

What is Inspiration?

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2 Timothy 3:16, "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God...*"

John 6:63, "*...the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*"

What is *inspiration*? One says that God's words were inspired in the originals and preserved in translation. Another says that the English King James Bible is both inspired and preserved. The first says that the text of our beloved King James Bible is accurate, but not inspired; the second vehemently disputes this, saying that our English Bible is not merely accurate, but inspired of God Himself.

What is inspiration? It is the breath of God. The word inspiration comes from the same root word as the word respiration. It is breath. 2 Timothy 3:16 makes it very clear that, "*All scripture is given by inspiration of God*", or, by God's breath.

God breathed into Adam and made Adam a "*living soul.*" Psalm 104:29 says, "*...thou takest away their breath, they die...*" So, the presence of breath is life; the absence of breath is death.

John 6:63, "*...the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life*"

Hebrews 4:12, "*For the word of God is quick...*" Quick in old English usage meaning "alive".

1 Peter 1:23, "*Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*"

It is a *living* word, not a dead word. It is not merely a preserved corpse, devoid of life, but a living word. We must not treat God's Words as if they were no different than Shakespeare's words, which have been faithfully preserved. God's words are more than scribblings on a piece of parchment.

God's Words, according to John 6:63, are *spirit and life*, because of inspiration.

God's Words, according to 1 John 1:1-2, are the manifestation of eternal life, through *inspiration*.

Our Saviour, Jesus Christ, was God's Word manifested in the flesh, according to John 1:14.

These are more than mere words - they are powerful, living words according to 1 Peter 1:23.

The Words of God not only instruct, they cleanse, according to Ephesians 5:26.

The Words of God teach us what to do and then empower us to do it!

Do we, then, in the English language, have a living, or *inspired*, Word of God, or is our Bible no more alive than the dumb idols of which the prophet spoke of in Jeremiah 10:14, "*Every man is brutish in his knowledge: every founder is confounded by the graven image: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them*"

That, then, takes care of the word *inspiration*, which is breath, or life. To what then do we apply the word *inspiration*!

2 Timothy 3:16 applies the word *inspiration* to the Scriptures. If inspiration applies only to the original documents, or possibly the original languages, then by logical extension, the word *Scripture* should also apply only to the original documents, or the original languages, at best.

But this is not the case.

In Matthew 21:42, Jesus rebuked the Pharisees, saying, "*Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?*"

Jesus referred to the Scriptures, and then quoted the *Hebrew* Psalm 118:22-23 in the *Greek* language! This is not an isolated incident of Jesus referring to Scripture translated from Hebrew to Greek. He does the same in John 7:38, in John 7:42, and in John 13:18. Peter does the same in Acts 1:16, as does Paul in Romans 4:3, Romans 9:17, Romans 10:11, Galatians 4:30 and many others. In each of these instances, Jesus, Peter and Paul refer to a Greek translation of Hebrew writings as "Scripture," placing them clearly under the scope of 2 Timothy 3:16, hence being "inspired of God."

So then, the *translation* of the Hebrew Scriptures to the Greek retained their *inspiration*. Or, in other words, *inspiration* carried through *translation* by means of *preservation*.

Now, tie all this into Psalm 12:6-7, "*The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever*"

Then, if Jesus, Paul and Peter used translations which they referred to as Scripture, and all Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and preservation is promised to every generation forever, then the *preserved* words of God in the King James Bible are also *inspired words*. One cannot be divorced from the other.

To take inspiration away from our English King James Bible is to take away the life that underlies the words. Instruction in righteousness is not enough; we need the moving of the Holy Spirit through the pages. We need the cleansing of the living word. We need the quickening (life-giving) power, "*...the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*" Preservation without inspiration is a corpse without breath.