

The Bible – How Firm A Foundation!!

"Thy Word is truth" – John 17:17

The Scriptures cannot be broken" – John 10:35

"The Scriptures must be fulfilled" – Mark 14:49

"All things must be fulfilled which were written..." – Luke 24:44

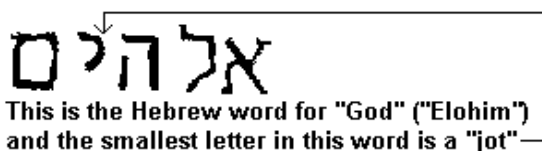
"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Words shall never pass away" – Matthew 24:35

The following are **TERMS** you should **UNDERSTAND**. They relate to the perfect inspiration, absolute truthfulness and complete trustworthiness of the Bible.

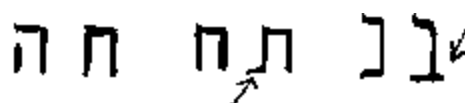
1. **INERRANT** – free from error *of any kind* (including historical, chronological, genealogical and scientific error), no errors, totally and completely exempt from errors, absolutely true, no mistakes, no flaws, no contradictions, no discrepancies, no inconsistencies, no inaccuracies, no disagreements, no imperfections, no defects, no deceptions, no blunders, no lies (Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18), no falsity, no misconceptions, no false impressions, *the TRUTH, the whole TRUTH, and nothing but the TRUTH* (John 17:17; Psalm 119:160).
2. **INFALLIBLE** – not liable to error (hence a synonym for *inerrant*); incapable of being wrong or mistaken or inaccurate or misleading; absolutely trustworthy and sure. The term is sometimes used of persons. For example, it has been claimed by some that the Pope is infallible. No **POPE** or **PRIEST** or **PASTOR** or **PERSON** is infallible, but God is infallible and thus His Word is infallible (John 10:35). People may err, but not the Bible (Matthew 22:29).
3. **AUTHORITATIVE** – the Bible has absolute *authority* (power, dominion, rule, control) over me so that I must bow before the authority of the Word (Isa. 66:2; Ezra 9:4; 1 Sam. 3:9-10) without doubting it, debating it, questioning it (Gen. 3:1), contradicting it (Gen. 3:4), disbelieving it, changing it, redefining it, adding to it, subtracting from it (Rev. 22:18-19); or objecting to it ("but look what science says," "but that's old fashioned," "but I don't like that verse"). The Serpent (Devil) wants people to think that **YOU CAN'T BE SURE** (convinced, confident, positive, certain, settled, dogmatic, decided) **ABOUT WHAT GOD SAYS**. This is why the unsaved give the constant objection, **"BUT THAT'S JUST YOUR INTERPRETATION."** The believer who submits to the authority of the written Word can **KNOW** the certainty and assurance of **"THUS SAITH THE LORD!" "THE MOUTH OF THE LORD HATH SPOKEN IT!" "GOD HATH SAID!"** (compare Genesis 3:1).
4. **INSPIRED** – the word is defined in 2 Timothy 3:16. The Greek word is *theopneustos* which literally means **"GOD-BREATHED."** To say that "all Scripture is God-breathed" is to say

that all Scripture is breathed out from the mouth of God, as if God were actually speaking the very words. [Technically it might be more correct to speak of "expiration" rather than "inspiration."] Thus, in Psalm 33:6, according to Hebrew parallelism, the expression "the breath of His mouth" is equivalent to the expression "the Word of the Lord." Whenever we speak, we are breathing out words. To say that we are breathing out words is another way of saying that we are speaking. The Bible is GOD SPEAKING! God has breathed out the Scriptures and the whole Bible is from the MOUTH OF GOD! All Scripture is God's Word. After every verse in the Bible we could rightly say, "THE MOUTH OF THE LORD HATH SPOKEN IT!" Thus, to say that there are errors in the Bible is to say that God has ERRED in what *HE HAS SAID*. How blasphemous!

5. **PLENARY INSPIRATION** – the Bible is *fully* and *completely* inspired (2 Tim. 3:16 – "ALL Scripture"), not just some parts (or the parts you like best). This would include Genesis chapters 1-11, the historical sections, the numerical listings, the chronological details, the genealogies and every other part of the Bible. It is totally erroneous to say that only "revelational" Scripture is without error. "Revelational" Scripture is said to be that which gives the message of salvation (that which makes a person "wise unto salvation") and instruction for living – the teaching or doctrine of the Bible and all that relates to matters of faith and practice. But 2 Timothy 3:16-17 declares that "ALL SCRIPTURE...is profitable for doctrine (teaching)." In other words, this passage teaches that the entire Bible relates to matters of faith and practice—that's why God gave it. Thus, all Scripture is "revelational" and all Scripture must be inerrant. Let no man dare to decide which parts of the Bible are true! What folly for a mere man to choose what parts he will accept and what parts he will reject! How wise is that man who gladly receives ALL the Bible as God's truth!
6. **VERBAL INSPIRATION** – Even the very *WORDS* (not just the ideas) are inspired (Psalm 12:6; Prov. 30:6), as recorded in the original manuscripts (autographs) as penned by the Bible writers. Though we do not possess the original copies of Scripture, the manuscripts which we do have are of such quality and completeness and abundance that we can know with great accuracy what the original text of Scripture said.
7. **JOT AND TITTLE INSPIRATION** – A *jot* is the smallest letter in the Hebrew alphabet and a *tittle* is a tiny mark which enables one to distinguish between two Hebrew letters which look very similar (see below):



This is the Hebrew word for "God" ("Elohim") and the smallest letter in this word is a "jot"

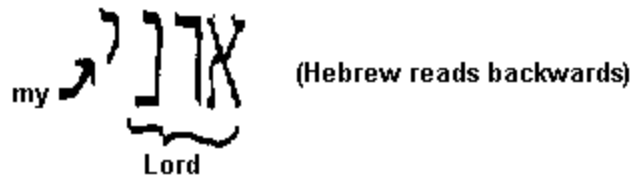


Three examples of a "tittle"

Every jot and tittle is inspired and will be fulfilled (Matthew 5:18; Luke 16:17). Or as we might say in English, every dotting of the "i" and crossing of the "t" is important in God's Word. Thus, inspiration extends even to the smallest details of the sacred text as originally given when "Holy

men of God spoke (and wrote) as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter 1:21). Some examples of the importance of "jot and tittle" inspiration:

- 1) In Matthew 22:44 Christ's masterful argument is based on the fact that David said, "MY Lord." This observation prepared the way for the unanswered question, "How can David's Son be David's Lord?" [This perplexing question finds its answer in Romans 1:3-4]. It is interesting to note that the word "MY" in Psalm 110:1 is not a separate word in the Hebrew. It is simply a "jot" added to the end of the word "Lord" as a suffix:



Thus we see that one little "jot" is very important. Our Lord's argument hinged on it.

- 2) In Galatians 3:16 Paul's argument rests upon the difference between singular and plural. The one letter "s" is very important!
- 3) How did the writer of Hebrews know that Abraham believed that God would raise Isaac from the dead (Heb. 11:17-19)? The key is found in Genesis 22:5 where Abraham said, "WE will come again to you" (or to paraphrase: "even though I am going to sacrifice Isaac, we both will return alive"). The difference between "we will come" and "I will come" (which would have suggested that Abraham would return alone) in Hebrew is one letter:



- 4) In Matthew 22:32 our Lord's argument rests on the fact that God said, "I am the God of Abraham" and not "I *was* the God of Abraham" (cf. Exodus 3:6). Here the overall context of the passage and even the TENSE OF THE VERB is highly significant in our Lord's skillful argument.

Thus, those who have a correct understanding of "jot and tittle" inspiration will study their Bibles in such a way as to give much attention to the *details* of the text (the tense of the verb, the personal pronouns used, the difference between plural and singular, the little words that we often overlook, and even the very letters that make up the words). *"FOREVER, O LORD, THY WORD IS SETTLED IN HEAVEN"* (Psalm 119:89)!

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