

II Peter 1:20 states: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture comes into being by one's own interpretation."

Preservation from the inclusion of error stemming from the author's limited knowledge, mind-set, cultural context, or world-view is guaranteed, not by authorial intent, but by the purpose and guidance of God.

d. The extent of Inspiration

The question here has to do with the extent of God's guidance and preservation in the inscripturation of revelation.

With respect to the writers themselves, how far did God's guidance extend?

- (1) To religious impressions only, the formation of concepts, selection of contents, and choice of words being left to the writer?
- (2) To the initial impulse to write only, i.e., to record an experience of revelation, the selection of contents and choice of words being left to the human author?
- (3) To the selection of general subject matter, of topics only, the specific subject matter and choice of words being left to the writers?
- (4) To thoughts and concepts only, the selection of words being left to the human writer?
- (5) To the very words that the writer chose to express his thoughts?

Any answer that falls short of "the very words that the writer chose to express his thoughts" puts us into a relative stance in which we need an absolute principle of some sort to enable us to distinguish between what is and what is not inspired in Scripture.

With respect to the writings themselves, how far did God's guidance extend?

- (1) To mysteries only (truths unattainable by reason)?
- (2) To the message of salvation only?
- (3) To the words of Christ only?
- (4) To certain types of material only (e. g., to the didactic portions