

New Testament word study: *Theopneustos*: “God-breathed” (Part 1)

[“EVERY SCRIPTURE: God-breathed” – as *Rotherham’s Emphasized Bible* and e.g. both *Young’s* and *Green’s Literal Translations* translate - is *theopneustos*, and it occurs only once in all the New Testament, in 2 Timothy 3:16.

This is a unique word *not* found in the Greek language, but *created* by the Divine Author, combining *Theos*: “God”, with *pneustos* (from *pneo*: “to breathe” – same as in *pneuma*: “spirit”).

KJV has: “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” which carries essentially the same meaning, except using the English word “inspiration” deriving from the Latin *inspirare*: “to breathe upon”, from *spirare* (“to breathe”) – whence we have the English word “spirit”.

“But continue **thou** in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing **of whom thou** hast learned them;
And that from a child thou hast known **the holy scriptures**, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation **through faith which is in Christ Jesus**.”

All scripture is given by inspiration of God [*theopneustos*] and is profitable

- for doctrine,
- for reproof,
- for correction,
- for instruction in righteousness:

THAT [*hina*: “in order that”: implying purpose] the man of God may be **perfect**, thoroughly furnished **unto all good works**”.

(2 Timothy 3:14-17, KJV, *Rotherham emphasis*).

Let us note several things:

1. Timothy had learned, and had - since childhood - known, *the Scriptures*, ever the very first requirement for getting to know the Lord.

2. The Scriptures *are able* to make us “wise unto salvation”, BUT ONLY

“through faith which is in Christ Jesus”

[“...in CHRIST Jesus, namely (with the *first* of the two names providing the emphasis) HE Who is NOW the Exalted One, Who once humbled Himself.

Conversely: “Jesus Christ”, during His presence on earth, means “Jesus Messiah” (“Messiah” being Jehovah’s Anointed; “Christ” is “Christos”, the Anointed, in Greek, from *chriō*: “to anoint”).

After our Lord’s death and resurrection, reference to Jesus Christ emphasizes HE WHO once humbled Himself, but is now exalted].

3. The Scriptures, being “God-breathed”, are profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness, for the purpose THAT

“the man of God may be perfect [*artios*] thoroughly furnished [*exartizō*] unto all good works”.

The words “perfect” and “thoroughly furnished” both contain *artios*, which means “fitted, complete, perfect” (*Strong/Thayer*)., and thus (according to *Thayer*) “having reference apparently to "special aptitude for given uses".

[Richard Trench (in his “Synonyms” says (excerpted): “*artios* occurs only once in the NT.

...If we ask ourselves under what special aspects completeness is contemplated in *artios*, it would be safe to answer that it is not as the presence only of all the parts which are necessary for that completeness, but involves further the adaptation and aptitude of these parts for the ends which they were designed to serve.

The man of God, St. Paul would say (2 Tim. 3:17), should be furnished and accomplished with all which is necessary for the carrying out of the work to which he is appointed].

The word exartizō (*ek*: "out" used intensively, *artos*: "a joint" or from *artios*: “perfect”, literally: "exactly right"), means, according to *Vine*:

"to fit out, to prepare perfectly, to complete for a special purpose"; of being "completely furnished," by means of the Scriptures..." (*our excerpt and emphasis*).

And this being exactly right for the purpose, and completely furnished for it, is *unto* all good works.

[“Unto” is *pros* (a strengthened form of *pro*), here with accusative, meaning: “towards; (literal and mental direction: with a view to an end, marking the ultimate purpose” (*Bullinger*)]

HENCE it is clear that:

the man of God needs *nothing else* than the Scriptures, to be fully, wholly and completely equipped for the task of teaching the things of God!

Learn the Scriptures. Know the Scriptures. And the man of God is then fully enabled, BECAUSE:

“Every Scripture is GOD-breathed”.

So: what does that mean, that the Scriptures are “God-breathed”?

It means that the Scriptures originate with, and are brought about, by our Almighty God. In short: God is the Author.

As the Scriptures them-selves abundantly testify: ALL things are created by God.

The “normal” means (if we may in all reverence use this phrase, speaking of the mighty acts of our God so utterly beyond our limited understanding) whereby God creates (as e.g. Psalm 33 sets forth in such majesty) is:

“**By the word of the LORD** were the Heavens made;
and all the host of them **by the breath of His mouth**”.

AND: “For **He spake**, and it was done; **He commanded**, and it stood fast...”.

[And thus: “And God **said**: “*Let there be light*”: and there was light” (Genesis 1:3, KJV)]

However, not so regarding bringing about the written record, the Scriptures, wherein God reveals Himself to us, and speaks to us.

This God brought about by the means of men.

[Including that Holy One, even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ:

“Who **in form of God**

subsisting Not **a thing to be seized** accounted the being equal with God, But **Himself** emptied Taking **a Servant’s form**. Coming to be **in men’s likeness**; And **in fashion being found as a man** Humbled Himself, Becoming obedient as far as death Yea, **death upon a cross**” (Philippians 2:6-8; Rotherham; *emphasized*).

Hence, and as it is it is clearly set forth in Hebrews 1:

“God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers **IN [en] the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners**, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us **IN [en] Son**, Whom He appointed heir of all things, through Whom also He made the worlds [*aiōnas*: “Ages”] (Hebrews 1:1-2, ASV; *Rotherham emphasis*).

THIS phenomenon of God speaking “IN [en] the prophets” and “IN [en] Son”, was – as Scripture again so abundantly testifies - brought about by God “putting His words in their mouths”, e.g.

- “...the LORD...put a word in his mouth...” (Numbers 23:16);
- “...the word of the LORD spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah...” (1Chronicles 36:22);
- “...the word of the LORD by the mouth of Jeremiah...” (Ezra 1:1);
- “...the word of the LORD which He spake by Joshua the son of Nun” (1 Kings 16:34).

When God spoke IN Son, however, He spoke forth from the indwelling of the Father within the Son, because the Son of God was Himself God, BUT “in fashion being found AS a man”.

Hence our Lord says plainly:

“...I am in [en] the Father, and the Father in [en] Me”

AND: “...he that hath seen ME, hath seen the Father” (John 14:9,11; KJV)

However, as regards the words spoken by the Lord, the same principle applied as with the prophets of old:

“...the words that I speak unto you I speak not **of Myself**: but **the Father that dwelleth** in [en] Me, HE doeth the works” (John 14:10, KJV; *Rotherham emphasis*).

God would also bring His word by way of vision, or dream, e.g.

- “the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision...” (Gen.15:1).
- “And the word of the LORD was precious in those days; there was no open vision” (1 Samuel 3:1).
- “The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath My word, let him speak My word faithfully” (Jeremiah 23:28).

[And similarly e.g. Daniel’s numerous visions, and the apostle John being translated to the future Day of the Lord and seeing everything pertaining to that Day, as recorded in the “Revelation of *Jesus Christ*” (which is the proper title of the book)].

The words of God - whether put into the mouths of His spokesmen, or provided by God in vision or dream - were spoken by His chosen individuals and were then recorded, i.e. WRITTEN DOWN, e.g. :

- “...according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses...” (Joshua 22:9);
- “And also by the hand of the prophet Jehu the son of Hanani came the word of the LORD” (1 Kings 16:7);
- “...and what thou seest, write in a book...”(Revelation 1:11);

[Interestingly, in Luke 1:3, KJV translates: “It seemed good to me [Luke] also, having had perfect understanding of ALL things from the very first, to write unto thee ...”;

“from the very first” translates *anōthen*, which is an adverb with the primary meaning “from above, from a higher place, of things which come from heaven or God (*Thayer*); or as *Vine* has it: “*anōthen*: of things which come from heaven, or from God in Heaven, John 3:31; 19:11; James 1:17; 3:15, 17, e.g.

“Thou [Pilate] couldest have no power at all against ME, except it were given thee from above [*anōthen*]”.

Thus indicating, that Luke had received his perfect understanding of all things *from above*, namely God in Heaven.

All versions translate along the lines of “...it seemed good to me also, having traced the course of all things accurately from the first” (or “beginning” – the secondary meaning of *anōthen* (or, as Darby, Julia Smith and Green’s Literal Translation have it: “accurately acquainted from *the origin* with all things”). This is doubtless correct Greek in the context of all the words used – but it is interesting that the Divine Author has chosen a word, which implies – if we have eyes to see – also a deeper meaning].

“God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers **IN** [*en*] the prophets **by divers portions and in divers manners**, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us **IN** [*en*] Son,

Specifically, God enabled His spokesmen in diverse and particular ways. Thus our Lord Jesus Christ told his disciples:

“But take heed to yourselves: for they shall deliver you up to councils; and in the synagogues ye shall be beaten: and ye shall be brought before rulers and kings for my sake, for **a testimony** against them.

And when they lead you to judgment, and deliver you up, **be not anxious beforehand what ye shall speak:**

but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye; FOR it is not ye that speak, BUT the Holy Spirit *” (Mark 13:9, 11, KJV)

* [*to pneuma to hagion*: “the Spirit the Holy”, with double definite article, i.e. the Holy Spirit Himself].

Then, at Pentecost, the disciples were enabled by the Holy Spirit in this way:

“...suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.

And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them.

And they were all **filled with holy spirit** [*pneuma hagion*; no definite article – this is what the Holy Spirit filled them with, namely: *pneuma hagion*: i.e. holy spirit] and began to speak with other tongues, **AS the Spirit** [*to pneuma*, the Holy Spirit Himself] gave them utterance”.

At Pentecost was fulfilled the Father’s promise referred to by our Lord earlier in Acts 1:4-8:

“And, being assembled together with them, [He] commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but **wait for the promise of the Father, which**

“ye have heard of Me. For John

truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with holy spirit [*pneuma hagion*; no definite article] *not many days hence.*

Our risen Lord Jesus Christ *also* refers to this promise of the Father in Luke 24:49:

“And, behold, I send **the promise of my Father upon you**: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, **until ye be endued with power from on high**” [*dunamis ek hypsous*]

And this – indisputably and conclusively - defines for us *how* the disciples were enabled: by being baptized with holy spirit, *which is defined as POWER from ON HIGH*, namely the Holy Spirit Himself enduing them with this power, i.e. holy spirit [*pneuma hagion*].

And our Lord refers yet one more time to this, before Pentecost happened, namely in Acts 1:8:

“When they therefore were come together, they asked of Him, saying, “*Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?*”

And He said unto them, “*It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in His own power, **BUT ye shall receive power** [dunamis] after that the **holy spirit** [pneuma hagion] * **is come upon you:** and ye shall be witnesses unto Me...*”

* [tou hagiou pneumatos in the Greek contains here the definite article used grammatically, referring back to and identifying with *pneuma hagion* mentioned in verse 5].

HENCE Peter, before the rulers of Israel in Acts 4:8, speaks “**filled with pneuma hagion** [“holy spirit”; no definite article, i.e. power from ON HIGH].

[We have mentioned the above in some detail, because total confusion reigns amongst believers regarding the important distinctions in the Scriptures between the Holy Spirit Himself, and His gifts, in various forms, which He gives to His saints.

There is similar and utter confusion in the various translations, which completely haphazardly writes either “the Holy Spirit” with capital letters, or “holy spirit”, without any consistency, but – it seems – as the translators “think best”.

We are only aware of two sources which systematically identify the Holy Spirit, and holy spirit, i.e. “power from on High”, everywhere these words occur: “The Companion Bible” (in the notes), and Dr E.W Bullinger’s book “The Giver and His Gifts, or the Holy Spirit and His Work”]

We understand it, therefore, when the apostle Peter says in his 2nd letter:

“**Above all**, you must understand that **no prophecy of Scripture** came about by the prophet’s own interpretation of things. FOR prophecy never had its origin in the human will...” (2 Peter 1:20-21, NIV – Rotherham emphasis)

Almighty GOD is the originator of and the force behind, and the AUTHOR of His words.

THUS king David – a 1000 years before it happened – spoke about the Lord Jesus Christ, as the apostle Peter sets forth in his great speech in Acts 2:

“...for David saith in regard to HIM: I foresaw the Lord always before me...” (Acts 2:25)

“...concerning the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is among us unto this day” (v.29);

Therefore being a prophet (v. 30)... having foreseen, he did speak concerning the rising again of the Christ...”(v. 31) (Young’s Literal Translation)

It was king David, who spoke – in detail – about the Lord Jesus Christ in Psalms 16:8-11, 132:11 and 16:10 (as quoted by Peter) – BUT: it was not David’s words, but *God’s words*.

Similarly, and evidencing another of the extraordinary effects of God’s “power from ON HIGH” working within His prophets, let us briefly consider the prophet Jeremiah;

(“To whom the word of the LORD came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign”, Jeremiah 1:2).

In Jeremiah 1:5, God says:

“Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations”.

Then said I [Jeremiah]: *“Ah, Lord GOD! behold, I cannot speak: for I am a child”.*

But the LORD said unto me, *“Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak”.*

Now consider this: 23 YEARS *later*, God commands Jeremiah:

*“Take thee a roll of a book, and **write therein ALL the words that I have spoken unto thee against Israel, and against Judah, and against all the nations, FROM the day I spake unto thee, FROM the days of Josiah, even unto THIS day.***

Then Jeremiah called Baruch the son of Neriah: and Baruch wrote **from the mouth of Jeremiah ALL the words of the LORD, which He had spoken unto him**, upon a roll of a book”. (Jeremiah 36:2, 4, KJV).

Every single word “from the Lord” given to Jeremiah over 23 years of prophetic testimony, dictated to his scribe Baruch – just like that!

(Continued in Part 2)