

## INSPIRATION AND REVELATION

**April 5, 2015**

In the Bible we find the word "inspiration." We also read the word "revelation", or its cousin, the word "revealed." Preachers talk about these ideas. Does knowing the meaning of "inspiration" and "revelation" have any significance to you? Do those words make a difference in your life?

Hello I'm Larry Murdock. I preach for the Gandy church of Christ.

The English word "inspiration" only appears twice in the King James Version of the Bible. Once it appears in the Old Testament, and once in the New Testament. In Hebrew and in Greek the original word literally means "breath." In both those places that I am referring to in the Bible the word refers to God's breath! That's right! The first occurrence is in Job 32:8, "...*there is* a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty [the breath of the Almighty (ESV)] gives them understanding." ([Job 32:8 KJV](#)) In this passage, "understanding" in the minds of people is a product of God's "breath."

The New Testament passage that contains the word "inspiration" is 2 Timothy 3:16, 17. "All scripture *is* given by inspiration [the breath] of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly [thoroughly] furnished unto all good works." ([2 Timothy 3:16-17 KJV](#)) In this place, Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ says that the whole Bible [all scripture] is a product of God's "breath." In the paragraph before this one, the apostle Paul urged the young man to whom he was writing, "But as for you [Timothy], continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus." ([2 Timothy 3:14-15 ESV](#)) Since childhood Timothy had been acquainted with the Holy Scripture, the sacred writings. Paul encouraged Timothy to continue in what he had learned from those writings because those writings possessed an ability to make a person wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. Does "inspiration" [God's breath] have anything to do with you? Does it matter that the scripture is "breathed out" by God?

Many people in the world do not think that God exhaling words has anything to do with them or their lives. Those words that are called "holy" does not play a role in the way they live.

A Jewish preacher by the name of Jonah was once commanded by God to travel to the city of Nineveh in the land of Assyria. God said to Jonah, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it, for their evil has come up before me." ([Jonah 1:2 ESV](#)) God wanted those people to know the result of their sins. That preacher was to warn the 120,000 inhabitants of Nineveh of coming destruction because of their sins. Jonah first rebelled against the command of God. He took a ship sailing in the opposite direction! A sudden tempest threatened the ship and Jonah confessed to the sailors that he was running from God. The sailors tossed him overboard and the storm subsided, but before he drowned Jonah was swallowed by a large fish. In the belly of that fish Jonah prayed, promising God that he would keep the promise that he had made to speak God's words. The last thing Jonah said in his prayer was, "Salvation belongs to the Lord." In other words, if anyone could save Jonah from the belly of that fish it would be God. That was a powerful lesson for that preacher to learn. If anyone is going to be saved from death and destruction, it will be the Lord who created us who will do the saving. "Salvation belongs to the Lord."

Destruction also belongs to the Lord. That's right! Death is the punishment for sin, and it always has been. The New Testament says, "The wages of sin is death." (Romans 6:23) And so that ancient city of Nineveh was headed for destruction because its sin had gone up before God. Have you ever thought this that your sins are thrown up into the face of God? Your sins are an act of insult. It is as if you are slapping in the face the One who loves you! Nineveh was slapping God in the face. But because of God's great love for people, because of His great mercy, God sent a preacher to speak the words of God. So God said a second time to Jonah: "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and call out against it the message that I tell you." ([Jonah 3:2 ESV](#))

And so a reluctant preacher finally came to Nineveh. God gave Jonah this message: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" ([Jonah 3:4 ESV](#)) The result? "And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. The word reached the king of Nineveh, and he arose from his throne, removed his robe, covered himself with sackcloth, and sat in ashes." ([Jonah 3:5-6 ESV](#)) These

people repented of their sins! Because of their repentance, God changed His mind and spared their lives and their city. In explanation to a pouting Jewish preacher, God said, "...Should not I pity Nineveh, that great city, in which there are more than 120,000 persons who do not know their right hand from their left....?" ([Jonah 4:11 ESV](#))

You see, friends, the preaching (the Holy Scriptures) are given out of God's great pity for those who "do not know their right hand from their left"! That's right! Ignorance is the enemy of God's creation! God's great pity, His mercy, His love, is the reason that God "breathed-out" words for His creation. God's message identifies and condemns sin; God's message also identifies and promotes righteousness. And so I ask you again, "Does inspiration [God's breath] have anything to do with you? Does God love you? Does it matter that the scripture is 'breathed out' by God?" When it comes to sin and righteousness, do you know the difference between your right hand and your left? "Salvation is from the Lord!" You need what God has breathed-out!

When God "breathed-out" what is now written down it became known as "revelation." That is, God was revealing to certain preachers what He wanted to reveal to the world. To reveal something is to make it known. God revealed the difference between the "right hand" and the "left hand". The world is shown which is which! God has not left it up to His created people to decide what sin is and what is righteousness, what is right and what is wrong; God has revealed what is right and what is wrong. When an old man named Simeon came into the Jewish temple one day he saw the baby Jesus in his mother's arms. Immediately Simeon was filled with the Holy Spirit and prayed to God using God-given words, saying, "...My eyes have seen your salvation that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel." ([Luke 2:30-32 ESV](#)) That baby Jesus was to become a "light for revelation." Jesus was to bring to the world an understanding ("a light") that could save the people of the world from the punishment of their sins.

Jesus' apostle Paul wrote a prayer for the church of Christ at Ephesus, a Gentile city located in modern day Turkey. Paul wrote and said, "For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom

and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe..." (Ephesians 1:15-19 ESV)

Friends, notice the benefits of God's revelation to you and me and to the world. God's revelation opens the eyes of our hearts. We are enlightened with knowledge. We are no longer ignorant of what the Great Creator wants from His creation. Secondly, God's revelation reveals a hope that the people of the world are called to believe. And what is this hope? It is the hope of a rich inheritance reserved for people who are saved from their sins. Do you have this hope? Thirdly, God's breathed-out revelation tells us about the immeasurable greatness of God's power, which is trusted by those who believe. And what does this power have to do with you? That power is resurrection power! Resurrection from death! God raised up Jesus and by that same power He will raise you up from the dead! God's created people will live again after the mortal body is dead.

Those who receive God's salvation from their sins through Jesus will be raised from the dead in order to enter the heavenly Kingdom of Christ. But those who do not receive God's salvation through His Son will be raised to experience an eternal damnation. Jesus' apostle John cried out, "Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life." (1 John 5:12 ESV) It was Jesus Christ Himself who promised "...An hour is coming when all who are in the tombs will hear his voice and come out, those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil to the resurrection of judgment." (John 5:28-29 ESV) Many decades later Jesus appeared to his servant John, the apostle. John said, "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. But he laid his right hand on me, saying, "Fear not, I am the first and the last, and the living one. I died, and behold I am alive forevermore, and I have the keys of Death and Hades." (Revelation 1:17-18 ESV)

Jesus has the keys of Death and Hades. Hades is the place where dead people are living in the spirit until resurrection day. You and I will experience Hades unless Jesus returns before we die. One of these days, there will be no more dying in the world. Jesus has the key to Death. One of these days, bodies in the cemeteries will reunite with their spirits in Hades. Immortal bodies will be raised in the great

resurrection day. Jesus has the key to Hades. But Jesus cannot say and does not say when that resurrection day will be! That's right! There are people who think they know, but Jesus says even he does not know. Jesus said, "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will not pass away. "But concerning that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father only." (Matthew 24:35-36 ESV) Yes, this is something God has not revealed in His book the Bible! God has not chosen to inspire anyone with the knowledge of the day or the hour when the great resurrection day will come. But, if you believe the inspired men, and if you believe the revelation that God has given the world, then you will believe that He has the power to raise the dead! God has demonstrated His power on many occasions in history, but the greatest of those occasions is the resurrection of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ. I ask you again: Does "inspiration" and "revelation" mean anything to you?

Visit a church of Christ near you and become acquainted with the inspired Word of God.