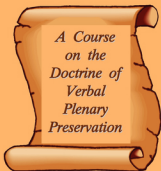


VPP

of the Bible



*A Course
on the
Doctrine of
Verbal
Plenary
Preservation*

Rev. Dennis Kwok

&

The Faculty of Far Eastern Bible College

Editor: H. D. Williams, M.D., Ph.D.

VERBAL PLENARY PRESERVATION OF THE BIBLE

A Course On The Bible's Doctrine Of Verbal Plenary Preservation

**Rev. Dennis Kwok,
Pastor of Truth Bible-Presbyterian Church
&
The Faculty of Far Eastern Bible College**

Editor: H. D. Williams, M.D., Ph. D.

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PREFACE

The Battle in the Past. For many years (or even centuries), ever since the serpent said, “*Yea, hath God said*” (Genesis 3:1), there has been a questioning of the fact of, the extent of, and the manner of Bible preservation. In this book, the editor, Dr. H. D. Williams, has reproduced in one volume these truths that had been previously made available in ten separate lessons. Through the permission of Dr. Jeffrey Khoo, the Dean of the Far Eastern Bible College (FEBC) in Singapore, and the other authors, we have been able to make these important studies available to the entire English-speaking world in book form. Dr. Khoo and his fundamental Bible Presbyterian associates have paid a tremendous price in standing for the verbal plenary preservation of the Words of the Bible.

The Battle in the Present. As this book is being published, the FEBC, which holds to the sound position of the verbal plenary preservation of the Bible, has been asked either to give up this Biblical position, or to move out of the buildings they have occupied since their beginning. Those who have ordered them out of their school properties are the leaders of the Life Bible Presbyterian Church, formerly pastored by Dr. Timothy Tow, until his forced resignation over this truth. Dr. Tow and his brother, Dr. S. H. Tow (President of the FEBC board of directors) have been seeking to solve this crisis by conciliatory means but to no avail.

The Battle in the Future. The removal of FEBC from their former quarters is a matter yet to be decided as of this writing, but the battle for the truth of the verbal plenary preservation of the Words of God will go on until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. In the United States, opposition comes not only from the Roman Catholic Church, the apostate Protestants, and the compromising New Evangelicals, but also, sadly, even from many leading Fundamentalists, fundamental churches, and fundamental schools. The leading schools that oppose this Biblical teaching include Bob Jones University, Detroit Baptist Seminary, Central Baptist Seminary, Calvary Baptist Seminary, and many of their sister schools. “*Verbal*” refers to the Words, not merely the ideas, concepts, thoughts, or message. “*Plenary*” refers to the entire Bible from Genesis to Revelation. “*Preservation*” refers to the inerrant preservation of the original Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Words from their verbal plenary inspiration to this present hour.

**Sincerely yours for God’s Words,
Pastor D. A. Waite, Th.D., Ph.D.,
President of the Bible For Today, and
President of the Dean Burgon Society**

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ABBREVIATIONS

BFT = Bible For Today
CEV = Contemporary English Version
CUV = Chinese Union Version
DBS = Dean Burgon Society
ESV = English Standard Version
FEBC = Far Eastern Bible College
KJB = King James Bible
LB = Living Bible
LBPC = Life Bible Presbyterian Church
NASB = New American Standard Version
NIV = New International Version
NLB = New Living Bible
RSV = Revised Standard Version
TBPC = Truth Life Bible Presbyterian Church
TEV = Today's English Version
VPI = verbal plenary inspiration
VPP = verbal plenary preservation
WCF = Westminster Confession of Faith
W/H = Westcott and Hort

SAMPLE PAGES

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The following course on verbal plenary preservation (VPP) of the Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Words that lie behind the King James Bible is taught at the Far Eastern Bible College (FEBC) and Truth Bible-Presbyterian Church (TBPC) in Singapore. It is printed with their permission. The Dean Burgon Society (DBS) and Bible For Today Baptist Ministries (BFT) highly recommends it for those who desire the truth behind the modern conundrum of Bible texts, the 'new' versions of the Bible, and the mass confusion surrounding these topics.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is on the doctrine of Verbal Plenary Preservation (VPP) of the Bible. It will discuss the inspiration, canonicity, identification, transmission and translation of Scripture that support fully the doctrine of VPP. VPP is a biblical doctrine that is well-supported by the Scriptures. The superiority of the King James Bible and the Textus Receptus that underlies it will also be demonstrated.

II. RECOMMENDED TEXTS

1. D A Waite, *Defending the King James Bible* (Collingswood NJ: The Bible for Today Press, 1994).
2. Dean J W Burgon, *The Revision Revised: A Refutation of Westcott and Hort's False Greek Text and Theory* (Collingswood NJ: Dean Burgon Society Press).
3. Edward F Hills, *The King James Version Defended* (Des Moines IA: The Christian Research Press, 1984).
4. Jeffrey Khoo, *Kept Pure in All Ages: Recapturing the Authorized Version and the Doctrine of Providential Preservation* (Singapore: FEBC Press, 2001).
5. S H Tow, *Beyond Versions* (Singapore: King James Productions, 1998).

6. Timothy Tow & Jeffrey Khoo, *A Theology for Every Christian Book I: Knowing God & His Word* (Singapore: FEBC Press, 1998).

III. Lessons

<u>Lesson No.</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Author/Teacher</u>
<u>Lesson 1</u>	<u>Introduction to the Doctrine of VPP</u>	Dennis Kwok
<u>Lesson 2</u>	<u>Inspiration & VPP</u>	Dennis Kwok
<u>Lesson 3</u>	<u>Biblical Support for VPP (I)</u>	Carol Lee
<u>Lesson 4</u>	<u>Biblical Support for VPP (II)</u>	Quek Suan Yew
<u>Lesson 5</u>	<u>Biblical Support for VPP (III)</u>	Quek Suan Yew
<u>Lesson 6</u>	<u>Biblical Support for VPP (IV)</u>	Das Koshy
<u>Lesson 7</u>	<u>The King James Bible & VPP</u>	Dennis Kwok
<u>Lesson 8</u>	<u>Identification of God's Preserved Words (I)</u>	Jeffrey Khoo
<u>Lesson 9</u>	<u>Identification of God's Preserved Words (II)</u>	Jeffrey Khoo
<u>Lesson 10</u>	<u>Conclusion / Q & A Session</u>	All teachers

Links to more articles on the defense of VPP are at the end of this course.

LESSON 1

INTRODUCTION

To The Doctrine Of Verbal Plenary Preservation

I. DEFINITION OF VPP

What does VPP mean? “Verbal” means “every word to the jot and tittle” (Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18). “Plenary” means “the Scripture as a whole with all the words intact” (Matt 24:35, 1 Pet 1:25). So VPP means the whole of Scripture with all its words even to the jot and tittle is perfectly preserved by God without any loss of the original words, prophecies, promises, commandments, doctrines, and truths, not only in the words of salvation, but also the words of history, geography and science. Every book, every chapter, every verse, every word, every syllable, every letter is infallibly preserved by the Lord Himself to the last iota.

II. THE BEGINNINGS OF VPP ISSUE IN SINGAPORE

A. Two Deadly Poisons: ‘From The Mind of God to the Mind of Man’ and ‘One Bible Only?’

1. The battle to be fought today is the battle for the Bible. The doctrine of inspiration was fought in the last century. In this new century, it is the battle of the doctrine of Bible preservation. Far Eastern Bible College of Singapore stood firm on God’s providential preservation of the perfect Bible and is still standing today without compromise and apology.

2. The book ‘From the Mind of God to the Mind of Man’ published by Bob Jones University in 1999 attacks the fundamental doctrine of Bible preservation by having an inclination to the critical texts originated from Westcott and Hort. In addition, BJU adopts a neutral position on the

English Bible versions. This is the first poison that spreads to all who adore BJU as one Bible seminary and university that stood without apology through the dangerous time of great apostasy. Unfortunately, like many other Bible seminaries which had fallen, BJU succumbed to the god of humanistic scholarship and downgraded spiritual and biblical discernment. Thus, FEBC, being true to her call to be God's watchman in these last of the last days, must sound the alarm bell of warning.

3. The second poison is found in the book 'One Bible Only?' which was written by the Baptist fundamentalists who taught at Central Baptist Theological Seminary of Plymouth, Minnesota. This book speaks in one voice throughout saying that the Bible is preserved conceptually, and not verbally. In other words, it was believed that only the vital doctrines are preserved, and not the inspired words. Many of the non-VPPists or anti-VPPists sing the same tune as this book. Their arguments against the doctrine of VPP are relatively the same.

B. Life BPC & FEBC

1. Dr Jeffrey Khoo, the Academic Dean of FEBC, wrote two separate critiques against the two poison books which were highly endorsed by BJU and Central Baptist Seminary, in order to defend the King James Bible and the original language texts underlying it. His timely critiques serve as a strong warning to the readers of these books. The teaching of the doctrine of VPP has thus taken root and eventually became the hot topic among B-P churches in Singapore

2. Among the teaching faculty members of FEBC, two disagreed on the doctrine of VPP. As a result, they resigned from the faculty but remained as assistant pastors of Life BPC. Due to their influence and good support from the Church Session, Life BPC steered a different direction from FEBC. Since then, anti-VPP statements were consistently made and taught that VPP is a new teaching and remains a personal conviction rather than a universal gospel truth.

3. Thus, Life BPC and FEBC went on separate ways from the last quarter of 2003 onwards. In the same year, FEBC Principal Rev Timothy Tow resigned from Life BPC as pastor and started a new church called 'True Life BPC' under the umbrella of FEBC.

C. Calvary BPC & Truth BPC

“Truth will out’ is what Rev Timothy Tow always reminded his students in FEBC. The issue of VPP did not remain with Life-FEBC. For more than two years, Calvary BPC has been staying clear of this sensitive issue for fear of splitting the church. It was until 2 Oct 2005, an official church stand was made for a non-VPP position, though not without a strong appeal made to the Board of Elders against making such a hasty decision. As a result, five deacons and two full-time staffworkers, unwilling to submit to a non-VPP stand, resigned from their offices at the end of the year 2005. It was in such a situation, Truth BPC was born on 1 Jan 2006 at Calvary Pandan BPC premises to take a firm stand on the doctrine of VPP. “*For we can do nothing against the truth but for the truth*” (2 Cor 13:8).

III. THE IMPORTANCE OF VPP

A. Inspiration and Preservation are Twin Brothers!

1. Non-VPPists or anti-VPPists do not believe the God who perfectly inspired His Word has also perfectly preserved His Word. They affirm Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI) but deny Verbal Plenary Preservation (VPP). They believe strongly that we do not have an infallible and inerrant Bible TODAY and thereby their denial of the doctrine of VPP. By denying VPP, they might as well deny VPI, for what is the use of an infallible and inerrant Bible in the past but not today?

2. Dr Ian Paisley was absolutely correct to say, “The verbal Inspiration of the Scriptures demands the verbal Preservation of the Scriptures. Those who would deny the need for verbal Preservation cannot be accepted as committed to verbal Inspiration. If there is no preserved Word of God today then the work of Divine Revelation and Divine Inspiration has perished” (*My Plea for the Old Sword*, 103).

3. Dr Timothy Tow, founding pastor of the Bible-Presbyterian Church in Singapore and principal of the Far Eastern Bible College, likewise wrote, “We believe the preservation of Holy Scripture and its Divine inspiration stand in the same position as providence and creation. If Deism teaches a Creator who goes to sleep after creating the world is absurd, to hold to the doctrine of inspiration without preservation is equally illogical. ... Without preservation, all the inspiration, God-breathing into the Scriptures, would be lost. But we have a Bible so pure and powerful in every word and it is so because God has preserved it down through the ages” (*A Theology for Every Christian: Knowing God and His Word*, 47).

4. Dr Hills wrote, “If the doctrine of *divine inspiration* of the Old and New Testament Scriptures is a true doctrine, the doctrine of the *providential preservation* of these Scriptures must also be a true doctrine. It must be that down through the centuries God has exercised a special, providential control over the copying of the Scriptures and the preservation and use of the original text have been available to God’s people in every age. God must have done this, for if He gave the Scriptures to His Church by inspiration as the perfect and final revelation of His will, then it is obvious that He would not allow this revelation to disappear or undergo any alteration of its fundamental character” (*The King James Version Defended*, 2).

B. The Doctrine of Bible Preservation is not a New Teaching!

1. The doctrine of the 100% inspiration and 100% preservation of God’s Holy Word existed even before the Westminster Confession as much as the doctrine of the 100% deity and 100% humanity of Christ existed before the Athanasian Creed. The doctrine of 100% inspiration and 100% preservation of God’s words in the Holy Scriptures is not a new doctrine but a very old one. It certainly did not begin with D A Waite, nor E F Hills, nor J W Burgon, but with the Holy Scripture itself.

2. The doctrine of preservation is as old as the Bible. Why is the Bible our Supreme, Final, and All-sufficient Authority in faith and life? It is precisely because it is God’s Perfect Word, infallible and inerrant, even today!

C. The Doctrine of VPP is Biblical!

1. The *Westminster Confession of Faith* (WCF) states very clearly that the inspired Scriptures in the original languages are by God’s “singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages” (WCF 1:8). The Westminster divines used Matthew 5:18 as a proof text for this affirmation of the verbal plenary preservation (VPP) of the Scriptures. This proves that the doctrine of the VPP of Scripture is not just creedal, but more importantly *Biblical*.

2. The VPP of Scripture is a position of faith that is based solely on the Word of God. “*Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen*” (Heb 11:1). “*So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God*” (Rom 10:17). “*But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently*

seek him" (Heb 11:6). It is a position that we must take if we are to weather and survive the onslaughts of postmodernism, pop-modernism, open-theism and neo-deism that seek to destroy the church today.

D. What Kind of Bible Preservation?

1. Many including non-VPpists say they believe in providential preservation. This is what they say, but what do they really mean? Non-VPpist will tell you he believes in preservation, however he does not mean entire preservation but essential preservation; it is conceptual preservation, not verbal preservation. In other words, he believes that only the vital doctrines are preserved and not the inspired words.

2. Does the Bible teach partial and conceptual preservation or plenary and verbal preservation? The Bible and the Protestant Church creeds affirm the latter. The Reformed Confessions in both Presbyterian and Baptist circles affirm not just the 100% inspiration of the Autographs, but also the 100% preservation of the Autographs in the faithful Apographs that have come down to us today.

3. The Westminster Confession of Faith (1.8) for instance states, "*The Old Testament in Hebrew (which was the native language of the people of God of old), and the New Testament in Greek (which, at the time of the writing of it, was most generally known to the nations), being immediately inspired by God, and, by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages, are therefore authentic; so as, in all controversies of religion, the Church is finally to appeal unto them.*" Note that the Westminster Confession did not use the term "Autographs" but spoke of the Scriptures in terms of the original languages (Hebrew OT and Greek NT). The Westminster Confession clearly affirms the 100% inspiration ("immediately inspired by God") and 100% preservation ("by His singular care and providence, kept pure in all ages") of the Holy Scriptures in the original languages.

E. What and Where are the Preserved Texts Today?

1. They are the inspired OT Hebrew words and NT Greek words the prophets, the apostles, the church fathers, the reformers used which are today found in the long and continuously abiding and preserved words underlying the Reformation Bibles best represented by the time-tested and time-honoured KJB, and **NOT** in the corrupted Alexandrian

manuscripts and critical Westcott-Hort texts underlying the liberal, ecumenical, and neo-evangelical modern English versions.

2. To be more precise, the infallible and inerrant words of Scripture are found in the faithfully preserved Traditional/Byzantine/Majority manuscripts, and fully represented in the Printed and Received Text (or Textus Receptus) that underlie the Reformation Bibles best represented by the KJB, and **NOT** in the corrupted and rejected texts of Westcott and Hort that underlie the many modern versions of the English Bible like the NIV, NASV, ESV, RSV, TEV, CEV, etc.

F. Are there Scribal/Copyist Mistakes?

1. We do not deny that copying mistakes were made during the transcription process, but that does not negate the fact that God has superintended the transcription of His inspired words to ensure that none of His inspired words would be lost. If 10 scribes were copying the Scriptures, one or two might possibly make a mistake in copying a particular verse, but the rest would have copied it correctly, and the mistake made is easily identified and rectified by the rest. The special providential hand of God has ensured this.

2. God's providential work is always supernatural. God knows all things and is all-powerful. Man makes mistakes, but not God. He who has inspired every jot and tittle of His Word has surely preserved every jot and tittle of His Word (Matt 5:18).

3. There are no mistakes in the Bible. If there are any "discrepancies" in the Bible, the "discrepancies" are only seeming or apparent, **NOT** real or actual. Any inability to understand or explain such difficult passages in no way negates the infallibility and inerrancy of the Scriptures, applying the faithful Pauline principle of biblical interpretation: "*let God be true, but every man a liar*" (Rom 3:4)

G. Is KJB Inspired?

1. Anti-VPPists are prone to put words into the mouths of VPP proponents by saying that they believe the KJB to be as inspired and as infallible and inerrant as the original language Scriptures. We make no such claim. We believe that "the King James Version (or Authorized Version) of the English Bible is a *true, faithful, and accurate* translation of these two provisionally preserved Texts [Traditional Masoretic Hebrew Text and Traditional Greek Text underlying the KJB], which in

our time has no equal among all of the other English Translations. The translators did such a fine job in their translation task that we can without apology hold up the Authorized Version and say 'This is the Word of God!' while at the same time realising that, in some verses, we *must go back to the underlying original language Texts* for complete clarity, and also compare Scripture with Scripture" (*The Dean Burgon Society, "Articles of Faith," section II.A*).

2. No translation can claim to be 100% equivalent to the original language Scriptures, but if it is a true, faithful, accurate translation based on the preserved text, it is the Word of God. The Textus Receptus is like the platinum yardstick of the Smithsonian Institute, accurate to the last decimal point. The KJB on the other hand is like the wooden yardstick used in the homes and shops. Would anyone deny that the common yardstick though not the perfect yardstick of the Smithsonian Institute is any less a yardstick and fit to measure?' (Dr Jeffrey Khoo, *The Emergence of Neo-Fundamentalism: One Bible Only? Or Yea Hath God Said?*, January Issue of Burning Bush Volume 10 Number 1).

3. Many English versions have been published, but none has yet overthrown the KJB. The KJB remains the best, most faithful, reliable, accurate, trustworthy, beautiful English Bible we have today. Can the venerable KJB ever be replaced? Should we ever think of revising it? Here is Dean Burgon's reply: "Whatever may be urged in favour of Biblical Revision, it is at least undeniable that the undertaking involves a tremendous risk. Our Authorized Version is the one religious link which at present binds together ... millions of English-speaking men scattered over the earth's surface. Is it reasonable that so unutterably precious, so sacred a bond should be endangered, for the sake of representing certain words more accurately,—here and there translating a tense with greater precision,—getting rid of a few archaisms? It may be confidently assumed that no 'Revision' of our Authorized Version, however judiciously executed, will ever occupy the place in public esteem which is actually enjoyed by the work of the Translators of 1611,—the noblest literary work in the Anglo-Saxon language. We shall in fact never have *another* 'Authorized Version'" (*Revision Revised*, 113).

IV. SUMMARY

Our earnest contention for the inerrancy and infallibility of an extant Bible in the original languages is not an act of schism but of love for both God and man. We are intent on teaching “*all the counsel of God*” (Acts 20:27); we can do no less. The doctrine of VPP promotes God and glorifies Him, for it testifies of His character as One who is the same yesterday, today and forever. He means what He says, and says what He means. “*Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My WORDS shall not pass away*” (Matt 24:35). Is this divine statement not clear enough?

Dr Jeffrey Khoo in his critique (published in FEBC Burning Bush Volume 10 Number 1) of the book *One Bible Only?* wrote ‘Hindus and Muslims all believe that their scriptures, the Bhagavad Gita and the Koran respectively, are perfect. Yet Christians who claim to believe in the one living and true God, the Creator of heaven and earth, and Christ the only Mediator and Saviour of the world, are not so quick to believe they have an existing infallible and inerrant Scripture. What a shame!’ If we adopt a non-VPP position, then Christianity is no longer true, and Christians shall become the laughing stock of the religious world. Indeed, if the Christian Bible is not perfect, infallible and inerrant today and it is a thing of the past, “*then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; ... If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable*” (1 Cor 15:14-15, 19).

Basically, those who hold to the VPP of Scripture believe and embrace the following tenets:

1. God has supernaturally preserved each and every one of His inspired Hebrew/Aramaic OT words and Greek NT words to the last jot and tittle, so that in every age, God’s people will always have in their possession His infallible and inerrant Word kept intact without the loss of any word (Ps 12:6-7, Matt 5:18, 24:35, Mark 13:31, Luke 21:33, John 10:35, 1 Pet 1:23-25).

2. The “providential” preservation of Scriptures is understood as God’s special and not general providence. *Special* providence or *providentia extraordinaria* speaks of God’s miraculous intervention in the events of history and in the affairs of mankind in fulfilment of His sovereign will for the sake of His elect and to the glory of His Name. The divine

preservation of the Canon (books) and Text (words) of Scripture comes under God's *special* providence.

3. The Bible is not only infallible and inerrant in the past (in the Autographs), but also infallible and inerrant today (in the Apographs).

4. The infallible and inerrant words of Scripture are found in the faithfully preserved Traditional/Byzantine/Majority manuscripts, and fully represented in the Printed and Received Text (or Textus Receptus) that underlie the Reformation Bibles best represented by the KJB, and **NOT** in the corrupted and rejected texts of Westcott and Hort that underlie the many modern versions of the English Bible like the NIV, NASV, ESV, RSV, TEV, CEV, etc.

5. There are no mistakes in the Bible, period. There are no mistakes or errors (scribal or otherwise) in such OT passages as Judges 18:30, 1 Samuel 13:1, 1 Kings 4:26, 1 Chronicles 18:3, 2 Chronicles 22:2 etc. If there are "discrepancies" in the Bible, the "discrepancies" are only seeming or apparent, **NOT** real or actual. Any inability to understand or explain such difficult passages in no way negates the infallibility and inerrancy of the Scriptures, applying the faithful Pauline principle of biblical interpretation: "*let God be true, but every man a liar*" (Rom 3:4).

6. Knowing where the perfect Bible is is a matter of textual recognition and **NOT** textual criticism. In the field of textual recognition, Burgon is good, Hills is better, Waite is best.

7. The Chinese Union Version (CUV) is the "Word of God" for the Chinese people today since it is the best, most faithful, most reliable, and most accurate version among the Chinese versions presently available. Great care ought to be taken not to undermine our Chinese brethren's confidence in the CUV. Nevertheless, versions or translations are never superior to the inspired and preserved Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek Scriptures; thus there is a need to consult these original language Scriptures for clarity and fulness of meaning, and to compare Scripture with Scripture.

SAMPLE PAGES

LESSON 2

INSPIRATION AND VPP

I. DEFINITION OF INSPIRATION

A. Meaning of Inspiration

1. The Bible is God-breathed. “*All scripture is given by inspiration of God...*” (2 Tim 3:16). The word *inspiration* is translated from a compound Greek word (theo-pnuestos) which means ‘God-breathed.’ Thus this verse says that ‘all Scripture is God-breathed.’ God directly breathed out His words over a period of about 1,500 years to approximately 40 specially chosen men of God who wrote them down to give us our Scriptures, the Word of God in three languages (Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek).

2. With so many human writers, one is more inclined to think there would be a total diversity or contrary opinions within the writings. However, there is an undisputable consistency of theme, a thread of continuity and unity from Genesis to Revelation. It is as though there were collusion among these writers, spanning nearly 1,500 years to produce something flawless and inspiring. The conclusion must be that there was a single mind and therefore the author behind the writings in which formed the Book is the Almighty God. The Bible is clear in revealing that God is the Author of the Bible (see Ps 68:11; Heb 1:1; 1 Cor 2:13; Gal 1:11-12; etc).

3. The inspiration of the Bible was a direct and unique act of the Holy Spirit and cannot be duplicated by man. The process of inspiration is a mystery of the providence of God, but the result of the process is a Book preserved and authorized made available to us today.

B. Meaning of Verbal Inspiration

1. This [Bible] is the writing of the living God: each letter was penned with an Almighty finger; each word in it dropped from the everlasting lips; each sentence was dictated by the Holy Spirit.’ – C. H. Spurgeon

2. The word *verbal* means 'by means of words,' or 'word for word.' As used of inspiration, it means the very words of the Bible were breathed out by God. In other words, God gave the **exact words** of Scripture (see 2 Sam 23:2; Acts 1:16; 1 Cor 2:13).

3. The testimony of Jesus in Matt 5:18 says, "*For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.*" A "jot" is the smallest letter of the Hebrew Alphabet (yod י). A "tittle" is a small appendage that differentiates between two similar-looking letters in the alphabet (beth ב as compared to kaph כ).

C. Meaning of Verbal Plenary Inspiration

1. Every word of the Bible is God-breathed. "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matt 4:4).

2. The word plenary means 'full.' Of inspiration, it means that the 'full' Bible is inspired, or that every word is breathed out by God (see Prov 30:5).

'That this inspiration should extend to the very words seems most natural since the purpose of inspiration is to secure an infallible record of truth. Thoughts and words are so inseparably connected that as a rule a change in words means a change in thought.' – Loraine Boettner

II. THE MIRACULOUS WORK OF DIVINE INSPIRATION

A. Holy Men Set Apart and Prepared by God to Write the Scripture

1. *For 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*" (2 Pet 1:21). God would not trust His holy Word to unregenerate men, for how can they touch the Holy Thing of God without a clean hand and a pure heart? Although the 40 men were not perfect, they had a deep reverence for God and were considered spiritual leaders of their day (see the complete list of the writers of Scripture in the Appendix 1).

2. God prepared these 40 men, using and transcending their personalities, for the writing of His Word. Some of them were leaders, musicians, teachers, and from all walks of life. Since God is the

Creator of language and the Master of all styles, He could give His Word in the styles of David, Jeremiah, Peter, Paul and the rest of them, all exhibit unique styles, when inspired by the Holy Spirit to pen down His Word.

3. And when they wrote, since it is the Holy Spirit who guided them, wrote exactly what men are: sinners in need of salvation. Sins were exposed, revealed, shamed and punished. The Bible did not ignore Moses' anger, David's sin of adultery, or Peter's denial of his Lord three times. Sinful men left to themselves could never have written a book so revealing of human nature.

B. Non-eyewitnesses to Write the Scripture

1. In Genesis 1 God described the Creation of the world. He gave that information to mankind through Moses. But neither Moses nor any other human being was an eyewitness to Creation. God breathed into Moses the description of something Moses knew nothing about.

2. Daniel admitted that he did not understand what he was writing (see Dan 12:8-9). Certainly God does not require the writers to see or understand in order to pen down His Word since it is His Word which is to be written and not theirs.

C. Eyewitnesses to Write the Scripture

However God did inspire some of these men to write those things which they had been eyewitnesses. *"That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life; ... That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us"* (1 John 1:1-3).

III. THE FALSE VIEWS OF INSPIRATION

A. Natural Inspiration

This false idea teaches that man can reach high levels of creativity like Shakespeare, Bach or Beethoven and equate with 'inspiration' to write the Bible. This modernistic idea teaches inspiration without God but exalted man to develop inspiration naturally on his own. This type of 'inspiration' is certainly fallible since it derived from sinful man.

B. Partial Inspiration

1. This false teaching claims that the Bible merely 'contains' the Word of God. It claims that some of the Bible is inspired, and not all; the Bible may be accurate in morals and doctrine, but unreliable in areas of science, geography and history.

2. This view ultimately makes man the final authority in determining which passages are inspired and which are not. Anytime a fallible human being becomes the judge and final authority, the Bible in his hand becomes no more his supreme and the only authority. If the Bible is truly God's Word as it claims, then it must be perfect by definition (since the product of a perfect God can be nothing less than perfect).

3. If the Bible is accurate in areas of major importance, why should it not be accurate also in areas of minor importance? We realize that all of the Bible is important, but those who believe in this teaching say that we can only trust it on the issues of eternal life, salvation, etc. Don't fall into the trap of the evil one! If we can trust the Bible for our eternal destiny, we can also trust it to be accurate in every area of life and thought.

C. Conceptual Inspiration

1. This unscriptural idea says that God only inspired the thoughts of the Bible and man wrote those thoughts down in his own words. It rejects verbal plenary inspiration, saying it is unbelievable to imagine God dictating every Word. But whose words is greater, God's or man's; the Creator's or the creature's? God said it, I believe it, that settles it!

2. Thoughts were not written down, but words. It is impossible to have wordless thoughts. If the words were not from God, how could we be sure the thoughts were from God? Very slight changes in words or grammar cause dramatic changes in the thought of a sentence.

3. Some of the writers themselves did not understand what they were writing (see Dan 7:15-16; 12:8-9). How could the human writers put God's thoughts into their own words if they did not understand what they were writing? The only solution to this is that God had to dictate to them every word and they simply wrote them down accordingly.

IV. PROOFS OF INSPIRATION

A. The Bible Itself

1. Some would argue that it is circular reasoning to use the Bible's claim as a proof of its inspiration. They say that any book could make such a claim. But the fact is that very few other books have claimed to be written by God Himself. And those which have made such a claim either did not stand the test of time or are of obviously inferior quality (contains historical inaccuracies and inconsistencies).
2. There are many powerful statements of inspiration in the Scriptures (see 2 Tim 3:16; 2 Pet 1:21; 2 Sam 23:2; Ezra 1:1; etc). The phrase "*Thus saith the Lord*" and similar phrases are found over 3,800 times in the Old Testament.
3. Christ placed His stamp of approval on the Scriptures (see Matt 4:4).

B. Indestructibility

1. The Roman emperor Diocletian (AD 245 – 313) decreed in AD 303 that every Bible should be destroyed. He had been told that if he could destroy the Bible he would destroy Christianity because 'Christians are a people of the Book.' Feeling he had succeeded, Diocletian raised a column with the inscription in Latin saying, 'the name of Christ is extinguished.' In AD 312, Constantine succeeded him and replaced all the pagan symbols with the symbol of the cross. This remarkable change took place in less than ten years.
2. Fourteen hundred years after Constantine, the French atheist Voltaire (1694 – 1778) boasted, 'One hundred years from my day there will not be a Bible in the earth except one that is looked upon by an antiquarian (one who study into relics of the past) curiosity seeker.' Just twenty years after the death of Voltaire, the Geneva Bible Society purchased his house for printing the Bible. It later became the Paris headquarters for the British and Foreign Bible Society, which stored and distributed Bibles throughout Europe. "*The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever*" (Isa 40:8).
3. The indestructibility of the Bible was promised (see Isa 55:11; 59:21; Matt 5:18; 24:35; Luke 16:17; etc).

4. The indestructibility of the Bible was fulfilled in the copying of the manuscripts. Almost as soon as the original manuscripts (Autographs) were written, copies began to be made. Just as a well-loved and used copy of the Bible soon begins to deteriorate, so the original manuscripts did not last long because of constant handling. But God preserved His Word by the hands of dedicated copyists. These men had such a high regard for Scripture that they went to great lengths to ensure the accuracy of their copies. Minute regulations were laid down in the Talmud for their preparation. 'A synagogue roll must be written on the skins of clean animals, prepared for the particular use of the synagogue by a Jew. These must be fastened together with strings taken from clean animals. Every skin must contain a certain number of columns, equal throughout the entire codex (manuscript). The length of each column must not extend over less than forty-eight, or more than sixty lines; and the breadth must consist of thirty letters. The whole copy must be first lined; and if three words be written in it without a line, it is worthless. The ink should be black, neither red, green, nor any colour, and be prepared according to a definite receipt (receipe). An authentic copy must be the exemplar, from which the transcriber ought not in the least to deviate. No word or letter, not even a yod, must be written from memory, the scribe not having looked at the codex before him... Between every consonant the space of a hair or thread must intervene; between every word the breadth of a narrow consonant; between every new parshiah, or section, the breadth of nine consonants; between every book, three lines. The fifth book of Moses must terminate exactly with a line; but the rest need not do so. Besides this, the copyist must sit in Jewish dress, wash his whole body, not begin to write the name of God with a pen newly dipped in ink, and should a king address him while writing that name he must take no notice of him... The rolls in which these regulations are not observed are condemned to be buried in the ground or burn; or they are banished to the schools, to be used as reading-books.

Besides recording varieties of reading, traditions, or conjecture, the Masoretes (Old Testament copyists) undertook a number of calculations which do not enter into the ordinary sphere of texture criticism. They numbered the verses, words, and letters of every book. They calculated the middle word and the middle letter of each. They enumerated verses which contained all the letters of the alphabet, or a certain number of them; and so on. These trivialities, as we may rightly consider them, had yet the effect of securing minute attention to the precise transmission of the text; and they are but an excessive manifestation of a respect for the sacred Scriptures which itself

deserves nothing but praise. The Masoretes were indeed anxious that not one jot nor tittle – not one smallest letter nor one tiny part of a letter – of the Law should pass away or be lost – Sir Frederick Kenyon, *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1940), pp 38-43.

C. Inerrancy

1. Inerrancy means the Bible is without error throughout, whether it is speaking historically, scientifically or morally. An inerrant Book indicates a perfect Author. Inaccurate writings or speeches would reveal a less-than-perfect author. Deut 18:21-22, *“How shall we know the word which the LORD hath not spoken? When a prophet speaketh in the name of the LORD, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the LORD hath not spoken.”*

2. Christ authenticated the passages which have most often been challenged as to their accuracy.

Matt. 12:40	Jonah and the whale
Matt. 12:41	Repentance of Nineveh
Luke 17:26-27	The Flood
Luke 17:28-29	Destruction of Sodom
Luke 17:32	Lot's wife turn into a pillar of salt
Luke 4:27	Miraculous healing of Naaman's leprosy
John 3:14	The brazen serpent

3. Those who most often question the accuracy of the Bible are those who do not give it serious study. 'The Bible got mistakes' is an expression usually repeated by an individual ignorant of Biblical truth and has an extremely low view on the Bible.

D. Fulfilled Prophecy

1. Here is a partial listing of Old Testament prophecies that have already been fulfilled in the New Testament.

PROPHECY OF THE PROMISED MESSIAH	OT REFERENCE	NT FULFILLMENT
His Virgin birth	Isa 7:14	Matt 1:20; Lk 1:30-35
Birthplace in Bethlehem	Mic 5:2	Lk 2:4-7

His forerunner, John the Baptist	Isa 40:3	Jn 1:6-8, 19-23
His Triumphal Entry	Zech 9:9-10	Jn 12:12-19
His side pierced at Calvary	Zech 12:10	Jn 19:34
His cry, "My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?"	Ps 22:1	Matt 27:46
Darkness at His crucifixion	Ps 22:2	Matt 27:45
Mocking at His crucifixion	Ps 22:6-8	Matt 27:39-43
His Hands and feet pierced	Ps 22:16	Jn 20:24-29
Casting lots for His vesture	Ps 22:18	Matt 27:35
His unbroken bones	Ps 34:20	Jn 19:36
Given vinegar to drink	Ps 69:21	Matt 27:34, 48
Buried in a rich man's grave near the wicked	Isa 53:9	Matt 27:57-60
Christ's Resurrection	Ps 16:10; Hos 6:2	Lk 24:1-7
Christ's Ascension	Ps 110:1; Ps 24:3-10	Acts 1:8-11

2. There are many Old Testament prophecies concerning Christ's first coming.

3. Many New Testament prophecies are fulfilled by historical events. The followings are two examples:

a. The destruction of Jerusalem in AD 70. Jesus prophesied in Matt 24:2, "... *there shall not be left here one stone upon another...*" The Roman armies under Titus besieged Jerusalem for 143 days. Josephus records that Titus finally ordered the entire city to be burned to the ground. The city wall 'was so completely leveled with the ground that there was no longer anything to lead those who visited the spot to believe that it had ever been inhabited.'

b. The unnatural death of Simon Peter prophesied by Jesus Christ. Jesus says in John 21:18-19, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee,... when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God." Jerome states that Simon Peter (at his request) was crucified upside down. Peter felt he was unworthy to be crucified in the same manner as his Master.

E. Scientific Accuracy

Although the Bible was not written as a science book, yet when the Bible speaks concerning matters of science, it is scientifically accurate. The followings are some examples:

1. God created the universe ex nihilo (out of nothing) – Heb 11:3
2. Moisture in the atmosphere goes through a cycle of evaporation and condensation – Ps 135:7
3. The earth is spherical in shape – Isa 40:22
4. The earth rotates upon its axis – Job 38:13-14
5. The earth is suspended in space – Job 26:7
6. The stars cannot be numbered – Jer 33:22
7. The stars travel in certain paths – Jud 5:20
8. The stars differ in magnitude – 1 Cor 15:41
9. The blood sustains life – Lev 17:11
10. The chemical composition of man and earth is identical – Ps 103:14

F. Historical Accuracy

1. Archaeology has confirmed the existence of peoples who were once questioned by Bible skeptics (eg. The Hittites).
2. Archaeology has confirmed the accuracy of the names, times and places of reign of over forty different kings by means of documents contemporary with the Bible (Belshazzar as king of Babylon).
3. Archaeology has confirmed that writing was highly developed when Moses wrote Pentateuch (the uncovering of Sinai script revealed invention of alphabet well before 1500 BC).

V. INSPIRATION & PRESERVATION

A. Inspiration and Preservation are Twin Doctrines of the Bible!

1. Non-VPPists or anti-VPPists do not believe the God who perfectly inspired His Word has also perfectly preserved His Word. They affirm Verbal Plenary Inspiration (VPI) but deny Verbal Plenary Preservation (VPP). They believe strongly that we do not have an infallible and inerrant Bible TODAY and thereby their denial of the doctrine of VPP. By denying VPP, they might as well deny VPI, for what is the use of an infallible and inerrant Bible in the past but not today?

2. Dr Ian Paisley was absolutely correct to say, “The verbal Inspiration of the Scriptures demands the verbal Preservation of the Scriptures. Those who would deny the need for verbal Preservation cannot be accepted as committed to verbal Inspiration. If there is no preserved Word of God today then the work of Divine Revelation and Divine Inspiration has perished” (*My Plea for the Old Sword*, 103).

3. Dr Timothy Tow, founding pastor of the Bible-Presbyterian Church in Singapore and principal of the Far Eastern Bible College, likewise wrote, “We believe the preservation of Holy Scripture and its Divine inspiration stand in the same position as providence and creation. If Deism teaches a Creator who goes to sleep after creating the world is absurd, to hold to the doctrine of inspiration without preservation is equally illogical. ... Without preservation, all the inspiration, God-breathing into the Scriptures, would be lost. But we have a Bible so pure and powerful in every word and it is so because God has preserved it down through the ages” (*A Theology for Every Christian: Knowing God and His Word*, 47).

4. Dr Hills wrote, “If the doctrine of *divine inspiration* of the Old and New Testament Scriptures is a true doctrine, the doctrine of the *providential preservation* of these Scriptures must also be a true doctrine. It must be that down through the centuries God has exercised a special, providential control over the copying of the Scriptures and the preservation and use of the original text have been available to God’s people in every age. God must have done this, for if He gave the Scriptures to His Church by inspiration as the perfect and final revelation of His will, then it is obvious that He would not allow this revelation to disappear or undergo any alteration of its fundamental character” (*The King James Version Defended*, 2).

B. Without Preservation, Inspiration is Meaningless!

1. If we reject the perfect preservation of the Bible today, then we concede that we do not have the inspired Word of God intact, as the words of the originals are not kept pure which the Westminster Divines believed otherwise in their Confession.

2. For centuries, the Church has been upholding and still standing firm on the doctrine of Verbal Plenary Inspiration because without it the Church will surely fall. Inspiration of God’s Word can only stand as long as Preservation of the same Word continues to be found in our hand today. Otherwise, what’s the point of believing inspiration of the

Scripture? We believe it exactly because God has preserved for us providentially all of His inspired Word today.

(Appendix 2 is the crossword puzzle. Fill in all the answers in the boxes and discover for yourself the twin doctrine of the Holy Scriptures)

VI. SUMMARY

Although the Preservation of God's Word was not taught till this century, it does not mean it is a new teaching. It is as old as the Bible. God's Word declared it, Jesus Himself affirmed it, let us believed it. To deem preservation of God's Word as a new teaching and insist it is a new path is an indirect attack on God and His character. Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb 13:8). Is not His Word the same yesterday, today, and forever? Will you tell me God has changed His mind and therefore His Word is not the same today as yesterday?

Let us remember that Satan is still the master of all deception and falsehood. He continues to undermine God's Word since in the Garden of Eden against Adam and Eve. Today his cunning method used is remarkably a 'fool-proof' plan that has turned conservative fundamentalists unknowingly to his side and attack God's providential preservation of His inspired Word. But God's Word stands unwavering, "*for we can do nothing against the truth but for the truth*" (2 Cor 13:8). Amen.

"False doctrine does not meet men face to face, and proclaim that it is false. It does not blow a trumpet before it, and endeavour openly to turn us away from the truth as it is in Jesus. It does not come before men in broad daylight and summon them to surrender. It approaches us secretly, quietly, insidiously, plausibly, and in such a way as to disarm man's suspicion, and throw him off his guard. It is the wolf in sheep's clothing, and Satan in the garb of an angel of light, who have always proved the most dangerous foes of the Church" (J C Ryle, *Warnings to the Churches*, 56).