

## THE NEED FOR WRITTEN REVELATION

- Not every word of revelation has been put into writing, but much has been committed to writing. God himself set the pattern by writing the ten commandments on tables of stone with his own “finger” (Exodus 31:18), even after he had spoken them audibly (Deuteronomy 5:22). Moses wrote down the rest of the law at God’s command (see Exodus 24:4; 24:27).
- When God sent the prophets, he sent them not only to preach but also to write (see Jeremiah 30:2; cf. 36:2; Luke 1:3; Revelation 1:11, 19).

### *Why Written Revelation?*

- A permanent form available to immediate recipients and to future generations. God's redemptive acts in history are one-time events. They must be recorded and explained for all times. Revelation given to particular persons in particular historical circumstances must be put into a form that is permanently available. See Romans 4:22-25; 1 Corinthians 10:11; John 20:30, 31.
- An objective standard, accessible to all in the same form and the same way. The written revelation invalidates appeals to subjective experience as the norm. See Matthew 4:10; Romans 1:17.
- A finality that befits the character of God. When a law or a judgment or a prophecy is written, that makes it final and firm and solid. It should be done, it shall be done, it must be done. Once written, God's word must not be changed (see Revelation 22:18, 19; Exodus 17:14; Isaiah 30:8; compare Deuteronomy 27:2, 3; Joshua 8:32).
- Ultimately, to provoke faith and redemption (John 20:31; 5:39, 40).

## *GOD IS THE AUTHOR OF SCRIPTURE*

- The source of error in divine things is ignorance of the scriptures.
  - ▶ Note how Jesus answers his critics. “Have you not read even this scripture?” (Mark 12:10). “Did you never read . . .” (Matthew 21:16). “You do err not knowing the scriptures” (Matthew 22:29).
  - ▶ In Matthew 19:4 Jesus attributes to God a statement made by Adam in its Old Testament context (Genesis 2:24). The word of scripture can be treated as a declaration of God because all scripture is Word Of God.

- ▶ The writers of the New Testament could naturally speak of God saying what the scriptures say (even though God might not have uttered it in its Old Testament setting).
  - Hebrews 3:7 from Psalm 95:7
  - Acts 4:24-25 from Psalm 2:1
  - Acts 13:34-35 from Isaiah 55:3
- ▶ Paul uses the expression “oracles of God” when speaking of scripture (Romans 3:2).

### *THE HUMAN ASPECT OF SCRIPTURE*

- The scriptures came into being by human agency. It would be inexact to say that there is a human element in scripture, as if there are elements in the Bible belonging to man and elements belonging to God. Rather in all parts the scriptures are from God. But the whole of the Bible has been given by God through the instrumentality of men.
- These men speak from God. Scripture is the product of man speaking from God and under such a control of the Holy Spirit that they are “carried along” by him.
- See Matthew 22:42-43 (from Psalm 110); Acts 1:16; 4:25; Romans 10:19, 20.
- The New Testament writers have no difficulty in assigning scripture to its human authors, or in discovering in scripture traits due to its human authorship.
- To say that “Moses says” or “David says” is evidently the same as saying that “scripture says,” which is the same as saying that “God says.”
- The gift of scripture through its human authors took place by a process much more intimate than dictation, and it took place in a process by which the control of God’s Holy Spirit was too complete and pervasive to permit the human qualities of the secondary authors to condition the purity of the product.
- This process is of a fashion which does not do violence to the nature of the writers as men, and at the same time is in every part expressive of the mind of God. In this manner the Bible is a divine–human book.
- Some human phenomena in scripture to note.
  - ▶ 1 Corinthians, chapter 1
  - ▶ Romans 9:1ff.
  - ▶ 1 Corinthians, chapter 7
  - ▶ 2 Peter 3:15-16
  - ▶ Jude 14; Acts 17:28; Titus 1:12

## INSPIRATION

### ◆ 2 Timothy 3:16

- The word translated “inspired of God” is the Greek *theopneustos* which literally means “God-breathed.”
- What this word indicates is not that the scriptures were “breathed into by God” (that is, the divine inbreathing into human authors), but rather that the scriptures were “breathed out by God,” the product of the creative breath of God.
- The “breath of God” is in scripture the symbol of his almighty power, the bearer of his creative word (see Psalm 33:6).
- 2 Timothy 3:16 simply states that the scriptures are a divine product. The passage says little if anything about the process of the how of the operation of God in the production of scripture.

### ◆ 2 Peter 1:19-20

- Peter assures his readers that “the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” did not rest upon “cunningly devised fables.”
- Peter’s “every prophecy of scripture” is the exact equivalent of Paul’s “every scripture” in the previous passage.
- The source of scripture lies in God. True it was spoken by men, but the men who spoke it “spoke from God.”
- These men who spoke from God are said to have been borne along or carried along by the Holy Spirit. The things which they spoke under this operation of the Spirit were therefore God’s things and not their own. This is why “the prophetic word” is so sure.

### ◆ John 10:34ff.

- Jesus affirms “the scripture cannot be broken.”
- It is impossible for the scripture to be annulled. Its authority cannot be withstood or denied. Men can bicker and argue over any religious matter, but the scriptures always have the last and final word. Why? Because the scriptures are Word Of God.
- Jesus constantly appeals to scripture as the final authority against the temptations of Satan (see Matthew 4:4, 7, 10; Luke 4:4, 8; note the emphatic “it is written”).
- Those who do not believe all that the prophets have spoken concerning the Christ are foolish in heart (Luke 24:25f.).