

Sunday, December 20, 2015—Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*  
Lesson 13 Passages Proving the Plenary Position

### Introduction

- In Lesson 12 we sought to identify some of the potential pitfalls of the *Plenary Verbal View* of inspiration. Specifically we discussed the following potential pitfalls:
  - *Words not the Men*— the main issue with inspiration is the words on the page not what happened to the human authors.
  - *Preservation Secures the Plenary Position*— the correct view of inspiration is meaningless without Preservation.
  - *Plenary Verbal on Inspiration but Dynamic on Translation*—it is inconsistent to hold to the inspiration of every word (*Plenary Verbal*) only to turn around and advocate for a Dynamic Philosophy of translation.
- In this Lesson we want to consider some Biblical texts that prove the veracity of the *Plenary Verbal View* of inspiration.

### Passages Proving the Plenary Position

- For this section we will consider the following sub-points.
  - The Bible self-authenticates its own claim of inspiration.
  - Practical examples that the words are the issue in inspiration.

#### *Self-authenticating Nature of Inspiration*

- II Timothy 3:16—**all scripture is given by inspiration of God.** That is the Bible’s claim for itself. That is what the Bible says about itself, and that is the boast that it makes for itself. “*Pas graphē theopneustos*” are the Greek words, and they simply mean “all scripture is inspired of God”. “Pas” is the word for “all, every.”
- Luke 24:44-46—“And he said unto them, These *are* the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and *in* the prophets, and *in* the psalms, concerning me. 45) Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures (*graphē*), 46) And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day:”
- The word translated “scriptures” in verse 45 is the same word translated “scripture” in II Timothy 3:16; *graphē*. The Lord Jesus Christ called all three parts of the Hebrew Bible the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms (our Old Testament), Scripture.

The Law ( <i>Torah</i> )	The Prophets ( <i>Neviim</i> )	The Psalms ( <i>K'thuvim</i> )
Genesis	Joshua	Psalms
Exodus	Judges	Proverbs
Leviticus	Samuel	Job
Numbers	Kings	Song of Songs
Deuteronomy	Isaiah	Ruth
	Jeremiah	Lamentations
	Ezekiel	Ecclesiastes
	12 Minor Prophets (1 Book)	Esther
		Daniel
		Ezra-Nehemiah
		Chronicles

- Therefore, our Lord's attitude toward the entire Old Testament was that all of it was scripture and inspired by God.
- I Timothy 5:18—"For the scripture (*graphē*) saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer *is* worthy of his reward." This verse is comprised of quotations from both the Old and New Testaments.
  - Deuteronomy 25:4—"Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn."
  - Matthew 10:10 and Luke 10:7—"The labourer *is* worthy of his reward."
- Now, do you see what Paul did? He quoted a passage out of Deuteronomy, (the words of Moses), and then he quoted a passage out of the Gospels (the words of Christ), and he called them both scripture. Paul did not make any distinction between them. So, they are both scripture – the Old Testament and the New Testament. When he says "all scripture" he is literally talking about "all" or every part of it.
- II Corinthians 14:37—the things Paul wrote are also the commands of the Lord.
- II Peter 3:15-16—Peter calls everything Paul wrote in "all his epistles" scripture or *graphē*.
- Notice how in all of these verses the Bible self-authenticates its own inspiration. In II Timothy 3 Paul teaches you that all scripture is given by inspiration of God. Then, in Luke 24, the Lord Jesus Christ names the threefold division of the Hebrew Old Testament and calls it scripture. Later, Paul in I Timothy 5 quotes both the Old Testament and Gospels and calls them scripture. Finally, in Corinthians 14, Paul claims that the things he is writing are also the "commandments of the Lord." Finally, in II Peter 3, Peter informs his readers that everything Paul had written was scripture as well. All parts of your Bible, both Old and New Testaments, are *graphē* or that which was written down by God Almighty.
- II Timothy 3:16—once again, the Greek word for "scripture" is "*graphē*". Our word "graph" comes from that word. "*Graphē*" means "to write down, something that is written down". Now it is very important that you get this point. What does the verse say is inspired? Scripture is

inspired; the writings are inspired. The thing that is written down on the page is the thing that is inspired. You want to be careful to notice that the verse says that the “writings” are inspired, not the “writers”.

### *Words not the Men: Practical Examples*

- I Kings 13 is a passage that highlights the importance of the words and not what happened to the writers. In I Kings 13, there is a man who prophesies in the name of the Lord, without even foreseeing that he was going to do it.
  - I Kings 13:1-7—God tells this young man of God to go down to the king and prophesy against him. He goes down and he does it, and the king reaches out to get him; but when he does, his hand withers up. The man of God prays for the king, and his hand is restored. Then, the king says, You come on down to my house, and I will give you a reward (verse 7).
  - I Kings 13:8-10—God essentially tells the young man of God, “You go down there and tell them what I have to told you, and then get out of there. Do not eat anything and do not tarry. Do not even come back the same way. Do not get familiar enough with the territory to return the same way that you went.” So, the man of God, following the Lord’s instructions, goes back a different way and finds himself in Bethel at the end of verse 10.
  - I Kings 13:11-17—on the way back, there is an old prophet living in Bethel. You know this old prophet had to be a ‘compromiser’ or God would have used him to start with to go down and rebuke the king. Anyway, this old prophet seeks out the man of God and tells him that he wants to meet and dine with him back at his house (He was an experienced man in the ministry, and he wanted to talk with the young man.). The man of God tells him in verses 16-17; no, I cannot come home with you. God told me not to stay, and not to eat, and not to drink and so forth.
  - I Kings 13:18—the old prophet just flat out lies to the man of God. He tells the young man that God sent him a further revelation and you are supposed to come home with me.
  - I Kings 13:19—so the man of God harkens unto the words of the old prophets and goes back with him to his house to eat and drink.
  - I Kings 13:20-22—the word of the Lord came unto the old prophet to pronounce judgement upon the man of God for not harkening unto the words that God had previously given him.
  - I Kings 13:23-24—before the man of God got home a lion slew him just as the old prophet had predicted by the word of Lord.
- There are many points of practical application that could be made from this passage. My main reasoning for bringing it up in this Lesson is to point out the following. That old lying prophet in Bethel has the man of God in trouble to start with. Then, all of the sudden, something happened to him that he was not used to happening – the Lord came and put a word in his mouth and pronounced judgment on the man of God. That old prophet did not foresee that happening. This is

an example of a man that spoke the word of the Lord without foreseeing that he was going to do it. He did not plan it, it just happened.

- This story from I Kings 13 helps to illustrate our main point regarding inspiration; **the issue is the words not the instrument.**
- John 11 provides a New Testament example of a similar phenomenon.
  - John 11:49-52—Here Caiaphas prophesied something without even knowing what he was doing when he did it.
- According to the Holy Spirits commentary in verses 51 and 52, Caiaphas said something that the Holy Spirit says is a prophecy about Christ dying for Israel and for the children of God that were scattered abroad. The rest of the nation is scattered to the four winds of the earth out there. And old Caiaphas never knew what he did. In fact, he probably died never knowing about it. The only way you know what he did is because the Holy Spirit wrote it down in the passage.
- So, there is a man who prophesied something (the passage said he did) but he did not know anything about it. My point to you is that the important issue **is the words on the page, not the man.**
- I Peter 1:10—many of the prophets spoke/wrote things that they did not fully understand.
- Our final example comes from the story of Balaam and Balak recorded in Numbers 22 -25.
  - Numbers 22:1-7—the children of Israel have pitched camp near Moab, and Balak the King sees them, and he knows what they have done to everybody else that got in their way. So, Balak says, “I am going to get me a prophet to come down here and curse these people.” So, he sends men to Balaam.
  - Numbers 22:8-12—Balaam says, “Okay, but I have to pray about it before I go.” So he went and prayed and asked the Lord about it, and the Lord said, “Number one, you cannot go. Number two, you cannot curse them because I have already blessed them. The Lord tells him *you cannot go with these guys anyway.*”
  - Numbers 22:13— So, Balaam went back the next day and told the men of Moab that he could not go with them. Notice though that Balaam only tells them part of the story. He does not tell them that God forbade him from cursing Israel.
  - Numbers 22:14-19— So, Balak sent the men back to Balaam to offer him more money – “the reward of divination”. The men did just that, and Balaam said, “Well, let me go pray about it again.”
  - Numbers 22:20—the Lord said, “Look Balaam, if the guys come to you in the morning and ask you to go, you can go.” That being said, Balaam would still have to speak the word that God gave him.

- Numbers 22:21—so, in the morning Balaam woke up and told them that he is ready to go with them. But, that was not what the Lord had said. Balaam just decided to go and so he went.
- Numbers 22:22-35—Balaam and his donkey were withstood by the angels of Lord. In verse 35, Balaam is told again that he is allowed to speak only the words that he is given to speak.
- Numbers 22:36-38—in verse 38 Balaam tells Balak that he can only speak, “the word that God putteth in my mouth.”
- Numbers 23:1-10—the next day Balaam double crosses Balak and blesses Israel according to the “word” the Lord put in Balaam’s mouth.
- Numbers 23:11—Balak gets upset with Balaam for double crossing him. Balak said, “I am paying you wages and I put you up in the Holiday Inn. I am treating you real nice and buying you steaks for supper. But what are you doing? I hired you to curse them and you are blessing them.”
- Numbers 23:12—Balaam replies by saying I cannot speak anything other than what “the Lord hath put in my mouth.”
- Numbers 23:13-15—Balak takes Balaam to a different place and goes through the whole religious charade again. In verse 15, Balaam tells Balak that he is once again going to go consult the Lord.
- Numbers 23:16-24—Balaam goes out and blesses Israel according to the “word” that the LORD put in Balaam’s mouth. Balaam did not want to bless Israel, he wanted to curse them but every time he opened his mouth out came blessing.
- Numbers 23:25-30—now they go to a third spot.
- Numbers 24:1-9—Balaam blesses Israel for a third time.
- Numbers 24:10-13—after listening to Balaam tell him what will befall his people, Balak has a fit.
- My point in studying these passages with you is two-fold. First, I want you to understand whenever you see the issue of prophecy and this type of inspiration going on, the issue is not the people and the man, but the issue is the words that they are speaking and/or writing down, i.e., the *graphē*.
- II Timothy 3:16— the English word “inspiration” is a different word. The Greek word is “*theopneustos*” “*Theos*” means “God” and “*pneo*” means “to breathe”. When you put those two words together, you have “God-breathed”. All scripture is given by inspiration, “*theopneustos*” – God breathed it out. In other words, when it says that all scripture is given by inspiration, it means that God breathed it. What does that mean? It means that the scripture came out of the mouth of God. What do you do when you breathe? It goes in and comes out of your mouth. The

scriptures came out of the mouth of God and that means that whatever the scripture says, who said it? It came out of God's mouth.

- Psalms 33:6—notice *Natural Revelation* in Psalms 33. Do you remember what Natural Revelation is? Natural Revelation is God's revelation in creation. We went over this in Lesson 6. Natural Revelation was authored in exactly the same way as the Written Revelation is authored.
- Second, in these accounts the various men speak the words that God put/placed in their mouths. In other words God gave them the exact words He wanted said/written. Consider the following examples from the exchange between Balaam and Balak in Numbers 22-24.
  - Numbers 22:38—And Balaam said unto Balak, Lo, I am come unto thee: have I now any power at all to say any thing? **the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.**
  - Numbers 23:5— **And the LORD put a word in Balaam's mouth**, and said, Return unto Balak, and thus thou shalt speak.
  - Numbers 23:12—And he answered and said, **Must I not take heed to speak that which the LORD hath put in my mouth?**
  - Numbers 23:16—And the LORD met Balaam, **and put a word in his mouth**, and said, Go again unto Balak, and say thus.
- Verses such as these bring up the question of the means by which inspiration occurred because they seem to imply the notion of dictation. God placed His word into the mouth of Balaam thereby causing Balaam to utter forth only those words that God gave him to speak.
- The notion of Mechanical or Divine Dictation as a descriptor for how *Plenary Verbal Inspiration* was accomplished has fallen on hard times in the past 150 years or so but this was not always the case. In the next Lesson we will begin looking at whether or not dictation was the mechanism by which inspiration was accomplished.