

THE SUFFICIENCY & INSPIRATION OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

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Have you ever thought that your faith would be much stronger and your life more holy if only you could have walked with Jesus Himself as the Apostles did – if you could have seen His miracles, heard His teaching and followed Him around through Galilee and Judea? Peter tells us in 2 Peter 1:19 that we must not think that way, when he calls Holy Scripture a "more sure word of prophecy." We have something better and more sure than the Apostles had who were "eyewitnesses of his majesty." Think of that! Can you imagine any stronger statement of the value and sufficiency of Holy Scripture?

Let us look at what Peter says. In 2 Peter 1:16–18, Peter is talking about the transfiguration of Christ. Not long before His death Jesus was "transfigured" on a mountain in Galilee. You will find the story in Matthew 17:1–8, Mark 9:2–8 and Luke 9:28–36. There, the three disciples (Peter was one of them) not only saw Jesus and Moses and Elijah, but they heard the voice of God Himself testifying of Jesus. What is more, they saw Jesus in His heavenly glory, as we will see Him when He comes again. That is why Peter speaks of seeing His "power and coming" in verse 16. What could be better than that?

Peter knew we would think that way. He knew we would ask, "But what about us? How can we know and be sure? We did not see Him. We were not eyewitnesses of His majesty." Peter answers these questions before we even ask them, when he tells us that Scripture is a more sure word of prophecy. It is more sure than an eyewitness account or than being an eyewitness! That is part of what we call the SUFFICIENCY of Scripture. In Scripture we have everything we need for faith and life.

But do you know why Scripture is a more sure word? Peter explains that too by talking about the INSPIRATION of Scripture. He says, "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost" (verse 21). In other words, Scripture was not written

because the authors of the various books wanted to write. They were not the ones, finally, who decided what to write and how to write it. In all their remembering, consulting of sources, planning, actual writing and editing, the Holy Spirit "carried" them. That is what the word translated "moved" really means. They were "carried"! The real Author of Scripture is the Holy Spirit.

The result is that Scripture is a light shining in a dark place. This world is the land of the shadow of death, a land darkened by the wrath of the Lord (Isaiah 9:2,19). Scripture tells us that there will be no night in the new heavens and earth, but here there is no day. From a spiritual point of view this world is all darkness. It is only ever night and all around us the darkness deepens in these last days. In that darkness the light of Scripture shines and, until Christ the Day Star arises, it is the only light we have.

Take heed to it, therefore! Its light does not shine when its covers are left closed. Read it daily. Study it with prayer, that God will make its light shine in your heart. Meditate on its precious truths and follow it as a light on your life's pathway.

Which Version?

If Scripture is the all-sufficient and inspired Word of God, it is very important that we use a good version of the Bible. Before recommending a particular version, let us understand that the proliferation of modern versions is a way in which the Bible has been taken away from God's people. Because so many different versions are in use, one hardly recognises a passage any more when it is quoted or preached. Nor do children effectively learn and memorise Scripture, since they are taught from so many different versions. They hear one version at home, another in school, yet another in church and still others in their fellowships and Bible studies – and they remember none!

It is also very telling that all the modern versions have arisen in an age of modernism, apostasy and doubt, not during a time when the Church was strong and faithful to the Word of God. This is, we believe, a good reason to be suspicious of modern versions. Many of them, in fact, are not true translations or versions at all but paraphrases (The Living Bible) or something halfway between a paraphrase and a translation (New International Version).

It is probably obvious by this time that the only English version we would recommend is the King James or Authorised Version. We would recommend it for many reasons, the most important being that it is an accurate and faithful translation of the Hebrew and