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BIBLICAL INERRANCY

Ed Nichols

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INTRODUCTION

Self Sufficient and Self Proclaiming

To begin a study of inspiration and the truthfulness of scripture one must first recognize that without the Bible as a complete system of self sufficiency and self proclamation there would be no premise for its inspiration and/or truthfulness. This conjecture simply stated is that the Bible exist and states its existence as created by The Holy God. If an individual is incapable of grasping the Biblical concept revealed by The Holy Spirit that,

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; (Heb 1.1-2 KJV)

then the individual will be unable to accept the statement of God's providentially providing the scriptures complete with inspiration and truthfulness. The scripture which best describes the act of providing the scripture to us is that, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness. (2 Tim 3.16 NIV).

The premise of this paper will be to direct the reader to the conclusion that the scriptures are without error and divinely inspired by the Holy Spirit. To begin one must consider that the Bible is a revelation from God.

Revelation

According to Chafer the term "revelation" is defined "...as the divine act of communicating to mankind what otherwise would not be known."¹ This definition then would conclude that the Holy Spirit as describe in the Bible provided that which is now known by a supernatural act. That act is described as breathed.

Holy Spirit Breathed. The Book speaks for itself and declares continually to be revelations from God to man. Such statements as "The Lord said to Isaiah" (Isa 7.3) points to the Bible as inspired and truthful.

Providentially Provided. A review of the Bible quickly gives evidence of its divine purpose which is to direct men to God. Its unfolding guidance of the authors by the Holy Spirit provides clear insight that this book is provided by a loving God for man's redemption to Himself.

The deistic descriptions inside the Bible speak to issues that clearly come from God. Its parts make a totally complete whole even

¹Lewis Sperry Chafer, Chafer Systematic Theology, 2 Vols. (Dallas: Dallas Seminary Press, 1948), 1:62

though it had multiple authors and covers hundreds of years. Revelation of all authors which points to the "scarlet thread" and God's redemptive plan for man should produce the conclusion that the Bible is inspired. Revelation and inspiration are clearly God working to provide His word to man.

Inspiration

The importance of the doctrine of inspiration is that God's influence on the writers of both the Old and New Testament is so evident that one can clearly see that even given each author's personal style and literary individuality that God produced His perfect will in providing His divine word which reflects His message as completely God-given and containing God's infallible word. Unless you accept this as fact and without error you have no basis for your beliefs in a supreme being who is here-after and consequently have no hope for tomorrow. Only when one can accept that God has revealed Himself to us through His word, and that word is without error, can we then proceed to place our faith and trust in Him to save us according to His word, the Holy Bible, as He revealed it to its multiple authors.

Thiessen explains that inspiration has to do with how the truth was given to the men who wrote the sixty-six books of the Bible. Thiessen indicates that the "Spirit of God moved upon men..." and further states that the "Scripture is fully and verbally inspired; it is God-breathed."²

Theories.

There have been a number of theories advanced to explain how the Bible can be written by multiple authors and in different time periods and yet be a divine word from God. Some of these theories are Mechanical Dictation Theory, Partial Inspiration Theory, and Verbal Plenary Theory.

Mechanical Dictation Theory.

This theory holds that God dictated the Bible and thus produced an accurate and infallible word which contains complete inspiration and truthfulness of the scriptures. This explanation suggests it would be impossible for man to provide accurate and infallible information.

Partial Inspiration Theory.

Since the scriptures are the source of Christian theology they must be inspired of God and absolutely true. Those who take the partial inspiration point of view believe that only doctrinal teachings and items which human authors can not have knowledge of are inspired. They would indicate that areas not related to theology, such as geography and history are not inspired and left to human interpretation.

²Henry C. Thiessen, Lectures in Systematic Theology, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 63.

Verbal Plenary Theory.

Individuals who espouse this theory believe that every word was given by divine revelation and that all of it was inspired. It therefore, is free of error of any kind. This theory seems the most plausible in that, the human authors over the period of time could not have put together such a document unless it were by divine revelation and complete without any mixture of error.

Historical and Geographical Evidence

Much of history and archaeology continue to match with events as recorded in the Bible. Attempts have been made to suggest that some Kings as mentioned in the Bible did not exist and therefore suggesting error on parts of the scriptures. In these circumstances rulers continue to match historical and Biblical accounts as archaeology unearths new findings which verify the authenticity of Bible passages.

The truthfulness of the Old Testament was substantiated when God as Christ in the flesh recognized many key doctrinal elements of the Old Testament as fact. His references to the occurrences as having taken place or as directed by God help to establish the validity of the scriptures.

Archaeology confirms such occurrences as the creation, flood, and battles of the kings by continually finding accounts which describe the circumstances of the events much as they have been described in the Bible. Archaeology continues to confirm the truthfulness of the Bible and its accuracy by continuing to search for evidence of civilizations which have been found by their Biblical references. The Bible has described locations in sufficient detail that archaeologists have been able to find whole nations and have dated them as being in existence at the time described in the Bible.

Writers Qualification.

The truthfulness of the New Testament can be described by several facts. One such fact centers around the credibility of the writers. The accounts which they relate in their writings were direct eyewitness accounts of actual occurrences. The writers had been with Jesus and wrote from their personal experiences. They received the scriptures which they wrote from the Holy Spirit and not of themselves. This spiritual insight and first hand reporting gave evidence of spiritual guidance.

Sincerity and Synchronization.

One cannot doubt the sincerity of the men who wrote the New Testament since much of what they wrote ran counter to established beliefs. To write against the traditional way of thinking took courage because of the consequences of their actions. They must have had great conviction that what they wrote was true since its content could put them to death. If what they wrote was not correct then death would be too high a price to pay for false heresy.

In conjunction with the writers convictions is the representation of facts which are reported by numerous writers covering the same content or occurrences. This harmonization of the many books of the New Testament adds proof of divine guidance for the establishment of the scriptures as true and without error.

Historical agreement

As the books written by different authors fit together to support each other so does the content fits the historical period. All of the writers use history and accurate similar accounts to produce a complete picture of Christ deity. They point to historical occurrences as substantiating divine inter-vention in the lives of men in the past, present and future. A study of the historical events leads one to conclude that there is nothing in history counter to Biblical claims nor does lack of agreement refute God's revelation.

Illumination

As Received.

The total Bible was received by the authors through the power of the Holy Spirit and was provided to them with understanding sufficient for them to write the word of God as God wanted it written. Although they were clearly their own personality and were capable of writing what they wanted to write, the Bible tells us that they only wrote that which they were led of the Spirit to write. They likewise were only given insight into that which they wrote as the Holy Spirit determined it necessary for them to have that knowledge. Circumstances throughout the Bible plainly tell the authors simply to write that which God wanted written and that it was not necessary for the writers to know or be illuminated to its purpose or content.

As Revealed.

1 John 2.20,27 according to Thiessen indicates that "each child of God has illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit to enable him to understand the Word;"³ Taking this statement to its logical conclusion then, would be that each child of God who spends time with God in his Bible will by the power of the Holy Spirit have Jesus Christ the Son of God revealed to them. This would be the extension of "understand the Word", since Christ is the Word.

Original versus Modern Versions

Original versions of God's Word to man is considered to be verbal, plenary inspiration text by some conservative Biblical scholars. Much debate over certain passages or some words, still cannot sufficiently deny that the word came by supernatural means and that its inerrancy is clear enough for learned men of the Bible to say

³Thiessen, Lectures, 41.

without hesitation that the Bible as we know it came from God to man and is without mixture of error.

The modern versions or translations of the Bible today may be regarded by some not to be without error or changes due to translation. If one believes that God using the power of the Holy Spirit illuminated the writers of the Bible, then one can also believe that the Holy Spirit can illuminate the readers to know and comprehend that which he wants understood from the text of present day translations.

THE REASONS

Save Man from Self

Man is a sinner and needs the infallible word of God to instruct him in the way to please his creator and to achieve redemption from his sin nature. God provides the instruction and redemption through divinely inspired written instructions, the Holy Scriptures. No matter what man thinks of the Bible it will not change whether or not the Bible is God's Word. Man deceived by Satan about the scriptures, and their power to reveal God to man for purposes of salvation, will find himself in hell for all his intellectualizing and rationalizing which are in error. God provided His Word to give man an account of Jesus Christ and His finished work on the cross. If man rejects the word and consequently rejects the redemptive message then that will be mans choice, not Gods.

Provide Way to Speak to Man

God has provided a means to save men from their sins. That way required that God speak to man. God chose to speak to man with the Holy Scripture. God has placed within His word the plan of salvation. Man can continue to find error or any other excuse for rejecting Gods way of speaking to man. Man's rejection of the inerrant word will not change God way of speaking to man for salvation purposes.

THE RESULTS

Bible Perseveres

Of the several arguments advanced for the inspiration and truthfulness of the scripture, its "indestructibility" by Thiessen, is proposed.⁴ If the Bible were not the true and inspired word of God one could say that it would not have survived the many attempt on its systematic destruction. Not all books are subject to systematic destruction as has been the Bible. There has not been a book which has had as much prohibition of reading. There has even been laws passed against its publication. In Spite of the many attempts to destroy the Bible it continues to survive and to point to the divine revelation of Jesus Christ as Savior.

⁴Thiessen, Lectures, 45.

Prophecy Fulfillment

The Bible is truthful in its fulfillment of prophecy. A study of just a few prophecies, many of which are extremely complex in nature, proves that the Bible is by divine revelation. Only God can know the future. God's book continues to be proven to possess knowledge of future events which have been fulfilled since its writing. Much of the unfulfilled prophecy continues almost on a daily basis to be fulfilled. One who is familiar with the prophecies in the Bible can clearly see that God has provided the Bible for us to know His true and inspired word.

CONCLUSION

The Scripture is Inspired and True

All of the above singularly should be sufficient proof of inspiration and truthfulness of the scripture but collectively should be overwhelming evidence of inspiration and the truthfulness of the scripture.

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Ed Nichols a retired university administrator, is an author, teacher and pastor. Nichols holds two earned doctorates. His degrees include a Doctor of Ministry from Luther Rice Seminary, Doctor of Philosophy from Saint Louis University, Master of Education and Bachelor of Arts from University of Missouri at St. Louis

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