

Inspiration

God spoke in a way that could be recorded in human language.

"Scripture is not only man's word, but also, and equally God's word, spoken through man's lips or written with man's pen" ([J.I. Packer](#), *The Origin of the Bible*, p. 31).

Neo Orthodox: A common belief of [neo-orthodoxy](#) is its view of the utter [transcendence of God](#). That is, God is so completely different and set apart from us that we cannot comprehend him apart from his revelation to us (this entails a rejection of [natural theology](#)). Proponents of neo-orthodoxy claimed the Word of God was God himself, and thus the Bible is a *witness* to the Word of God. As a witness, the Bible cannot *be* the Word of God (i.e. God is not the Bible), but the Bible still remains a mediator of the Word of God in some manner. Because the writers were finite and sinful, they were capable of error in their writings. Thus, while the writers of the Old and New Testament recorded their experiences and witness to revelation, their writings may contain errors. Problems with this account are raised when one understands that Scripture *is* God's Word (2 Tim 3:16) and that people were inspired by the Holy Spirit (2 Pet 1:20-21). They were not merely accounts of each person's experience with God.

Dictation: God literally told people what to write down.

The dictation method of inspiration sees God as the author of Scripture and the individual human agents as secretaries taking dictation. God spoke and man wrote it down. This view has some merit as we know there are portions of Scripture in which God essentially says, "Write this down" (e.g., [Jeremiah 30:2](#)), but not all Scripture was created that way. The Pentateuch is essentially a pre-history and chronicle of the Jewish people prior to settling in the Promised Land. While Moses is believed to be the primary author, much of it is the editorial work of Moses and later redactors who finalized the finished product. Luke states in the preamble to his Gospel that he performed detailed research into the events of the life of Jesus before writing his work ([Luke 1:1-4](#)). Many of the prophetic books read like journals of the prophets' lives. The bottom line is that the dictation method only explains certain portions of Scripture, but not all of it or even most of it.

Limited Inspiration: This view proposes that Scripture is inspired, yet it is limited to certain aspects. It affirms that God guided the writers, yet also allowed them the freedom to express their own thoughts regarding history and experiences they had. This allows the Bible to contain historical errors, yet, it is claimed that the Holy Spirit protected writers against any doctrinal error. Thus, the Bible may contain historical errors but it remains a reliable source of doctrine

Problems: Allows for historical errors in the text. Archaeology proves many biblical accounts. Allows people to easily dismiss difficult passages as incorrect.

Plenary Verbal Inspiration: Plenary means "full" or "complete." Therefore, plenary verbal inspiration asserts that God inspired the complete text(s) of the Bible, from [Genesis](#) to [Revelation](#), including both historical and doctrinal details. The word *verbal* affirms the idea that inspiration extends to the very

words the writers chose. Thus, the [Holy Spirit](#) guided the writers along (cf. 2 Peter 1:20-21) while allowing their own personalities and freedom to produce the Bible we have today. This view recognizes and asserts both the human and divine element within Scripture.

Christopher Wright: What Scripture says is what God wanted or allowed to be recorded.

What Scripture intends to affirm is what God wants to affirm.

Canonization:

Since the Reformation, Protestants accept 39 OT books. Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox have the apocryphal books. 1-2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Wisdom of Solomon, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah, Prayer of Azariah, etc. 1-2 Maccabees. (12-15 books)

Apocrypha (Deuterocanonical books.) Greek Septuagint.

OT has law, prophets and writings. Luke 24:44

Protestants argue that the 39 were the ones the Jews at the time of Christ and the apostles accepted.

Two NT writings refer to earlier Christian works as Scripture (1 Timothy 5:18 quotes Luke 10:7 and 2 Peter 3:16 talks about Paul's letters.)

There are other works from early church leaders that aren't in the canon.

Canon: Greek term that originally meant a "measuring rod" or "ruler"

First Christians were Jews – we were never without Scripture.

How did the 27 NT books become Scripture? First gospels cae in aD 60 or 70 but Luke says that many had undertaken to record the events of Jesus.

They began reading the letters in their church meetings.

Justin Martyr: On the day called the Day of the Sun all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray."

Apostolicity (authorship by postle or close associate

Orthodoxy (doesn't contradict apostolic testimony from earlier times)

Relevance (widely used throughout the early church, rather than limited to one or a few small groups)

1. Self-Authenticating quality: People found salvation in these books.
2. Used in Christian Worship
3. Tied to an apostle: was it written by an apostle or someone who had been in direct contact with them.

AD 140—Marcion. Believed the God of the OT was different from the God and Father of Jesus. God of the OT was unknowable. Christian God was revealed. Marcion rejected the OT and new books that he thought favored Jewish readers: Matthew, Mark, Acts and Hebrews. Also rejected 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus because they didn't agree with all his views. He only accepted part of Luke's gospel and ten letters of Paul.

Marcion was excommunicated by the church in Rome in 144, but Marcionite churches began to spring up. Basically worshipped Paul.

To deal with this problem, the church fathers decided to keep Paul's letters and others and bridge them to the gospels through Acts.

Gnostic Gospels. Said they contained secret revelations from Jesus to James, Peter, John, Philip, Thomas and Mary.

Montanus: Second half of second century church was becoming more secularized. Between 156-172 Montanus appeared to demand a higher standard and a separation from the church and world. He prophesied in the Spirit and spoke in a state of ecstasy. There was disorder and Montanus insisted that opposition to his new prophecies were blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

Denied God's decisive revelation had occurred in Jesus. How could the church keep the gospel central?

AD 190 Muratorian Canon List of the NT books. Third century only a handful of books continued to create any question. Some opposed Hebrews and others Revelation.

First complete list came in an Easter letter written in 367 by Bishop Athanasius from Alexandria. Councils at Hippo (393) and at Carthage (397) published same list.

Transmission

Written on scrolls made from papyrus. Since all the books found in the Old Testament and the New Testament predate the widespread adoption of the codex, it is probable that all the writings of any length (i.e., longer than a single page) were originally written on scrolls.

The codex was a Roman invention, modeled on wooden writing tablets that consisted of two or more thin pieces of wood, often coated with wax, tied together along one edge with a cord. [3] At some point during the first century, book dealers began offering certain works in codex form. [4] Still, codices were used sparingly for the reproduction of literary material until they were adopted as the standard book-form for the sacred writings of Christianity.

The MT was primarily copied, edited and distributed by a group of [Jews](#) known as the [Masoretes](#) between the 7th and 10th centuries [CE](#). Though the consonants differ little from the text generally accepted in the early 2nd century (and also differ little from some [Qumran](#) texts that are even older), it has numerous differences of both greater and lesser significance when compared to (extant 4th century) manuscripts of the [Septuagint](#), a Greek translation (made in the 3rd to 2nd centuries BCE) of the Hebrew Scriptures that was in popular use in Egypt and Israel (and that is often quoted in the [New Testament](#), especially by [Apostle Paul](#)).

The current received text finally achieved predominance through the reputation of the [Masoretes](#), schools of scribes and Torah scholars working between the 7th and 11th centuries, based primarily in the [Land of Israel](#) in the cities of [Tiberias](#) and [Jerusalem](#), and in [Babylonia](#). According to Menachem Cohen these schools developed such prestige for the accuracy and error-control of their copying techniques that their texts established an authority beyond all others

Oral Tradition:

Memorization was highly cultivated in first century Jewish culture

Eyewitnesses could have contradicted what was being said

Rabbis and followers often took private notes

Succinct summaries of Jesus' words and works—material was probably formed within months or weeks of the events described

Why are there still “problem passages”?

Biblical Criticism