

Sunday, January 17, 2016—Grace Life School of Theology—*From This Generation For Ever*
Lesson 16 Divine Dictation: The Mechanism of Inspiration? Part 3

Introduction

- In Lesson 15, we concluded our consideration of the historical articulations of inspiration before the publication of *On the Origin of the Species* in 1859. In doing so, we concluded that, before the controversies of the latter half of the 19th century, dictation or the imagery of a musician playing an instrument was a perfectly acceptable way of explaining the mechanism by which *Plenary Verbal Inspiration* was accomplished.
- Therefore, having concluded our investigation of the first two points on this topic we are now ready to look at the third. In Lesson 14, I told you that we were going to study the following three points regarding Divine Dictation:
 - Study what modern theologians have said regarding the notion of dictation (Lesson 14).
 - Consider historic articulations of inspiration before the publication of Darwin's *On the Origin of the Species* in 1859 under the following three categories.
 - The Pre-Reformation Fathers (Lesson 14)
 - The Reformers (Lesson 15)
 - Post-Reformation Theologians (Lesson 15)
 - Consider the Bible's testimony concerning itself. (Lessons 16 & 17)
- In this lesson we will begin our consideration of the third and final point regarding Divine Dictation i.e., the Bible's testimony concerning itself. As I said at the end of Lesson 14, the Bible is to be our final arbiter in answering this question. That fact that a host of Christian theologians and philosophers throughout church history have used dictation to describe how inspiration was accomplished is meaningless if the notion is not substantiated by scripture.

Dictation: What Saith the Scripture?

- In seeking to answer this question, we will study the following three sub-points:
 - Testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ
 - Testimony of the Law and the Prophets
 - Testimony of the Apostle Paul

Testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ

- Matthew 22:29-31—Jesus answered and said unto them, Ye do err, **not knowing the scriptures**, nor the power of God. 30) For in the resurrection they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven. 31) But as touching the resurrection of the dead, **have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying**, (quotes Exodus 3:6)
 - Who wrote Exodus 3:6? Moses. Jesus asks them, “have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God.” He said, “It’s not just what Moses said, or wrote, but it is what God said to you.” Christ says that what Moses wrote in Exodus 3 was spoken unto them by God. God spoke through Moses.
- 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. Therefore, our Lord’s attitude toward the entire Old Testament was that all of it was scripture and inspired by God.
- In the book of Hebrews the Law, the prophets, and Psalms are all said to be the words of the Holy Spirit.
- Hebrews 3:7—Wherefore (**as the Holy Ghost saith**, To day if ye will hear his voice, (quotation of Psalm 95)
 - The writer of Hebrews quotes Psalms chapter 95. So, in the book of Hebrews you are told that words in the book of Psalms are really the words of the Holy Spirit. When you read the book of Psalms, you are reading what the Holy Spirit said.
- Hebrews 9:8—**The Holy Ghost this signifying** that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:
 - The writer of Hebrews is talking about the regulations written down back in the books of Moses, (in the book of Exodus), about the tabernacle. Moses wrote some things down, that the book of Hebrews now tells you was really God the Holy Spirit signifying.

Who wrote Exodus? The writer of the book of Hebrews says that the Holy Spirit wrote it. So when someone tells you that God the Holy Spirit says something to you, and they quote a verse of scripture, they are being scriptural; and so are you when you do it. The word of God is God’s word. Don’t you forget that! When you speak it, you are speaking with the authority of Almighty God; and when you face it, you are facing Almighty God.
- Hebrews 10:15-16—**Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us**: for after that he had said before, 16) This *is* the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; (quotes Jeremiah 31:31-34)

- The author of Hebrews is saying that the Holy Spirit is the one who spoke in Jeremiah 31:31-34. So the Holy Spirit is said to be the speaker in the Psalms, the Law, and the Prophets.

Testimony of the Law and the Prophets

- Exodus 4:28-31— And Moses told Aaron **all the words of the LORD who had sent him**, and all the signs which he had commanded him. 29) And Moses and Aaron went and gathered together all the elders of the children of Israel: 30) And **Aaron spake all the words which the LORD had spoken unto Moses**, and did the signs in the sight of the people. 31) **And the people believed: and when they heard that the LORD had visited the children of Israel**, and that he had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped.
 - God puts the words into the mouths of Moses and Aaron. The words they spoke are the words that God put in their mouths.
- Exodus 19:25-20:1—So Moses went down unto the people, **and spake unto them**. 20:1) **And God spake all these words, saying, . . .**
 - When Moses spake to them, he gave them the words that God gave him to say.
- Exodus 24:4—**And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD**, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel.
- Numbers 11:24—And Moses went out, **and told the people the words of the LORD**, and gathered the seventy men of the elders of the people, and set them round about the tabernacle.
 - Notice what Moses did – he told the people the words of the LORD. He got the words from the LORD and then he communicated them to the people.
- 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**.
 - Once again, here is a man who spake even though it was going against his will, and against his desires, to say what he said. “The word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak.” He said, “I do not have any choice; that’s all that will come out of my mouth because I am God’s spokesman.”
- II Samuel 23:1-2—Now these *be* the last words of David. David the son of Jesse said, and the man *who was* raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel, said, 2) **The Spirit of the LORD spake by me, and his word was in my tongue**.
 - Now, that is some claim to inspiration. David is a man who was conscious of what was going on, “The Spirit of God spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.” Turn to the New Testament and notice the attitude of the New Testament writers about what David said. What does the Lord Jesus think about that? Does he think David is a little overzealous? *Is that a hyper view of inspiration David? You should not feel that way.*

- Mark 12:35-36—And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, How say the scribes that Christ is the Son of David? 36) **For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool (Psalm 110:1).**
 - Jesus says that when David wrote down Psalm 110:1, he did it by the Holy Spirit. Jesus just confirmed the method of inspiration outlined in II Samuel 23. Christ is not the only one to do this with respect to the writings of David. Consider Peter's statement in Acts 1.
- Acts 1:16—Men *and* brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, **which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake** before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus.
 - Who wrote Psalm 41? David did; it is a Psalm of David. But, whom does the verse say spoke it? The verse says the Holy Spirit by the mouth of David spoke it. Well, then who spoke it? David wrote it down, but what he wrote down was what God the Holy Spirit spoke through him. Do you see how strong that thing is?
 - E.W. Bullinger states the following regarding Acts 1:16, "It was David's "mouth," and David's pen, David's vocal organs, and David's hand; but they were not David's words. They were the words "which the Holy Ghost spake before concerning Judas." David knew nothing about Judas, David could not possibly have spoken anything about Judas. David's "mouth" spake concerning Ahithophel; but they were the words "which the Holy Ghost spake concerning Judas."

David was "a prophet": and, being a prophet, he "spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost" (2 Peter 1:21). Hence, in Psalm 16, he spake concerning the resurrection of the Lord Jesus (Acts 2:30,31). In the same way he "spake before concerning Judas." (Bullinger, 2)
- Jeremiah 1:4-9—Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 5) Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, *and* I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations. 6) Then said I, Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I *am* a child. 7) But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I *am* a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, **and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.** 8) Be not afraid of their faces: for I *am* with thee to deliver thee, saith the LORD. 9) **Then the LORD put forth his hand, and touched my mouth. And the LORD said unto me, Behold, I have put my words in thy mouth.**
- Jeremiah 5:14—Wherefore thus saith the LORD God of hosts, Because ye speak this word, behold, **I will make my words in thy mouth fire**, and this people wood, and it shall devour them.
- Jeremiah 6:18-19—Therefore hear, ye nations, and know, O congregation, what *is* among them. 19) Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, *even* the fruit of their thoughts, **because they have not hearkened unto my words, nor to my law, but rejected it.**

- Jeremiah has given the people the revelation, the words of God in God's own words, and when they reject what Jeremiah says, God said, "You rejected me!" God is equal to his word.
- Jeremiah 36:1-8—And it came to pass in the fourth year of Jehoiakim the son of Josiah king of Judah, *that* this word came unto Jeremiah from the LORD, saying, 2) **Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel**, and against Judah, and against all the nations, from the day I spake unto thee, from the days of Josiah, even unto this day. 3) It may be that the house of Judah will hear all the evil which I purpose to do unto them; that they may return every man from his evil way; that I may forgive their iniquity and their sin. 4) Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah: **and Baruch wrote from the mouth of Jeremiah all the words of the LORD, which he had spoken unto him, upon a roll of a book.** 5) And Jeremiah commanded Baruch, saying, I *am* shut up; I cannot go into the house of the LORD: 6) Therefore go thou, **and read in the roll, which thou hast written from my mouth, the words of the LORD in the ears of the people** in the LORD'S house upon the fasting day: and also thou shalt read them in the ears of all Judah that come out of their cities. 7) It may be they will present their supplication before the LORD, and will return every one from his evil way: for great *is* the anger and the fury that the LORD hath pronounced against this people. 8) And Baruch the son of Neriah did according to all that Jeremiah the prophet commanded him, **reading in the book the words of the LORD in the LORD'S house.**
 - Jeremiah dictates to his secretary, Baruch, the words of the LORD. There is not any way to describe that except with the word dictation. So you do not have to be afraid of the word "dictation." The words come out of Jeremiah's mouth; Baruch writes them down, and then the scripture says (by inspiration in verse 8) that the words that he read are God's words. Jeremiah is writing down the revelation of God in God's own words and they are equal to God. When Jeremiah speaks, God speaks. There is no difference.
- Ezekiel 2:1-2—And he said unto me, Son of man, stand upon thy feet, **and I will speak unto thee.** 2) **And the spirit entered into me when he spake unto me**, and set me upon my feet, that I heard him that spake unto me.
 - The spirit comes in and Ezekiel begins to get the revelation.
- Ezekiel 3:10-11—Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, **all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears.** 11) And go, **get thee to them of the captivity**, unto the children of thy people, and speak unto them, and tell them, Thus saith the Lord GOD; whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear.
 - "God gave Ezekiel the words to say, and he went out and gave them to the people. Go preach it Ezekiel, and whether they get it or they do not, you go tell them my words.

Turn to the book of Revelation and you will see a similar kind of a thing. In fact the way you understand Revelation 1 is by understanding Ezekiel 2. Revelation 1:10-11 "I was in

the Spirit (*like Ezekiel was*) on the Lord's day, (*transported up into the future day of the Lord*), and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: (*the Lord Jesus*) and, **What thou seest, write in a book**, and send *it* unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea." He says to write these things in a book. What is John writing in a book? He is writing what God shows him, and what God gives him. He instructs him to write down the revelation of God and to write it down in God's very own words.

Look at Revelation 22. John writes it down. Do not fail to understand what is going on in this passage. Revelation 22:18,19 – “For I testify unto **every man that heareth the words (*the individual words*) of the prophecy of this book**, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man **shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy**, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and *from* the things **which are written in the book.**” The words that John wrote down were the words that God gave him to write down. That is the bible's attitude toward inspiration.” (Jordan, MSS 101, Lesson 4)

- Acts 3:18, 21—But those things, **which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets**, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled . . . 21) Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, **which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets** since the world began.

- God shewed by the mouth of all his prophets? In other words, God was speaking by the mouth of those prophets. It is pretty obvious what is being said. When those prophets spoke it was God speaking through them. If you just read the bible and take what the bible writers and speakers say about inspiration, you do not have much problem understanding that the scripture came right out of the mouth of God and that God has made his word equal to himself.
- Regarding Acts 3:18 Dr. Bullinger wrote, “The particular "things" referred to here are "that Christ should suffer"; but the assertion is comprehensive and includes all other things "showed" by God.

Note, that it was God who, before, had showed them. It was the same God who had fulfilled them. The "mouth" was the mouth of "all His prophets," but they were not the prophets' words. They were the words of God.” (Bullinger, 2)

- Luke 1:67, 70—And his father Zacharias **was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, . . . 70) As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets**, which have been since the world began:
 - Zacharias speaks by the filling of the Holy Spirit. And what does he say? He says that God has spoken by the mouth of his holy prophets in verse 70. There is no doubt about what these verses mean when it comes to the issue of inspiration. Go back and read about some of these prophets. The prophets were the mouthpiece of God, speaking/writing only those things which God had placed in their mouths.

- Next week will consider our third sub-point on The Testimony of Paul

Works Cited

Bullinger, E.W. *How to Enjoy the Bible: A Guide to Better Understanding and Enjoyment of God's Word*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications: 1990.

Jordan, Richard. *Manuscript Evidence 101*. Grace School of the Bible.