

God Wrote a Book: How Did We Get the Bible?

Opening Discussion

1. What are some of your favorite songs and artists?
2. Would you say their music is inspired?
3. What else has inspired you? Books? Movies? People?
4. What is the difference between the Bible being the inspired Word of God and something else being “inspired?”

Scripture has one Divine Author and many human authors.

No prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1:20-21

“The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired.” The BFM 2000

1. How did the individual books of the Bible come to be written down?

- Theories that reject God as the Divine Author of the Bible:
 - Mythological Theory: The Bible is an ancient myth written to teach timeless truths through allegorical and legendary stories.
 - Natural Inspiration Theory: The Bible is only inspired in the sense that other works of literature are inspired. There is not supernatural involvement.
 - Love Letter Theory: Godly men wrote down their thoughts about God. Although there was no direct supernatural inspiration, because these men (and possibly women) walked closely with the Lord, the Bible contains secondhand supernatural inspiration. It is a collection of important expressions of love and devotion to God.
 - Encounter Theory: The Bible only becomes God's Word as we read it and encounter Him in it, but it is not God's Word when we don't encounter Him in it.
 - Partial Inspiration Theory: God only inspired parts of the Bible.
 - Dynamic Theory: God inspired the thoughts of the authors, but the authors developed those thoughts and put them into their own words.
- There's one theory overlooks the involvement of human authors:
 - Mechanical Dictation Theory: God mechanically dictated the words of Scripture without any real involvement of the human author.
 - The Mechanical Dictation Theory ignores the impact of individual talents, personalities, and situations of the human authors.

- There's one final theory that takes into consideration the Divine Author and the human author.
 - The Verbal Plenary Theory:

“Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

Matthew 5:17-18

The Holy Spirit breathed Scripture through human authors chosen by God for that task. Divine inspiration occurred using the writer's personality, writing styles, and experiences. The writers were not merely passive stenographers recording what was dictated to them by God. Exactly how this process occurred is a mystery that God does not explain.

- Human authors

Long ago, at many times and in many ways, God spoke to our fathers by the prophets, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son. **Hebrews 1:1-2**

“This method may have been adopted by the writer to assist the memory; and the Holy Spirit may have employed it to show us that the graces of style and the arts of poetry may lawfully be used in his service. Why should not all the wit and ingenuity of man be sanctified to noblest ends by being laid upon the altar of God?” Charles Spurgeon on Psalm 25, which is an alphabetic acrostic

- The Divine Author

*All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. **2 Timothy 3:16***

2. How were the individual books compiled into the Bible?

- The process is called canonization.
- There is an entire session on that process.