

empirical experience. Sense experience may deceive, the prophetic word will not; sense experience is of a private nature, the prophetic word is open, publicly available to Peter's readers; sense experience is in this case unique and unable to be repeated, the prophetic word records for all time this wonderful self-revelation of deity. To this prophetic word, Peter exhorts, they should pay close attention.

We have briefly noted what Scripture itself asserts are the elements included in the act of inspiration, as well as the effects resulting from the act of inspiration. These data would appear strongly to argue for the organic view of inspiration defined earlier. But now we must ask a further question.

What is the Relevance of Inspiration to the Apographs?

This question prompts us to return to the implications of a statement made near the outset of our discussion. We said that inspiration, as a supernatural act of the Holy Spirit, refers to the sacred writings as originally penned, and says nothing about subsequent copies, versions or translations. But now we must ask, "Is this statement strictly true, in all senses?" That is, if we grant that inspiration is a unique act, referring only to the autographs, does this act have any implications for copies, versions and translations, i.e., implications for the apographs of Scripture which we presently possess?

The usual answer given by evangelical writers to this question (and it has been given times without number) is that, as a result of inspiration we can be sure that what we have is the Word of God, that it is true, and that it is authoritative. Some would add, "and that it is infallible." The reason only some would add this clause is that the word "infallible" has been undergoing a development in meaning. To some Christians "infallible" means "without error." To others it has come to mean that "God's purposes in giving us Scripture will not fail to be secured." Those who take this latter meaning would view the apographs as infallible. They would employ a different term to mean "without error," namely the word "inerrant." All evangelicals would agree that the apographs are not inerrant. And all would agree that the apographs are infallible in the latter sense of the term.

But now we must ask, "How can apographs of Scripture be considered the