

An Examination of 2 Peter 1:19-21 and its Implications for understanding the Inspiration of Scripture

Nicholas Dodson

TRUETT McCONNELL UNIVERSITY

CLEVELAND (GEORGIA)

Joseph Pak

TAYLOR UNIVERSITY

UPLAND (INDIANA)

RESUMEN El presente artículo examina 2 P 1,19-21, con el objetivo de analizar qué dice el pasaje acerca de la inspiración de la Escritura. La pregunta planteada es: ¿cuál es el significado de las expresiones ‘τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον’, ‘βεβαιότερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον’, ‘πᾶσα προφητεία γραφῆς ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως οὐ γίνεται’, ‘ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι ἐλάλησαν ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἄνθρωποι’? El verbo griego φέρω es examinado detenidamente a la hora de responder a dicha cuestión. Se presenta y refuta la interpretación de William Abraham, que postuló que la inspiración es diferente a la revelación, y se defiende la teoría de la inspiración verbal plena.

PALABRAS CLAVE Inspiración, Escritura, 2 P 1,19-21, profecía, φέρω.

SUMMARY *This article examines 2 Peter 1:19-21 to see what this passage says about the inspiration of the Scripture. A key question asked is, “what is the meaning of the following expressions: ‘τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον’, ‘βεβαιότερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον’, ‘πᾶσα προφητεία γραφῆς ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως οὐ γίνεται’, ‘ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι ἐλάλησαν ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἄνθρωποι’?” The Greek verb φέρω is examined closely in answering this question. Then it presents and refutes William Abraham’s view that inspiration is distinct from revelation and defends verbal plenary theory of inspiration.*

KEYWORDS *Inspiration, Scripture, 2 Pet 1:19-21, prophecy, φέρω.*

I. INTRODUCTION

The inspiration of the Christian Scriptures is a much written about and discussed subject, but the actual meaning of inspiration is often debated. For biblical support of the idea of inspiration, many turn to 2 Timothy 3:16, which says, “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness” (NASB)¹. The word here translated as “inspired by God” is the Greek word θεόπνευστος, and, as B. B. Warfield points out, this word does not mean “inspired by God”; rather, this English phrase that has become so common is actually a rendering of the Latin phrase *divinitus inspirata*, which was held over from the use of the Vulgate in early English translations². He explains, “The Greek term has, however, nothing to say of inspiring or of inspiration: it speaks only of ‘spiring’ or ‘spiration’. What it says of Scripture is not that it is ‘breathed into by God’ or is the product of the Divine ‘inbreathing’ into its human authors, but that it is breathed out by God, ‘God-breathed’, the product of the creative breath of God”³. Thus, though this passage emphatically asserts the divine origin of Scripture, it does not give any specific indication of how the Scriptures were divinely produced through the agency of human authors.

In order to gain some biblical insight as to how the Scriptures were actually produced by God through men, one must turn somewhere other than the passage in 2 Timothy. Another passage often referred to in the discussion of inspiration is 2 Peter 1:19-21. This passage, and especially verse 21, is an important statement about the inspiration by God of the Scriptures. Unlike 2 Timothy 3:16, this passage does not explicitly say that all Scripture is of God, but it may give more indication about how God actually produced them through human authors. As Michael Green remarks, it is “perhaps the fullest and most explicit biblical reference to the inspiration of its authors”⁴. With this in mind, we will examine 2 Peter 1:19-21 in depth with special attention given to the meaning of the forms of the verb φέρω found in the passage. An examination

1 Θεόπνευστος is also translated “inspired” in several other translations, including the RSV and HCSB, and as “given by inspiration of God” in the KJV and NKJV.

2 B. B. WARFIELD, *Revelation and Inspiration* (Grand Rapids, MI 2003) 52.

3 WARFIELD, *Revelation and Inspiration*, 52.

4 M. GREEN, *2 Peter and Jude* (rev. ed. Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, Grand Rapids, MI 1987) 102.

of two theories of inspiration and whether or not they are supported by what this passage teaches will follow.

II. EXAMINATION OF 2 PETER 1:19-21

1. EXEGETICAL ISSUES

As already mentioned, this passage is not necessarily explicit about the inspiration of all Scripture, but it is understood by many as a strong attestation by the author of the divine origin of the “prophetic word” or “word of prophecy”, and gives some indication of how God brought about that prophetic word.

The passage in question, 2 Peter 1:19-21, reads:

καὶ ἔχομεν βεβαιότερον τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον, ᾧ καλῶς ποιεῖτε προσέχοντες ὡς λύχνῳ φαίνοντι ἐν ἀρχιμηρῷ τόπῳ, ἕως οὗ ἡμέρα διαυγάσῃ καὶ φωσφόρος ἀνατείλῃ ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις ὑμῶν, τοῦτο πρῶτον γινώσκοντες ὅτι πᾶσα προφητεία γραφῆς ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως οὐ γίνεται· οὐ γὰρ θελήματι ἀνθρώπου ἠνέχθη προφητεία ποτέ, ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἁγίου φερόμενοι ἐλάλησαν ἀπὸ θεοῦ ἄνθρωποι.⁵

And we have the prophetic word which is more sure, to which you do well to give heed as a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts, knowing this first, that no prophecy of scripture comes about from one’s own interpretation, for no prophecy was brought about by the will of man, but men who were carried along by the Holy Spirit spoke from God⁶.

One of the questions raised about this passage is the meaning of τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον, here translated as “the prophetic word”. Richard Bauckham lists six possible meanings for this phrase that have been held historically: 1) Old Testament messianic prophecy, 2) the entirety of the Old Testament,

5 All Greek text from E. Nestle et al. (eds.), *Novum Testamentum Graece* (Stuttgart 2007) unless otherwise noted.

6 All translations of Greek into English and bold and italics in them are ours unless otherwise noted.

which is understood to be messianic prophecy, 3) a certain Old Testament prophecy, 4) Old and New Testament prophecies, 5) the passage about to be given, 2 Peter 1:20-2:19, or 6) the Transfiguration as itself prophecy of the Parousia⁷. If this only refers to specific instances of prophecy or to the Transfiguration as prophecy, then this passage is not as important for understanding the doctrine of inspiration as many have thought, but Bauckham makes a strong case that the whole Old Testament is in view here. He explains:

All other known occurrences of the phrase [τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον] refer to OT Scripture, except 2 *Clem.* 11:2, which refers to an apocryphon which the writer presumably regarded as part of OT Scripture (cf. 1 *Clem.* 23:3)... It seems in fact to be interchangeable with the term “Scripture” and, like that term, can refer to...the OT generally...the term is virtually synonymous with “Scripture”⁸.

Bauckham refers to Justin’s *Dialogue with Trypho*, 129:1, which says, “And now I shall again recite the words which I have spoken in proof of this point. When Scripture says, ‘The Lord rained fire from the Lord out of heaven’, the prophetic word indicates that there were two in number...”⁹ Here it is clear that Justin, like other early Christian writers, used the words “the prophetic word” as a synonym for the entire Old Testament or Scripture. Though not all commentators come to the same conclusion as Bauckham, most do acknowledge that, in Jewish thought of the day, all Scripture was thought to be prophecy¹⁰. It is likely then that the author of 2 Peter also had in mind all of the Old Testament Scriptures. This understanding is further strengthened contextually by Peter’s reference to the entire Old Testament period in which false prophets arose among the people just as there will be false teachers who will arise in the post-Old Testament era (2 P 2:1)¹¹.

7 R. J. BAUCKHAM, *Jude, 2 Peter* (WBC 50; Waco, TX 1983) 224.

8 BAUCKHAM, *Jude, 2 Peter*.

9 See A. ROBERTS – J. DONALDSON – A. C. COXE (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Fathers I* (Christian Classics Ethereal Library, n.d.) en: <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.i.html>.

10 See R. A. REESE, *2 Peter and Jude* (Two Horizons NTC; Grand Rapids, MI 2007); P. H. DAVIDS, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude* (Pillar; Grand Rapids, MI 2006); R. HARVEY – P. H. TOWNER, *2 Peter and Jude* (IVP NTC; Downers Grove, IL 2009) 65.

11 G. R. ALLISON, “A Theologian Addresses Current Theological Issues Impinging on Christian Education”: *Christian Education Journal* 8 (2011) 89.

Since this is the case, it is possible that the adjective *βεβαιότερον*, which is modifying the phrase *τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον*, is not necessarily, as is commonly thought, conveying the idea that the prophetic word is being “made more certain” or “confirmed” by the Transfiguration. To take an incident of Christ’s ministry as confirming Old Testament prophecies would be a reversal of the New Testament practice whereby the prophecies confirm the Gospel events¹². One can hardly overemphasize the apostles’ regard for the Old Testament. As Packer correctly points out, the apostles’ chief proof of the divine origin of Christianity was its fulfillment of the prophetic Scriptures (e.g., Ac 2:16-36; 3:18ff; 10:43; 13:22ff; 17:2ff, etc.)¹³.

In 2 Peter 1:19a, since the adjective is in the predicate position, one could justly supply the words “which is”, taking the adjective *βεβαιότερον* as a predicate. Then the verse would be saying that the prophetic words are even more certain than what Peter, James and John experienced at the Transfiguration. The prophetic word is a fuller and more explicit testimony concerning the messianic glory than even the Transfiguration¹⁴. The numerous prophecies in the Scriptures concerning the Messiah already fulfilled give an even firmer basis of assurance than the Transfiguration that the predictions concerning his coming glory will also be fulfilled¹⁵.

It is also possible that the comparative adjective is being used as a superlative, something commonly done in *Koine* Greek, which would render it “the prophetic word which is most sure”. This would be a strong statement about how the author views the certainty of Scripture, but, of the seven other times Peter uses a comparative adjective, he always uses it comparatively rather than superlatively or elatively¹⁶. If the present verse follows the norm, Peter must be comparing the prophetic word to something, which in this case would be his experience on Mount Transfiguration¹⁷. Peter would then be saying that that the Scripture is even more certain guarantee of Christ’s second coming than the Transfiguration event.

12 D. E. HIEBERT, “Selected Studies from 2 Peter, Pt 2: The Prophetic Foundation for the Christian Life: An Exposition of 2 Peter 1:19-21”: *BibSac* 141 (1984) 160.

13 J. I. PACKER, *God Has Spoken*, rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI 1993) 65.

14 HIEBERT, “Selected Studies from 2 Peter, Pt 2”, 160.

15 *Ibid.*, 160.

16 J. SHERWOOD, “The Only Sure Word”: *Masters Seminary Journal* 7 (1996) 61.

17 *Ibid.*, 62.

Even if, however, one takes the interpretation that the word of prophecy or Old Testament Scripture is confirmed by the Transfiguration¹⁸, this still gives a strong statement about the veracity and importance of the Scriptures. It should also be noted that the author exhorts his reader to pay attention to the prophetic word as one would pay attention to a lamp in the dark until the dawning of the eschatological age¹⁹, again showing the importance placed on Scripture for the believer.

Also of particular importance for understanding the implications of this passage for the doctrine of inspiration is the meaning in verse 20 of *ὅτι πᾶσα προφητεία γραφῆς ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως οὐ γίνεται* (“no prophecy of scripture comes about from one’s own interpretation”), especially the ambiguous phrase *ἰδίας ἐπιλύσεως* (“one’s own interpretation”). That no prophecy of Scripture is of “one’s own” interpretation has caused some confusion. Some have taken it to mean “one’s own” as opposed to the “general” or “authoritative” interpretation. Reese argues:

The opening part of the sentence indicates that prophecy is not a matter of one’s own interpretation since it originates with God...the interpretation of prophecy should be seen in a more communal light. If individuals are not to be solely responsible for the interpretation of prophecy, then acceptable prophetic interpretation must reside in the community²⁰.

While she is correct that Peter is showing prophecy’s origination with God, her conclusion about communal interpretation raises some questions. It seems best to take *ἰδίας* here as referring to “one’s own” as opposed to that of the Spirit, contra Reese, which makes the most sense in light of the verse that follows²¹. Though *ἐπιλύσις* (“interpretation”) can refer either to the interpretation of original author of the prophecy or to the contemporary exegete, Bauckham has effectively shown that “*ἴδιος* is used in a series of Hellenistic Jewish and early Christian statements which deny the human *origin* of prophecy, and

18 E.g., D. J. Moo, *2 Peter, Jude* (NIVAC; Grand Rapids, MI 1996) 76.

19 See T. R. Schreiner, *1, 2 Peter, Jude* (NAC 37; Nashville, TN 2003); Davids, *The Letters of 2 Peter and Jude*.

20 Reese, *2 Peter and Jude*, 145.

21 The verb *γίνεταί* in v. 20 also supports the view that Peter is talking about the Scripture’s being originated from God because the verb often conveys the idea of origin (e.g., 1 Tm 6:4; 1 P 4:12; 2 P 2:1) (Sherwood, “The Only Sure Word”, 72).

seems to have been virtually a technical term in such assertions”²². If this is a technical term or phrase for the origin of prophecy, then objections raised against this interpretation because of some of the grammatical awkwardness can be effectively answered. Moo also points out that the word ἐπιλύσεως (“interpretation”) was widely used to denote the explanation of mysterious events, visions and sayings; for example, it is used in Aquila’s version of the Septuagint to describe Joseph’s interpretation of the baker’s and butler’s dreams in Genesis 40 and 41²³. “Thus the word is better suited to describe the prophet’s own interpretation of the visions and revelations given to them than to characterize the interpretation of the prophets’ words by believers in Peter’s day”²⁴.

Another factor that supports the view that divine origin is in view is the purpose of the letter which is a polemic against false teachers: the letter is contrasting the prophet undertaking his own interpretation of the divine will (which is what the false prophets were doing in the days of Jeremiah for example)²⁵ over against the prophecy being a result of the activity of God, who has moved the prophet (1:21)²⁶. As Harvey and Towner aptly state,

A familiar charge laid against false teachers in the Old Testament was that their proclamations came from their own thoughts, so that they spoke out of the “the delusions of their own minds” (Jr 14:14); they experienced “visions from their own minds, not from the mouth of the Lord” (Jr 23:16); and they therefore were “foolish prophets who follow their own spirit and have seen nothing” (Ezk 13:3)²⁷.

Whereas false teachers interpret prophecy by themselves and perhaps even construct a prophecy by the will of man, Peter is stressing that “the very nature of prophecy is that it has a divine origin in contrast to his opponents’

22 BAUCKHAM, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 229. Also see SHERWOOD, “The Only Sure Word”, 69, who points out Reese’s view renders v. 21 useless although the verse’s function is to support what v. 20 expresses.

23 Moo, *2 Peter, Jude*, 78.

24 *Ibid.*, 78.

25 See Jr 23:16-17, 21-22, 25-26; Ezk 13:3.

26 P. A. HIMES, “Peter and the Prophetic Word: The Theology of Prophecy Traced through Peter’s Sermons and Epistles”: *BBR* 21 (2011) 238. As Himes correctly notes, “Peter’s discussion of prophecy in 2 Peter is apologetic, representing a conflict between the false teachers and true revelation.”

27 HARVEY – TOWNER, *2 Peter and Jude*, 71.

polemics, which possess only a human origin”²⁸. Peter is pointing out that just as the apostles did not invent stories (1:16), the Old Testament prophets did not speak or write their imaginations²⁹. Thus, the context and relationship to verse 21 give weight to the understanding that what is in view here is Scripture having its origins with God and not with man³⁰. The issue is the authentication, not interpretation, of the divine origin of Scripture³¹. After all, Peter plainly declares in verse 21 that no prophecy was ever produced by the will of men, but men spoke from God as they were “carried along” (φερόμενοι) by the Holy Spirit. It is clear then that verse 21 is the very heart of Peter’s argument in this passage about the divine origin of the Old Testament Scriptures, and it is immediately apparent upon reading this verse that the use and meaning of the forms of φέρω are important for rightly understanding it.

2. MEANING OF ΦΕΡΩ

The word φέρω is used twice in 2 Peter 1:21, once as an aorist, passive, indicative, third person, singular (ἠνέχθη) and once in the nominative, masculine, plural, present, passive, participle (φερόμενοι). In English translations, ἠνέχθη is rendered in various ways, such as, “came” (HCSB, NKJV, RSV), “was made” (NASB), “was produced” (ESV), and “was borne” (NET). In most English versions φερόμενοι is translated as something along the lines of “moved” [by the Holy Spirit] (e.g., HCSB, NASB, NKJV, RSV), while some (e.g., ESV, NIV) render it “carried along” [by the Holy Spirit]. The meaning of this word, especially in this passage, has great significance for the author’s meaning here and for our understanding of God’s involvement in the production of the Old Testament Scriptures (and possibly the New Testament as well). The most basic meaning of this word is “to bear”, “to carry”, or “to lead”, but it can have a fairly wide range of meanings. Therefore, it will be necessary to examine fully the possible meanings of this word in the passages in which it is used

28 HIMES, “Peter and the Prophetic Word”, 239.

29 HARVEY – TOWNER, *2 Peter and Jude*, 71.

30 BAUCKHAM, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 232 (“The reason why scriptural prophecy is not simply a product of human interpretation is that its authors did not speak of their own volition but under the inspiration of God.”); See also G. R. OSBORNE, *James, 1-2 Peter, Jude* (Cornerstone Biblical Commentary 18; Carol Stream, IL 2011).

31 GREEN, *2 Peter and Jude*, 102-103.

in a similar manner to the passage in question in order to best understand its meaning in 2 Peter 1:21.

a. Classical Greek

The *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* notes that, in relation to the New Testament, φέρω has, in the secular literature, “the basic sense ‘to bring’, ‘to lead’, ‘to drive’ of men”, animals, and things. Of particular interest here is the idea of men being led or borne, and the example given comes from Homer’s *Iliad* (2, 838).³² The reference here is to a passage in which a man is borne or carried away by his horse, which reads:

Ἄσιος Ὑρτακίδης ὄν Ἀρισβηθεν φέρον ἵπποι αἰθωνες μεγάλοι ποταμοῦ
ἄπο Σελλήεντος.

Asius, son of Hyrtacus, whom his horses tawny and tall had borne from Arisbe, from the river Selleïs³³.

The usage of φέρω here shows that the idea of a man being borne or carried along was a viable understanding in the Homeric use of the word. Liddell-Scott gives further explanation that this word often means to “bear along, implying motion”, and specifically mentions that “horses are said ἄρμα φέρειν”³⁴, that is, to bear along a chariot. This is most likely the sense in which the word is used in the passage above, and this idea of moving someone along is most pertinent to the use of the word in 2 Peter 1:21.

Other notable functions of φέρω from the ancient literature are the idea of bearing, as a woman with child, to bring a word or announce, to produce as fruit, and to carry off/along as by the wind, a storm, the waves, or a river³⁵. The meaning of bringing or conveying a word has more importance for the usage of the form of φέρω in 2 Peter 1:18, but of these other uses, the idea of being carried along by the wind, waves, a river, etc., especially in the passive

32 K. WEISS, s.v., “φέρω”, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* IX (Grand Rapids, MI 1964-76) 56.

33 A.T. MURRAY, *Homer: The Iliad with an English Translation* II (Cambridge, MA 1924) 838-839.

34 H. G. LIDDELL – R. SCOTT, *Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English Lexicon, Abridged* (Simon Wallenberg Press, 2007), BibleWorks, v.8.

35 Cf. KITTEL, *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*; LIDDELL – SCOTT, *Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English Lexicon, Abridged*.

voice, is likely the most informative for the meaning in 1:21, as they give something of an idea of control to the agent or thing doing the bearing/carrying.

b. Uses in the Septuagint³⁶

Φέρω is most often used in the LXX to translate words from the Hebrew root נָחַץ in the Hiphil stem denoting, “‘to bring, present’ with obj[ects] of all kinds, persons and things, but esp[ecially] gifts brought as offering or sacrifices to the temple, priests or alter”³⁷. It is also quite commonly used to translate נָשָׂא with the meaning of bearing a burden or, akin to the previous usage, to bring a gift or pay tribute. Sometimes, it also has the meaning of to bear, endure, or suffer a burden or to tolerate something. There are other Hebrew roots occasionally rendered by φέρω, but not as relevant as the two just mentioned³⁸. One thing to note about the Hebrew words most commonly translated as φέρω in Greek is that they are commonly in the Hiphil stem, which “is the ‘causative (with agency nuance) active’ stem...the Hiphil causative generally has to do with the causing of an event, this time with agency nuance. In the Hiphil causation, the object participates in the event denoted by the verbal root”³⁹. This fact does not specifically inform the meaning of φέρω in the passage in question, but it is interesting to note that though the object being borne/carried/led participates, it is the agency idea that is important to the words which φέρω is often used to translate in the LXX.

Though the vast majority of uses of φέρω are translations of the two verb stems mentioned above, it will be valuable to evaluate some of the occurrences in the LXX in order to gain insight into the possible meaning of the word in 2 Peter 1:19-21.

36 HEREFTER, LXX.

37 WEISS, “φέρω”, 9:56.

38 *Ibid.*

39 B. T. ARNOLD – J. H. CHOI, *A Guide to Biblical Hebrew Syntax* (New York 2003) 48-49.

Exodus 35:21

καὶ ἦνεγκαν ἕκαστος ὃν ἔφερεν αὐτῶν ἡ καρδία καὶ ὅσοις ἔδοξεν τῇ ψυχῇ αὐτῶν ἦνεγκαν ἀφαίρεμα κυρίου εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔργα τῆς σκηνῆς τοῦ μαρτυρίου καὶ εἰς πάντα τὰ κάτεργα αὐτῆς καὶ εἰς πάσας τὰς στολάς τοῦ ἁγίου⁴⁰.

Everyone whose heart stirred him and everyone whose spirit moved him came and brought the LORD'S contribution for the work of the tent of meeting and for all its service and for the holy garments (NASB).

In Exodus 35:21 in the LXX, φέρω is used to translate the Hebrew verbal stems נָבַא, which is common and has in this specific instance the meaning of “brought” concerning the tribute. The most interesting instance here, however, is the use of ἔφερεν, which is rendered “stirred”. Here, one can see a person being “stirred” or “moved” or “impelled” by the καρδία in Greek or נָבַא in Hebrew, which means “the heart”, “the inner man”, or “will”. While the person is not physically borne in a certain direction, they are here, at least, carried or moved toward a specific action. This usage, though it is in the imperfect, active, indicative, rather than the participial form, could be valuable for understanding the usage found in 2 Peter 1:19-21, especially as one considers the idea that “no prophecy was brought about by the will of man”⁴¹.

Job 13:25

ἢ ὡς φύλλον κινούμενον ὑπὸ ἀνέμου εὐλαβηθήσῃ ἢ ὡς χόρτω φερομένῳ ὑπὸ πνεύματος ἀντίκεισαί μοι

Will you give heed to me as a leaf moved by wind or will you oppose me as *hay* carried by a breeze⁴²?

40 All LXX passages taken from A. RAHLFS, *Septuaginta: Id Est Vetus Testamentum Graece iuxta LXX Interpretes* (Stuttgart 1971) unless otherwise noted.

41 See also Ex 35:22, 29 for similar uses of φέρω.

42 Note that this differs somewhat from the Hebrew and thus from most English translations, but the focus of the discussion here is on the use of the Greek word. It is, therefore, more beneficial to focus on the LXX rendering.

The value for this passage in gaining insight into the meaning of φέρω in 2 Peter 1:21 is not found in the fact that the word here is used of a person, but rather in the fact that this is similar construction to that found in the verse in 2 Peter. Here in Job, φερομένω is a present, passive, participle, just as the form found in 2 Peter 1:21, and the moving or carrying is being done by an agent, shown by ὑπὸ plus a genitive noun, the marker of direct agency. Here, ὑπὸ πνεύματος shows the agent, in this instance, a breeze, is what carries the hay, while the same phrase ὑπὸ πνεύματος in 2 Peter 1:21 with the addition of ἁγίου to modify πνεύματος indicates that the Holy Spirit is the agent.

It is also interesting to note that in the greater context of this verse the χόρτος, the hay or grass, seems to be understood to be blown or moved about helplessly, which is not surprising as hay or grass is inanimate. Though this may not directly affect how one understands “men φερόμενοι (who are carried along) by the Holy Spirit” in 2 Peter 1:21, as men are not inanimate, it may lend the idea that there is much more control by the Spirit than by the men. This will be discussed further below in the analysis of the passage in 2 Peter⁴³.

Ezekiel 37:5

τάδε λέγει κύριος τοῖς ὀστέοις τούτοις ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ φέρω εἰς ὑμᾶς πνεῦμα ζωῆς.

Thus says the Lord to these bones: “Look, I am bringing unto/into you a spirit of (which is) life”⁴⁴.

In this verse, φέρω is used to translate the Hebrew root נָחַם in the Hiphil, which, again, is common. However, this instance may be helpful in understanding the meaning in 2 Peter 1:21, as it is apparently a personal thing that is being brought/borne into the bones. Πνεῦμα is used here to translate the Hebrew word נֶפֶשׁ, which, like the Greek word, can mean spirit, wind, breath, etc., and it is very possible in the Greek construction πνεῦμα ζωῆς, which is meant to translate the Hebrew מַחְיֵהוּ, meaning “that you may live”, that ζωῆς is

43 Lv 26:36 also has a usage of φέρω very similar to the one found in Jb 13:25. It says, φωνῆ φύλλου φερομένου (“the sound of a leaf which is driven/blown/carried”), which also has the idea of something being carried about or moved not of its own volition or ability.

44 Again, this differs slightly from the Hebrew and therefore from most English translations (see note above).

a genitive of apposition, which would render it “a spirit which is life”, or even more probably an attributive genitive (also known as a Hebrew genitive)⁴⁵, which would give the meaning of “a living spirit”. If, indeed, “a living spirit” is the correct meaning here, this does give an example of a living (probably personal) being that is brought or borne.

All the Old Testament LXX usages of φέρω discussed in this section lend the idea that the agent doing the bearing/carrying/leading/moving is an important and dominant part of the process. The agent does this actively, not passively, and so the one being borne/carried/moved seems to be less in control of the end result. This will be important to keep in mind in later discussion of the issue of inspiration.

c. New Testament Usages

In the New Testament, like in the LXX, φέρω often has the typical meaning of bear, carry, and bring, especially of inanimate objects such as gifts, or lead, as of animals⁴⁶. It can also mean to bear fruit, which is seen numerous times in John’s Gospel, but the main concern for understanding 2 Peter 1:21 is how it is used concerning persons or when the agent is God, as these will give the most insight into the usage in question.

People brought to Jesus

In the Gospels, φέρω is regularly used of people brought to Jesus for various reasons. This appears to be a particularly prevalent usage in Mark, which is not surprising in light of his many healing passages, but the word is used in this way in all the Gospels⁴⁷. Mark 8:22 says:

45 D. B. WALLACE, *Greek Grammar beyond the Basics: An Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament with Scripture, Subject, and Greek Word Indexes* (Grand Rapids, MI 1996) 86-88, 95-99. Since, according to Wallace, this is a common use of the genitive in the NT due to the Semitic mindset of the authors, it stands to reason that this function is likely to occur in the LXX as well. See also F. BLASS – A. DEBRUNNER – R. W. FUNK, *A Greek Grammar of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago 1961); R. A. YOUNG, *Intermediate New Testament Greek: A Linguistic and Exegetical Approach* (Nashville, TN 1994) 23ff.

46 F. W. DANKER – W. BAUER – W. ARNDT, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago 2000) 1051ff.

47 It is also used this way, though not as frequently, in Acts. Cf. Acts 5:16 where the sick and demon possessed are being brought to Peter for healing and Acts 5:15 where the sick are carried out (ἐκφέρω) into the streets that Peter’s shadow might touch them.

Καὶ ἔρχονται εἰς Βηθσαϊδάν. Καὶ φέρουσιν αὐτῷ τυφλὸν καὶ παρακαλοῦσιν αὐτὸν ἵνα αὐτοῦ ἅψηται.

And they came into Bethsaida. And they brought to him a blind man and beseeched him that he might touch him.

Mark 9:17 reads:

καὶ ἀπεκρίθη αὐτῷ εἷς ἐκ τοῦ ὄχλου· διδάσκαλε, ἦνεγκα τὸν υἱόν μου πρὸς σέ, ἔχοντα πνεῦμα ἄλαλον·

And one from the crowd answered him, “Teacher, I brought my son to you, who has a spirit that makes him mute”.

Both verses show people being brought or led to Jesus, who, in some fashion, may have been able to assist or take part in their being taken. There is no indication that they did not participate in some way. In other words, it is not clear whether they were simply led and went under their own power or if they were fully carried, but there are instances of people being taken to Jesus who could not have gone under their own power such as Luke 5:18:

καὶ ἰδοὺ ἄνδρες φέροντες ἐπὶ κλίνης ἄνθρωπον ὃς ἦν παραλελυμένος καὶ ἐζήτουν αὐτὸν εἰσενεγκεῖν καὶ θεῖναι [αὐτὸν] ἐνώπιον αὐτοῦ.

And behold, men who were carrying on a bed a man who was paralyzed and they were seeking to carry him in and lay [him] before Jesus.

This verse is particularly interesting because it uses forms of φέρω twice, once as a present, active, participle, and then εἰσφέρω (φέρω as a compound with the preposition εἷς – to bring in or carry in) is used in the aorist (thus the 2 aorist form, εἰσενεγκεῖν), infinitive. What this verse shows is that the person being carried is being done so fully by the agents doing the bringing/carrying. This man who is paralyzed, even if one takes παραλύομαι to mean weakened or disabled rather than paralyzed, is clearly unable to get himself before Jesus, as he is being borne/carried on a mat and his companions are seeking to place him before Jesus.

Being led somewhere one does not intend to go

There are other instances in the New Testament of people being led or carried by other people, but not in the context of being led to Jesus for healing. John 21:18 is an important example of such an instance:

ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω σοι, ὅτε ἦς νεώτερος, ἐζώννυες σεαυτὸν καὶ περιεπάτεις ὅπου ἤθελες· ὅταν δὲ γηράσῃς, ἐκτενεῖς τὰς χεῖράς σου, καὶ ἄλλος σε ζώσει καὶ οἴσει ὅπου οὐ θέλεις.

Truly, truly, I say to you, when you were young, you dressed yourself and walked where you desired. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hand, and another will dress you and will lead/carry you where you do not desire [to go]⁴⁸.

This is an important verse for understanding the usage in our passage in 2 Peter, as it appears to show that people can be carried/led somewhere or in a direction contrary to their own will or desire. It would be saying too much to say that φέρω, in itself, has the meaning of being led completely against one's will; however, the context indicates that Peter will be led somewhere or in a way he did not intend.

Another instance that would seem to fit into this category would be Acts 27:14-15:

μετ' οὐ πολὺ δὲ ἔβαλεν κατ' αὐτῆς ἄνεμος τυφωνικὸς ὁ καλούμενος εὐρακύλων· συναρπασθέντος δὲ τοῦ πλοίου καὶ μὴ δυναμένου ἀντοφθαλμεῖν τῷ ἀνέμῳ ἐπιδόντες ἐφερόμεθα.

Now not long after a violent wind, the one which is called northeaster came down from it [the island of Crete]; and when the ship was caught and was unable to head into the wind, we gave up and were driven along.

48 Note that most English translations add "to go" at the end of the verse, though it is derived from the context and not in the text itself.

Like the usage of φέρω just discussed, this indicates that someone is being led or carried away where they did not intend. This passage, again, shows that a person, or even a group, can be carried in a direction other than what they desired, but it is interesting to note that it was in conjunction with their giving up or allowing it to happen that they were then carried along.

With God as the agent

Besides the instances in 2 Peter, the only New Testament occurrences of φέρω in which God, either the Father, Son, or Spirit, is the one directly doing the action, are found in Romans 9:22 and Hebrews 1:3. Paul says in Romans 9:22,

εἰ δὲ θέλων ὁ θεὸς ἐνδείξασθαι τὴν ὀργὴν καὶ γνωρίσαι τὸ δυνατόν αὐτοῦ ἤνεγκεν ἐν πολλῇ μακροθυμίᾳ σκευὴ ὀργῆς κατηρτισμένα εἰς ἀπόλειαν,

What if God, in order to demonstrate his wrath and to make known his power, endured with much long-suffering vessels of wrath which were prepared unto destruction?

In this instance, φέρω is apparently being used with the sense to bear with or endure, so it does not necessarily have the same idea of carrying on or bearing that 2 Peter 1:21 has. However, it is being used of people, as these vessels of wrath are, as can be seen from the larger context, people prepared unto destruction.

The other instance in which God is the agent, is Hebrews 1:3, which says:

ὃς ὢν ἀπαύγασμα τῆς δόξης καὶ χαρακτὴρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ, φέρων τε τὰ πάντα τῷ ῥήματι τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ, καθαρῶσιν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξιᾷ τῆς μεγαλωσύνης ἐν ὑψηλοῖς.

who, being the radiance of his glory and the exact representation of his substance, and bearing up all things by his powerful word, after he made purification of sins, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high⁴⁹.

49 Various English translations render φέρων upholding, sustaining, etc., and some English translations render τὰ πάντα as “the universe,” as the sense is likely “all things that exist”.

Here, Christ is said to be bearing up or sustaining everything that exists, the whole of the cosmos. This passage does not speak to any specific personal being or person being led or borne, but it is clear that, in this context, the one doing the bearing up is in control.

While many instances of φέρω in the New Testament are simply references to things, inanimate objects, being brought or carried, there are also a large number of instances in which people or personal beings are said to be borne, led, or carried. As is evident from the survey of both LXX and New Testament usages above, when the bearing of a person is in view, there is often, if not always, some idea of the one being borne lacking the will or ability to control where and/or how they are borne/moved. In other words, the results, it seems, of their being borne are ultimately up to the agent, the one doing the bearing/carrying rather than themselves. It is interesting to note, though, that in virtually all the instances when personal beings are borne/moved/carried, they are not completely passive or unwilling. Rather, the usages seem to speak to an awareness of and willingness to be borne/carried.

3. VERSE 21 CONTINUED

With the understanding that the author is using the phrase τὸν προφητικὸν λόγον, the prophetic word, and prophecy to refer to the whole of the Old Testament Scriptures and a fuller understanding of the meaning of the word φέρω, some preliminary conclusions can be reached as to what the author is saying here about the divine origins of the Old Testament Scriptures. As Bauckham points out, “It should be noted that φέρειν (lit. “to bear”) was also used in vv 17-18 of the heavenly voice. That author’s concern there to stress that the words at the Transfiguration came from God, is comparable with his concern here to stress that the words of OT prophecy also came from God”⁵⁰. This is true, and in light of the meaning of the word φέρω as determined from the examination above, it is clear that this is a very strong assertion by the author that the prophets were not writing of their own accord but what the Holy Spirit led them to write. It was the Holy Spirit that inspired not only visions or dreams of the prophets but also the interpretation of them, so that

50 BAUCKHAM, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 233; see also MOO, *2 Peter, Jude*, 79.

what they recorded in Scripture were God's very words.⁵¹ The theory of inspiration this best supports will be discussed further below, but the implication is clearly that the Old Testament Scriptures are the words of God rather than just the words of men.

This brings about the question as to whether this passage can have any bearing on how one understands not just the inspiration of the Old Testament but also the New Testament Scriptures as well. If, as has been argued, it is correct to understand the “word of prophecy” as the entirety of the Old Testament, then what is said here in verse 21 would apply to the entirety of the Scriptures that the readers of 2 Peter had at the time which seems to have included certain apostolic writings as can be seen from the fact that in 2 Peter 3:16 the author refers to the writings of Paul as *γραφαί*⁵².

III. WHAT DOES 2 PETER CONVEY ABOUT INSPIRATION?

The preceding exegetical examination of 2 Peter 1:19-21 and in-depth examination of the meaning of *φέρω* specifically have an important bearing on the understanding of the inspiration of the Old Testament Scriptures and arguably also the New Testament. There are various competing theories of biblical inspiration among theologians. René Pache summarizes the different theories into four possible views. The first is that the Bible is not divinely inspired but is only a remarkable human production, something akin to the great works of antiquity like those of Homer or Plato. The implication of this is that the Scriptures are fallible just like any other human production. The second view is that the Bible is only partially inspired in some sense. There are several different expressions of this view such as these: “Inspiration had to do only with the author's thoughts, not with the words used”, “Only the moral and spiritual teachings of the Bible were inspired”, and “The Bible ‘contains’—but ‘is not’—the word of God”⁵³. A third view is that the Bible is only divine, and

51 BAUCKHAM, *Jude, 2 Peter*, 234-35; See also WARFIELD, *Revelation and Inspiration*, 53ff.

52 Peter equates *τον προφητικον λογον* (“word of prophecy”) with *προφητεια γραφησ* (“prophecy of Scripture”) in v. 20 and elsewhere uses the term *γραφη* to refer to the entire known Scripture at that time including Paul's writings (3:15-16) (SHERWOOD, “The Only Sure Word”, 63).

53 R. PACHE, *The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture* (Chicago 1980) 58-64.

the human authors were entirely passive in the process of recording revelation; this has been called the dictation view. This theory would be something akin to what Muslims believe about the Quran; that is, it came from heaven to earth with no human contribution whatsoever. The final view Pache gives is the verbal plenary inspiration of Scripture. Adherents of this view believe that the Scriptures are inspired in their entirety (plenary) and that the very words themselves are inspired (verbal). The verbal facet is important because, as most proponents of the plenary view believe, the words are inseparable from the thought or message which is inspired⁵⁴.

Among those scholars and theologians who see the Bible as authoritative, only the second and fourth views are widely espoused, and, other considerations aside, it would seem possible, at least initially, to accept the second view and understand the prophets being “borne” by the Holy Spirit to mean something like the inspiration of the author’s thoughts or intentions rather than his words. So, it is necessary to determine which of the two views is best in line with the passage just examined.

William J. Abraham is a good example of one who holds to what is above called the partially inspired view and whose proposal for such a view of inspiration seems potentially promising concerning the understanding of 2 Peter 1:19-21⁵⁵. In the interest of following what he calls an “inductive” approach to the study of inspiration, Abraham begins his approach to inspiration by categorically denying that there is any possibility of inspiration being equivalent to God’s speaking, which, he believes, is the mistake made by all “deductive” theories of inspiration. “Deductive theories” is his term for all theories that begin with the premise that God has inspired the Scriptures and seek to examine whether this is true and how it might be so. Abraham says:

This is the fundamental problem in classical deductive approaches to inspiration. It is not that proponents of such theories are wrong to try and draw valid inferences from the idea of inspiration. In this they are correct. It is rather that they have invariably been working less with

54 PACHE, *The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture*, 57-79.

55 W. J. ABRAHAM, *The Divine Inspiration of Holy Scripture* (New York 1981). For a similar and somewhat more recent, “inductivist” approach to inspiration, see K. R. TREMBATH, *Evangelical Theories of Biblical Inspiration: A Review and Proposal* (New York 1987).

the concept of inspiration than with the concept of divine speaking. Surely it is harmful and confusing to approach divine inspiration from this angle. Any responsible and coherent account of inspiration must at least begin with the possibility that there is as much difference between divine inspiration and divine speaking as there is between human inspiration and human speaking. It must consider as a live option that divine inspiration is a basic act or activity. It must not be confused with other activity of God, whether this be the creative activity of God or the speaking activity of God⁵⁶.

Abraham begins with the presupposition that God's inspiring is not equivalent with his speaking, which, ironically, does not seem to be a truly inductive approach. In fact, he believes that the way to understand inspiration is not to start with what it means of God but rather what it means for men to be inspired and then how it can be applied to God⁵⁷. He proceeds to develop a paradigm for biblical inspiration based on the way a student might be inspired by his teacher. He says that students will be inspired to varying degrees based on natural abilities and the closeness of their relationship to their teacher. It is also the case that students are active in the inspiration process and, because they will be using their natural abilities, their own styles will be obvious. Thirdly, because of other influences on the students, it would be no surprise that they make mistakes. Abraham continues the use of his analogy in his discussion of the mode of revelation. First, he says, inspiring is not done apart from other activities; in other words, the teacher simply inspires the student as he interacts with him through teaching and other activities. Therefore, the inspiring may be done unconsciously or unintentionally. He concludes his paradigm case by noting that the effects of inspiration will be discernable, not because the teacher says he has inspired, but by the results produced by the students⁵⁸. Abraham summarizes his concept of inspiration as follows:

What I am suggesting with respect to inspiration is simply this. It is through his revelatory and saving acts as well as through his personal

56 ABRAHAM, *The Divine Inspiration of Holy Scripture*, 37.

57 *Ibid.*, 61.

58 *Ibid.*, 63-67.

dealings with individuals and groups that God inspired his people to write and collate what we now know as the Bible. Inspiration is not an activity that should be experientially separated from these other acts that God has performed in the past. As a matter of logic, inspiration is a unique activity of God that cannot be defined in terms of his other acts or activity, but as a matter of fact he inspires in, with, and through his special revelatory acts and through his personal guidance of those who wrote and put together the various parts of the Bible. This is the heart of my positive proposal⁵⁹.

Abraham's position then is that revelation is distinct from inspiration, and inspiration is something that happens to and in a community of people who receive God's revelation, not something that can be true of words or propositions. Therefore, the books of the Bible are only "inspired" inasmuch as they were written by people influenced, "inspired", so to speak, by the saving activity of God.

How does this understanding fit with the view of inspiration gained from an examination of 2 Peter 1:19-21? Of this passage, Abraham himself says, "The key point made is that God took the initiative in directing the prophets. God moved them to prophesy—what they said did not come from the impulse of man. Beyond this 2 Peter 1:21 is silent. Here there is no mention of original autographs, no mention of divine speaking, no mention of inerrancy and no inflated claims about the character of Scripture as a whole"⁶⁰.

Consider Abraham's contention that God's inspiring cannot be equated to God's speaking. In his analogy of the teacher and students, the inspiration takes place secondarily as a result of other activities and the "inspired" results are completely the impulse of the students working under the indirect influence of what the teacher has taught them and the way in which he or she has inspired them, but under no direct influence of the teacher. There are two reasons why this idea of Abraham's does not seem to fit. First, as verse 20 says, "no prophecy of scripture comes about from one's own interpretation". As discussed above, there is ample evidence to show that this means the original prophet's interpretation as opposed to the interpretation given by the Spirit.

59 *Ibid.*, 67.

60 *Ibid.*, 94-95.

Secondly, and this is at the heart of the issue, verse 21, which says, “men who were carried/borne along by the Holy Spirit spoke from God”, indicates a much stronger sense of inspiration than what Abraham has allowed. As the word study of φέρω has shown, there is a strong guiding/moving/bearing influence by the active agent on those being borne/carried/impelled when this word is used of people, especially in the New Testament. Abraham’s analogy of someone doing something great or passively “inspiring” which influences something to be done in a certain way does not fit with the usage and meaning of φέρω in this passage or the meaning of the passage as a whole. If Abraham’s proposal were correct, then prophecy would indeed have been a matter of the prophet’s own interpretation and would most certainly have come by the will of man rather than by men being borne by the Spirit to speak from God. Such a proposal seems to directly contradict what Scripture says about itself concerning its inspiration in 2 Peter 1:19-21. Abraham’s fundamental premise that God should not be understood as speaking has also been argued against quite effectively by the philosopher Nicholas Wolterstorff in his book, *Divine Discourse*⁶¹. So Abraham’s entire argument seems to have been built on philosophically shaky ground and is at odds with what Scripture actually says about itself.

Admittedly, there are those who, like Abraham, believe a verbal theory of inspiration is saying too much and ultimately causes one to slip into something akin to the dictation view. This, however, is strongly denied by proponents of the verbal inspiration view such as B.B. Warfield, J.I. Packer, Rene Pache, and others. These charges leveled at those who would hold to the verbal inspiration of the Scriptures tend to come out of a concern to maintain human freedom and account for the very human elements of the biblical writings. This is a valid concern, since the books of the Bible do have human authors and human elements that can be seen in differences in style, language, setting, etc. In light of 2 Peter 1:21 and the meaning of the word φέρω used therein, it may seem that all human elements are dismissed and only God’s agency remains. Concerning the use of φέρω Warfield says:

It is not to be confounded with guiding, or directing, or controlling, or even leading in the full sense of the word. It goes beyond all such

⁶¹ N. WOLTERSTORFF, *Divine Discourse* (Cambridge 2013).

terms, in assigning the effect produced specifically to the active agent. What is “borne” is taken up by the “bearer”, and conveyed by the “bearer’s” power, not its own, to the “bearer’s” goal, not its own. The men who spoke from God are here declared, therefore, to have been taken up by the Holy Spirit and brought by His power to the goal of His choosing⁶².

He rightly identifies the strong impulse of the Holy Spirit that results in God’s purpose being accomplished and his words being recorded. However, Warfield also recognizes the role of the human authors when he says:

The Spirit is not to be conceived as standing outside of the human powers employed for the effect in view, ready to supplement any inadequacies they may show and to supply any defects they may manifest, but as working confluently in, with and by them, elevating them, directing them, controlling them, energizing them, so that, as His instruments, they rise above themselves and under His inspiration do His work and reach His aim. The product, therefore, which is attained by their means is His product through them⁶³.

Harrison observes active mental activities of the prophets in 1 Peter 1:10-12 in contrast to their apparent passive roles in 2 Peter 1:19-21 and comments:

Here the passivity of the prophets seems to be emphasized, and yet in the first epistle we are introduced to the most intense kind of mental activity. . . . It is not to be wondered at that they should be pricked into investigation, since they had been the chosen channels of revelation. Hence the prophets, though passive in the sense that they did not contribute [to] the message apart from the Spirit’s moving, yet were so far from being mechanical instruments that they had all their powers of thought aroused and taxed by the disclosures granted to them⁶⁴.

62 WARFIELD, *Revelation and Inspiration*, 55.

63 *Ibid.*, 23.

64 E. F. HARRISON, “Exegetical Studies in 1 Peter”: *BibSac* 98 (January 1941) 72.

Such a traditional verbal inspiration view is more in line with and better accounts for the idea of inspiration that can be seen in 2 Peter 1:19-21, than does Abraham's view of inspiration that seeks to move the locus of inspiration from the product to the recipient⁶⁵.

IV. CONCLUSION

After an examination of 2 Peter 1:19-21, which gives important biblical insight about the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, it is clear that Scripture teaches that it is inspired in a way that entails more than just a passive influence by God on men to write fallible and uninspired words. This is consistent with the purpose of 2 Peter which was to strengthen the recipients' faith in God's Word while defending against the accusations of the heretics⁶⁶. Pache is correct, then, when he says:

[I]nspiration of the thoughts may be granted to the believer, inspiration of the words makes a prophet, inspiration of the writings makes a sacred author... The Lord was able to combine the individuality of the authors—their conscience, memory and emotions—with the material He was causing them to produce⁶⁷.

As Michael Green puts it, "the prophets raised their sails . . . and the Holy Spirit filled them and carried them along in the direction He wished"⁶⁸. Theologians may wish that Scripture taught more concerning inspiration. At the least, we believe from our examination of 2 Peter 1:19-21 that any theory of

65 HIEBERT, "Selected Studies from 2 Peter, Pt 2", 166-67. For another approach to supporting the verbal inspiration theory while strongly maintaining human freedom, see William Lane Craig, "Men Moved by the Holy Spirit Spoke from God' (2 Peter 1:21): A Middle Knowledge Perspective on Biblical Inspiration": *Philosophia Christi* 1 (1999) 45-82. Here, Craig gives an interesting philosophical argument from a Molinist perspective as to how verbal inspiration is possible without theistic determinism.

66 HIMES, "Peter and the Prophetic Word", 237-38.

67 PACHE, *The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture*, 60.

68 M. GREEN, *The Second Epistle General of Peter and the General Epistle of Jude: An Introduction and Commentary* (Tyndale NTC; Grand Rapids 1968) 91.

inspiration, if it wishes to stay true to what the Bible says, must acknowledge that the Scriptures are very truly the product and words of God. Peter's own words summarize our conclusion well: "no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (2 P 1:21).

