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.”*

3. Why God Gave Us His Word. God’s Word is given to warn us of the coming judgment, convict us of our sinfulness, and draw us to repentance. In Deuteronomy 18:19 God says, *“I myself will call to account anyone who does not listen to my words that the prophet speaks in my name.”* In Jeremiah 23:29 God says, *“Is not my word like fire,” declares the LORD, “and like a hammer that breaks a rock in pieces?”* Jesus is also described in Revelation 1:16, 2:16, and 19:15 as a warrior who wages war against those in rebellion to God with the sword of His mouth. God’s Word is given to soften our hearts, illuminate our minds, and direct our paths to godly living. Hebrews 4:12 says, *“For the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”* God’s Word is given to point us to our need for Jesus. Jesus taught this in Luke 24:25-27. Hebrews 6:5 describes those who’ve been saved by faith in Jesus as those who’ve tasted the goodness of the Word of God. Hebrews 12:25 warns against rejecting Jesus and the new covenant saying, *“See to it that you do not refuse him who speaks.”* God’s Word is given to cleanse and sanctify His church, as written in Ephesian 5:26. His Word is described in Ephesians 6:17 as the sword of the Spirit to be used in spiritual warfare. 2 Timothy 3:15-16 summarizes all these important points well saying, *“From infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”* Cherish your Bible. Let it be a light for your path!

Let’s pray. Heavenly Father, help me to trust and love Your Word. Put it deeply within me. May Your Word renew my mind, cleanse me, transform my life, and direct all of my steps. In Jesus’ name. Amen.