

Inscriptionation is not Inspiration

2 Peter 1:16-21

Introduction: Peter’s readers had a two-fold problem: 1) They were soon to be under attack by false teachers (2 Peter 2:1ff), and 2) elderly Peter was about to die and would no longer be able to protect them against false teachers (2 Peter 1:12-15) These teachers may have been appealing to the believer’s *personal experience* as a source for spiritual guidance. This error continues to today, exemplified by those who believe their experience determines the meaning of Scripture. Peter’s solution was to instill in his readers a high regard for the **WRITTEN** Word of God, as opposed to regarding even the human experience of the apostle himself as authoritative.

Scripture	Outline & Comments
<p>16 For we did not make known to you the power and presence of our Lord Jesus Christ by following cleverly devised fables, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. ¹⁷ For after He received from God <i>the</i> Father honor and glory, such <i>a</i> voice was borne to Him by the Magnificent Glory, This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. ¹⁸ And this voice we heard borne out of heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.</p>	<p>I. The Claim of Peter – Vss. 16-18</p> <p>A. He was an Eyewitness – Vs. 16</p> <p>B. He was an Earwitness – Vss. 17-18</p> <p>Peter’s two-fold claim in verses 16-18 is based on his personal experience. Can you identify the event from the Gospel records? See Matthew 17:1-8. Peter indicates his experiencing of this event both by sight (we were eyewitnesses) and by sound (we heard).</p>
<p>19 And we have a more certain prophetic word, which you do well to receive, like a lamp shining in a dark place until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts,</p>	<p>II. The Certainty of the Prophetic Word – Vs. 19</p> <p>Peter compares his experience with the written prophetic word. The pronoun “which” refers to the “more certain prophetic word” which in turn is identified in vs. 20 as the “prophecy of Scripture” that is, the prophetic word in written form. <i>Scripture is more certain than Peter’s experiences.</i></p> <p>“The day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts” refers to the illumination of the truth from this written prophetic word.</p>
<p>20 knowing this first, that every prophecy of Scripture does not come to be from its own source.^{1 21} For no prophecy was ever borne by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke being borne by the Holy Spirit.</p>	<p>III. The Process of Inscriptionation – Vss. 20-21</p> <p>What is the source of the prophecy of Scripture? The word “source” here is usually translated “interpretation”. The word is not from <i>hermeneuo</i> “to interpret,” but from <i>epiluo</i>, meaning “to untie, release.” The idea is that no prophecy of Scripture came into existence from its own derivation or source. Vs. 21 confirms this meaning.</p> <p>Vs. 21 indicates first negatively the source of the written prophetic word: “that every prophecy of Scripture does not come to be from its own source,” and indicates then positively that “holy men of God spoke being borne along by the Holy Spirit” This last statement indicates the method that God used to bring into existence the prophetic Scripture. Prophets spoke in the prophetic scripture as a result of a special ministry of the Holy Spirit who bore or carried them along in the process.</p>

¹ Kenneth O. Gangel says that this passage “has been interpreted several ways” which he lists as follows: 1) Scripture should be interpreted only in context, that is, a prophecy cannot stand alone without other prophecies to aid in its understanding. 2) Scripture should not be interpreted according to one’s own individual liking. 3) Scripture cannot be correctly interpreted without the Holy Spirit. 4) The prophecies did not originate with the prophets themselves.

The word ἐπιλύσεως (*epiluseōs* - lit., “unloosing, being set free”) and the word γίνεται (*ginetai* - “came to be”) favor the fourth view. The Scriptures did not stem merely from the prophets themselves; their writings came from God. Verse 20, then, speaks not of interpretation, but of revelation, the source of the Scriptures. (*BKC*, “2 Peter”). Dr. Gangel is correct in his understanding of this statement. The question asked is, “How did the prophets know what to write, and how to write it?” The answer is, “They were borne by the Spirit of God when they wrote.”