

How to Study the Bible
(Lesson 2)

Introduction:

1. Lesson 2 in this series is a study of "inspiration."
2. Although this lesson does not deal directly with "how to study the Bible," it is necessary to study inspiration because our convictions concerning the Bible's inspiration will influence our approach to studying the Scriptures.

Discussion:

I. "WHAT IS INSPIRATION?"

- A. "Inspiration refers to the process in which God used a human being to convey His words to other men either by speaking or writing. God Himself provided the words used by such men."
- B. The Bible claims to be "inspired" [God-breathed] (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
- C. The inspiration process is explained in 1 Corinthians 2:9-13; Ephesians 3:3-5.
- D. In addition to claiming to be inspired, the Bible contains numerous . . .

II. "PROOFS OF INSPIRATION"

A. The Bible's unity suggests that it is inspired.

1. The Bible is a collection of 66 books that were written:
 - a. over a period of approximately 1500 years (1400 BC - 100 AD)
 - b. by about 40 people who came from a variety of backgrounds and occupations
 - c. in 3 different languages (Hebrew, Aramaic, Greek).
2. Throughout the Bible, there is a remarkable unity of purpose with no contradictions.
3. The Bible's unity would suggest that its writers received divine guidance.

B. Scientific facts revealed in the Bible prove that it is inspired.

1. About 700 BC, Isaiah stated that God sits "*upon the circle of the earth*" (Isaiah 40:22).
 - a. As recently as 1492 AD, when Columbus made his famous voyage, the earth was commonly believed to be flat.
 - b. How was Isaiah able to declare that the earth is round about 2200 years earlier?
2. Job stated that God hangs "*the earth upon nothing*" (Job 26:7).
 - a. Those who thought that the earth was flat also thought that something or someone supported it.
 - b. However, hundreds of years before Isaiah lived, Job declared that the earth is suspended in space--how did Job know this?
3. (Psalm 8:6-8) About 1000 BC, David stated that man has dominion over all animals, including whatever passes "*through the paths of the seas.*"
 - a. After reading this psalm, Matthew Maury (1806-1873) discovered the ocean currents.
 - b. How did David know about them approximately 2800 years before they were discovered?

C. The Bible's fulfilled prophecies prove that it is inspired.

1. In order to determine whether a prophecy is genuine, it must:
 - a. be made a sufficient length of time before it is fulfilled
 - b. contain a sufficient number of details that no one could know on his own.
2. In about 700 BC Isaiah stated that a man named Cyrus would allow the Jews to rebuild their temple in Jerusalem (Isaiah 44:24-45:4).
 - a. In 536 BC Cyrus conquered Babylon and allowed the Jews to return to Jerusalem so they could rebuild the temple.
 - b. How was Isaiah able to call this man's name about 160 years before he conquered Babylon?
 - c. The explanation is given in 2 Peter 1:20-21.