

**FEATURE: When God Logs In**

VOICE: Professor, a friend corrected a problem in my computer, without touching my computer. In fact, he did it from several kilometers away!

PROF.: That's interesting. How did he do it?

VOICE: First, I installed some software that enabled him to access my computer. A minute or two later, *his mouse* started moving images across *my screen*, opening various windows to correct the problem.

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PROF.: Tell me more about how your friend corrected your computer problem, from several kilometers away.

VOICE: He told me to go to a website that provides software that enables one computer to take temporary control of another computer. This product was called "LogMeIn.com," but there are similar products named WebEx and pcAnywhere. After I downloaded the software, my friend accessed my computer from his computer.

PROF.: I assume you had to give him a password and permission to log into your computer. Without password protection, you would make your computer accessible to every Internet user in the world.

VOICE: Right, I told my friend my password and my access code. Soon my monitor was showing a box containing the words, "This computer is being remote-controlled by" and my friend's name and e-mail address.

While he was working, I had to stop using my keyboard and mouse so he could work. At first, it seemed strange to see arrows and other images moving across my screen, moved by somebody I couldn't see.

During those few minutes, I gave up control – but I benefited from the knowledge and skill of someone who understands computers better than I do.

PROF.: While you were describing that, I realized that this illustrates how God used people to write the Bible. God inspired the Apostle Peter to describe the process this way: "But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation, for *no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will...*"<sup>1</sup>

VOICE: In other words, writing the Bible wasn't a human idea. Men used ink to put the words on paper or papyrus, but God gave them the thoughts.

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1 2 Peter 1:20-21a.

PROF.: Yes. That verse concludes by saying, “but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” Another translation says “but men spoke from God as they were *carried along* by the Holy Spirit.” End quote.

God's Spirit inspired humans to write the books of the Bible.

VOICE: But parts of the Bible sound as if the writers did their own research. For example, earlier today I was reading the Gospel According to Luke. He got his facts by interviewing eyewitnesses who had seen and heard Jesus.

PROF.: That's true. (TURNS PAGES) Luke wrote, “Many have undertaken to draw up an account of the things that have been fulfilled among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the first were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. Therefore, since I myself have carefully investigated everything from the beginning, it seemed good also to me to write an orderly account for you, ...so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught.”<sup>2</sup>

VOICE: So Bible writers did careful research to make sure they reported the facts accurately. How was God involved?

PROF.: God was the real author. First, God guided these writers to find reliable eyewitnesses. Then God guided the writers in choosing the most relevant facts to put into His Word.

Scholars often say God “superintended” the writing of the Bible. He gave wisdom and discernment to Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and others – to select which information would be helpful for us to know.

VOICE: John followed Jesus as a disciple for several years. So he was an eyewitness of most or all of the things that he reported in his Gospel.

He saw Jesus do so many good things, that he concluded, “Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written.”<sup>3</sup>

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2 Luke 1:1-4.

3 John 21:25.

PROF.: A chapter before that, John explained, “Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”<sup>4</sup>

John included enough samples of Jesus’ actions, to prove his point that Jesus was really God’s son. And he provided enough of Jesus’ words, to provide the message of how we can have eternal life.

VOICE: Each writer of the various books of the Bible has an individual style. With my interest in science, I noticed that the author of the book of Acts gave anatomical details about one miracle.

He wrote, “Then Peter said, ‘I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, walk.’ Taking him by the right hand, he helped him up, and instantly *the feet and ankle bones became strong*. He jumped to his feet and began to walk.”<sup>5</sup>

PROF.: Yes, Luke had been a medical doctor. God used Luke’s medical knowledge to explain what happened in that incident.

VOICE: So God used the personal observation of Bible writers, plus their access to eyewitnesses, to make the historical books of the Bible accurate.

But the first chapters of the Bible describe events that happened *before humans existed*. How could the Bible writers report those events?

PROF.: You’re right that the early chapters of Genesis tell about the creation, which occurred before any man was alive to observe these events. So you’re right to wonder how Moses could write with confidence, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.”

VOICE: And how could he confidently list the *order* in which God created the stars, plants, animals, and man?

PROF.: Here’s where the experience with your friend logging into your computer helps us to understand God’s working.

Apparently *God gave Moses the information* about what he had done before the creation of humans.

VOICE: So God “carried Moses along,” by telling him what He had done before human eyewitnesses existed.

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4 John 20:30-31.

5 Acts 3:6-8a.

PROF.: Yes, and He also spoke directly to Bible writers, when he predicted events that would occur *after their lifetimes*. For example, he inspired men to predict many details of Jesus' birth, life and death – hundreds of years in advance!

VOICE: But if God supervised every word that he wanted to go into the Bible, why do some writers seem to contradict others? For example, two Gospels report that Jesus took small amounts of bread and fish and multiplied them to feed large crowds of people.

But one says that Jesus fed *four* thousand men, plus additional thousands of women and children. Another reports it was *five* thousand.

If God supervised the gospel writers, why did they write different statistics?

PROF.: Because they were reporting different incidents. Jesus said he did *both of them*.

VOICE: Really? Show me.

PROF.: (TURNS PAGES) Here's what Jesus said at a time when his followers had forgotten to bring bread for their lunch. The ninth chapter of the Gospel of Mark documents Jesus asking, "Don't you remember? When I broke the five loaves for the 5000, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?"<sup>6</sup>

His followers answered, "Twelve," and Jesus continued, "And when I broke the seven loaves for the 4000, how many basketfuls of pieces did you pick up?" They answered, "Seven."

VOICE: So Jesus verified that both numbers are right. He fed 5,000 on one occasion and 4,000 on another, by taking small amounts of bread and fish and multiplying them.

PROF.: Yes. As the author-in-chief of the Bible, God controlled the Bible's accuracy by several different means. First, God arranged for some writers to document words and actions of Jesus Christ, by giving them the privilege of *observing Jesus directly* during his short lifetime on earth. Second, God superintended other writers by enabling them to locate *reliable eyewitnesses*.

And third, there were times when God wanted mankind to know about events that occurred before He created humans, or that would occur in the future. In those instances, he *provided the information directly* to the people whom He chose to write His Word, the Bible.

VOICE: So God "logged in" with humans.

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6 Mark 9:18b-19.

PROF.: That's an excellent way to illustrate the idea. Sometimes God let men do the research, with his direction and quality control.

If God were inspiring the Bible today, he might be sitting at a computer, supervising the eyewitnesses, to make sure they didn't forget important facts.

At other times, God would "input" the information from His own memory. In a variety of ways, God enabled humans to write totally accurate statements of what He wanted us to know.

VOICE: What a privilege a few dozen people had – being the writers God used to provide a message for all people to read in the Bible!

PROF.: And what a privilege *we* have – to have a book that is so completely true, so accurate, and so beneficial to read!

VOICE: Yes. The same passage that tells us that the Bible is inspired, tells the benefits we get from reading it. It says, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is *useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness*, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."<sup>7</sup>

PROF.: One final thought: God offers to "log into" our lives today. Before I open the Bible every day, I ask God to energize my mind – to enable me to understand and learn something new from it, something I had never known before.

He promised, "Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you."<sup>8</sup>  
A 21<sup>st</sup>-century paraphrase could be, "Log on to God, and he will connect with you."

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<sup>7</sup> 2 Timothy 3:16.

<sup>8</sup> James 4:8.