

Inspiration & Inerrancy: Who Wrote the Bible?

Who Wrote the Bible?

- Dual authorship
 - Human beings inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet. 1:20-21)

Inspiration

- The Bible was not dictated by God to people
- The Holy Spirit inspired people to write what they wrote (2 Tim. 3:16)
 - Θεόπνευστος (theos + pneuo) = God-breathed
- Each work reflects elements of the human author
 - Personality
 - Style
 - Culture
 - Language
 - Both the language they used: Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek
 - And the vocabulary and syntax they used
- Each work also presents the message God intended
 - The Biblical text is God's word!
 - But must be understood in its original context
- This is good news, because it shows:
 - God's action in human history
 - God does not override personality
 - He works *through* people

Is the Bible Trustworthy?

- How do we know that what we read in the Bible today is what God actually wanted to be heard?

Inerrancy

- The belief that the Bible is without *error* in its original writings
 - Original language: Hebrew, Aramaic, & Greek
 - Original documentation: The original scrolls or copies of each book of the Bible
- Does *not* mean that any translation is without error

Faithfulness of the Text

- If we do not have access to the original documents, how do we know that the texts that we translate the Bible from are accurate?
 - Telephone game?
 - But the transmission of the Biblical texts is neither linear nor oral
- The Old Testament's accuracy
 - The main Hebrew text used today is the Masoretic Text (MT)
 - Dates to c. 1000 AD
 - The Dead Sea Scrolls
 - Dating from the 2nd century BC to the 1st century AD
 - Contain fragments of every book of the OT, except Esther
 - 5 nearly complete scrolls of Isaiah
 - Agree 95% with the MT
 - Disagreements are due to:
 - Spelling distinctions, esp. names
 - Easily traceable scribal errors
 - Ex. Letter duplications, letter swapping, line duplications, etc.
 - Absolutely no change to the meaning of the text
 - Sometimes offers clarity
 - Ex. Isa. 53:9
- The New Testament's accuracy
 - We don't have any original copies of any books of the Bible
 - Though we have very early copies of many books
 - We have thousands of handwritten copies from a period of over 1400 years
 - No two manuscripts are 100% identical

Textual Solution

- Sift through the thousands of copies and compare where they are different (variant)
- Figure out which differences are errors and which represent the original text
- This process is called Textual Criticism
 - A carefully controlled science which
 - Looks at external evidence
 - The quality & age of a manuscript
 - Example: MT vs. LXX vs. DSS
 - Looks at internal evidence
 - Examines scribal errors

- Though not an exact science
- Generally speaking, the older the manuscripts and the more copies we have, the better the translation

- KJV, NKJV (pg. 40)

Should we be concerned?

- Even among all the textual variations, the meaning of the text does not change
 - Ex. Rom. 8:28
 - Some manuscripts *God works all things together for good, or God works in all things for the good*
- God not only inspired the authors of Scripture
 - But He has also sustained His word through history