



The  
**PERSON & WORK**  
of the  
**HOLY SPIRIT**

**GEOFFREY BINGHAM**

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# Summary of Contents

FOREWORD: xi

**STUDY ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE THEME:**

The Study of Pneumatology; The Holy Himself 1.

**STUDY TWO: THE HOLY SPIRIT AND GOD'S PLAN - I:**

Introduction: Knowing the Spirit by His Work; The Plan of God; The Spirit and the Plan God; The Spirit and Creation; The Spirit and Antediluvian Man; The Spirit of God the Covenant With Abraham; The Spirit the Mosaic Covenant 10

**STUDY THREE: THE HOLY SPIRIT AND GOD'S PLAN**

The Holy Spirit, the Prophets and Prophecy: Conclusion as to the OT Times and the Spirit 21

**STUDY FOUR: THE HOLY SPIRIT AND GOD'S PLAN - III THE SPIRIT AND THE FULFILMENT OF PROPHECY:**

The Holy Spirit and the Coming of John the Baptist; The Holy Spirit and Jesus; Jesus Unique Amongst Men Because of the Spirit 30

**STUDY FIVE: THE HOLY SPIRIT AND GOD'S PLAN - IV**

**MESSIAH FULFILS THE SCRIPTURES THROUGH THE SPIRIT**

Jesus' View of the Holy Spirit; Jesus the Fulfilment of the Prophecies; The Outworking of These Prophecies; The Universal Outpouring of the Spirit 40

**STUDY SIX: THE HOLY SPIRIT AND GOD'S PLAN - V THE NEW ERA OF THE SPIRIT**

Pentecost and its Significance; The Spirit the Applicator; The New People of God; The Proclamation of the Gospel; The Current Programme of Jesus the Lord; The Spirit at the End-Time 50

- STUDY SEVEN: THE HOLY SPIRIT AND MAN AS PERSON - I**  
*What is Man?; Created Man and the Holy Spirit; Man and the Spirit of Holiness* 60
- STUDY EIGHT: THE HOLY SPIRIT AND MAN AS PERSON - II:THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE GIFT OF SALVATION:**  
*The Gift of Christ; The Gifts Which are. and Which Bring Life* 71
- STUDY NINE: THE HOLY SPIRIT AND MAN AS PERSON - III**  
**THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE GIFTS OF LOVE AND HOLINESS**  
*Introduction; The Gift of Love; The Gift of Holiness; Holiness Through Love* 82
- STUDY TEN: THE HOLY SPIRIT AND MAN AS PERSON - IV**  
**THE HOLY SPIRIT AND CHRIST'S DWELLING IN MAN**  
*Introduction: Imitation or Habitation?; Christ's Indwelling Man. Especially by the Spirit: What is the Indwelling, What is its Resultant Action, and its Goals?* 91
- STUDY ELEVEN: THE HOLY SPIRIT WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON**  
*Introduction: ,Creation With a View to the Glory of God; The Holy/Spirit and the Father and the Son* 101
- STUDY TWELVE: THE HOLY SPIRIT WITH THE FATHER AND THE SON - II:THE PEOPLE OF GOD - FATHERHOOD, SONSHIP & SPIRIT**  
*The Spirit and the Family; The Church the Family. and its Mission; The Spirit and the Gifts* 110
- STUDY FOURTEEN: THE FLESH AND THE SPIRIT** *Introduction: The Two Realms; Evil Seeking to Subvert the Creation; The mind of the of the Flesh; The Mind of the Spirit; Newness of Spirit by the Spirit; The Continuing Mind of the Spirit; The Way of Walking in the Spirit* 132

**STUDY FIFTEEN: THE SPIRIT AND ESCHATOLOGY**

*Introduction: The Spirit of the First and Last Things; The Spirit of the Things to Come; Conclusion*

144

**STUDY SIXTEEN: LIVING IN THE SPIRIT**

**Introduction: The Spirit Who is Person; Man Under the Spirit; Experiencing the Spirit; Growth in, Maturity; Habituation; Living in the Spirit**

155

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

165

## Foreword

*The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit* is a companion volume to *The God and Father of Us All* (i.e. *The Person and Work of the Father*), and *The Person and Work of Christ*. These three sets of studies were used in Schools conducted by New Creation Teaching Ministry. They were originally set out in duplicated note form.

We believe the material is valuable. Even though we have published other material on the same theme, e.g. *Spirit-Baptism: Spirit-Living* (1978), and *The Day of the Spirit* (1985), we believe this set of studies has its own value. The studies themselves are concise, contain enough material to fill out their subjects, and as a total work cover the person and work of the Spirit quite thoroughly.

All study books leave something to be desired, since they have little opportunity to be descriptive and applicative. Even so, the great themes of this study book, with the panoramic view of the Spirit's work in history, can be of immense value.

To get the most out of the book, the reader needs to have his Bible with him, and to look up the references, reading them along with the written material of this volume. Then the amazing work of the Spirit will come to life, and into the light of understanding. To know the Spirit personally is as rich in experience as knowing the Father and the Son. Indeed it is not really possible to know one or two Persons of the Godhead unless one knows the Spirit. In fact we only know them truly when we know them simultaneously.

May we then approach both the Person and the subject with  
humility of spirit and with awe in our hearts.

*Geoffrey Bingham,*

Coromandel, June 1985.

## **STUDY ONE**

### **Introduction to the Theme**

*The Study, of Pneumatology; The Holy Spirit Himself*

#### **1. THE STUDY OF PNEUMATOLOGY**

Pneumatology is the name given to the, study of the person and work of the Holy Spirit. It derives from the Greek word *pneuma* which can mean “breath”, “air”, “wind”. We derive our English word “pneumatic” from it, meaning air-driven or air-filled. In the Hebrew the equivalent word to *pneuma* is *ruach* and has almost identical meaning. The question we have before us is, “How can we possibly study the person and work of the Holy Spirit?” The obvious answer is, “From the materials provided in the Bible, and, possibly, from our own personal experience of the Spirit himself”. Our problem is really the ways in which we study the materials available. For example we believe we have a fully developed doctrine of the Holy Spirit presented in the whole Bible. For this reason – whether or not we are correct in our claim – we have to realise that down through history this ‘fully developed doctrine’ was not available as we see it now. How did those in early times understand the Holy Spirit? How did they think of him within the times of the ‘major prophets’ and the ‘minor prophets’? How indeed did they think of him in the period covered by the Gospel accounts, and then, later, in the period covered within the Book of the Acts? Surely there has been a development or regression of doctrinal ideas within the scope of church history, whilst today there are patently many and varied views of the Holy Spirit.

This is enough to point out that the study of the person and work of the Holy Spirit is not at all simple when we seek to systematise the available materials. By nature of the case we may even do despite to a true understanding of his person and work. We will try then, as far as possible to proceed along lines which give us (a) An overall view of the plan of God in which the Holy Spirit continually works, and (b) The manner in which his work relates to us as persons in God's created world. It will be seen that these two elements are closely related, and are, really, very much the one. Our plan, then, will be roughly as follows:–

**(i) The Holy Spirit – Himself**

He is Person. He is God.

**(ii) The Holy Spirit and God's Plan**

He is Agent in the plan, working in the following:– (a) Creation. (b) Providence. (c) Salvation History:–Pre–Abraham history, the Patriarchs, Israel, the Prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus, the Church, Current Work of Christ, the Eschaton.

**(iii). The Holy Spirit and Man as Person**

The prevenient work of grace, love, conviction. The gifts of repentance, faith and forgiveness. Life and sanctification. Present relationships. Ultimate glorification.

**(iv) The Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son**

Recapitulation of certain elements relating to Messiah, the church and man. The Holy Spirit and the Father. The Holy Spirit and the Son. The Holy

Spirit and God's People. The internal relationships of the Family. The ultimate end of man and his eternal relationships.

This is an ambitious programme. It will certainly be difficult to confine to sixteen studies. Students are advised to make further reading according to the bibliography at the end of the study notes. Certain appendices will also need to be studied.

## **2. THE HOLY SPIRIT HIMSELF**

### **(i) The Holy Spirit is Person**

Psychologically we say a person is one who has intelligence, will and feeling. It can be easily shown that the Holy Spirit has these three elements, but such a statement is naive, seeing Scripture shows him to be the Spirit of life, and so the very one from whom we derive our elements of life, namely intelligence, willing and feeling. We cannot easily describe life itself, although we insist that human life has the three elements we have named. What in fact we are seeking to guard against is the impression that the Holy Spirit is to be thought of impersonally, as a force or fluid, an 'it', or simply a way of speaking about God's power in act without the Action being the Spirit himself. Part of the difficulty comes from statements in both the OT and the NT where the Spirit is said "to come upon", "fall upon", "to fill", "moved in" and like terms. The words "ruach" and "pneuma" lend themselves to this kind of thinking. In our English translations the Spirit, by reason of the Hebrew and Greek languages has often been translated "it". No one can complain about this, but, in the NT especially the use of masculine pronouns even against the neuter antecedent has sought to point

to the personality of the Holy Spirit, and even to make the Spirit masculine, although “spirit” in some languages is necessarily translated in the feminine gender. In fact the Hebrew word ruach is feminine, which is simply a fact of grammar.

### **(a) The Holy Spirit Wills**

Viewing the doctrine of the Holy Spirit from the oneness of Scripture, i.e. seeing all Scripture as an integrated whole and therefore seeing the work and person of the Spirit from the purview of Genesis to Revelation (and, of course, Revelation to Genesis), then we see him as one who wills to fulfil his work as Agent in the whole matter of God’s plan. From creation to the ultimate creation he sets about doing that which is his own particular work. As we will consider more deeply, he is always the “Spirit of”, i.e. of the Lord, of God, of Christ, of the Son, of holiness, etc. Hence in this sense he does the work of the Lord, of God, of Christ, and so on. We see his will as strongly defined.

Through this will he causes certain action, such as creation, renewal, the utterances of the prophets, the designing of the tabernacle and its furniture, the defeat of Israel’s enemies, the conception of Christ, his ministry, his resurrection and ascension. In the NT he leads the church into what it must do, and to “walk in the Spirit” is to do the will of the Spirit. In this way Philip goes to Gaza and Peter to Caesarea and “as many as are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God”. One, then, either “walks by the Spirit” or is “led by the Spirit”. Isaiah 63 depicts Israel as expected to do just this, which it did not. It vexed the Holy Spirit, i.e. went against his will. Ephesians 4:30 et al warns against grieving the Spirit since he is the eschatological Spirit. He is the one who seals

with a view to the day of redemption.

Will, for the most part in the human scene, is accompanied by action. Scripture depicts the Spirit as the one of action. His will is always attended with action, and very powerful action, be it creative, redemptive or eschatological. He fulfils his will. This we recognise to be part of true personhood.

### **(b) The Holy Spirit Feels**

The Anglican Article No. One has it, “God is without body, parts, and passions”. This confessional statement is to preserve theology against crude anthropomorphism, i.e. making God in our image, a merely enlarged human being. The Article thinks of God as impassible. Whatever its merits it is nevertheless true that in the Bible God is depicted as feeling love, tenderness, anger, frustration, change of mind, and so on. The Article seeks to guard us from imputing (fallen) human ways of feeling to God. We are generally the objects of our feelings and not the subjects. God is always the subject of what He feels. He cannot be caught up by passions, nor are His feelings arbitrary. They are consistent with His basic perfection of nature.

The Holy Spirit feels. We have seen in both Isaiah 63 and Ephesians 4 that the Holy Spirit can be grieved or vexed. In some places he is depicted as the Spirit of burning or of judgement, in which case he comes as terrible fire (e.g. Matt. 3:11–12, Isaiah 4:4). The Holy Spirit, once vexed, can be angry (Isa. 63:10). At the same time he is the Spirit of love (Rom. 15:30, Gal. 5:22, Rom. 5:5, Col. 1:8). In fact all of his work, from creation to the end–time must be seen as the outworking of his love. His very tender and intimate feeling is portrayed beautifully in Romans 8:26–27 where

“the Spirit himself makes intercession within us with groanings which cannot be uttered” (“sighs too deep for words”). Romans 8:14–17 with Gal. 4:4–6 depicts the Spirit as crying “Abba!” (“Father!”), and so generating the same cry from the believer, thus cementing *the relationship* between man and God.

We will see, eventually, that *relationships* are the primary work of the Holy Spirit. This is natural, he being the Spirit of love. For the rest he who is the Spirit of joy and peace and similar emotional and affectional states can scarcely, himself, not be said to feel!

### (c) The Holy Spirit Thinks

It may sound simplistic to speak of the Holy Spirit as thinking, but in the way of accommodating to us God says, “I know the thoughts that I think towards you, says the Lord” (Jer. 29:11). He also says, “My thoughts are not your thoughts” (Isaiah 55:8). We do not mean that God has to think in order to understand, but that what He thinks is what truly is. Since thinking (ratiocination) is part of what it is for a human to be a person we are helped to understand the Spirit as Person when we see he thinks.

That he is intelligent is axiomatic to his being if he is the Spirit of God. He is actually called “The Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge...” (Isaiah 11:2), and when Bezalel is chosen to design the tent of meeting and its furniture he is said to be “filled with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence and knowledge...” (Exodus 31:3). However on a much wider frame of reference the Spirit is called “the Spirit of truth”, thus embracing all wisdom and knowledge and truth. In I Cor. 2:9–14 he

searches the “deeps of God”, and reveals great mysteries to the elect of God. In John 16:12–15 he leads “*into* all the truth”, and in fact until man is reborn of this Spirit he can neither *see* nor enter God’s Kingdom (John 3:3–6). In Ephes. 1:17 he is “the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him”.

In every way, then, the Spirit is the Spirit of intelligence. In fact he alone is the means by which man may know true wisdom, and think true thoughts.

This one then, the Holy Spirit, wills and feels and thinks in what we may call “the pure way”. If personhood consists in these three elements, not as separate aspects or attributes, but as the one integrated whole, then far from the Spirit merely resembling true personhood he is its very epitome, its perfect actuation, its total being! Whilst he may be powerful in influence, whilst his actions may well be likened to those of fire, wind (even tempestuous wind), and water (even turbulent, flowing water), and symbols of light and oil, and even of a dove be ascribed to him, he is nothing if not truly Person!

For this reason any true study of the Holy Spirit must be humble, reverential, and loving. Were we to study any person such attitudes would be essential. How much more then in the case of this Person who is himself the very Spirit of God!

### **(ii) The Holy Spirit is God**

When we recognise that the Bible is not a book which is systematic theology, and which does not go about to “prove” our dogmas, as such, then we can understand there is no formal “proof” as such, for

the fact that the Spirit is God, or, to put it another way, has deity. The knowledge that he is God (although not G God) comes through in the whole' thrust of his acclaim within the Scriptures, his work, and his accomplishment. "God is Spirit" of John 4:24 parallels with Isaiah 31:3, "The Egyptians are men and not God; and their horses flesh and not spirit". Only God is Spirit. Also God is not a spirit, but Spirit.

In the OT the Spirit is "the Spirit of God", "the Spirit of Yahweh", "the Spirit of the Lord", "His Holy Spirit", "Thy Holy Spirit". This must mean that the Spirit is simply the manifestation or action of God Himself without being hypostatised, that is given personhood or discrete being within himself. However, the general thrust of the OT, whilst making the Spirit the very manifestation of God Himself, also gives him discrete being and personal operation such as in "The Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters" (Gen. 1:2). This could of course be translated, "The wind of God was moving across the face of the waters" in which case wind is an entity, and not to say, God Himself, other than in the form of manifestation. It is what happened as a result of the wind ("Spirit", *ruach*) moving that gives the dynamic of the action. C.K. Barrett says, "The *ruach elohim* was, along with the creative speech of God, the agent by which the present existing world was brought out of the inchoate primeval waste". (*The Holy Spirit and Gospel Tradition*, SPCK. 1954, p.18).

Hence when we say, "Spirit of the Lord", and so on, we always mean the action of God through this means or Agent. Whilst he is "The Spirit of the Lord" and so does the work of the Lord and not some work of his own, it is true to say that the work which is his own, is the work of the Lord. He *does*

*what Only God can do!* How then does he do this without being God? We will see that he is in the work of creation, of all of salvation history, salvation itself, and the consummation of the eschaton.

We have then but to see *the kind of work* the Spirit does to realise that he is God. We are told that “God is love”, and we see that he is the Spirit of love. He is the Spirit of the Father (Matt. 10: 20, cf. Luke 10:21, John chs. 14, 15, 16), the Spirit of the Son (Gal. 4:4–6), as well as being the Spirit of Messiah (Romans 8:9–11). The high statements which call him the Spirit of life and ascribe created and redeemed life to him place him above being a mere emanation of God. See Psalm 104:30, “When Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit they are created, and Thou renewest the face of the ground” (cf. Isa. 32:14–15). See also Ezekiel 36, 37, Romans 8:2–3, II Cor. 3:6, Romans 7:6, John 3:6.

When we conclude that the Spirit of God is God we may know very little of what we are saying and meaning. When we speak of him as Person we may still understand very little. To know God is not merely an intellectual matter, and most of us have no ontology of God. Much less do we know the reality of the Personhood of Father, Son and Spirit. However we do have the very same Spirit, the Spirit of God to teach us, and he is of all the teacher (see John 14:25–26, 16:12–15, I Cor. 2:12, etc.). To those who are redeemed the apostle John says, “You have been anointed by the Holy One and you know everything”, and “His anointing teaches you about everything, and is true...” (I John 2:20,27).

Let us then press on to read, learn, and understand the person and work of this wonderful, Holy Spirit.

## STUDY TWO

### The Holy Spirit and God's Plan—I

*Introduction Knowing the Spirit by His Work,. The Plan of God. The Spirit and the Plan of God; Tile Spirit and Creation,. The Spirit and Antediluvian Man,' The Spirit of God and the Covenant with Abraham,. Tile Spirit and the Mosaic Covenant*

#### I. INTRODUCTION KNOWING THE SPIRIT BY HIS WORK

God has always been “the God of action” or as some have said, “God is pure action”. It is not possible to conceive of God without action, and indeed without incessant action. In any case we generally learn of a person from his acts, especially when those acts are true and not merely simulated or deceptive. The Scriptures contain the account of God's acts. Through them we come to know *the kind of God He is*.

When we tabulate, from the Scriptures (a) The plan of God as we see it in acts, in prediction, and in fulfilment, and (b) See the participation of the Spirit in this plan, then we come to know much of his person and work. However to this point we have assumed that God has a plan, and now we need to see that indeed Scripture tells us of this plan, and shows to us much concerning the intention of God, His predictions of the same, and the fulfilment, at least to our time in history of that plan. We would expect prediction of its end and fulfilment as also indications that this is in the process of happening. This is precisely what the Scriptures tell us.

## 2. THE PLAN OF GOD

Biblical history<sup>1</sup> would be incomprehensible, in the light of the nature of God if it commenced somewhere only to go nowhere in particular. The creation of man was followed by his fall. In Genesis ch. 3 we see the punishment of the man and the woman, and the exclusion of the human race from paradise. Man had been offered access to the tree of life, but had neglected to use it, choosing instead the forbidden tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The statement of Genesis 3:15 was prophetic and predicted the defeat of the serpent by the seed of woman. This indicated some plan in history.

The first eleven chapters of Genesis prepare the reader for the remainder of the book which has to do primarily with the Abrahamic covenant, and the selective manner in which his seed is chosen to bear the covenantal promise, until the tribes of Israel are formed. The books Exodus to Joshua show the working out of God's purposes for those tribes. Likewise the prophetic books from Joshua to Nehemiah indicate the wider plan of God for Israel. Israel in exile hears its prophets predict a return to their land, and this happens. A second temple is built, the sacrifices renewed, and Israel seems set for the fulfilment of the Abrahamic covenant, which, beyond the covenant given to Moses is a covenant of grace. This, in fact, does not happen. Israel is constantly ravaged and brought under the domination of militant nations, even up to the times of the NT when she As part of the great Roman Empire.

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<sup>1</sup> Biblical history is dealt with in full detail in the course "*Salvation History*" (N.C.T.M./B.C.S.A. Short-Term Bible School No. 1, 1977). These notes are available from N.C.P.I., and should be closely studied.

With the coming of the promised Messiah, Jesus, Israel should fulfil the prophecies and be a great nation at peace, living in righteousness and prosperity. For the most part the Jews did not recognise Jesus as their Messiah, but officially denounced him as a blasphemer and an impostor. Hence they Judged and crucified him. Whilst his followers claimed he was proved to be the Son of God (Messiah) by resurrection from the dead, this was never officially received by the nation. However, Christianity began with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. The church began. A new era was commenced, but again, it was not recognised by the Sanhedrin, the official body of Jewish leaders. At the best Christianity was tolerated as a curious sect. At the worst it was heavily persecuted from time to time by the Jews.

It is in the NT that the prophetic writings flower. It is in them that the plan of God is discussed, its outworking rationalised, and further predictions added. This is a study all of its own. The reason we mention it here is that the NT rounds off the OT in the following manner:–

- a) It claims that the OT prophets spoke of the Messiah to come and that these predictions referred to Jesus (cf. I Peter 1:10–12). The Book of Acts is studded with claims that they, the preachers, proclaim only what the prophets predicted, the very things Jesus fulfilled.
- b) Since the prophetic predictions were fulfilled then Jesus was the Messiah of the Kingdom of God, and him and his Gospel they proclaim so *that* men, especially Jews must have repentance towards God and faith in Jesus Christ.
- c) They claim that God's plan, sealed in its

intention by the Cross, Resurrection and Ascension is to be consummated at the end of the present age. the present age. This will be by the *parousia* or appearing of Jesus. The same end-events as predicted in the OT prophecies concerning “the last day” or “the day of the Lord” will be fulfilled.

Ephesians 1:4–14 speaks of God's plan for his elect people. This must necessarily relate to the Abrahamic Covenant (cf. Galatians ch. 3), for this covenant involves not only the people of Israel but all the nations of the world. Acts 3:21 speaks of Jesus being held in the heavens “until the time for establishing all that God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from eternity”. Rev. 10:1–7 speaks of God shortly fulfilling “the mystery” (i.e. the plan) which He had announced to His servants the prophets. Amos 3:7 has it, “Surely the Lord God does nothing without revealing His secret to His servants the prophets”. From this we conclude that (a) There was the plan of God. (b) He revealed what needed to be known of this plan to man, by His prophets. (c) His intention for history has been being fulfilled, and ultimately will find its final and ultimate completion.

### 3. THE SPIRIT AND THE PLAN OF GOD

Doubtless the portion of the plan which most intimately concerns us is our own salvation, sanctification and ultimate glorification. Hence we most easily relate to the Spirit in these-areas, particularly where his ministry would touch us personally. Nevertheless it is good for us to see His work, as is often said, holistically. Many treatments of Scripture have divided the Bible into epochs or dispensations. Doubtless there are such, but in every epoch it is the same Spirit, as it is also the same

Father and Son. Some treatments see these epochs atomistically and not holistically. We should see them as integral parts of the whole of salvation history.<sup>2</sup> What we are really saying is that we have the same Spirit operating in every epoch and with the same aim or goal or plan in mind. This does not mean that he does the same thing in every age, for each epoch is a further instalment of the plan of God. It is just that we must not see any epoch as a failure on God's part, or a new epoch as a revision of His plan. Nothing He does is ever an expedient to meet a contingency. When we see the work of the epochs holistically this helps us to understand what God is about in each age, and to better understand the person and work of the Holy Spirit. In fact it is difficult for us to truly understand the Spirit apart from his agency in the plan and work of God from creation to the end-time.

#### 4. THE SPIRIT AND CREATION

Without doubt, as we have seen, the Spirit is present at creation (Gen. 1:2). When he moves across the face of the waters it is not as a bird broods over its egg for he has nothing to hatch out!

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<sup>2</sup> When we say "salvation history" we do not mean there are two histories, one "secular" and one "religious". There is only one history – God's action, His plan working out for the salvation of His elect. All history is salvation history, but since few see it that way there are other rationalisations of history. Hence we designate salvation history to distinguish it from secular understanding.

It is out of the chaos that he brings form and order, purpose and beauty. This is paralleled by the doctrine of spiritual new birth or re-birth as seen in John 3:3ff. Out of the inchoate and disordered chaos of the fallen man comes the new true creation (II Cor. 5:17, Gal. 6:15). II Cor. 4:6 shows God as saying “Let light shine out of darkness”, i.e. not on it, or into it. The Spirit then is the Spirit of creation, form and order. Hence in Job 26:13 “By His *ruach* the heavens were made fair”, and Psalm 33: 6 we have both the commanding word, to make the heavens and “all their host by the *ruach* of His mouth”.

Further, in Psalm 104:29–30 the *ruach* from God is the principle of life. The animal creatures die when it is removed. The writer says, ‘When Thou sendest forth Thy Spirit (*ruach*) they are created; and Thou renewest the face of the ground”. Doubtless he is speaking of the initial creation, but also of creation continued and sustained. The NT passages such as Col. 1:15–17, Heb. 1:2–3, I Cor. 8:6, John 1:1–4 speak of all creation as created for God and contingent for its true and continued being upon Him. Also at the same time the Son upholds creation by “his powerful word”, and “in him all things subsist”. Here the Spirit is the creative Spirit of life.

This is seen in Gen. 2:7 when God breathes into man. He breathes not the *ruach* of life, but the *neshehah* of life, and man becomes “a living being”. This is taken to mean the Spirit comes to him and gives him true being. This true being is not simply animated clay being, but spiritual being.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See A.B. Come's detailed and powerful treatment in his book “*Human Spirit and Holy Spirit*”. He maintains against monistic, bipartite, and tripartite theories that man is truly spirit, as man who is contingent upon God who is essentially Spirit.

We say this because to think of the Spirit being the Agent in creation, and not to understand the *nature of that creation*, is to miss the nature of God as Father, as Eternal Son, and as Holy Spirit (cf. Psa. 19:1ff, Romans 1:19–20). This “living being” compasses the whole variety, capacity and ability of man as a human creature in relationship with God.

The renewing creative powers of the Spirit we have seen in Psalm 104:30. They are also pointed out in Isaiah 32:15 and context, but it is in Ezekiel 36 that the “new Spirit” points to the miracle of the “new heart” or, as Jesus put it “being born anew”. Likewise in Ezekiel 37 the *ruach* of God comes to bring national renewal. He comes as the wind, similarly to his operation at creation, and later, at Pentecost. Hence to call him “the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” may mean he is the Spirit of life, or he is the Spirit of life in Christ, but then II Cor. 3:6 speaks of (the guilt of) the law bringing death, but the Spirit giving life, a thought repeated in Romans 7:6. When, then, we understand that the Spirit is the great creative power, we are awed and astonished that he is present to every detail of creation, giving it initial life and sustaining it in life. The gift of redemptive life by the agency of the Spirit is doubtless connected with creation, but we will speak of it elsewhere.

## 5. THE SPIRIT AND ANTEDILUVIAN MAN

If our claim is correct – that man as created is creature of spirit – then we must accept that his fall brought a difference to him. He died, particularly in relationship to God, and so to himself and to the woman (his neighbour). This does not mean he did not remain a spiritual being, but in this case a contradiction of *that* true spiritual being, a

perverse spiritual being, and from God's point of view, dead (Gen. 2:17). What is interesting to note is that one son "was of that Evil one" (I John 3:11) and the other, a righteous man, in fact a prophet (I John 3:12, Hebrews 11:4, Luke 11:51). Cain is omitted from the "generations of Adam", Seth being the substitute for Abel (Gen. 4:25 – 5:4). We draw the conclusion then, that through grace men like Abel and Enoch (for example) were true men of the Spirit (cf. Gen. 5:21–24, Jude 14), being prophets (cf. I Peter 1:10–12, II Peter 1:21).

When we come to Genesis 6:1–3 it seems that the godly line of Seth and the ungodly line of Cain "sons of God and daughters of men" are now Joined and such evil takes place as can be called "evil with a high hand", i.e. the evil of presumption. At this point God changes His pattern of the use of His *ruach*. Gen. 6:3 can mean a number of things, but generally it appears to mean that man has forsaken his creative being of spirit, and has become flesh. This is a perversion of his true created being. For this God will judge, or abandon him, even though 120 years will elapse in which Noah will proclaim the truth of God (cf. II Peter 2:5). We assume then that despite the Fall, the Spirit worked not only in his capacity of creative and sustaining Spirit, but also with man to give him the powers of true spiritual being. The Flood came as judgement upon sinful man. Only Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. He, of all, must have been a man of the Spirit.

## **6. THE SPIRIT OF GOD AND THE COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM**

The first covenant of grace is given, through Noah, to mankind. Judgement, in the nature of the Flood will not again come to man, no matter how deeply he sins (Gen. 8:21–22). The normal rhythm of

creation will proceed uninterrupted by this kind of judgement. Man, then, sees what grace is. Nevertheless a covenant of (grace) blessing is not given universally until God appears to Abraham. See Gen. 12:1f, cf. Acts 7:2ff. It is clear from Genesis 10 and 11 that man does not intend to obey the creational mandate (Gen. 1:28ff), not even in its post-flood form (Gen. 9:1-7). Nimrod disobeys it, and the men of Babel spurn it. Yet God appears to Abraham.

In the text of Genesis we have no explicit reference to Abraham and the Spirit. However Galatians 3 and 4 speak not only of Abraham being justified (Gen. 15:6) but his son Isaac was “born of the Spirit”, and not like Ishmael, “of the flesh”. If Isaac, the heir of the Abrahamic promise is a man of the Spirit so, even more, is Abraham. Even Sarah seems included in this as “the free woman”. Abraham, of course, is known as a prophet (Gen. 20:7), as prophets are, in some sense, men of the Spirit, as we have seen. Jacob, Isaac’s son is also a prophet, as Genesis 49 well shows (see especially v.10). Of his son, Joseph, Pharaoh asks, “Can we find such a man as this in whom is the Spirit of God?” We take it then that the Spirit moved amongst these (covenantal) patriarchs, and of course this fact is pointed out in Hebrews 1:1.

Later we will see that the covenant which was given to Abraham, although for an epoch confined, so to speak, within the Mosaic covenant, eventually flowers out (in accordance with the prophecies) into the New Covenant, which is the covenant of universal blessing, embracing both Jew and Gentile. For the moment, however, we need to examine the Spirit and the Mosaic Covenant.

## 7. THE SPIRIT AND THE MOSAIC COVENANT

As we examine these epochs we should see them as forward-moving steps within the plan of God, and not endeavours upon the part of God to rectify regrettable errors and rebellion on the part of man, and even His own chosen people. We will see then, that the Spirit was doing that work which would build towards the ultimate intention God had for His creation.

Moses is depicted as a man of the Spirit. Not only 'does God appear to him personally and speak with him in a way which even other prophets had not (and would not) experience (Numbers 12:6–8, cf. Deut. 18:15ff), but it is explicitly stated that Moses was a man of the Spirit (cf. Numbers 11:16–29). In another sense others are equipped with the Spirit for special artisan's works. This we see in Exodus 28: 3, 31:1ff. Under Moses the seventy elders have the Spirit come upon them (Numbers 11:16ff). Joshua is also a man of the Spirit (Numbers 27:18, Deut. 34:9). Later we see explicit happenings of the Spirit coming upon the men who God appointed as judges in Israel. See for this the Book of the Judges.

In Isaiah 63:10–14 we see that the Holy Spirit was present with Israel in the exodus from Egypt to Canaan. In the Book of Judges (see 3:10, 6:34, 11:29, 13:25, 14:6, 19, and 15:14) we see the Spirit move on such men as Gideon, Jephthah and Samson. This is to teach, rebuke and save the people of Israel. In Haggai 2:4–6 God speaks to Zerubbabel and Joshua – the prince and priest of His people, telling them to be courageous. He says, "My Spirit abides among you; fear not". The sense could be, "My Spirit has always been among you, even in exile, and he is here now, and will so remain". We know from the prophecy of Ezekiel that the glory of the Lord left Israel at the exile, and yet we are also

to understand that God never left His people. The prophecy of Ezekiel 36:24–28 was intended to convey, along with Ezekiel 37:1–15 that God would renew His people in the Spirit, and wonderfully beyond anything they had ever known.

It is when we come to the prophets, as we shall see in our next section, that the Spirit is seen not only to be in Israel, ministering through the prophets, but through the prophets makes promises so wonderful as to be almost inconceivable. All of these relate to Israel, and to the Kingdom of God. In *fact* the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Israel appear to be identical in the prophetic teaching and predictions.

## STUDY THREE

### The Holy Spirit and God's Plan--II

*The Holy Spirit, the Prophets and Prophecy; Conclusion as to the OT Times and the Holy Spirit*

#### 1. THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE PROPHETS AND PROPHECY<sup>4</sup>

In Revelation 19:10 we are told that ‘the testimony of Jesus is the spirit (or, Spirit) of prophecy’. This is stated as a general principle. Hebrews 1:1 says that in many ways and at various times God *spoke to the fathers by the prophets*. It compares this with what happens in the last days, “In these last days He has spoken unto us by (a) Son”. Yet that Son is the subject of all prophecies. This is seen in Luke 24:25–26 and 24:44–47. In the Gospels Jesus is said to fulfil the prophets by what he is and does, and this claim is made in Acts that he has done these things, whilst the epistles assume the same. I Peter 1:10–12 says quite explicitly that the Holy Spirit, speaking to and through the prophets was “the Spirit of Christ”.

We need to see then that the line of prophets spread from Abel to Zechariah (Luke 11:51) and ultimately to John the Baptist, whose ministry we will regard. Without doubt prophecy in a very special way began a different course from Samuel onwards. This is verified by Acts 3:24 and 13:20 (cf. Hebrews 11:32). However, as we have seen, the first nominated

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<sup>4</sup> For a full and detailed treatment of this subject see Living Faith Study No. 7, “*Prophecy: Its Meaning, Scope and Significance*”.

prophet was Abel. Enoch is also a prophet. The patriarchs had prophetic ministry to some degree. Balaam is a prophet declaring oracles even though he would wish to curse Israel for money. He is forced, prophetically to divine a glorious future for this people of God, Israel. David at first sight would not appear to be a prophet, but II Sam. 23:1ff makes it clear he was a prophet. Of Balak it had been said, “And the Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he took up his discourse and said, ‘The oracle of Balaam ...’” Of David we read, “The oracle of David, the son of Jesse... ‘The Spirit of the Lord speaks by me, his word is upon my tongue. The God of Israel has spoken ...’” In Acts 2:30 Peter, using Psalm 16 says, “(David) being therefore a prophet”. In Acts 4:25 another prophecy (Psalm 2) is accorded to David. David, then was very much a prophet, and many of his psalms spoke of the Messiah–King to come. Our main point, however, is that it was by the Spirit he prophesied (II Sam. 23:2).

### The Spirit and the Prophets

There is no true prophecy without the Spirit of God. Pharaoh recognised Joseph’s dreams as prophecy or divination, and this was consonant with Numbers 12:6 where God says he speaks to the prophets in dreams and visions. Hence Pharaoh said Joseph was a man “in whom is the Spirit of God” (Gen. 41:38). In I Kings 22:24 the test of the false prophet and the true prophet is the one in whom the Spirit of God is. In fact Micah set out the principle, “I am filled with power, and with the Spirit of the Lord, and with Justice and might to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin” (Micah 3:8). In Isaiah 48:16 the prophet says, either of himself or another, “And now the Lord God has sent me, and His Spirit.” In Ezekiel 11:5 the classical pattern is shown of the prophet and the Spirit, “And the

Spirit of the Lord fell upon me, and he said to me, 'Say, Thus says the Lord .... " When the Spirit came upon the seventy elders they began to prophesy, even though only on that occasion (Numbers 11:25). In Acts 2 a similar thing happens when the Spirit falls 'on the one hundred and twenty, and in that special book of prophecy, the writer is "in the Spirit on the Lord's day", and it is at that point he commences "the word of the prophecy" (Rev. 1:10, cf. 1:3).

In I Peter 1:10–12 the writer tells us that the prophets prior to Christ were moved by the Spirit of Christ. This, surely was "the testimony of Jesus", the same testimony that John the writer of the Revelation is exiled for, to the Isle of Patmos. The principle of prophecy is stated in II Peter 1:20–21, "First of all, you must understand this, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, because no (true!) prophecy ever came by the impulse of man, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God."

If we add to this such statements as in Zechariah 7:12 that the Lord had sent the law and the words *by His Spirit through the former prophets* (i.e. the action and operations contained within the books from Joshua to Nehemiah), and Nehemiah 9:30, "Many years Thou didst bear with them, and didst warn them *by Thy Spirit through the prophets*, yet they would not hear .... ", then something of great importance begins to emerge. It is this:–

Not only is the Spirit the Spirit of creation and sustaining providence, but he is the Spirit who has to do with every phase of man's history. Whilst man is dependent upon him for his biological existence, he is at one with God the Creator–Redeemer in making sure that the plan of God is known, and in particular to the covenant people of God, Israel.

The prophecy which he stimulates and controls not only has prediction but warning and exhortation. A study of prophetic ministries in Israel's history shows that men of the (prophetic) Spirit were marked out from others. Moses wished that God would pour out His Spirit on all flesh, and not confine it to the 70 elders, so powerful was the effect of the Spirit.

Of course there are strange things such as when Saul suddenly becomes as another man when the Spirit grips him. A prophet may even be caught up and translated in a strange manner to some distant place (cf. I Kings 18:12, II Kings 2:16, Ezekiel 8:3, and 11:24). If he is caught up, 'then the Spirit catches him up. It has been observed by some commentators that the later canonical prophets – the major and minor prophets – rather seemed to play down the manifestations of the Spirit for in fact they were rather sent with the word of God than came as persons under some possession of the Spirit which we today might call psychic. Yet while it is true they come with the Word, it is also true that the earlier prophets came with the word of God. Whilst the modes of the prophets may have differed in various generations or epochs they still experienced the same thrust—the prophets were those through whom the Spirit of God communicated. Hosea 9:7 has it that the prophet is the man of the Spirit.

### **The Substance of the Prophetic Word**

Each prophet was intended to speak to his own people and their circumstances. As we saw they brought “the words and the law” and they warned, as well as predicted. It was of great importance that a prophet was present to the people, even though the words of the prophet often caused them to reject him, persecute him, and in many cases kill him. As we have it in I Sam. 3:1, “The word of the Lord was

rare in those days: there was no frequent vision". It was of this matter that the writer of Proverbs spoke: "Where there is no prophecy (vision) the people cast off restraint" (Proverbs 29:18). This makes the ministry of the Spirit, so to speak, indispensable to the exercise of continuous restraint or constraint. The Spirit then must continuously relate to the people in this prophetic manner. Hence the significance of a statement such as I Sam. 3:21 – 4:1, "And the Lord appeared again at Shiloh, for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel by the word of the Lord. And the word of Samuel came to all Israel", i.e. the word now was not so rare in Israel!

However there gradually grew to be a wider word of the Spirit through the prophets. Some call it the eschatological word, for the horizon widens far beyond the times contemporary to the prophet who uttered the prophecy. It even seemed, often, to extend beyond Israel and become universal, and sometimes reached to the end of time and history. None of these great themes was unrelated to Israel's plight at the time of the prophet. If they were under judgement, and going into exile, then there was the promise of the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel. If they were judged because of their idolatry and impurity, then a time would come when they would be washed and renewed, returned to their own land, and the name of God, far from being profaned would again be honoured by the (new) holiness of His people.

So great themes emerge, the themes of the new covenant, the Kingdom of David, the renewal of God's people, the greatness and victory of the Messiah, or the Son of Man, as also the mysterious not-easy-to-be-understood references to the Suffering Servant. The latter could possibly be the nation or a person, or even the pure seed, the holy remnant of the elect.

Whatever these great themes, there was an enormous dynamic of hope given through the prophets, and this was the widening ministry of the Spirit as he prepared the covenant people for the events to come.

We would have to be honest and say that few, if any, would have thought of “the spirit of prophecy” as “the testimony of Jesus”. Some may have seen much of it as “the Testimony of Messiah”. Certainly a great deal of teaching was given about the Spirit himself. In Isaiah 11:2 he is the sevenfold Spirit (cf. Rev. 5:6, etc.), as well as, at the same time, the Spirit of Messiah. Likewise in Isaiah 61:1–3 he is the Spirit of Messiah, enabling him to do his varied and dynamic work. In Isaiah 59:16–21 God raises up His powerful Intercessor who intervenes for his people. God promises (v.21) that the Spirit will remain upon His covenant people to all generations, and as a consequence so will His word be for ever in their mouths.

The Spirit is greatly connected with renewal in many Isaianic passages. It is probably to one or more of these that Jesus refers in John 7:37–39, and even, possibly in John 3:6–10. Such passages are 32:14ff, 35:1–10, 43:18ff, and 44:3ff. There are many such renewal passages not connected directly with the Spirit. In Ezekiel 36 and 37 we find such passages, whilst in Joel chapter 2 is the explicit prophecy of the pouring out of the Spirit in “the last days”. The “last days” or “the day of the Lord” are often spoken of graphically, as times of calamity and catastrophe as well as of restoration. But then they are also the days of Messiah, the days of the new covenant and the days of the Kingdom.

With the advent and completion of the minor (canonical) prophets, the prophetic series comes to

a close. Does this mean, then, that the spirit of prophecy is not working? The answer is that the substance of the prophets, i.e. the prophetic deposit is now before God's people. It remains now only for the predicted elements to be fulfilled. It is obligatory upon God's people to respond to the exhortations, warnings and admonitions of the prophets, and be people true to the covenant God who is their God of grace.

The prophets then are not a matter of antiquarian interest. Their prophecies are dynamic. The people must anticipate the coming of Messiah or the 'Son of man'. They must prepare for the full restoration of the Kingdom which is now in bad shape. They must anticipate the new covenant with its promise of the forgiveness of sins, and they must look to see the universal outpouring of the Holy Spirit of God, i.e. "on all flesh" with the consequent ministry of prophecy from its recipients.

These and other matters must occupy them, and it is true that many of these matters were in the minds of the people of Israel, the Jews of Judea and Galilee. Some of their notions were hazy, some quite awry, and some—for very few—quite clear. It needed the coming not of false messiahs or fierce revolutionary zealots, but the coming of John the Baptist, the last and greatest of all the prophets to appear. He was to be the catalyst who crystallised the expectations of his people. He was to be the true precursor to Messiah himself.

## **2. CONCLUSION AS TO THE OT TIMES AND THE HOLY SPIRIT**

The theme of the Holy Spirit, prophecy and the prophets really extends, vitally, into the NT, and this we shall see. However, as we have observed,

the series of the prophets “from Abel to Zechariah”, and even more from Samuel to John the Baptist sealed off a period in which God had worked, all with a view to the need for the coming of Messiah, as also consonant with this, the fulfilment of the Abrahamic Covenant.

If we see the first eleven chapters of Genesis preparing man (and his understanding) for the Abrahamic covenant, then we understand the thrust of salvation history, or, simply, history. If we note the presence of the Spirit in the patriarchs, Israel itself from Egypt to Canaan and then in Canaan, then we will also understand the nature of God’s purposes for His people to be a priest nation among all the nations of the earth (cf. Exodus 19:5–6, cf. I Peter 2:9–10).

We see that the Spirit then is the Spirit of salvation history, always acting as the Agent of God in the events of history. Some theologians actually call him “the action of God”. He is present in the exodus, in the leaders who bring Israel into Canaan, and guards them through the work of the Judges. A king such as David is clearly a man of the Spirit. Whilst the kingdom of Israel in Canaan was filled out by this man, and his son, Solomon, following, the division of the kingdom, the growth of idolatry, the trust in other lords than the true Lord all seem to speak of the demise of a great people, but their greatness lies not in themselves, but the God who has called them as His elect people. Hence we see the Spirit who will anoint their great and coming Messiah with the sevenfold gifts and graces of the same Spirit. We see that he will be a liberator of an order not before conceived. We see the new hope grow in Israel, especially amongst the elect and holy remnant, and all the time, through one means and another it is the Spirit caring, guiding, exhorting,

warning, teaching, predicting, giving birth to the living hope of the One-to-come, Messiah, the Suffering Servant.

When we see the expectation flow up to, and into, the coming of John the Baptist and then of Jesus, Immanuel, then we know that history is not epoch after epoch of failure, or even failure corrected and compensated for, but epoch upon epoch in which Father, Son and Spirit are surely and purposefully fulfilling the plan of God for man, for time, and for eternity.

## **STUDY FOUR**

### **The Holy Spirit and God's Plan—III The Spirit—and the Fulfilment of Prophecy**

*The Holy Spirit and the Coming of John the Baptist; The Holy Spirit and Jesus; Jesus Unique amongst Men Because of the Spirit*

If we were to say that the Spirit is not only the Agent of God, but in a particular way the Guardian of history, we would not be wrong, yet both are the one thing. We will further see that God's plan for history is the redemption and glorification of His called ones. In this sense the Spirit is not simply above the people of God, and the manipulator of history, but rather, as loving Person he is yearning over each whom he brings to redemption, with no less love than that of the Father and the Son. This intimately personal element must always be kept in mind. Just how this relates to human beings as persons is shown in the action of the Spirit and the coming of John the Baptist.

#### **1. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE COMING OF JOHN THE BAPTIST**

For some four hundred years there had been no prophetic ministry of the Spirit which was explicit. In this period scholars had tended to turn back on law as an end in itself, and had occupied themselves with the principles, and often, the minutiae of law. Hence the preponderance of lawyers, scribes, and the sect of the Pharisees who were quite legal in their approach to life. The ruling caste of Jews was that of the sect of the Sadducees, who did not believe in the supernatural, life after death,

angels and the resurrection. They had held the reign of political power. They were the rulers, primarily, of the Temple. They were scarcely likely to welcome any “spiritual” movement. If they were religionists, then they were hard-headed in that direction, and in fact quite political in their use of their control of the Temple.

The four Gospels clearly show John the Baptist as a man who contained within himself authority. Luke's Gospel speaks of the remarkable events which attended his birth. The other synoptics show him as a man who had spent time in the wilderness, and who appeared as the prophet *par excellence*. He is described as the prophet or precursor to Messiah by the use of Isaiah 40:3. Luke uses Isaiah 40:3–5. In Luke's account an angel of the Lord, prior to John's conception by the aged couple Zechariah and Elizabeth, uses Malachi 4:5 of John that is that he will come in the Spirit and power of Elijah to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children. Jesus, also, later uses this reference in regard to John (Matt. 11:14). Mark also uses Malachi 3:1, “Behold I send my messenger before thy face who shall prepare thy way”, and conflates it with Isaiah 40:3. This messenger is to go before the Lord, the messenger of the covenant, and his coming is going to constitute a heavy confrontation for Israel.

The import of these uses is to distinguish John as an exceptional prophet. Apart from “the prophet” of Deut. 18:15ff, no prophet's coming has ever been prophesied. John denied he was that prophet (John 1:21), so then he was an exceptional prophet. Jesus said that “all the law and prophets prophesied until John” (Matt. 11:13), meaning that an era had finished, with the coming of John. He also said that John was the greatest of men born of women. He added that the very least in the Kingdom was greater than John. His meaning was, “John is the greatest

prophet. His coming has been prophesied. By coming he fulfilled the prophecies concerning himself, but more, what they prophesied, and what he prophesied has now happened in my coming, of which he was the precursor”.

The reason we look at John is that he was very much the climax of the series of Spirit-enabled prophets. It was said of him that he was to be filled with the Spirit *even from his mother's womb* (Luke 1:15, cf. Luke 1:41). John was surely a great prophet of the Spirit. His message was that Messiah was near, even on the doorstep. He, John, baptised with water, promised forgiveness of sins (to come) and commanded the baptism of repentance with that in view. However, Messiah would baptise with the Holy Spirit, he would take away the sins of the world, and with him would Come the very Kingdom itself! I Peter 1:10–12 speaks of the prophets knowing the principles they prophesied, but not the actual times or events. John knew both. Hence his greatness as a man of the Spirit.

From our point of view of looking at the person and work of the Spirit we can see that the many centuries of preparation of mankind, of the people of God, and of the holy seed, the true elect remnant, were now about to have their fruition.

## 2. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND JESUS

Without doubt Jesus is “the man of the Spirit” as later the Spirit himself can be known as “the Spirit of the man”. By this we mean that all prophets and other men invested with the Spirit acted differently from those who were not anointed or filled by the Spirit, yet Jesus, even beyond John the Baptist is the man of the Spirit. He is uniquely so.

The evidence of the Gospels, taken at face value, tells us that from beginning to end his lot was tied in with the Spirit, and it is this we have to investigate. However, we first have to consider one matter – was such a man of the Spirit predicted in the prophets? Is the use of OT Scriptures merely a justificatory rationalisation of Jesus, and an artificial attempt to make him congruous with the prophecies, or is he indeed the *very* fulfilment of the prophecies, and so, truly the man of the Spirit, and no mere theological concoction as such? For example, we have seen that John the Baptist is not someone who, as it were, appears out of the air. He is authenticated by happenings and the prophecies.

We have seen that there is a figure upon whom the Spirit comes, and in whom the Spirit dwells. This is shown in Isaiah 11:1–9, 42:1–4, and 61:1–2. Also, though without reference to the Spirit as such the angel quotes Isaiah 7:14 to Joseph (Matt. 1:23). In Luke 1:30–37 Mary is told that there will be a birth (which would well accord with Isaiah 7:14) and it is said, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you: therefore the child to be born will be called the Son of God”.

As to the Spirit coming upon Jesus, Jesus himself applies the passage of Isaiah 61 to himself (Luke 4:18–21). Isaiah 42:1 is also applied in the Father’s affirmation at the baptism, where it is conflated with Psa. 2:7. The 11th chapter of Isaiah is applied by Paul to Jesus in Romans 15:12. However it is not mere application of prophetic proof-texts that interests us. It is the full figure of Jesus as he emerges in the Gospels. He is certainly the man of the Spirit. This we see in the following ways:–

(a) *He was conceived in and by the Spirit.* That we have already seen. It is reasonable to

assume that even more than John the Baptist he was filled with the Spirit from his mother's womb.

- (b) *He grew up in the Spirit.* The two passages of Luke 2:40 and 52 indicate good human growth. Wisdom is one of the elements that is twice predicated of him. In this we are reminded of Isaiah 11: 2. However it is the events which attend his birth which show us how the Spirit is active concerning him. In regard to John's birth, both Zechariah and Elizabeth are filled with the Spirit. In regard to Jesus, Simeon has the Holy Spirit upon him and prophecies over Jesus. Doubtless Anna, also was a person of the Holy Spirit. We can conclude that Jesus grew up in the aid and power of the Spirit.
- (e) *He was baptised in the Spirit* The four Gospel accounts are aware of this. At his baptism Jesus is anointed Messiah, a term which seems to be synonymous with "the Son of God" (cf. Matt. 16:16, 26:63). Acts 10:38 speaks of this anointing as producing the ministry Jesus wrought. Jesus himself interprets it from Isaiah 61:1f, whilst the Father uses, as we have seen, Isaiah 42:] and Psalm 2:7 to describe the significance of the event.
- We have said that men of the Spirit could only accomplish what was demanded of them by what had been given to them by the Spirit. This must be so, also, with Jesus.
- (d) *He ministered in and by the Spirit.* Both Acts 10:38 and Matt. 12:28 specify that Jesus wrought his miracles, signs and wonders, healings and exorcisms by the Spirit. We see that he was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to have his Sonship tested by Satan. There is no diminution of the Spirit through this event since "Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee .... and he taught in their synagogues being glorified by all". As

human spirit he was undoubtedly fulfilled and enabled by Holy Spirit.

He rarely speaks of the Holy Spirit during his ministry, but doubtless he understood the ministry of the Spirit to himself. His profound statement in regard to worship of God through the Spirit (John 4: 23–24) must have come out of his own experience in the Spirit. In Luke 10:21 we see him in such worship and prayer.

- (e) *He offered himself through the eternal Spirit.* This is a commentary of Hebrews 9:14. It partly refers to the fact that he went to the Cross unblemished and so was the true sacrifice. However, since Jesus did all things through the Spirit we assume he also fulfilled the work of redemption by the Spirit. Doubtless the union of the two in this work speaks of very deep dimensions in regard to his love, his suffering, and his battle with the powers of darkness.
- (f) *He was raised from the dead through the Holy Spirit.* Romans 1:4 and 8:11 do not directly say that Jesus was raised from the dead by the Spirit, but that thrust is unmistakable. The Spirit is going to raise us, hence we assume he raised Jesus. Jesus rose through the spirit of holiness, and we assume his spirit had its holiness through the Holy Spirit. The care of the Spirit in that experience of death must mean that at no point did the Spirit separate from the one he had anointed and aided.
- (g) *Jesus ascended by the power of the Spirit.* Ephesians 1:19–21 speaks of the power which raised Jesus from the dead. This same power has set him at the right hand of the Father. This power in Romans 6:4 is called “the glory of the Father”, yet we take it that the operative power is the Spirit himself. This must be so since he is the spirit of

life, the creative, and the re-creative Spirit.

### 3. JESUS UNIQUE AMONGST MEN BECAUSE OF THE SPIRIT

Having said all that we have in the seven categories above, we need also to understand the consciousness that the Spirit must have given to Jesus, even before his Messianic anointing, and certainly following it. This consciousness was of himself, and his relationship to the Father. He could cry “Abba!” (Mark 14:36). Indeed when he prayed to his Father his level of utterance was high (cf. Luke 10:21). In Luke 11:1ff we see that he moved his disciples to want to pray in similar manner.

However, it is John’s Gospel which gives us an extraordinary view of Father–Sonship as Jesus lived it. This is not confined to the Gospel of John. Matthew 11:27 has long intrigued scholars as it suddenly confronts us with the fact that Jesus has unique knowledge of God, as Father, he being uniquely Son. In fact he seems to suggest that one does not know God really – not in depth – unless one knows Him as Father. Obviously no one can have his own unique relationship with God, but he is prepared to reveal God as Father *to those to whom he chooses to do so*. Unless he does, man will continue in ignorance of the full nature of God.

As we have said, John’s Gospel alerts us to the unusual nature of Jesus as man. It is not that his humanity is of another quality, in the sense that he is more than a man in his humanity, or that he has a super humanity. In fact nothing about his humanity appears to differ from that of others. There is however this puzzling quality of *relationship* which he claims to have with the Father, God. Nor is it simply a claim. He is virtually saying

that if his hearers knew God as Father they would recognise him as Son, indeed would understand – his humanity and all given in – that he had come from the Father.

At no point does he explicitly point to the Spirit as the means, cause or agent for this knowledge of God which he possesses. However it is Peter who later gives us the indication, “Jesus of Nazareth whom God anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing all manner of good and healing all those who were oppressed of the devil, *for God was with him*”. Peter is saying that God was with Jesus, the man from Nazareth, and so related to him that he was possessed of great power and accomplished wonderful things – healings, signs, miracles, exorcisms, and the like – thus giving evidence of a humanity exercised in an incomparable way. None had been or done like him before.

In John 2:23 – 3:14 Jesus does not trust the sudden acceptance which he meets from people who are impressed by his signs which he has done. He tells a member of the Sanhedrin, Nicodemus that it is not enough for him to say, “We know that *you are a man come from God*; for no man can do the things that you do, unless *God be with him*”. He says, “Except a man be born again *he cannot see the Kingdom of God*”, implying that Nicodemus has not been born again. He adds, “Unless one is born of water and of the Spirit *he cannot enter the Kingdom of God*”.

He is giving us a clue to his own knowledge and experience of God – the birth of man by the Spirit. If a man were to have this he would understand Jesus. Jesus is a man of the Spirit. He worships the Father in Spirit and in truth, and does so uniquely. Knowing this we begin to see that the man Jesus is different from all men who have walked the earth.

This is enormously important for a true Christology.<sup>5</sup> It does not mean that when we have analysed the Scriptures, studied the Christological categories we find there, and put them together as best we can that we will be much closer to really knowing him. Unless we too are men and women of the Spirit we *will never understand* this one whom Luther calls “the proper man”, i.e. the true man of the Spirit.

We mean that in the OT there are prophecies of Messiah, of the son of Jesse, the Davidic king of the new and extended kingdom, the Son of Man who is given authority over all nations and peoples and tribes, the one who is Wonderful Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace, the one who is the coming King, riding into Zion upon an ass, that is the colt, the foal of an ass. He is also the Suffering Servant bearing man’s griefs and sorrows, having man’s total iniquity laid upon him, and by his death justifying many. He is the prince of the new covenant, the covenant of peace. He is all of these things.

That so many things can be contained in one man, and must be comprehended in him is a great mystery. A Christology which does not contain them within the man Jesus is obviously a deficient Christology. Yet to understand such a person apart from the Spirit is posing the impossible. Hence Jesus’ kind encouragement to the disciples, “Shall not your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him”, and his final teaching in John chapters 14, 15 and 16 concerning (a) The Father, (b) The Son, and (c) The Holy Spirit. When the Spirit was

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<sup>5</sup> A detailed study of Christology is available from N.C.P.I. in note form from the Third Short-Term Bible School (1978).

come they would understand both him and his Father. To these statements we must add the Lukan elements in Luke 24:48–49, and Acts 1:5–8. In the light of these a simple but profound understanding of this man of the Spirit would come.

Of the Spirit Jesus said, “He is among you (in my person and actions), but he shall be in you.” (John 14:17).

## **STUDY FIVE**

# **The Holy Spirit and God's Plan--IV Messiah Fulfils the Scriptures through the Spirit**

*Jesus' View of the Holy Spirit; Jesus the Fulfilment of the Prophecies; The Outworking of these Prophecies, The Universal Outpouring of the Spirit*

### **1. JESUS' VIEW OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

We need not doubt that Jesus knew the events attending the birth of John the Baptist and his own birth. He would have known of the evidences of this special work of the Spirit; Our view of him when he is in the temple, talking with the learned doctors, is enough to show his consciousness of his being.

He talks about "my Father's house", which to say the least is an unusual phrase. At his baptism he would have been conscious of the anointing, and this would be verified by the Father's, "Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased". His Messianic designation is linked with the anointing of the Spirit.

This must be the reason that he accepts the leading of the Spirit immediately, and enough to be led into the wilderness (cf. Rom. 8:14). His experience there was one of triumph and we saw that he returned in the power of the Spirit to Galilee. Yet it is from other passages that we see his high regard for the Spirit. It is not too much to say he submits to the Lordship of the Spirit. A comparison of Matt. 12:31f, Mark 3:28f, and Luke 12:10 (cf. Luke 11:18ff) shows us that Jesus claims that if one speaks a word against the Son of Man he will be forgiven, but whoever speaks a word against the

Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, not only in this life, but also in the next. Such speaking is called blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. In this sense Jesus places the Holy Spirit far above himself as the Son of Man.

The reason for this is seen in Matt. 12:28 where Jesus says that if he casts out demons by the Holy Spirit then has the Kingdom of God come upon the people. Luke 10:9 supports the same principle, especially when linked with Peter's explanation of Acts 10:38. In other words, ' where Jesus is the Kingdom is, and is in action. However it is only where the Spirit is present that Jesus can be the King–Messiah, for his very anointing is of the Spirit, and indeed, the Spirit himself.

We can draw the conclusion, then, that Jesus saw himself as the fulfilment of the prophecies, but knew such fulfilment was only through the power, direction and enablement of the Spirit himself. As we have pointed out, Luke 10:21 shows a very high moment when he is conscious of the Father, and the Father's will, and praises his Father for that will, when in fact some of it seemed to indicate rejection of himself, failure to understand him by those who were "wise and prudent"!

## **2. JESUS THE FULFILMENT OF THE PROPHECIES**

Elsewhere we have given details of (a) The prophecies and (b) Their fulfilment.<sup>6</sup> What we propose to do here is show that Christ and the apostles understood he had fulfilled these prophecies. If

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<sup>6</sup> That is in "The Person and Work of *Christ*" N.C.P.I. Short–Term Bible School, 1978.

then we keep in mind that the Spirit was the author of those prophecies, then we can see how intimate is his connection with Christ in leading, empowering and enabling him to fulfil them. This would constitute part of fulfilling the large programme of salvation history.

In Luke 24:25–27 Jesus speaks of having fulfilled all that the prophets have spoken. This, he pointed out, was what it was all about! In Luke 24:44 he says, “These are my words which I spoke to you, while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms must be *fulfilled*”. Having said this he opened their minds to understand (these Scriptures). He then added, “Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem”.

Notice that not only in his life, ministry, death and resurrection has he fulfilled the Scriptures, but that *further fulfilment of these* will be the preaching of repentance and remission of sins across the world. The Gospels show us, and often in meticulous detail, how Christ fulfilled the Scriptures, so much so that often their fulfilment seems almost mechanical, although of course it is not. Jesus then walked every step of the prophetically laid out path. He also fulfilled all the offices we have referred to of Messiah, Son of Man, Messianic King, Suffering Servant, and so on. These details are many, and the working out of them quite complicated. Yet they are there; that is what matters. Christ is the fulfilment of the Scriptures. Shortly we will see that their fulfilment is not simply in order to justify the prophecies for that

would be futile. The prophecies are there because their fulfilment is primarily indispensable to the plan of God and the salvation of mankind. Their fulfilment certainly “authenticates” Messiah, if that is called for, but it is what their fulfilment accomplishes that is the real point. Before proceeding to this, let us see whether Christ’s followers, after his resurrection and in their proclamation understood and proclaimed him as the fulfilment of the prophecies.

This is so. The Book of the Acts, particularly in the sermons given by such as Peter, Stephen and Paul constantly reiterates this point. These speakers keep quoting actual prophecies in relation to the life and ministry of Jesus. They see them as authenticating the Cross, Resurrection and Ascension. Acts 17:2f says, “And Paul went in (to the synagogue) as was his custom, and for three weeks argued with them from the Scriptures, explaining and proving that it was necessary for Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead...” In his first recorded sermon Paul says of the Jewish rulers “...because they did not recognise him nor understand the utterances of the prophets... *fulfilled these by condemning him*” ...”And we bring you the good news that what God promised to the fathers, this he has fulfilled to us their children by raising Jesus from the dead, as it is written...” Later Paul claimed he was “saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass...” (Acts 13:27, 32, 26:22). Similarly in I Cor. 15:3–4 Paul says, “For I delivered to you as of first importance that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins *in accordance with the Scriptures*, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day *in accordance with the Scriptures.*”

We conclude then that the early church saw Jesus as the fulfilment of the Scriptures. Far from making these prophecies redundant, it shows their dynamic

and through them conducts us to deeper views of Messiah. More than this, it reminds us that the Spirit who is both behind the utterances or the prophecies and then their fulfilment is indeed the Lord the Spirit, God's unresting and active Agent in the fulfilment of His plan.

### 3. THE OUTWORKING OF THESE PROPHECIES

Wonderful, and even curious as it would be for a person in history to fulfil prophecies concerning him, it could conceivably be pointless also. Therefore it is the *nature* of the prophecies which really matters. These, in the OT are of such high level and value that their fulfilment is not only astonishing but eminently useful. We must limit the variety and details of these to certain basic headings. They are (a) Messiah and the Kingdom. (b) The New Covenant. (c) The pouring out of the Holy Spirit on "all flesh". These three in turn relate to further themes such as the people of God, the forgiveness of sins, the universal reign of Christ as Lord, and yet more elements implied by these we have just stated. They involve the redemption of man, his sanctification and glorification. They involve theodicy, the justification of God, and the ultimate revelation of His glory. It may not be easy, at first sight, to see the connections, but they are there.

#### (i) Christ, Messiah–King and His Kingdom

This is the theme proclaimed by John. The Kingdom was at hand. In Mark 1:14 Jesus takes it over from John. As we have seen, his being acclaimed Messiah–Son by the Father, and anointed for that ministry means that the Kingdom is in operation wherever he works through the Spirit, or perhaps better still, the Spirit through him. However, whilst this is good, it is not good

enough. The victory of the Kingdom must be sealed for all time. Satan, the prince of this world must be defeated. This was the thrust of the original prophecy of Gen. 3:15. Jesus claims to be the stronger-than-the-strong man (Luke 11:21ff), and pronounces the doom of Satan in John 12:31 (cf. 14: 30–31). Hence the Cross constitutes the defeat of evil, principally. In this sense the Kingdom is secured.

John the Baptist allied the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins with the Kingdom. Messiah then has to deliver his people from Satan by bearing their sins. This victory is indicated in Hebrews 2:14–15, and Col. 2:14–15. All enemies are defeated, and especially death (Rom. 5:10, cf. I Cor. 15:55–56) so that when Christ rises from the dead his people can be (and are) “transferred from the powers of darkness into the Kingdom of the Son of His love” (Col. 1:13). This is linked with the forgiveness of sins (Col. 1:14). We would expect this message of the Kingdom to be proclaimed as a result of Messiah fulfilling the Scriptures, and so it is in the Book of Acts, with references to it, often, in the Epistles.

An allied theme with this victory becomes the primary point of proclamation by the early church. It is this:— *“Jesus is Lord!”* Later we will see how the Lord through the Spirit, and the Spirit through the Lord work out the Father’s plan to fulfilment. However, at this point we must see that there is no Kingdom unless Jesus is “King of kings, and Lord of lords” (Rev. 1:5, 17:14, 19:16, cf. Acts 2:36, 10:36). He must be the King of Psalm 2:1–7 and Psalm 110. We must note that it is not simply the eternal Son or Logos who is Lord, but Jesus, that is his humanity has gained this title and authority, through the Cross and the Resurrection.

## (ii) Christ and the New Covenant

Nowhere in the OT is the covenant with Abraham rescinded. It is by nature of the case in the ultimate, universal. The covenant with Israel, as Israel, especially as it relates to Palestine, has conditions about it. Some scholars consider God has rescinded it; others do not. However this may be, Jeremiah 31:31–34 and related passages make it clear God will make a new covenant with the house of Israel which is “not the covenant that I made with them when I brought them out of the land of Egypt ... which covenant they broke” (Jer. 31:31ff). It is to be a new covenant. It is to be a covenant which evokes spontaneous obedience in accordance with the law internalised in the heart. Out of this heart thing will come true (relational) knowledge of God. This will come from the free and total forgiveness of sins which has no reference to the Mosaic sacrificial ritual and cultus.

The Benedictus in Luke 1:68–79 makes it clear that the new covenant is really the flowering out of that made with Abraham. Matthew 26:28 also makes it clear that the Cross fulfils this covenant. The writer of, Hebrews develops his theme of the better covenant, better mediator of covenant, better sacrificial structure, better outcome – mainly full forgiveness and complete access to God. Later we will see how the Spirit *applies* the Covenant, but here we see that by his ministry in and through Christ the Spirit brings the mediator (Jesus) to full pitch as the covenant–mediator. It is also interesting to note that Kingdom–victory through the Cross and Resurrection bring the forgiveness which becomes the covenant–gift.

#### 4. THE UNIVERSAL OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT

This promise – the universal outpouring of the Spirit – is closely connected with the promise of the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel. The restoration of the Kingdom to Israel in the Acts and Epistles does not simply embrace Israel but takes on universal character, and this, too, is in accordance with the prophecies of the OT. In this sense the Kingdom, the Covenant, and the outpouring of the Spirit are inter-related prophecies, especially in respect of their fulfilment. For example the restoration prophecy of Ezekiel 36:24–28 accords very closely with the covenant promise of Jer. 31:31–34. Again the restoration of Israel, and of its Kingdom is described in the full chapter of Ezekiel 37. In the first half the outpouring of the Spirit on Israel is described, and in the second half the uniting of Israel's Kingdom under the Davidic King. Also God will make a covenant of peace with them, and they will constitute His sanctuary – a theme which is taken up at the end of Ephesians 2, relating to the church, and in the opening verses of Revelation 21 where His people constitute His sanctuary.

We have already seen that there are many promises of the outpouring of the Spirit and the renewal of Israel's Kingdom. Such passages are Isaiah 32:14ff, 35:1–10, 43:18ff, and 44:3ff. In these the Spirit is directly referred to. In other passages such as Isaiah 55 and 59 the reference is not direct but the principle is the same. Hence in Acts 1:3–8 we see the theme of the Kingdom being spelled out by the risen Messiah, and also the promise of the outpouring of the Spirit. The apostles naturally enough connect the two and ask whether there will be an *immediate* restoration of the Kingdom to Israel. Jesus does not deny there will be a restoration but says that the times and seasons are in the Father's hands. Their job is, having received the Kingdom to

be about the Kingdom's business, and leave the outworking to the Father Himself.

When John the Baptist promised that Messiah would baptise his hearers in (or, with) the Holy Spirit he was pointing to a ministry of Jesus. Jesus taught his disciples that the Spirit would come primarily from the Father, but that he too would be involved. He would ask the Father, who would send the Spirit (John 14:16). The Father would send him in Jesus' name (John 14:26). In fact the Son will send him from the Father (John 15:26). Jesus must go or the Spirit will not come (John 16:7). In Acts 1:5 Jesus says they will be baptised in the Spirit shortly, and in Acts 1:8 says the Spirit will come upon them.

When the Spirit comes at Pentecost Peter explains the event from Joel 2. This too is a chapter embracing both the restoration of Israel's kingdom, and the outpouring of the Spirit. In this case it is "upon all flesh". The interesting point, however, is in Acts 2:33 where Peter says of Messiah, "Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit he has poured out this which you see and hear". That is Messiah is the one who pours out the universal gift of the Holy Spirit! The man of the Spirit has now become the man who pours out the Spirit, so that *the Spirit is now the Spirit of this man*.

It is impossible to calculate the significance of this change. To this point the Spirit has always worked in creation, through history, sustaining the life of man, and working through prophets and persons to usher in the day and events of Christ. This too he has done, and has so enabled the man Jesus to be the true Messiah and Lord of the Kingdom, and the mediator of the covenant, that true salvation has

become the new order of the world, rightly understood. Now that man, Jesus, being raised from the dead and seated at the right hand of God has received the gift of the Holy Spirit to give to all men. Not simply as before will he anoint certain leaders, kings, Judges, prophets, artisans and priests, but he will come to all men in a new and unprecedented manner.

This, in the eyes of the Holy Spirit, must be one of the greatest elements of fulfilment of the prophecies. Somewhere behind this lies the principle, "The Spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus".

And of course the testimony of the Son is in reality the testimony of the Father.

## **STUDY SIX**

### **The Holy Spirit and God's Plan--V The New Era of the Spirit**

*Pentecost and Its Significance; The Spirit the Applicator; The New People of God: The Proclamation of the Gospel; The Current Programme of Jesus' the Lord; The Spirit at the End. Time*

#### **1. PENTECOST AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE**

Acts 1:3–8, with the teaching concerning the Spirit in John, chapters 14 to 16, gives the primary significance of Pentecost. Add to this Luke 24:45–49, the passages of the Gospel commission including John 20:19–23, and the purpose of Pentecost is made plain. Up to the ascension of Christ the Spirit has been aiding Jesus to complete the work of salvation, to seal the victory of the Kingdom, and to bring in forgiveness of sins. Now the redemptive work of the Father, through the Son (and, by the Spirit) has to be proclaimed and applied in the human scene.

To put it another way: What boots it to shape history up to “the proper Man”, and for prophecy to be fulfilled in him, and the Spirit to lead and empower him, if he, now become the Lord of glory should fail to be proclaimed to men? What boots it if salvation has been made available to man and man not know it? What hope, also, of man knowing and really hearing if the Spirit of truth does not come to apply the word of redemption in which he has been so powerfully the enabling Agent? The significance of Pentecost is that the Spirit has come, and come in a new way, and come for the proclamation of the Gospel, the operation of the Kingdom, and for the birth and growth of the Body of Christ, the Church, the people of God.

We will now give our attention to these details.

## 2. THE SPIRIT THE APPLICATOR

One of the quirks of textual history in regard to the Spirit has been the use of a preposition in John 16:13 (King James Version) where it is said of the Holy Spirit, “He will not speak of himself”. This was generally taken to mean “about himself”, however the Greek preposition *apo* means “from”, and is translated in the RSV “on his own authority”, as an equivalent statement of Jesus in John 14:10 where Jesus said “I say nothing of myself” now translated “on my own authority” or, “from myself”. Because of this misunderstanding the Holy Spirit was often called “the anonymous one”, as though he sought (modestly) to hide himself. In fact from Genesis to Revelation the Holy Spirit reveals much of himself, to wit that we can write these notes on all that is apparent concerning his person and work.

**Secondly** there have been those who have said, “The only work of the Spirit is to apply the work of Christ”. If we add “sick” after “only” then the balance is restored. Given his work is application, then what a work! However we know he was agent in the preparation for Christ’s coming, and in the redeeming work of Christ. It is therefore given to him to apply it, and without this application the work of redemption is static and ineffective. We say this with great reverence.

It is not our purpose here to examine the modes or even the results of his applicatory work. We will go into great detail in later studies into his work of redemption, sanctification and glorification. At the moment we simply want to see that the people of God are those through whom the Spirit works, for Pentecost was also the birthday of the church.

### 3. THE NEW PEOPLE OF GOD

I Peter 2:9–10 makes a direct transference of old Israel to the new people of God by applying Exodus 19:5–6 to them. In Acts 2:36 Peter says, “*Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made him (Jesus) both Lord and Christ*”. When 3,000 accept the word and are baptised Peter then exhorts them, “Save yourselves from this crooked generation”, i.e. the generation which having crucified Jesus will not now, even with the fact of the resurrection and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit repent and turn to him. In this sense a new people of God has been born, although with real continuity with the old. The one hundred and twenty upon whom the Spirit has been poured are Jews who have believed in Christ. Now they are joined by none but Jews who believe at Pentecost.

The mode and manner of this new people, as they live out their life has continuity with the old life, for they worship at the temple and observe the customs of their fathers. However, it has discontinuity also. Because much, if not most of prophecy has been fulfilled in Messiah, because he is Messiah, and is Lord, they are under new modes of life.’ They worship by the Spirit (Phil. 3:3). They have new and unusual powers and gifts from the Spirit. They have what is called “the unity of the Spirit”, and this has been ensured by the supreme gift of the Spirit – love (Rom. 5:5).

All this given in – a new people with new modes of life – it is what the new people of God *do* which is of primary importance. They proclaim the Kingdom, and the Gospel of the Kingdom. In another term this is called “witnessing to Messiah” (Acts 1:8), but it is witnessing in the context of the outworking of the Kingdom of God in the affairs of men – “to the end/s of the earth”.

#### 4. THE PROCLAMATION OF THE GOSPEL

Is the new people of God to be composed of those who imitate Christ, or do the things which Jesus did? Are they an extension of his ministry such as was seen in Palestine? Do they simply multiply the operations and effects of that ministry, or do they have a proclamation of what he did which is effective, because what he did is what redeems man? Is then any imitation of Jesus a mere by-product, a spin-off as it were of being incorporated in him, and not the basic work of the Spirit in 'the people of God? These questions need (and will have) their answers, but for the moment the important fact before us is that the people of God must proclaim the Gospel.

They must proclaim because Christ has commanded that they do so. This is evident from the closing portions of the four Gospels and the opening portion of Acts. They must proclaim not merely to obey a command for if they love Christ they will automatically and spontaneously be about obedience (John 14: 15). No, they must proclaim because that is God's burden in history. Man is lost and perishing; man is in existential anguish; man is under the doom of judgement; man needs liberation from his mortal enemies. Man cannot truly live until the love and justice of God has freed him.

Moreover the Kingdom is in action and power (I Cor. 4:20, Rom. 14:17). At Pentecost the Spirit falls on "all flesh", at least, as Pentecost signifies, the "first-fruits" of the ultimate harvest. In particular, those of Israel are anointed. In Acts 8 there is an anointing, in principle, of the Samaritans, and in Acts 10 - 11 of the Gentiles. This is the first fulfilment of "Jerusalem and all Judea, Samaria, and the end/s of the earth". If we look at the references to the Kingdom (e.g. Acts 8: 5-12, 19:8, 20:20-25, 28:23, 30-31) in Acts and the epistles we see that those who hear the Gospel must

believe that Jesus is Lord, Messiah of the Kingdom, and that the power of God is working to effect salvation in the elect, and to bring judgement to the evil powers and impenitent man.

I Cor. 1:21 shows that only “the foolishness of the proclamation (*kerugma*)” can save men. Its *modes* may be foolish (“not with enticing words of men’s wisdom”, “in weakness and in much fear and trembling”) but its *substance* is even more foolish: “To the Jews a stumbling block (“a scandal”) and to the Greek (the intellectual) foolishness”. Yet it is the only way, the dynamic way of saving men. However, it only saves because of the power of the Spirit. This is seen in I Cor. 2:4f, I Thess. 1:5, I Peter 1:12.

We need not enter into all the details of the *kerugma*. Roughly speaking they are these:–

In accordance with the prophecies Messiah has appeared. He was anointed, attested to by God through the signs and wonders which attended his ministry. His death, though normally speaking to be regarded as a scandal, yet was beforehand ordained by God. Being raised from the dead attests him to be Messiah and Lord, and, indeed, Son of God. One must believe and repent, and so receive forgiveness and eternal life. One will also receive the gift of the Spirit. One will have gained entrance into the Kingdom of God. Those who reject must remember that God will one day judge the world by this man, Jesus. Meantime he is actively Lord over creation.

## 5. THE CURRENT PROGRAMME OF JESUS THE LORD

The significance of Pentecost is seen in that the people of God are now in the ministry of prophecy or the testimony of Jesus (Acts 1:8, Rev. 19:10, cf. Acts 2:15–21). This means that Jesus is in action, still working in history. Revelation 2:26 and 3:21 (cf. Ephes. 1:19–23) show that Messiah is at the right hand of God, the place of reigning, and that as head of his church he is directing his people in the plan of action which the Father has for history.

In Matt. 28:18–20 Jesus makes it clear that as the apostles follow his directions so they will be fruitful, and that he, the Lord will be with them to *the consummation of the age*. The end of Mark depicts him as working with them, confirming their word by signs and wonders. This thought is repeated in Acts 14:3 “...the Lord, who bore witness to the word of his grace, granting signs and wonders to be done by their hands” (cf. Acts 19:11, 20). It is apparent that the Lord was present, primarily, in and by the Holy Spirit, but what matters is that he was present.

This anticipation of ultimate victory because of the Cross is stated clearly in Hebrews 1:3 and 10:12. By virtue of his Cross-victory he is expectant of ultimate victory. This principle is seen in the opening section of Revelation 5. In I Cor. 15:24–28 it is put together well. He will ultimately subdue, in action, the enemies he has defeated principally and legally at the Cross.

It scarcely needs us to point out that in this era of the Spirit it is the Spirit who guides the people of God. Romans 8:14, and Gal. 5:16–26 set this principle out clearly. God's people walk

according to the Spirit or are led by the Spirit. However in the Book of Acts we see this in practice. From Pentecost onwards the apostles and others are led by the Spirit, both in the internal actions of life and discipline within the church, and in the external ministry of proclamation. Peter goes to Caesarea by the guidance of the Spirit, and an angel and the Spirit guide Philip to the chariot of the Ethiopian eunuch. Paul and Barnabas are sent out on the guidance of the Holy Spirit to the church at Antioch, whilst the council at Jerusalem will make only that move which “seemed good to the Holy Spirit and us”. Paul and Silas are forbidden by the Spirit to speak the word in Asia. When they attempt to go into Bythinia they are prevented by the Spirit.

To this many things could be added, where the Spirit warns and guides, particularly through prophecy. However these things may be, the Holy Spirit, sent by Messiah, is leading Christ’s people in the plan of the Father. Hence Paul’s injunction to “Be not foolish but wise, knowing the will of the Lord”, and immediately adds, “Be filled with the Spirit”, knowing it is through him that that will is made known.

Prophecy as our Lord outlines it in the Olivet discourse, and as John reveals it in the Revelation, and as Peter and Paul depict it in the prophetic passages of their letters, all indicate that the day of the Lord is coming, that is the end-time. In Acts 2:14–21 Peter points out that in the prophecy of Joel the era of the Spirit was to commence with the outpouring (Pentecost) and continue unto when “the day of the Lord comes, the great and manifest day”. This means, then, that the Holy Spirit is working his work, the work of the Father and the Son, which can be summed up in “the testimony of Jesus” from Pentecost to the day of the Lord, and certainly on the very day of the Lord itself, be

that a day or a period of time and operations. This is why he is called the eschatological Spirit.

To be the eschatological Spirit does not mean he will work only at the end-time, but that he has always been working for the end-time. If we can speak of his shaping up history for the incarnation and ministry of Christ, and if we can speak of his shaping up man to redemption and man in redemption unto glorification then we can begin to understand the whole import of the person and work of the Spirit. This is the real meaning of his being called the eschatological Spirit. Of course in the same sense we can speak of “the eschatological Father” and “the eschatological Son”, as incongruous as those statements sound. God has always had His true and in view, and it is of those things we will presently speak.

## 6. THE SPIRIT AT THE END-TIME

In the OT the Spirit is often called “the *ruach* of His mouth”. By this *ruach* we saw creation made. In Isaiah 11:2 the *ruach* of the Lord rests upon “the shoot from the stump of Jesse”, i.e. the Davidic Messiah. This is the sevenfold Spirit. The anointed one – the one upon whom the Spirit comes – will judge the world, and “he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with *the ruach* of his lips he shall slay the wicked.” He will judge then with Word and Spirit, and the Spirit shall execute judgement.

In Isaiah 4:2 we read of “in *that day*” when all shall be cleansed and holy following judgement. There will be a *ruach of judgement*, and a *ruach of burning*. This relates to the warning of John to the Pharisees and Sadducees, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come.” He refers to snakes fleeing before a desert fire. He

adds, "Bear fruit that befits repentance, and do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father', for I tell you that God is able to raise up from these stones children to Abraham. Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit *is cut down and thrown into the fire*". What, then, is that fire? He adds, "I baptise you with water for repentance, but he who is coming after me is mightier than I .... *he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire*. His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into the granary, but *the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.*"

"...with the Holy Spirit and fire" is a form of Hebraic parallelism. The Holy Spirit is fire, and fire is one of his symbols as was seen on the day of Pentecost. The same fire burns up the dross but purifies where there is need. Jeremiah had the word of God as fire in his bones. This is the fire of energy. Hence the Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of judgement, and the Spirit of burning" since "our God is a consuming fire." I Cor. 3 shows that the ultimate judgement will be a test which will burn up the dross but, purify the pure and true metal. Again in II Thess. 2:8 "the breach of his (Jesus's) mouth" will destroy "the lawless one". This is a use of the *ruach* of Isa. 11:4 and is also eschatological.

On the one hand, then, the Spirit will be operating at the judgement. Yet we know – and will further see – that he is the eschatological Spirit in that he sanctifies and glorifies the believer. This is a very intimate work, but it is the climax of his total work throughout history as he works with the Father and the Son. We find him, at the end of the Revelation saying with the church, the Bride, "Come!" The first "Come!" is to the Bridegroom, for the marriage of the Bride and the Lamb is a blessed con-

summation to history. The second “Come!” is to all who, as yet, have not drunk of the water of life, freely (cf. Isaiah 55:1ff).

We can close this chapter of our studies by saying that when the glorification of man is manifested then the glory of God is shown in full. That is the point where the plan of God is completed, and we recognise with awe, gratitude, and love, that the tireless Agent who works ceaselessly to fulfil this plan is the one who is called the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of glory, and the Spirit of the Father and the Spirit of the Son.

## STUDY SEVEN

### The Holy Spirit and Man as Person—I

*What is Man?; Created Man and the Holy Spirit: Man and the Spirit of Holiness*

#### 1. WHAT IS MAN?

This is a very important question. On it depends understanding of the work of the Spirit, as also reciprocally the work of the Spirit helps us, then, to understand more of what and who man is.

##### (i) Man is Spirit

We can only understand the nature of man in the light of the nature of God, so that our starting point, then, is God. Man is made in the image of God. This must mean that he reflects God in Who He is and what He does, by being in total contingency upon Him. Man is creature, and no less than creatures, but then he is also creature in a way in which no other being is creature. None is in the image of God, but man.

If man is an emanation or extension of God then he is divine. Man is not divine, the various references to his ephemeral nature – e.g. “all flesh is as grass” – show that if we can speak about him essentially, then he is dust. However it is into that dust that God has breathed, and man has become “a living being (soul; Heb. *nephesh*)”. Unfortunately the prevalence of “Bible-psychologies” has sought to make man either bipartite (Body–soul, with the spirit and the soul one) or tripartite (Body–soul–spirit), whereas the Hebrew Scriptures think of man as a total being, without the kind of divisions we make in our analyses today. A. B. Come, “*Human Spirit and Holy Spirit*”, and G. S. Hendry, “*The*

*Holy Spirit in Theology*”, as also Henrikus Berkhof, “*The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit*” have made out a very good case for thinking of man primarily as “spirit”. One of the statements of fallen man – “spiritually dead” – is probably a wrong statement. Probably “spiritually perverse” would be a better statement, but anyway it points to the fact of man’s spirit-being. However, by “spirit” we do not mean that which is immaterial or ethereal or merely unseen, but that which constitutes true personhood, having the element of discreteness. We mean having basic affinity with God Who ‘is Spirit. We seek to define, but with difficulty what spirit is.

An example of this is the “body of glory” (cf. Phil. 3:21, I Cor. 15:51ff). This can mean “a glorious body”, but now a body composed of (ethereal) glory. It will be a true body, a glorified body, but a body, as was that of Jesus “having flesh and bones”. The person will be “spiritual” according to I Cor. 15:45–50, yet we will be “spirits”, each being “spirit”. Hebrews 12:23 speaks of “the spirits of just men made perfect”, and 12:9 speaks of “the Father of spirits”, an obvious reference to Numbers 16:22 “the God of the spirits of all flesh” (“flesh” here means “mankind”).

Someone has pointed out that man can never really be just an animal. He may try to be so but cannot succeed. Nor can he succeed in being (as) God. He is neither. He is more than animal and less than God: he is human. He is spirit. Fallen man (cf. Psalm 8:3ff and Romans 3:23) is an anomaly, but a spiritual anomaly. He has to be consonant with being spirit but he will not. Jesus gave the clue when he said, “God is Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him *in spirit* and *in truth*.” Surely he meant, “They must be spirit and be truth (i.e. live truthfully and live spiritually) and so

have affinity with the Father who is the truth and who is Spirit.” That is, “Deep calls unto deep”, or “Like calls unto like”. If this were not so then man could be permanently happy and contented with less than God. Some of this truth may be expressed in Eccles. 3:11, “You have put eternity (or, the world) into man’s heart so that by searching he cannot find out the end from the beginning.” Man cannot be contented with less than the *all* that has been given to him. Being spirit he needs God the Spirit. With God the Spirit he is truly man.

(ii) Man, as Man, is Always “Becoming”

Passages such as Isaiah 43:6–7 and Ephes. 1:4–14 with I Cor. 2:6–12 indicate that man, even as created, was not complete within himself, nor intended to be. Before creation God had planned man’s glorification but had not glorified him at creation. In this sense man is created to grow into his fulness. Whilst the fall can be said to have “set him back” man did not change, essentially, from being “spirit”. Call fallen man “bad spirit” if we will, but he was still spirit and could only essentially be contented with the fulness of God. Even if he does not seek God (Roman. 3:11, Psalm 14:1–2) he is driven to seek *something*. In fact idolatry – in some form or another – is his *must*. He must have a god, and a god, rightly understood is not man.

Romans 8:17–25 indicates that redeemed man is waiting for full redemption. Phil. 3:21 shows the hunger of redeemed man for the body of glory, i.e. full and mature spirithood. II Cor. 3:18 tells us that justified man is increasing in glorification even whilst on this earth, and II Cor. 4:16ff shows us that suffering is the mode or means of glorification and that the process is doubtless ensuing whilst the redeemed are living in this world.

What we need to see is the connection of the person and work of the Spirit with man in all his “ages and stages”, that is in creation, the fall, the process of salvation history and the end–time. Does the Spirit leave fallen man to “un–becoming” or does he undo this and bring man to full and proper “becoming”? If so, what is man at the end of time when he has fully “become”? Surely the answers to these question, if demanding, must be some of the most thrilling a human being can know!

## 2. CREATED MAN AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of all creation. He is the Spirit of might and strength and through him everything has life. No less than the Word of God is the Spirit of God operating to bring all things into being, virtually out of nothing (cf. Hebrews 11:3, Psalm 33:6, 104:29–30). However, the creating of life, and the sustaining of it, wonderful as that may be, is not the primary question. The primary question is, “What kind of life is created?” Romans 1:19–20 indicates that it is that sort of life – in all its modes and forms – which indicates to us the kind of Being God is, not merely a proof that He is, that He exists. So when man is created our understanding of the work of the Spirit (and so the person of the Spirit) will arise from the kind of person man is, as created. Some of this, of course, we have seen above.

That man is remarkable is a mild understatement. Elihu made the statement, “The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life”. That is profound enough, but the question is “What kind of life?” The answer to that is seen in Genesis 1:26ff. It is also seen in Psalm 8, I Cor. 11:7, Eccles. 3:11, and 7:29, amongst other passages. If we understand man to be spirit, and then understand what is spirit – especially man–wise–

then we recognise the brilliance of man, his amazing powers and capacities, especially in comparison to other creatures, and we see one who if left to himself can accomplish almost anything (Gen. 11:6). Man's brilliance is not matched by an essential moral power to accomplish great things in the moral realm. In this sphere man can do nothing except he be contingent upon God. Romans 7:13–25 is probably the most famous passage ever written in describing man's moral impotency.

If we look at man—remarkable, and add to that picture the insights we have seen as to his appointed end (glorification) and his present “becoming”, then we see the measure of the Spirit's creative powers. What we began to see in John 4:23–24 of God being Spirit and man having to be spirit is linked with the wider truth of God being Father, and of course Christ being Son. Man is by nature a son of the Creator—Father. He has come to created being by the Spirit, but then the Spirit is, eternally, the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, simultaneously. However, having touched upon this point we will leave it for later amplification.

### 3. MAN AND THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS

We have stated, often, that the Spirit has, as it were, nothing of his own. He is the Spirit of the Father and of the Son, of Yahweh, of Jesus, of Christ, and so on. The term Holy Spirit is not really used to distinguish him, say, from “unholy spirit”, but is really “the Spirit of Holiness”. This is the thrust of Psalm 51:11 “Take not Thy Holy Spirit from me”, is really “Take not away the Spirit of holiness, i.e. the Spirit who creates in me a clean heart and puts a new and right spirit within me” (v. 10). Hence, as we have seen in Isaiah 4:4 the filth of Zion's daughters, and the bloodstains of Jerusalem are washed away by the

“Spirit of judgement, and the Spirit of burning”. Our section on cleansing by fire (above) shows us the same principle.

(i) **The Spirit and Holiness in the OT**

When we come to the subject of holiness itself in the OT we are met with a dynamic confrontation of the holiness of God Himself. The Hebrew words *qodesh* and *qadosh* which have the idea of separation or an object set apart are the adjectives, mainly used. Their use is prolific. God is holy, His people are holy, the tabernacle (temple) with its furniture is holy, Jerusalem is the holy city of God, the law is holy, worship must be holy, life must be holy. God is likened to fire, and this fire will destroy all that is not holy and purify dross away from that which is intended to be holy. God’s holiness is worshipful and God rejects ruthlessly anything not commensurate, in worship, with His holiness. Indeed His wrath is based on His holiness. Man’s fear of Him should also be based on His holiness. His holiness is dynamic, destroying that which is impure and evil.

At the same time His holiness is known in simplicity and love. In Isaiah 57:15 He is at once the high and lofty One who inhabits eternity and whose name is Holy, but also dwells with him who is of a contrite and humble spirit. He dwells thus to, “revive the spirit of the humble and to revive the spirit of the contrite”. Again in Hosea 11:9 He could easily destroy Israel but refuses to do so. He has always loved Israel. Hence He says, “I will not execute my fierce anger, I will not again destroy Ephraim; for I am God and not man, *the Holy One in your midst*, and I will not come to destroy”. He gives the compassionate warmth of His covenant love for Israel’s true security.

All through the OT we see God zealous for His people, that they may be holy. Exodus 19:5–6 is the *locus classicus* of this, and it is related to many other passages. God teaches His people purity, both in ceremonial and ritual, as in law. However it is the heart which He requires to be pure, and this is where we see the work of the Spirit. As we have seen in our wider sweep of salvation history, the Spirit who has created us in purity wishes to keep us in purity, for that is commensurate with being a true human, and, more so, with being the true people of God. That is why God is angry at anything which goes beyond or away from His created order in worship, righteousness, truth and love.

We have seen in Genesis 6:1–7 that mankind, from being “spirit” had become “flesh”. Then “wickedness was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of man’s heart was only evil continually”. In this context the Lord said, “My Spirit shall not abide in man for ever”. The meaning may have been that the Spirit would not dwell in man, thus abandoning him, even more to “flesh”. It may have meant that the *ruach* which keeps man *alive as a being* would be withdrawn, or it may have meant that God would give 120 years before this act of taking away the Spirit or ceasing to restrain man from ultimate evil. What is clear is that the Spirit relates to man’s current living and his ultimate judgement. In II Thess. 2:6–8 the “one who restrains” is considered by many to be the Holy Spirit.

When we come to *the story of David* we come to the fact that David had fallen into terrible sin. It was not as that sombre kind of sin which was Saul’s. This king had a curious attitude which brought on fits of remorse but never good repentance. It was that of a stubborn heart. David was clearly fleshly in his sin of adultery and murder, but from Psalm 32 we gather that as he hid his sin

it festered within him, bringing him to retributive forms of anguish and destruction. The word of the prophet to him, “Thou art the man:” really liberated him to repentance. Psalm 51 is the classical passage of repentance in the Scriptures. Not without cleansing and forgiveness can his guilt be destroyed – and it is! It is cleansed by “the Spirit of holiness”. David sees that God “requires truth in the inward parts” and asks, “Teach me wisdom in the secret heart”.

*In the story of Israel in the wilderness* we see the Holy Spirit leading the people to the promised land. Isaiah 63 says “They vexed the Holy Spirit”. This means, “They were unclean. They were not consonant with the true spirit of holiness man must have, and especially the people of God must have.” A study of Ephes. 4:26 – 5:2 gives us a New Testament parallel of the same kind of sin, the sin which grieves the Spirit.

*Finally we come to the prophets, by whom, as we have seen, the Spirit expresses himself richly.* They point to a holiness Israel lacks. Its polluting idolatry, its abominations, and its unrestrained immorality are so often castigated. The concept of a pure people, living wholly to the Lord changes to the recognition that under Israel in the bulk is the true Israel, the elect remnant, the *holy seed*. This is Israel’s true hope, and in fact the truth of God’s election. Had there not been left this stock, this stump, this holy seed, then Israel would have been no more. But God has kept for Himself such a people.

There are the promises, as we have seen them, of the covenant, and the new heart. Ezekiel 36 speaks of a new heart, a heart of flesh, a heart of obedience and a new spirit. The new spirit in Israel comes from the Holy Spirit within them. God will

have punished and purified Israel, and will restore their fortunes before their eyes and bring them back to their land *for the sake of His holy name!* In Ezekiel 37 Israel is totally renewed from its entire loss as a people.

What is clear from the covenant promises is that with the *new heart* there is *new obedience*. This is consonant with Deut. 30:6–10, where the circumcised heart loves God and keeps His commandments (cf. John 14:15). In the Psalms (see Psalms 19 and 119 especially) obedience follows the “enlarging of the heart”. We can sum all this up by saying that God insists on having a holy people who are consonant with their holy God. The Spirit works at this holiness in man, and is grieved when the demands of God are rejected and his own efforts (seemingly) thwarted. Prophetically he promises a rich redemption which will purify and warm the heart of man and make him true “spirit” again. In that day there will be a holy people.

#### (ii) The Spirit and Holiness in the NT

We have to admit that so far we have not described true holiness in its full meaning. The idea behind *qodesh* and *qadosh* which is thought to derive from the verb “to cut” seems to be that of separation. Man is not intrinsically holy, but contingently holy. If he lives obediently in contingency then he is living in holiness. Such holiness is not merely refusing to do evil, or seeking legalistically to keep with the law, but it is dynamic, negating evil on the one hand and warmly espousing true obedience on the other. True obedience is not simply moralistic operations, but participation in God’s world and God’s purposes.

When we come to the NT we find the Holy Spirit in powerful overt operations. These concern the

birth and ministry of John the Baptist, the conception, birth, life, baptism, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus. The Holy Spirit is greatly at work in the years of Jesus' ministry, and, if possible, even more in the early church. His shaping of the work of redemption through Christ, so that the gift of redemption can come to man is the story of the Gospels. His giving of that gift is the story of the Acts. The significance and outworking of all this is the thrust of the epistles. It is fair to say then, that we must first speak of the gift of redemption coming to man before we speak of holiness coming to him.

Two things are before us. **The first** is Jesus' constant anger at the working of evil. He rebuked the foul infestation by demons of human persons. To him it was an affront to his work of creation, and a caricature of what a person was to be before his Father, God. He liberated people from binding diseases, and even death. He freed some from the intolerable burden (and effects) of guilt. Finally he sealed the liberation from pollution by going to the Cross. In this *first operation* the Spirit is present. It is *by the Spirit* that Jesus exorcises, heals, raises from the dead and forgives sins. This, then, is a work of holiness by the Spirit.

The **second** matter concerns various Scriptures which make *sanctification* precede salvation, and even justification. In I Peter 1:2 Peter addresses those who are "chosen and destined by God the Father, and sanctified by the Spirit for obedience to Jesus Christ, and for sprinkling with his blood". "Obedience to Jesus Christ" is actually belief in the Gospel, and so, redemption. Here sanctification precedes this. It means that as the Father has chosen out, prior to redemption so has the Spirit set apart. The same idea is repeated in II Thess. 2:13

“...God chose you from the beginning to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit, and belief in the truth”. Again in I Cor. 6:11, “You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.” This latter is somewhat different from the former two, but at least shows sanctification by the Spirit precedes justification. All of this is contained, although not explicitly in I Peter 2:9–10 where the OT holy people are now the new true people of God, “a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people”.

Since in the factual order of experience repentance, faith and forgiveness follow in that order and add up to sanctification we will deal with them that way, but we may observe here that by the end of the NT it is seen who are the holy people of God. Their course is followed in the Acts, and they are spoken of much in the Epistles, but the Revelation shows their suffering and trials, and their ultimate emergence, at the end of time, as the holy people of God. He is not ashamed to dwell with them. What are these people? They are those who *have or hold or bear* “the testimony of Jesus”.

## **STUDY EIGHT**

### **The Holy Spirit and Man as Person--II The Holy Spirit and the Gift of Salvation**

*The Gift of Christ; The Gifts which are, and which bring Life*

In I Cor. 2:12 Paul says, "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us of God". These gifts, or things freely given, in the context, pertain primarily to the ultimate matters of glorification. However Paul certainly refers to all gifts. Romans 1:21ff tells us that man in the past, knowing God rejected Him and was "unthankful", i.e. he did not wish to see what he possessed as "the gifts of God". He has an inbuilt objection to ascribing these to God. He would rather ascribe them to the gods! When the Spirit comes he reveals these gifts.

#### **1. THE GIFT OF CHRIST**

The gifts of Christ (Ephes. 4:7–10) are the gifts given by Christ, but the gift of Christ is all that God gives to us in Christ, no less than Christ himself. In II Cor. 9:15 Paul cries, "Thanks be to God for His unspeakable gift!" Not even the disciples really understood the gift of Christ. At the birth of Jesus the angels spoke of God's great grace to man, and John later recorded, "The law came by Moses but grace and truth by Jesus Christ. . . .and of his fulness have we received, and grace upon grace." That however was on later reflection.

On the night of his betrayal Jesus said of the

Spirit that he would teach, would bring into remembrance all that Christ had spoken and finished by saying , “When the Spirit of truth comes he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. He will glorify me, for *he will take what is mine* and declare it to you. *All that the Father has is mine*; therefore I said that *he will take what is mine and declare it to you*”.

Paul sums it up, so far as our personal gain is concerned. “The wages of sin is death, but *the gift of God is eternal life in (through) Christ Jesus our Lord*”. (Rom. 6:23). The gift of Christ contains all that is our salvation. That salvation comes to us by the agency of the Spirit. He must show us the gifts; he must evoke us to receive the gifts.

## 2. THE GIFTS WHICH ARE, AND WHICH BRING, LIFE

Paul asks apropos of a certain matter, “What do you have that you have not received, and if you have received it, why do you boast as though it were not a gift?” (I Cor. 4:7). This could well be applied to the gift of eternal life, and would include the gifts by which the gift is received. Ephes. 2:8–9 shows clearly that grace and salvation are gifted, not earned. How could they be earned?

How does a man see the salvation of God? Jesus told Nicodemus that new birth, by the Spirit was essential to see and enter the Kingdom. In I Cor. 2:14 Paul says the natural (psychical) man does not receive the things of the Spirit for they are foolish to him, being only spiritually (not psychically) discerned. Here John 16:7–11 is pertinent. Jesus said the Spirit would convince the world of sin,

righteousness and judgement. Hebrews 6:4–6 seems to speak of a ministry of the Word and Spirit which *brings a man up to the place of true repentance*. If, having been illuminated he deliberately refuses what he knows to be the truth, then his case is hopeless. The Spirit gives the gift of illumination and conviction, but *man must respond*. It is logical to expect a positive response, but man does not necessarily respond. His refusal brings judgement. He has been proffered the gift, but he rejects.

### (i) Repentance

In Acts 5:31–32 Peter seeks to explain the significance of the ascension. “God exalted him (Jesus) at his right hand as Leader and Saviour, *to give repentance to Israel and the forgiveness of sins*. And we are witnesses to these things, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him.” In Acts 2 Peter says that God raised Christ up to the throne to “shed forth this which you now both see and hear”. He means the coming of the Holy Spirit. The coming of the Holy Spirit and the gift of repentance are bound together. In Acts 2:38 Peter commands repentance and baptism and promises forgiveness and the gift of the Spirit. In Acts 10 – 11 the Gentiles have the Spirit come upon them and obviously receive the forgiveness of sins. Later this is described as “God has also granted to the Gentiles (the gift of) *repentance unto lifts*.” Repentance then is a gift of God which comes via the Holy Spirit.

Something we must recognise is that repentance is evoked by a sight of God and a knowledge of what He has done for man (or, has given man) in Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who brings this revelation.

### (ii) Faith

Theologians debate whether faith or repentance come first. It does not much matter; “Repent and believe” or “Believe and repent” both seem appropriate. Ephes. 2:8–9 and Phil. 1:29 suggest that faith is a gift. Romans 10:14–17 enunciates the principle that without proclamation how could one have faith. The conclusion is that with proclamation faith can come, so “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ”. Whatever this means it must include the fact that the word preached in *the power of the Spirit* (I Cor. 2:5, I Thess. 1:5, I Pet. 1:12, cf. Gal. 3:1–3) evokes faith. The mystery of response or rejection, as we have suggested, is beyond our knowledge or ability to discern.

What is clear is that there is no true word without the Spirit, any more than there is true Spirit without the word. The Spirit of truth so works in man that the word is known as true, and man must do something, either by way of response or rejection. It is difficult for us to trace the psychological elements, the interior working of the Spirit. In the events of repentance and faith he alone knows the true nature of man, even fallen man, and the interior requirements to effect his results. He is, of course, at once both the Spirit of grace and the Spirit of judgement. Jesus spoke of “remitting sins” and “retaining sins”. This for us is mostly a mystery.

### (iii) Forgiveness of Sins

Acts 2:38, 3:19, 5:31, 10:43, amongst many other passages speak of the forgiveness of sins. In these passages forgiveness is a gift. In these passages also there is either the work or mention of the Holy Spirit. What we omitted to observe in regard to repentance was that the gift of repentance to Israel

was a thought which enraged the Sanhedrin. Why should Israel have to have a gift of repentance? They had virtually asked this of John the Baptist when he had demanded repentance. It seems from the prophecies that repentance was to be a sign of the new heart, or the precursor to the change of the heart of stone to the heart of flesh. Repentance is of course (Gk. *metanoia*) “a change of mind”. Likewise to speak of the gift of forgiveness for Israel was equally insulting. Did she not have her cultus of sacrifice for forgiveness? Had they not said Jesus blasphemed when he forgave? And so on. Yet forgiveness of sins was a very definite mark of the New Covenant (Jer. 31:31–34, Ezek. 36:24–28, etc.). Now it was a gift, not only for Israel but for the Gentiles. If the former was amazing, the latter was stunning.

One thing is patent. The gift of forgiveness is the most humbling of all gifts, insisting as it does that man is so sinful as to need forgiveness, and God so gracious as to send His Son to die to effect that forgiveness. Paul’s expositions on forgiveness are powerful. It takes not only a cross to obtain our forgiveness but a resurrection to seal that same forgiveness (I Cor. 15:17, cf. Rom. 4:25). Forgiveness is costly and the spirit of man is set against such grace-obligation which ensues from actual forgiveness. This is why it is impossible to know forgiveness apart from the Holy Spirit.

Let us look at some cases. The first is that on the day of Pentecost. Peter had the advantage of the remarkable events of the coming of the Spirit and the transformed understanding and expression of the recipients of the Spirit who told “the wonderful works of God”. Since they had been led into the truth, they were able to speak with truth and

conviction. When Peter spoke powerfully (a) Of the resurrection of Christ and (h) Of his (now) evident Lordship, seated as he was at the right hand of God, many of the hearers knew Christ had defeated death and so had defeated sin, and so was Lord and so ought to be obeyed. Peter gave them the wonderful promise that if they repented and were baptised in (to) the name of Christ they would receive forgiveness. Already they had cried out “What shall we do?” and here was the answer. The Spirit had brought conviction of sin, righteousness and judgement and now they were ready for repentance and forgiveness. The Spirit, in depth, had shown them the wonder of grace through the Cross and Resurrection.

This is virtually what happened in the case of the Gentiles at their “Pentecost”. Acts 10 shows Paul preached the Lordship of Christ “He is Lord all” (v.36). Then the promise of forgiveness is made, if and when they believe, *which they do*. Immediately the Spirit falls on them, and we assume, they receive forgiveness. Again the Spirit reveals forgiveness in depth *and applies it*. The third example (among many) is that of Saul of Tarsus. He is confronted by the Lordship of Jesus on the road to Damascus. Seated for three days in blindness he must have “put it all together”, i.e. his own understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures, what he had heard Christians say, and what Jesus had said. Ananias came in with a compound message, namely (i) What are you waiting for? Arise and be baptised, washing away your sins (ii) You are to be filled with the Spirit. Again, forgiveness and the Spirit, or the Spirit and forgiveness. The Spirit gives interior understanding. The Spirit helps us to know “the gifts that are freely given of God”. As we have said, and as is indicated in Romans 8:26–27 the interior work of the Spirit is very deep, very tender, very intimate. If, according to I Cor. 2:11–12

“a man’s own spirit knows the things of a man, and the Spirit the things of God so that he searches “the deeps of God”, then how much better can he search our deeps, who is the Spirit of truth whereas our spirits are not, of themselves such? None will ever be able to gauge or calculate the deeps of man into which the Spirit penetrates and in which he works.

#### (iv) Cleansing

The deepest humiliation of man must lit in his pollution. Created to be pure, and to have purity as his habitat, impurity brings him to deep shame and inferiority, albeit he refuses to objectivise this shame. David did when he cried, “You require truth in the inward parts. Purge me with hyssop and I shall be clean; wash me and I shall be whiter than snow.” We saw in Isaiah 4 that the Spirit would come and cleanse. We saw in Ezekiel 36 that he would wash them from all their idols and all their filthinesses, when the new heart and the new spirit would be internalised.

The great debate amongst the Jews concerning the Gentiles was that they were impure. God had to give Peter a special vision and tell him, “What I have made clean, make thou not unclean.” Peter had understood this, and knew that when the Holy Spirit visited them they were now clean. He explained to the Jews in Acts 15:8–9, “And God who knows the heart bore witness to them (the Gentiles), giving them the Holy Spirit just as he did to us; and he made no distinction between us and them, but *cleansed their hearts by faith.*” Ananias had told Paul to be baptised *washing away his sins*, and to *be filled with the Spirit*. I Cor. 6:11 speaks of being washed .... by the Spirit of our God. This accords with Titus 3:3–7 where there is “the washing of regeneration and the renewal of the Holy Spirit”.

How then, comes this cleansing by the Holy Spirit? If he can, of himself cleanse the sinner, then why the Cross? The answer is, "He applies the work of the Cross; he cleanses by the blood of Christ". Hebrews 1:3 has it, "When he had made purification for sins", and Hebrews 9:14, "The blood of Christ purge your conscience from dead works". The same verse speaks of the offering for sins being made through "the eternal Spirit". In Hebrews 10:22 the writer, after quoting Jeremiah 31:31–34, speaks of its conclusion, "Let us draw near (to God) with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water".

The old indelible stains, the ingrained pollution, the shameful inner filthiness, all of this has gone in the amazing work of Christ, applied deeply and intimately by the Spirit. We are those who have made our robes white in the blood of the Lamb (Rev. 7:14), but not without the aid of the Spirit of Holiness who had once aided Christ to bear the iniquity of us all. Though our sins were as scarlet, they have become whiter than snow, though they were once red like crimson, they are now as white as scoured wool. Now man is back in his natural *habitat*, the very holiness of God. Such pure spirit can have affinity with God who is Spirit; can worship him in spirit and in truth.

#### (v) Justification

Justification can be looked at from various angles. It can be understood as the non-imputation of (the guilt of) sin (Psalm 32:1–2, Romans 4:1–8,

II Cor. 5:19), or the acquittal from guilt (Romans 5:18 RSV, 6:7, 8:1), and from another point of view as the accounting of Christ's obedience as righteousness (Rom. 5:12–21, Phil. 3:9). It relates to law and its demands for (legal) righteousness. Paul's statement in Acts 13:39 "everyone who believes is justified from everything from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses", and his Romans 6:7 "he that has died is justified from sin", means, in accordance with Romans 5:14–15 "We are convinced that if one died for all then did all die", meaning that every believer has died for his sin in Christ, or Christ for him, and he is now justified from sin, i.e. cannot (and need not) die again for his sin. Christ has borne this guilt (I Peter 2:24, II Cor. 5:21, etc.). Such justification is by the amazing grace of God.

Also, apart from the Spirit men cannot know justification. Romans 8:1–3 has this message:—"We are no longer under condemnation. We were; but the law of the Spirit in Christ Jesus has set us free (Justified us from) the law of sin and death. The moral law, when we sin, becomes the law of sin and death to us. Man could not (and did not) keep the law. The Gospel came in the Cross but it required the Spirit to make it real to us, and that is 'the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus'" This equates with II Cor. 3:6, "The guilt of the law kills (cf. Gal. 2:19) but the Spirit (through the Gospel) gives life". This is seen in I Cor. 6: 9–11 where those caught in the terrible slavery of sin are "washed...sanctified...justified, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by the Spirit of our God.*" Again it is the Gospel as applied by the Holy Spirit.

Nor does the Holy Spirit leave it there. Man now is *justified by faith*, i.e. not at all by sight. The Just shall live by faith, battle by faith,

understand by faith. Hence “...through the Spirit, we wait for the hope of justification (righteousness)” (Gal. 5:5). Our daily understanding of Justification is contingent upon the Spirit (cf. Rom. 5:1–5). He gives the first-fruits as some tangible evidence for hope, and in Rom. 5:5 it is the actual and ever present love of God, again based on the Cross (Rom. 5:6–10).

#### (vi) Conclusion

“Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty (freedom)” (II Cor. 3:17). II Corinthians 3 gives us a contrast between the eras of law and grace, and bondage and the freedom of the Spirit. The same principle found in Romans 8:1–3 is in II Cor. 3. In this chapter Paul points out that the law brings heavy legalism, but the Gospel of grace brings freedom. It is, however, the Gospel as ministered by the Spirit. Hence the discussion in Gal. 2:11–21 on not reverting to law, but living in grace. Also in Gal. 3:13–14 Paul makes it clear that the blessing of the Gospel is *justification*, but justification is with a *view* to the Covenant blessing of the Holy Spirit. Both are intimately tied together.

There are many other themes under which salvation is spoken of in the NT such as ransom, redemption, the term ‘salvation’ which we have scarcely considered, and so on. However these are aspectual ways of seeing the whole. We need not deal with them in detail. It is enough to say that their experience and appropriation by the believer is through the ministry of the Spirit. In this the Spirit does what is called a prevenient work. In John 16:7–11 this is the work of conviction of sin, righteousness and judgement. It may be over a period of time, it may be, seemingly, instantaneous.

It leads to the receipt of the Spirit's gifts of repentance and faith. These gifts, received, must be exercised by the recipient. Then forgiveness, cleansing, justification, liberation come to the believer, again gifts exercised in faith, the Spirit meanwhile working in interior fashion within those he originally created, as he does his work of the "washing of regeneration and renewal" of the person. This brings what is called the liberty of the believer, and he consistently must be led by the Spirit, walk in the Spirit, and so live the life of faith, and out of this the life of hope, and, as we shall see, the life of love.

## **STUDY NINE**

### **The Holy Spirit & Man as Person—III The Holy Spirit and the Gifts of Love and Holiness**

*Introduction; The Gift of Love; The Gift of Holiness;  
Holiness through Love*

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

It is not always that we link love and holiness, yet it is axiomatic that God's love be holy love, and that His holiness be loving holiness, no matter how severe it may appear, even in that state, to man. For man the driving force for holiness is the love of God, and indeed his whole motivation comes from the love of God. Love, in its outworking is holiness. For this reason we will see how the gift of love comes by means of the Holy Spirit, and then how it inspires to holiness.

#### **2. THE GIFT OF LOVE**

“God is love” is a statement made by John twice in the fourth chapter of his first letter. He explains, also, how it is so. In Romans 15:30 Paul comes close to saying the Spirit is love. He uses the term “the love of the Spirit”. This will only mean a term to us until we go back upon the endless patient labour of the Spirit from creation until now, anticipating also the future, and seeing how tireless the Spirit has been in helping to effect our salvation and all the marvellous gifts of glorification. In fact what the Spirit has to do with primarily is love.

In Colossians 1:8 Paul expresses his pleasure at hearing of their “love in the Spirit”. Previously he has said that they have “love for all the saints” which is quite a saying! He means that they walk in the Spirit and so express their love.

However it is the beginning experience which brings love. This is simply that “we love because He first loved us” (I John 4:19). Love of course is seen at the Cross (Rom. 5:6–10, where Paul speaks of our weakness, our ungodliness, our sinfulness and our enmity in spite of which and for which Christ died), and so when one recognises love, then one loves. How does one recognise love? By none other than the Spirit. This is why Paul says in Romans 5:5 that the “love of God has been poured (or, flooded) into our hearts by the Holy Spirit”.

He does not mean that love is some quasi-metaphysical substance, some divine fluid or emanation which is inserted into our hearts, but he means a recognition (with response) of the love of God Himself. This is beautifully shown in Luke 7 in the story of the woman who was a sinner. “She has loved much,” said Jesus, “because her sins which are many are forgiven”. The principle of this is that only he who is *forgiven much* will *love much*. In fact a study of this passage along with Jer. 31:31–34, and I John 4:9–10 will show us that propitiation, or the removal of guilt and wrath, is what sets the heart free and beating with love. The grace of God is seen in its “abounding” measure. We are convinced that God loves us, because He has forgiven us.

Yet forgiveness is not merely a doctrinal fact but a dynamic and total experience. To know oneself to be free of the penalty, the pollution, and the power of sin is to experience an incredible happening. There is an interior release. This is why, and this is how love is experienced. If in

any way the grace of God, and the total forgiveness of God, including total release from penalty, pollution and power, is minimised, then love will be minimised. The Spirit never minimises, but maximises. Faith must rise up to that stunning maximum.

The gift of love is always contingent upon the Spirit. That is not to say that he withdraws the love at any point, but obviously when he is grieved, or vexed, or quenched (Ephes. 4:30, I Thess. 5:19), or his leading is rejected (Rom. 8:14, Gal. 5:16, 18, 25), or we fail to be “aglow with the Spirit” (Rom. 12:11) or “filled with the Spirit” (Ephes. 5: 18) or to go on in the Spirit to maturity (Gal. 3: 3–5), then the tides of love must seem to recede, and its reality to dim, at least in our subjective appreciation. But as we are obedient to the Spirit and are not negative in the ways just nominated, then that love is a real matter to us. We can then walk in love (Ephes. 5:2), and just as we have been forgiven, so we can forgive.

A matter with which we will deal more in the treatment of holiness is “the fruit of the Spirit”. This “harvest”, mentioned in Gal. 5:22–23 is in contrast to the “works of the flesh” where love is absent. When we look at the first of the fruit we see it to be love. In fact joy, peace, patience and the others are all constituents of love. In Col. 3:14 Paul exhorts, “Over all these things put on love which binds everything together in harmony”.

We may now proceed to the gift of holiness, and then its outworking in and by love.

### 3. THE GIFT OF HOLINESS

We have already seen in the OT prophecies that in place of the people of God who had pursued idolatry

and abominations, God was to raise up a holy people for Himself, and we saw that Exodus 19:5–6 now comes to be applied to a people derived from both Jewish and Gentile origins. The Jews themselves, that is the Christian Jews, scarcely believed that

God would include the Gentiles. The event at Caesarea, amongst others, convinced them. Hence Peter was able to say that God has “cleansed their (Gentile) hearts by faith”. This cleansing is sanctification, for it includes them in the separated people of God.

Again, Paul, when speaking of the commission Jesus had personally given to him, described it thus, “...the Gentiles, to whom I send you, to open their eyes that they may turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are *sanctified by faith in me.*” If they are sanctified by faith, then it is not by works, and so is a gift. It reminds us of the statement of Paul in II Thess. 2:13 which has the same thrust, but says they are saved “through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth”. That is they are cleansed by the Spirit and included in the holy people of God.

It also reminds us that in God’s intention this sanctification by the Spirit – i.e. this “setting apart” – has happened long before in the intention of God.

In addition we have looked at what we have called “the interior work of the Spirit”. The application of cleansing, the liberation from the tyranny of sin, the breaking of the bondage of Satan, his powers and his world–system, are dynamic facts and happenings. Now there is a hatred for evil, a distaste of sin, and a deep reluctance to be caught up in its bondage ever again. This is the thrust of Romans 6:2, “How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?” The idea is “Perish the thoughts” We see then that the Spirit not only brings purification

through the Gospel, but a power to oppose sin, and this is the basis of holiness.

To keep matters clear let us see the two elements or aspects of holiness. The first is that an interior work of cleansing has been done and simultaneously we have been made part of the people of God. Secondly there is a daily process of outworking on this act of the Spirit. We fight temptation, we reject uncleanness, we seek to live in positive obedience by all the means of grace at our disposal. The first aspect of holiness never varies. We have been “called to be saints” and we *are*. This is motivation then to live in holiness. Even so this is not a heavy legalistic striving. Behind our endeavours is the whole of love, and where we fail from time to time grace covers the failure and keeps us free in grace and love to continue the endeavour. Holiness must never be seen as a series of negatives, and a dread of failure. It is not a remorseless drive of perfectionist accomplishing, any more than it is the flippant light-heartedness of an antinomian carelessness.

The basic fact to remember is that it is the person of the Holy Spirit (“The Spirit of holiness”) who leads and guides in the matter of holiness. Being, initially the Sanctifier, he continually leads in the matter of practical holiness.

Practical holiness is simply obedience to the will of God. The work of the Spirit which we have to speak about—and this we will do later—is the work of bringing us to be sons of God. At this point we will assume the teaching of Romans 3:14–17, and Gal. 4:4–6. We remember that Christ said the Spirit would lead into the truth of the Son and the Father, i.e. coming to the Father through the Son, and the basic fact about the Son who once cried “Holy Father!” (John 17:11) is that holiness of

life is that of sons under the Fatherhood of God. This is seen in I Peter 1:14ff, where, in invoking the Father (who is holy), we too must be holy. This is also implicit in the Lord's prayer. To ask the Father's name to be hallowed is to present ourselves to be holy, and to do His will on earth.

The great point here is that obedience as sons is superior to obedience, merely, as servants. One becomes a son through the work of the Spirit, then one is led by the Spirit (Rom. 8:14). Gal. 5:16–18, 22–25 shows us the whole process of holiness, but shows it in the context of the believer being willing to be *led of the Spirit*, and so to walk *in the Spirit*. In Gal. 5:16–18 Paul sets out the principle that the believer is beset by two forces

(a) *Flesh* and (b) *The Holy Spirit*. “Flesh” stands for all that is evil and rebellious. It relates to “the old humanity” i.e. Adamic humanity, and its ways. Now one does not have flesh, so much as one is beset by flesh. Yet one is, rightly enough, beset by the Holy Spirit. In between we are, as it were, caught. The flesh would seek to hold us back from the ways of the Spirit. Also the Spirit would withhold us from the ways of flesh. If then we “give over” (as should be natural to God's children) to the Spirit and are led by him then we will not fulfil the strong desire (lust, drive) of the flesh. Also we will not be under law, that is, legalistic striving which will ultimately, anyway, land us up in fleshly living (cf. Gal. 3:1–5).

In Romans 8:11–14 Paul outlines a principle. He says that because of the Gospel and the Spirit we are under no indebtedness to the flesh (cf. Col. 2: 11–15), but if anything he says by inference, we are indebted to the Spirit to live after the Spirit. He says, “If you, through the Spirit, do put to death the deeds of the body you shall live.” Notice he does not say “the deeds of the flesh”, but “of the

body". Whilst body is flesh in one sense, it is not flesh in the sense of which we have been speaking. The body has right and natural desires such as eating, drinking, seeing, hearing, pleasure, sex, etc. None of these is wrong, but each can be used wrongly, say to excess, or for wrong reasons. When one is about to be dominated by such a "deed of the body", then it is the Spirit who aids us in putting to death that deed. If we do it out of our own wills we will finish up with "will-worship" and this will be another form of "flesh" or "self-achievement".

It is in this sense that Paul speaks in Col. 3: 1–10. He makes the point that we have died, with Christ, and are risen again (cf. Romans 6:1–10, Ephes. 2:5–6), and because this is so we can "put to death" elements which appear in us. We have put off the old humanity. We live, in the new humanity, Christ, and are being renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who created us. Holiness then is not so much an achievement as it is living consonant with the new life and context which is ours, albeit we are deeply opposed by forces of evil.

We conclude then that holiness is a gift of God, ministered to us through the Spirit. At the same time it is a process which follows the initial crisis of sanctification, but proceeds towards the ultimate climax. John Murray in his commentary on Romans has said, "Sanctification is glorification begun. Glorification is sanctification completed."

#### 4. HOLINESS THROUGH LOVE

We could equally say, "Love in holiness". Unholy love is no love, and loveless holiness is a dreary matter. It is, again, the Spirit who is present to make both as they should be. Both love and holiness in the experience of the believer are

contingent upon the presence and operation of the Holy Spirit, and that means, upon the willing obedience of the believer, being led by the Spirit and walking in him.

Jesus said, “If you love me you will keep my commandments.” He means that love will motivate to obedience. II Cor. 5:14 says, “The love of God constrains us”, meaning that it is God’s love which controls us in (to) obedience. We know from human experience that this is what love accomplished. Notice it is not so much love for God as God’s love for man which controls and motivates man. We have already seen in Deut. 30 that the circumcised heart is the heart that loves God and obeys Him. In Jer. 31:31–34 it is the heart of the forgiven person which has the law written within it, and so obeys. We have seen in Ezek. 36:24–28 that it is the heart that is cleansed, which is of flesh which now keeps God’s commandments and His ordinances. In other words, holiness in action proceeds from love. This must surely be equated with Romans 5:5 “The love of God has been shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, who, himself, has been given to us.” It also links up with the numerous verses which speak of the Spirit dwelling in the believer, e.g. Romans 8:9–11, II Tim. 1:14, II Cor. 1:22 and Ephes. 5:18.

On the obverse side, not to love is certainly not to live in obedience. In II Peter 1:3–11 the writer speaks of those who grow and flourish in maturity, step by step. At the same time he speaks of one “who lacks these things and is blind and cannot see afar off and *has forgotten he was purged from his old sins.*” His holiness of life is blurred or missing because he has denied the well-spring of love – forgiveness. Likewise in Ephes. 4:26 – 5:2 the thrust is that what we did under the old humanity we no longer do, or we grieve the Spirit. Not to be tenderhearted, kind, loving, forgiving is to

grieve the Spirit. In I Cor. 16:22 he who does not love the Lord is anathema. In I John 4:20 he who does not love his brother cannot say he loves God. Likewise he who hates his brother is a murderer.

We conclude then by saying that holiness is the way of life of the true believer, but it is holiness prompted, motivated, and enabled by love. In I John 5:3 we read, "This is the love of God that we keep His commandments." We have seen that obedience is motivated by love. Now we see the very deep truth that *obedience is love itself*. Elsewhere we read that the law, i.e. the keeping of the law is summed up in love to neighbour. True law is simply the way and manner of love, but in the era of the Spirit the law which was formidable when written on tablets, external to man's person, is now internalised, written on the heart. It is the Spirit who internalises such law. To be led by the Spirit and to walk in him is to understand the true nature of law at every point of experience and at every point where moral choice has to be made.

Such obedience, simply understood, is true holiness.

## STUDY TEN

### **The Holy Spirit & Man as Person—IV The Holy Spirit and Christ's Dwelling in Man**

*Introduction. 'Imitation or Habitation?; Christ's Indwelling Man, especially by the Spirit; What is the Indwelling, What is its Resultant Action, and its Goal?*

#### **1. INTRODUCTION: IMITATION OR HABITATION?**

Down through history, within the Christian church there has been a debate more generally implicit than explicit. Thomas a Kempis's "*Imitation of Christ*" has been variously praised and criticised. Are we asked to imitate Christ or to operate as though his life were within us and being worked out through us. Is it imitation, or is it (Christ's) habitation? In fact it may not be an "either-or" proposition in the ultimate.

Ephesians 5:1–2 quite definitely speaks of imitation of the Father. Note, however, the children can only (and must) imitate the Father because (a) He is the Father, and (b) They are the children! In I Cor. 11:1 Paul urges his followers to be imitators of him as he is of Christ. He is speaking of high ethical living. If we look at I Cor. 4:16, Phil. 3:17, II Thess. 3:7, and 9, I Thess 1:6 we see that Paul does not hesitate to suggest they imitate him. It is as though he enunciates principles, but gives the practice with it. He is saying, "Don't labour at trying to work out what happens in practice. Simply remember what we did. That will be it." This seems like a high claim, but it is really the simplicity of practice.

Whilst the Greek verb *mimeomai* is here used, it does not carry the modern idea of *mimic* although *mimic* derives from it. *Mimic* is a humorous or mocking

repetition of an act or person. Paul is speaking about that very nature of things, i.e. a child imitates its father, a convert his teacher, and so on. So we should imitate Paul who imitates Christ. Some, however, see in Thomas a Kempis's *"Imitation of Christ"* an attempt to do just what he did and so, somehow, achieve a spiritual level of living. In the imitation Paul is speaking of, he assumes regeneration, conformity to the image of God, and participation in Christ and his Spirit. In other words, imitation is not at all wrong if it issues from being inhabited by Christ and the Spirit, and of course, as well from dwelling in God, and He in us.

## 2. CHRIST'S INDWELLING MAN, ESPECIALLY BY THE SPIRIT

If the rather clumsy word "indwelling" can be excused, then we mean that man is not even a forgiven, justified and sanctified creature, but that he is one in whom Christ dwells. We have seen some of the Scriptures which point to this fact. The *locus classicus* is Gal. 2:20, "I live, yet not I, but Christ lives in me." Again in Col. 1:27 "Christ in you the hope of glory". "In you" could have a corporate meaning, "Christ in your midst, among you", but we cannot exclude the thought, "In each of you." Again in John 14:16–23 we have the promise of Christ that the Holy Spirit will dwell in the disciples and that the Father and the Son will come "and we will take up our abode in you."

What, then, does it mean for Christ to dwell in us? How can the risen man Christ, ascended into heaven, and seated at the right hand of God actually dwell in the hearts of (redeemed) men and women? Is this a mystical dwelling, and if so is it an actual dwelling? What for example does Paul mean

when he says, “...you are in our hearts, to live together and to die together” (II Cor. 7:3, cf. 6:11) and “...I hold you in my heart” (Phil. 1:7)? He surely means we think of you, experience you in the place of our love, thinking, and feeling. In this sense Christ must also be in our hearts. However Paul must mean more than that. Christ does not dwell according to the rise and fall of our feelings, remembrance, and so on. There must be some *objective dwelling* in our hearts.

How can this be? When it happens, what, then is it? The interesting fact is that Jesus tells us to abide in him, and Paul’s famous phrase “in Christ”<sup>7</sup> is the real basis of the Christian life. *In Christ* everything happens – election, regeneration, the new man, victory, accomplishment of all things, labouring, witnessing, resurrection – in fact the whole gamut of Christian experience in this life, and the resurrection from the dead. To be in Christ is to come under the entire impress, power and assistance of Christ. How then can one be “in Christ”? The answer is that whatever *the mode* may be does not so much matter as *the fact*. If a man is not in Christ then he is nothing and has nothing. The final authentic (true) things will be filled up by Christ, reconciled by Christ and united by Christ, so not to be in him is to be outside this grand finale to creation’s total events!

To be in Christ simply means to partake of him in every way commanded and available to the believer. The interesting truth is that one cannot be “in Christ” without the Messiah being *in him*. Jesus

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<sup>7</sup> For this whole subject see James Stewart’s famous treatment, “*The Man in Christ*”.

said, “Abide in me and I in you” (John 15:4. Jesus spoke of the oneness of the Father and the Son (John 17:21) “that they may all be one; even as thou Father art in–me, and I in thee, that *they also* may be in us”. We take it then to be in Christ (or for that matter “in the Spirit” or “in the Father”) is to have relationship with the Father, or the Son or the Spirit or all together. For Christ to be in (each one of) us is to have mutual relationship.

All that is Christ objectively becomes ours subjectively when he is in us, as also we are in him.

This may sound like a lot of words, put together to reason a reasonable situation. Yet the text of Scripture makes no bones about it. We are either in Christ, and Christ is in us, or we are not in Christ and Christ is not in us. We will see this clearly from Romans 8:9–11, a little later. Here we must make the statement, “When Christ dwells in man, then man does not so much imitate him, as he lives out the life of the indwelling Christ – if he will!” We add what we will amplify – “and this only by faith and the Holy Spirit”: If then one seems to imitate Christ, it is because he is living out that which is within him.

### **The Spirit’s Ministry Regarding the Indwelling**

In another study we have seen that the Spirit dwells in regenerate man. Scriptures concerning this are Romans 8:9–11, II Tim. 1:14, John 14:17, I Cor. 6:19, Ephes. 5:18, Gal. 4:4–6. The Spirit is often referred to as “the gift” and we wonder where that “gift” will be if not in the heart and life of the believer as these references seem to suggest. Contrary to popular belief we do not so much receive Christ (cf. John 1:12, Col. 2:6) as we *believe on him* and *receive the Holy Spirit* (I Cor.2:12,

II Cor. 1:22, Rom. 5:5, etc.).

This order is important. Ephes. 3:14–19 speaks of our hearts being strengthened by the Spirit so that *Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith*. The indwelling of Christ is by (a) The Spirit, and (b) Faith. This cuts away any mysticism as such. Some, of course, speak of “faith–mysticism”. However Jesus had said, “I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you” (John 14:18). He is saying, “I will come to you through the Spirit”. This accords with his words at the close of Matthew’s gospel “I will be with you to the consummation of the age”. It also accords with the fact that the Spirit will lead into the truth of the Son and Father (John 16: 15). In other words, “the other Comforter” (John 14:16) is the one who alone can bring Christ to his people, when he has ascended. In I Cor. 6:17 Paul says, “He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with him”, and this could, presumably, be translated “one Spirit with him”. John also says, “By this we know that *he abides in us* (that is) *by the Spirit whom he has given us*” (I John 3:24). In I John 4: 13 he says, “By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his own Spirit”. This is a most valuable verse when compared with John 15:4, for *how would we know he abides in us, and we in him, apart from the Holy Spirit?*

All of this prepares us for the passage of Romans 8:9–11. A close study of this passage teaches us that if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ (i.e. the Holy Spirit) then *he does not belong to Christ*. Why not? Because *to have the Spirit indwell is to have Christ indwell, and not to have the Spirit indwell is not to have Christ indwell*. It is best said, “*First the Spirit and so Christ*”. The test of the Spirit indwelling is not Christ’s indwelling but vice-versa. This accords perfectly

with Gal. 3:26, and 4:4–6. Christ brings redemption and sonship, but *sonship is not fulfilled until the Spirit of His Son enters our hearts*. The Spirit is the Holy Spirit, but for purposes of our sonship, the Spirit of His Son must come since our sonship *derives from his Sonship*. But notice clearly, this sonship comes only through the Spirit of (his) Sonship.

Another way of saying it is that Christ could not be the Messianic Son on earth apart from the Spirit. Now the Spirit is never apart from the Son, or, better still, the Son always comes to us through the Spirit. How this happens is not for us to say, nor need we know. Those depths are not for us to plumb. The Spirit teaches, guides, controls, and many other things as he *wills*. We receive the impact; that is what matters' and curiosity as to modes is not called for!

In general terms – leaving aside for the moment the matter of Christ's indwelling of us – Christ and the Spirit are as one. This was well said of the Father and the Son. It may well be said of the Father and the Spirit as registered in Matt. 10:20 (cf. Luke 11:13, 24:49, John 14:15f, Acts 1:4). However, just as no man can say "Jesus is Lord!" but by the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 2:36, 10:36), so Jesus says what he wills through the Spirit. In the Book of the Revelation John is in the Spirit, and Jesus dictates letters to the seven churches, yet Christ admonishes them, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches", i.e. what is written in the letters.

We may now come to our conclusion regarding Christ's indwelling by the Spirit. (a) Christ's indwelling is a fact as the various Scriptures show. (b) His indwelling is not merely a localised total presence of him in his glorified form, and so an

objective presence to sight, but Christ communicated to us by the Spirit who is the Revelator and the Communicator, the Teacher, and the Counsellor. Christ's dwelling by faith (Ephes. 3:17) is a dwelling not by sight, but by faith. This is also seen in I John 4:4, cf. I John 5:4. Likewise Christ's indwelling by the Spirit is personal, efficacious and real, but is known only through the Spirit. If we may say so, it is not a presence which grows or diminishes by the rise or fall of our *feelings* concerning it, for we know nothing of the *mode* of the indwelling but simply of the *instrument*, I{.e. the Holy Spirit. We should look again at I John 3:24 and 4:13 and contexts. Faith will accept and live by this indwelling. The Spirit will brace and strengthen us for it and in it, and bring the results of that, namely the increase of love, and our being filled unto all the fulness of God.

Another word may be said before we move on Go the purpose and goal of Christ's indwelling of us as persons and his people, by the Spirit. Whilst Ephesians 5:18 exhorts us to "go on being filled with the Spirit (or just 'spirit')", Colossians 3:16 in the context of a passage very similar to the Ephesian passage says, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly..." There may be no difference from the "word of Christ" to "the Holy Spirit", or, again, "Christ". These are inseparable, even though again we may be baffled as to modes. Romans 10:14–17 says we cannot believe until we hear the word (of Christ), and then we believe. Faith, the word, Christ, the Spirit – all of these are closely linked. In practice we seek to know they indwell us, that is we are filled by these things, and not the emptiness of things other than them. In this sense we can experience the things of faith, the word, Christ and the Spirit.

### 3. WHAT IS THE INDWELLING; WHAT IS ITS RESULTANT ACTION, AND ITS GOAL?

#### (i) Contingency is Power, is Reality, is Action

When we go thoroughly through the following Scriptures:— (a) Romans 11:36 (cf. I Chron. 29:11–12, Psalm 33:6), I Cor. 11:12, Acts 17:25, I Cor. 8: 6a, Ephes. 4:6, Acts 17:28–29, and Hebrews 2:10, then (b) I Cor. 8:6b, Col. 1:16 (cf. John 1:1–3) and Hebrews 1:2b, and then compare Rev. 1:8 and Rev. 22:13, we discover that all things are from God, and all through Christ, that is the Son. Nothing exists but in contingency upon God, and God as Father, and at the same time upon him who is the Son. The Son is the mediator of *all* things. Both Father and Son depend upon the Spirit to bring man to relationship with God as Father and Son. This is so, creationally, but more so redemptively. In creation it was the natural order (Psalm 33:6, 104:30, Gen. 2:7, Acts 17:25). In creation the Spirit is the Spirit of the Lord, of the Word, of the Son. In redemption he is the Spirit of the Father, the Spirit of the Son.

Hence ‘for the Spirit to come upon man gives him power. That power is that he makes man son to the Father (through Christ) and the subject of Jesus the Lord, Messiah of the Kingdom (I Cor. 12:3, Rom. 10:9). *Jesus’ power lay in his contingency, as Son, upon the Father, through the Spirit. The redeemed person and fellowship has its power in like contingency. The power to be (contingent) son/s is the power to be true man, to be effective servants in doing the will of God. For the Spirit to come upon is no less, as from Pentecost, than to enter and dwell in man. Terms like “come upon”, “fallen upon”, “baptised with the Holy Spirit” are the equivalent of “were filled” “received”, and so on. When the Spirit-visited man*

knows the impact of the Spirit he is committed to contingency, and contingency carries with it the demand and weight of doing the will of the Father which is no less than doing the will of the Son, the Lord. Where the will is done the power is present. This is the story of the book of Acts (cf. I Cor. 4:20, Rom. 14:17). The Spirit keeps causing the cry “Abba!” which is the cry of doing the will of the Father (Mark 14:36, cf. Rom. 8:14–15).

**(ii) Indwelling by Messiah is Personal and Corporate**

Christ is not only in each redeemed person (Gal. 2:20) but in his people as his Body. He is the Head. They are his members. He is present to each of them. By the Spirit he is with them, and among them. As Israel was the son of God (Exodus 4:22, cf. Hosea 11:1) so it existed corporately, although each true member of the covenant was a son (Deut. 14:1, etc.). When Israel’s sonship passed to the Servant of God (Hosea 11:1, cf. Matt. 2:14f and Mark 10:45, with Isaiah 42:1 and Matt. 3:17), that is to say, Jesus, then the true Israel’s Sonship became corporate in the Son (Gal. 3:26–29, 4:4–6). Just as Jesus’ own Sonship is Messianic (Matt. 3:17, Luke 4:17ff, Acts 10:38), so *the corporate Sonship of the church is nothing less than Messianic*. This theme we will see in later studies. However, we see at this point that Christ’s indwelling is not simply to be the aide to some private, individualistic spiritual pilgrimage and growth. Any of that will be the simple and natural “spin-off” of obedience to the plan of God in contingency upon Father and Son as the gift and working (within) of the Holy Spirit. For Christ to indwell is no less than for the Spirit to indwell, and for the Spirit to indwell means no less than we render sonship to the Father within the Sonship of the Son!

**(iii) Conclusion as to Christ's Indwelling by the Spirit**

We say there is no privatised indwelling of Christ. His nature would not allow that. The Spirit energises our faith, and as Christ dwells by faith, and so by the Spirit (or, vice-versa) then life comes, the will is motivated, and our actions are energised as our wills conform to God's plan. In another way of saying it we mean Christ lives out his life, not as though he clothes himself with a believing person, or uses them as some passive channel or instrument, but rather draws their wills to obedience, and their lives and energies into participation with his own actions.

The matter of heart-devotion, of holiness of life, of piety of being must, as we have said, be the simple and natural spin-off of the relationship. The Spirit relates us to Christ. The relationship is not only to us, but to us within us. This is why Paul could say "God revealed His Son in me", and Paul could pray for the deluded Galatians that Christ should again be "formed *within* you" (Gal. 1:16, 4:19), for this is his powerful and personal indwelling.

We need always to add, "By the power and (indwelling) presence of the Holy Spirit."

## **STUDY ELEVEN**

### **The Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son**

*Introduction: Creation with a View to the Glory of God: The Holy Spirit and the Father and the Son*

#### **1. INTRODUCTION: CREATION WITH A VIEW TO THE GLORY OF GOD**

We do not wish to be repetitive, but must resume our theme of the Spirit, the plan of God, and salvation history. We have seen that man's glorification was planned before time, and that salvation is no mere expedient to meet a contingency, but the intention of God from before time. We have seen that the Father, the Son, and the Spirit have worked continually to effect this plan, and are now working. The prophecies leave no doubt that the end purpose will be achieved. When it is achieved then God, as Father will be glorified in and by the perfection and presence of His people because they will represent the true fruit and end of salvation, truly glorified humanity.

We have traced the work of the Father, the Son and the Spirit, first in the OT with the patriarchs, Israel, and the prophets. We have seen the theme of the people of God and its blossoming in the NT Messiah, by the Spirit goes only to complete his work of salvation, defeating evil and laying the basis for man to come to new birth, redemption and adoption. With this we have seen that the Spirit applies the work of Christ, is present in the church, and leads the people of God on to the eschaton. When that has happened, as we have noted above, the plan will be completed in glorification.

In treating the new era, the era of the new covenant, the Spirit, and the church, we have majored largely on the personal salvation and sanctification of those incorporated in the new covenant. We have guarded ourselves somewhat by pointing out that salvation is not something which is individualistic, even though it is personal. It must not be privatised, and even devotion and piety must be wholesome and holistic. Such salvation happens in the context of the people of God and the full plan of the Father. We are thus led on naturally to the church and the work of the Spirit, and this must be discussed in its widest context and perspective. We will not be able to avoid covering some ground already traversed under former subject headings.

## **2. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE FATHER AND THE SON**

In the OT we have reference to the Holy Spirit but for the most part we speak of God as Yahweh, as the Lord, as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Not until we come to the NT do references to the Logos or Word take on much delineation. True, the Holy Spirit can be seen as an hypostasis, but it does seem that the NT emphasis is what delineates the Spirit as an hypostasis. What then is the OT truth of God as Father and does this imply an eternal Son, as NT references such as Heb. 1:2 and Gal. 4:4 with their allied Scriptures of John 1:1–3 (the Logos), Col. 1:15–17 and I Cor. 8:6 suggest?

If we take Paul's view as supported by pagan writers in Acts 17:25–28, then Adam was created as a son, and men may even have been determined to be sons. The comparison of the need to conquer in Genesis 1:28ff with Revelation 21:7 may also indicate that true humans were (true) sons of God. However, it is in Israel .that we find **two** aspects

- (a) Covenant Israelites are children of God (Deut. 14:1, Isaiah 63:16, 64:8, cf. Jer. ch. 3, and Mal. 2:10, amongst other references), and
- (b) Exodus 4: 22 and Hosea 11:1 with other indications show that Israel, as a people, was God's son.

These references take on significance, especially when the man Jesus is said to be the Son incarnate (John 1:14) and also the Logos incarnate. Hebrews 1:2 gives him eternal reference, and the use of "one God, the Father" in I Cor. 8:6 links Him with "one Lord, Jesus Christ". This perhaps would not be significant except that each NT letter speaks of "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ". Christ's own teaching points to eternal being with God, and with God as Father (cf. John 17:1–5, 24, and the references to being the Son and being sent by the Father).

For the Jews there would have to be prior reference to such a Son, and the NT brings into constant use Psalm 2, especially linking the Messiah with the King (anointed one) and the Son. This figure is Messiah–King–Son. The coming Messiah who was to be King was old enough coinage, and The Messiah–King was related to the Kingdom of God. It can be shown that Psalm 2, especially verses 7–8, is used concerning Jesus' baptism, transfiguration, death, resurrection and ascension.<sup>8</sup> As we will see it is also linked with his on-going mission in the world (cf. Psalm 2:8 and Acts 1:8 "the ends of the earth", "the uttermost part of the earth").

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<sup>8</sup> For a full treatment of these elements see N.C.P.I. notes on "The Person and Work of Christ" (Short-Term Bible Course No. 3, 1978).

One thing which it is not easy to define, especially in John's Gospel is whether Jesus always claims Sonship as being prior to his incarnation, and that the promises and prerogatives he exercises belong to that prior Sonship, or whether he is claiming that having become flesh, he is given these, as a man. It does not greatly matter, for what emerges in the over-all picture is that (a) He is eternally Son, (b) He is, as man, truly the Son of God. Some would see, especially in the synoptic Gospels that he is primarily Messianic Son,<sup>9</sup> that is that as man he is anointed to be the Son of God, and complete the work of being Messiah of the Kingdom, and to establish the Kingdom.

When we come to the Epistles we see they treat his work as the fulfilment of the prophecies and are not worried that God's Fatherhood as such has not been fully explicated in OT times. They see it fully explicated in the incarnation of the Logos, and in the ministry he has effected. With this they see the Spirit as the one who not only reveals Fatherhood and Sonship but communicates its fruits and benefits to man in the present. The revelation of essential Fatherhood (and Sonship) may have come late in man's history, but it is certain that—God did not become that late in history. Always the Father was Father, the Son Son, and the Gospel and the Spirit have revealed this truth.

Our task is to see how this Fatherhood and Sonship relate in at least two areas:— (a) The Kingdom of God, and (b) The Church, the Body of Christ.

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<sup>9</sup> Doubtless a Jew could accept that in some sense Messiah was a son of God. The Gospels seem to make Messiah and Son to be synonymous or virtually synonymous. See Matt. 16:16, 26:63m cf. John 1:49 with 1:41.

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD - FATHERHOOD, SONSHIP AND THE SPIRIT

In old times, and even in modern times the king or ruler of the people has been seen to be or desired to be, the father of his people. There is plenty of evidence for this idea. Since fathers, notoriously, have become despots, or been seen as despots by revolutionaries, so have kings and leaders. Nevertheless, ideally, the king is father.

The Kingdom of God is the Kingdom of the Father. This is so creationally. This is the thrust of Paul's message to those of Athens (Acts 17:24–28). Paul continues his message by pointing to the utter futility of idolatry. God must be seen as Father. At the same time He is "The God who made the world and everything in it...Lord of heaven and earth". In Matt. 25:34 Jesus said, "Then the King (now Jesus) will say to those on his right hand, 'Come, O *blessed of my Father*, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world". It seems the Father prepared it. Jesus taught, in the Lord's prayer that we were to say, "Our Father...Thy Kingdom come". Here the King and the Father are the one. Notice too in the same prayer that the Father provides for His children, but also demands His will to be done, in the Kingdom. The Kingdom is (now) contested by evil, but He will always overcome and deliver His children.

In addition, the sermon on the mount has as its basic subject the Kingdom of God. One must first seek this and the heavenly Father will provide all that is necessary. The Kingdom is never directly called "the Kingdom of the Father" but there are many such references. The one in the Lord's prayer is very clear. Jesus

on at least two occasions spoke of doing the will of his Father (Matt. 7:21ff, Matt. 12:49–50). No one will enter the Kingdom who does not do the will of the Father (his Father). On one occasion Jesus encouraged his disciples to press on in regard to the Kingdom: “Fear not little flock. It is the Father’s good pleasure to give you the Kingdom” (Luke 12:32). In Luke 22:28–29 he speaks of having been appointed a (ie. the) Kingdom by his Father, and so appoints them a (i.e. the) Kingdom. In Colossians 1:13 it is called “the Kingdom of the Son of His love”. All we need to see here is that the Father is the King and that uniquely Christ is the Son of the Father, the King, and by entrance into the Kingdom we too, become sons of the Father–King.

### **THE SPIRIT AND THE KINGDOM**

We have already seen in the OT that the outpouring of the Spirit was related to the restoration of the Kingdom to Israel, or as we now prefer, the full coming of the Kingdom. This is seen in two ways:– (a) The anointing of the Messiah of the Kingdom (Isa. 11:1f, 61:1f). In Psalm 2 this anointed one is the Son–King. (b) The pouring out of the Spirit upon all flesh.. (Joel 2, Isaiah 32:15, etc.). Thus with the coming of John the Baptist who was filled with the Spirit from his mother’s womb came the immediate promise of the Kingdom, of the forgiveness of the Kingdom, and of the outpouring or baptism with the Spirit. On John’s heels followed Jesus who himself was anointed as Messiah–Son, and who declared the Kingdom to be right on hand.

Following this Jesus as Messiah is aided, empowered and led by the Spirit (Acts 10:38, Luke 4: 17ff, Matt. 12:28). We saw that not only in his birth and baptism, but in his temptation, ministry, death, resurrection and ascension the Spirit was present in power. This all related to “If I by

the Spirit of God...then is the Kingdom come upon you". We noted that his death–resurrection–ascension events were to seal the victory of the Kingdom, so that the Kingdom could now be proclaimed as an incontrovertible fact, and as conclusive and present in power (I Cor. 4:20).

We can come to no other conclusion, especially when we look at the *action* in the Acts that it is (a) *In the power and purpose of the Spirit*, and (b) *That it is the proclamation and action of the Kingdom*. The first is so evident as to need little documentation. We read, time and again, "And he (they) being filled with the Spirit ... " Thus the action happens. In the second case – the proclamation of the Kingdom – we need to remember that as the Kingdom came upon people with proclamation in the Gospels (Matt. 12:28, Acts 10:38, Luke 10:9) so as in Acts 8:4–5, 12) healings occur and demons are exorcised and people come to peace. The *proclamation* and the *action* are normally the one. See, then, Acts 19:8, 20:25, 28:23, 31 and contexts.

In all this action the three elements are present which John promised – the Kingdom, the forgiveness of sins, and the Spirit. Hence when Jesus' Lordship is sealed by the cross–resurrection–ascension complex of events, it is the Spirit who proclaims Jesus as Lord, who upholds Christ's Sonship, and revelates the Father (John chs. 14–16, I Cor. 12:3, I Cor. 2:4f, I Thess. 1:5, I Peter 1:12, etc.).

### THE SON, THE SPIRIT AND THE KINGDOM

Whilst John's Gospel gives us a superb description of Jesus as the Son, doing nothing but the Father's will, being one with the Father, saying only what He prompts, doing only what he requires, even to the death of the Cross, yet whilst this is not styled after the same manner in the synoptic

Gospels it is no less present. Luke 10:21ff and Matt. 11:25–28 show us that all his action was that of the Christ, the Son of the living God. No one knows the Son save the Father, and the Father save the Son and he to whom the Son is pleased to reveal Him.

Nevertheless the Son works in relationship to the Kingdom. He is Son of the King. That is why true Israelites are “sons of the Kingdom”, as they are “sons of the prophets” and “sons of the covenant” (cf. Matt. 8:12, Acts 3:25). When the work of the Kingdom is to pass from Jesus, as such, to his followers (Luke 22:28–29, cf. 12:32) then they too will need the same anointing which he required and received as Messiah–Son. This is the anointing they are promised and we must see it in its context.

In Acts 1:3–11 we see the following:– Jesus spoke of the Kingdom for forty days. Finally he said they would be baptised in the Spirit not many days hence. Because of the OT context of Kingdom and the Spirit’s outpouring they concluded the Kingdom was about to be restored to Israel. Whilst he did not deny this or affirm it, he simply pointed out that in what they were going to do – be witnesses to him – they would need the anointing (baptism) of the Spirit. Then they would have power. What power? Power to witness. Witness to what? To Messiah. Witness where? To the ends of the earth. All of this pointed back to Psalm 2:6ff. The Son is to ask and (so) receive the nations for his inheritance (cf. Heb. 1:2) and “the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8b, Psalm 2:8) for his possession. Conclusion: The Kingdom will not be only for Israel, but universal. They will need the Spirit’s anointing for the (world–wide and time–long) task of the Kingdom.

Anointed he was Son. Anointed, they will be like the Son. They will be sons. They will be 'sons of the Kingdom'. By all this we mean that Messiah's work will go on under his direction ("Jesus is Lord!") and the Spirit's immediate leadership for, "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they *are the sons of God*." Thus the programme of I Cor. 15:24–28 (cf. Hebrews 10:12–13, Rev. 11:15, 10:1–7) will be completed by the sons, i.e. the "Messiahites" who being baptised in the Spirit are also anointed for the task of the Kingdom, or, to put it another way "Those who, having the Spirit of His Son (cf. Matt. 10:20) will share the Sonship of the Son, and so do the will of the Father, the King of the Kingdom." By this we mean that Christ will have the nations of the world for his inheritance and the "ends of the earth" for his possession, but he has them by the sons, who, anointed of the Spirit share in that fulfilment of the Father's promise to the Son.

What then does it mean for the sons to pray to the Father, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven .... Thy Kingdom come" if it does not mean in the here-and-now the children are sharing in the battling of the Kingdom, or as Paul says "the Kingdom of God for which you are suffering..." (II Thess. 1:5)? If not then there is no need to fear the testing in which they may fall and the evil from which they ask the Father's deliverance. Only a mind gripped by moralistic thinking could think of obedience within the Kingdom as keeping the law as such, or as a privatised devotion which in its inverted exercise evades the world-wide and time-wide battle and action, the action which the Spirit empowers, and for which he anoints.

## STUDY TWELVE

### **The Holy Spirit with the Father & the Son—II The People of God—Fatherhood, Sonship & Spirit**

*The Spirit and the Family; The Church the Family, and its  
Mission, The Spirit and the Gifts*

Peter in I Peter 2:9–10, transfers, as we have seen, the statement of Exodus 19:5 to this new family composed of Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles (cf. Acts 1:8). They are the people of God, a kingdom of priests, a holy nation. They have a task, “to declare the wonderful deeds of him who called you out of the darkness into his marvellous light”. He reminds them, “Once you were no people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”

In the same chapter Peter has reminded them that they are living stones built into a spiritual house. This concept is also used by Paul, although in a slightly different way, when he sees the household of God as children being built as a sanctuary for God. It is to be a dwelling place for God *Spirit*. “In the Spirit” must mean the Spirit is helping to build it, and this fits with the entire chapter of Ezekiel 37 where God resurrects dead and lost Israel (Israel without hope) and makes it into a new nation, by the Spirit. The last verses of that chapter accord with the first few verses of Revelation 21.

Paul also sees the church as the bride of Christ, and gladly subject to him because of his love in redeeming her. In Galatians 4 the bride, the wife of the Lamb as we see her in Rev. 21, is the Jerusalem

which is above. This is the one John sees descending from heaven. Paul calls her “the mother of us all”.

Another and powerful picture of the church is that of the household of God. This is apt for Ephesians for it is the epistle, of all which speaks of the many aspects of the Fatherhood of God, and the ministry of the Spirit, especially in respect to love, unity, forgiveness, familyhood. In Ephes. 2: 11f, Paul traces the loneliness of the sinful Gentile world, and speaks of their enmity against Israel, and how by the Cross that enmity has been destroyed, and the two (Jewish race and Gentile race) have been made one. This is, in fact “one new humanity, in fact the new man Christ himself in whom all are new. Paul says “We (both) have access by Christ, through the Spirit, unto the Father.” That is the story, we are no longer strangers and pilgrims, but fellow-members of the family (household) of God. Note, that this is by the Spirit.

### 1. THE SPIRIT AND THE FAMILY

When Paul is talking about the Cross he is not speaking of a theory of reconciliation, the principle enunciated in II Cor. 5:19. He has seen it happen as a fact, in his time. Not with ease, of course. The command of Christ was to take the Gospel to the world, with the statement that having received power by the coming of the Spirit they would witness to him in Jerusalem and all Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth. The problem faced was that the Jews did not see Samaritans and Gentiles as part of the people of God. In Ephesians 2 and 3 Paul works out what he calls “the mystery”, that is the plan of God that the Gentiles should be fellow-members of the people of God, the fellowship of Messiah’s people.

He could say this because it was true, but also because, as the Book of Acts describes the happening, Jews, Samaritans and Gentiles had become one in the family of God. This did not happen without a struggle and a certain amount of difficulty. Even late in Paul's ministry some sought to exclude the Gentiles or to make them observers of the Jewish law, including the rite of circumcision.

By this time we may have lost our thread of thought that the Holy Spirit from creation onwards is ceaselessly active in building up and fulfilling the plan of God. That plan we see has to do with the family of God. We saw in Acts 15:8–9 that Peter claimed, concerning the Gentiles that God made no distinction between them and the Jews – He gave the Holy Spirit to both of them! He cleansed the hearts of the Gentiles by faith, i.e. by the renewing and washing work of the Holy Spirit as he applied the Gospel. This illustrates Paul's comment in Ephes. 2:18 "We both (Jew and Gentile) have access, by the Spirit, to the Father". That is what makes family.

That is why the Spirit is, not for nothing, called the Spirit of unity, of love, and of fellowship. He brings into the family, by the Gospel. He works as "the Spirit of His Son" and causes the involuntary "Abba!" None can truly cry "Abba!" and not cry "Dear brother!" or, "Dear sister!" Thus when the Spirit gives the personal sense of sonship, he also gives the personal–corporate sense of brotherhood, and familyhood. This is because we relate to Christ as brother (Heb. 2:11, cf. Rom. 8:29) and God as Father, and because the Spirit of the Father and the Son inhabit us. We must then see that the Church is a most important factor in the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Wonderful as is familyhood, and being children of God and brethren one of another, this corporate being is no end in itself. If there

is any “end” then it is the mission of the Church.

## 2. THE CHURCH THE FAMILY, AND ITS MISSION

We have seen already that “sons of the Kingdom” must be conquerors. In Gen. 1:28f and Rev. 21:7 the true children of God overcome, and prove worthy of being inheritors. This is precisely what Christ did, through the Spirit, and so he overcame and inherited (see Rev. 2:26, 3:21, Psalm 2:8, Heb. 1:2). Thus he who is in the ministry of the Kingdom is empowered by the Spirit to proclaim the Kingdom. We would, however, be making a mistake if we identified the Kingdom and the Church, totally. We can never say “Thy church come” with congruity. Jesus said, “I will build my church”, but the Kingdom is already. It comes. It is the power of God. It is the reign of God. It subdues evil. It establishes righteousness. The church is involved in the work of the Kingdom and yet it is not the Kingdom itself.

Whilst the redeemed are in one sense in the Kingdom (Col. 1:13), yet in a sense they are yet to inherit it (Matt. 25:34, Acts 14:22, etc.). The church, as we saw is called to proclaim the Kingdom. This is the thrust of the commission passages at the end of each Gospel and in Acts 1:7–8. That is why, when we speak of the Spirit and the church, we are called to look at two aspects of the ministry of the Spirit. They are as follows:—

- (a) The Spirit seeks to bring the church to birth, to equip it for its—internal life, and to keep it strong and vigorous. The family matters. The people of God must know their God and Father, and obey their Lord, and follow the Spirit.
- (b) The church is the people of God who must proclaim the Gospel in Jerusalem, Judea

and all Samaria and to the end of the earth, and so accomplish two things: (i) The ingathering of the elect and (ii) The outworking of the defeat of Satan and his forces. Put together these two things mean the triumph of the Kingdom.

We now look to see how the Spirit equips and leads his church.

### 3. THE SPIRIT AND THE GIFTS

If we keep in mind that the internal life of the church is not an end in itself, then we will not think of the gifts of the Spirit in a privatised sense. The gifts are to maintain the well-being of the church in order that in its turn the church may exercise a vigorous external ministry of proclamation and defeat of evil.

#### (i) Baptism in the Spirit

What did John mean when he said, “He will baptise you with/in the Spirit and with fire”? ‘He meant that in regard to the Kingdom and the forgiveness of sins that Jesus was the one who would give them the gift of the Spirit. Not only did they have records of Spirit-visited men in Israel, but they knew the prophets, themselves men of the Spirit, had foretold the day when there would be a universal outpouring of the Spirit. Jesus scarcely mentioned this great promise of the Spirit. He encouraged the disciples to believe the Father would give the gift (Luke 11:13), and in John 7:37–39 he gave an invitation to drink of himself, which would mean those who drank would have the Spirit flowing from them. In John chs. 14–16 he spoke to his disciples on the last night of the Spirit, but then he spoke more of himself and yet much more of the Father. He said

that he would pray to the Father, the Father would send, and he would also send from the Father the Spirit of truth. We have seen in Acts 1:3–8 that Jesus related the baptism of the Spirit to the coming of the Spirit to the disciples, and *they receiving power to witness to him*. At the end of Luke’s Gospel the Spirit is “the promise of the Father” (cf. Acts 1:4, cf. Luke 11:13), and he must be received before “preaching repentance and forgiveness of sins amongst all nations”. In John 20 Jesus breathes on the disciples, much after the manner described in Genesis 2:7, and tells them to receive the Spirit. Many have sought to rationalise this as “a Johannine Pentecost”. Only ten of the disciples were present, and whilst it may have been, so to speak, an installment of what was to come later, we do not know, and speculation is fruitless. What we do know is that it was *related to the forgiving, and retaining of sins*.

Without doubt, whilst the term “the baptism in the Holy Spirit” is not found in Scripture, the 120 were baptised in the Spirit at Pentecost, and presumably for the purpose Christ had told them – “to witness to me”. Doubtless this was what they did. They told “the wonderful works of God”, but they told them in a dynamic way, and not only then but in the days, months and years that followed. The gift was not a privatised matter, nor primarily for personal education but for witness.

What, then, was witness? Pentecost and later show us what witness was. We need only to use a concordance to see that witness was dynamic ministry of such nature that their enemies (of the Sanhedrin) could say with wonderment, “They have been with Jesus”, i.e. “They do the sort of things he did in the sort of way he did them”, that is, *it was as though Jesus was present!* We, then, can see two

things happening. The word is being preached and acted with power. Jew, Samaritan and Gentile are being brought together in the one family. As they, too, receive the gift of the Spirit they join the witness to (or of) Jesus.

A good student will take every event where the Spirit comes, falls, fills, is received, comes upon, and so on, and he will understand that this experience of being baptised in the Spirit adds up to receiving the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38 is a good verse for this. The event at Caesarea is also linked with forgiveness.

### (ii) The Gifts of the Spirit

Hebrews 2:3 speaks of “great salvation” and says, “It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard him, while God also bore witness by signs and wonders and various miracles and by *gifts of the Holy Spirit* distributed according to his own will.” Here “gifts of the Holy Spirit” could mean portions or affusions of the Spirit given from time to time. We are told that people like Stephen, Peter and Paul, although they had already received the Spirit were, at certain points “filled with the Spirit”, as though they were given a special affusion for a special situation. On the other hand, it could mean gifts which belong to the Spirit. Here it is noticeable that the Lord distributes according to his own will.

In Ephesians 4:7–11 the gifts given are, in fact the gifts of Christ. Some of these are mentioned in I Cor. 12:28. In I Cor. 12:28 it seems the gifts are given *through* the Spirit rather than directly from the Spirit. If they are the gifts of the Lord, the Son, then this may well be the “fulness” of which Paul speaks in Ephes. 1:23, and even of

which John speaks in John 1:14–16. Certainly it is Christ who *fills all* things (Ephes. 4:10), and it seems this *filling* relates to the giving, and then the use of the gifts. The life we receive is Christ's life (Romans 6:23), that charisma ("gift") out of which the church operates.

Notice it is the Spirit who distributes, and the Spirit is the Lord (II Cor. 3:18). Christ is head of the church, but the Spirit rules and controls as being present to the Body. Christ indwells by the Spirit and by faith, but the Spirit indwells as the present power by whom we are able to witness to Christ. We see that there are gifts by the Spirit, "varieties of workings" and "varieties of services". In Cor. 12:7ff each gift seems to be a manifestation *of the Spirit*. In line with the twin-action of the Spirit and Christ, they also may be called "*manifestations of Christ*", but in any case they are under the direct control of the Spirit. This twin action of Christ and the Spirit is seen in 12:12–13, "For Just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, *so it is with Christ. For by one Spirit* we were all baptised into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and *were all made to drink of one Spirit.*" In John 7:37–39 we drink of Christ; here of the Spirit. To drink of Christ makes us one. To drink of "one-ness Spirit" makes us one. The gifts, then are out of this one-ness of Christ and the one-ness of the Spirit, and so we are one.

If we see the gifts all flowing from Christ, through the Spirit, then *their action is the witness to or of Christ*. We have seen in former studies that the Spirit is determined to bring through the plan of the Father and the Son, and this he does by the Church. Hence the anointing or gift of (or baptism in) the Spirit is essential for the unity of the body, the life of the family, the use of the

gifts and power, and out of all this (and through it) comes the powerful witness of Christ. We have to say it somehow. We have to say that since through the Spirit Christ inhabits the members of his body, each personally, and all corporately, then the *witness of Christ is the life, action, power and utilised gifts of his people*. This is Christ working.

In regard to this we need to do a close study of the term testimony, i.e. witness (in Greek the same words) in the Book of the Revelation. There they have or hold the testimony of Jesus. For this they are persecuted, exiled, pursued by Satan, martyred and the like. What Satan cannot stand is seeing Christ in action in the midst even though he is reigning at the right hand of God. In fact this is how he reigns, or the result and fruit of his reigning. This is the true witness of Jesus.

### (iii) The Spirit and the Witness

We must keep seeing that the Spirit, though the Spirit of love is never weak. It is dangerous to grieve him, or quench him, or to do despite to him (Ephes. 4:30, I Thess. 5:19, Hebrews 10:29). In the Acts, the Spirit is pressing for action, and action in power. Judgement comes upon Ananias and Sapphira. He quickly heals the breach threatening between the widows. He ensures Peter goes to Caesarea. He sanctifies the hearts of the Gentiles. He guides Peter to Caesarea, Philip to Gaza, Paul and Barnabas to central Asia, and even forbids Paul and Silas going to certain points. He who has shaped history up to the Jesus-events, and has been with the Son in all his work, and the events of the death, resurrection and ascension, and who has now been sent by that Son (and the Father) to fulfil the mission, does not brook anything which would stand in the way of fulfilment. Hence his gift of power, of gifts, of love and fellowship, the ability

to proclaim and the use of prayer, all of these are elements he wills to have in action. Hence we see the enormous importance of the Church, not only as the family together, but as the people of God proclaiming the Gospel, witnessing to Christ, and ministering in the service of the Kingdom.

If at the end of the Book of the Revelation we find him, with the Bride saying “Come!” to the Lord of the church, so in chapters 2 and 3 we hear him speaking to the churches, again in that twin-action with Christ who walks amongst the candlesticks. We scarcely, then, see any room for academic speculation, but only determined obedience to what the Spirit is saying to the churches – now. When we hear and obey then this will constitute the testimony of Jesus, and this, as we have seen is the. spirit of prophecy. It is the Spirit of prophecy who is leading us to witness to Jesus or “hold the testimony of Jesus”.

## **STUDY THIRTEEN**

### **The Spirit of Love**

*Introduction.* 'Handmaid of Love; The Spirit's Revelation of Love; The Spirit and Love--as a Whole; Conclusion on the Spirit and Love

#### **1. INTRODUCTION: HANDMAID OF LOVE**

We have no difficulty, from Scripture in showing that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of love. Such verses abound as would prove the point, but then verses are as nothing until the very heart of them comes alive to the readers and those uttering them. As we have said, the Holy Spirit, though discrete, does not do 'his own thing', for if he has his own thing it is the 'thing' of the Father and the Son. Thus when we see the statement, "God is love" in I John 4:8 and 16 we know that whilst this is probably the most theological statement of all, yet it needs the Spirit to make it revelation to us, or, to put it even better, we must see what he revelates, for there is no reluctance or inability on his part to make that powerful revelation. The Spirit is the handmaid of love in that he constantly brings to us the love of the Father and of the Son, and in his own love continues to work the loving will of God, for man.

#### **2. THE SPIRIT'S REVELATION OF LOVE**

##### **(i) Revelating the Father**

I John 4:9–10 with Romans 5:5–10 make it clear that it is at the Cross we see the love of God, primarily. As we will again see, the creation was God's act of love, and His providence is continuing love, but that is not seen because man has deliberately blinded his eyes to the nature of God, and

especially the nature of God as love. When the Cross is revealed, then God's love is revealed. When one knows God is love, then one can see that love in everything, even though previously this had not appeared to be so.

How then is the Cross love, and how does the Spirit show that love? In answer the first thing to be grasped is that even prior to creation God had purposed the Cross. I Peter 1:19–20 speaks of the precious blood of the Lamb which redeems, and says, "He was destined before the foundation of the world but was made manifest at the end of the times for your sake". II Tim. 1:9 speaks of "God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not in virtue of our works but in virtue of his own purpose and grace which he gave us in Christ Jesus from eternity".

Then we must grasp something of the holiness and righteousness of God. His righteousness demands the just punishment of the law. His holiness demands the destruction of our unholiness. He is wrathful only where there is evil, and only because of it, since by nature He is love. It must be His love which somehow takes into itself the judgement of law, and His wrath upon unrighteousness and unholiness. This concept is too difficult for us to understand, and history shows that men have not really grasped the true intent of God but have scorned the Cross either condemning God for allowing His wrath and judgement to come upon His Son, or refusing that this could be so, and so denuding the Cross of its dynamic of grace. They have chosen many theories, some very ingenious, to rationalise that Cross. Until we see 'the wrath of love' we do not really see God as love. The love of the Cross is that it destroys the guilt of man and sets him free. From the Cross flows forgiveness, justification and cleansing. Not one jot of this is deserved by man. Not one tittle can be earned by him. This is the offence of

the Cross but also the revelation of God as love.

When we understand history, and the labour of the Spirit to—train man in the meaning of sacrifice, Israel in understanding the righteousness and holiness of God, and his work in the prophets to bring through the message of the Suffering Servant to come who would also prove to be the Messiah, liberating his people from sin and evil, then we see the love of the Spirit.

Jesus came as the Son of the Father, spelling out true sonship in human terms, and so making God's Fatherhood intelligible. Again, Jesus met the obstacle of men's rejection of God, and the remaking of God in the image they cared to have Him in. Jesus makes it very clear in John chs. 14–16 that it is expedient for him (the Son) to go away, so that the Spirit can come in definitive ministry to revealate him (the Son) so that he can revealate the Father. In fact this is what he did. At Pentecost he came, and so gripped the 120 with the truth that they powerfully communicated "the wonderful works of God". At this point the person and ministry of Jesus became clear.

Nor was this all. Galatians 4:4–6 sums up the whole gamut of salvation and adoption. The Son redeems from the law. Men receive sonship (adoption). The Spirit is sent into their hearts crying "Abba!" They know the Father. They know He is love. They know because they have been forgiven. It is the Son who dies for their sins, but it is the Father who initiates that death, and it is the Father who forgives sins and Justifies men.

### (ii) Revelating the Son

Studies in Christology show how profound is the person of Christ. His many so—called "offices" such

as Son of God, Son of Man, Messiah, King of Israel, and the like require much contemplation. Jesus said of the Spirit, “He will take the things which are mine and will show them unto you”. The many statements in the NT concerning the love of Christ, e.g. II Cor. 5:14, Gal. 2:20 (cf. I Pet. 1:8), Ephes. 5:2, are simply words until the Spirit translates the action of Christ into the truth of love which we can understand. As he takes the things of Christ so we begin to understand the brimming love of Christ. We see his love for the Father, and his love for us.

It is in his yearning to die for us, and it is in the depthless suffering he endures to bring us to God. To bear our sins in his body, to take on him the iniquity of the world, to bear our griefs and carry our sorrows, to be made sin for us – these are but statements which are bewildering and unintelligible until the Spirit leads us into the truth of them. This he does, and then we know the Son is love.

### (iii) The Revelation of Love

#### *Revelator of Creation as Love*

The Spirit is the one who revelates Father and Son. Yet he revelates them as the Father who is love, and the Son who loves; not just as Father and Son. We see their love – each for the other – and we see their love, for us. This is quite stunning. Love, as commonsense tells us, if it is the love the Scriptures speak of, is without degree. John 17 speaks of the mutual love of the Father and the Son, and says that this is the love God has for His people. Hence when the Spirit revelates love he revelates it through this Father–Son relationship which is primarily understood at the Cross.

However, when we go back to creation, and especially

when we see its beauty, its order and its essential functions, we can, now, understand the love of the Spirit, as also the love of the Father and the Son. This Triune God sets out to create, and God is a “faithful Creator”, that is He not only ensures that the processes of creation are “very good” and keeps them so, but He has loved enough to meet man’s need, and creation’s need by the work of redemption through His Son. Nor is that all. Whilst creation is continuous and providence unceasing, He has also planned for the proper consummation of His creation. In this sense He is not a faithful Creator, and Redeemer, and Consummator, but He is “faithful Creator” because inherent in His purposes is that love which will bring it to its ultimate and full perfection.

### *Revelator of Redemption*

Again we need to emphasise the Spirit’s persistence in bringing the world to redemption, or, rather, redemption to the world, and then the world to redemption. We can see that through the creation and all of man, through the times of the patriarchs, of Israel, and the times of the prophets he had been shaping up redemption, preparing the world for “the fulness of time”. In Christ he had been working until the hour of the Cross. We do not know, precisely, his own work within that Cross, for it was primarily the work of the Son. Yet, as we may see, it was also the work of the Father, as “God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses against them”. We cannot dogmatically expound “who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God”. The word Spirit may need to be spelled with a small “s” .. spirit – but even so, on what did Christ’s spirit draw if not the Spirit, and in what sense was Christ’s spirit, as a man, eternal? The exegetes. have not yet been able to explain. We know that in some way,

and some very deep way the Spirit was in the work of the Cross as in every other work of the man Jesus.

Yet as we saw, the Spirit had to come in a new, different and epochal way (at Pentecost) to become the Spirit of conviction, of revelation, and of application. It is he who makes the work of the gospel an interior work. He works through the knowing, willing, feeling elements of man to show him the “deeps of God” and the “gifts of God”. and to evoke repentance and faith, and to aid man into, receiving the gift/s of salvation.

We have denied that the Spirit is impassible, in. the sense that he does not feel. We have also denied he is passible in the sense that he is the object of any passion. What we do know is that he is the Spirit of love. Romans 8:26f shows how tenderly and intimately he works in each believer so that the heart of that person is as the mind of that Spirit! What of the deep-seated groans which cannot be uttered? What of the dynamic outpouring through the proclamation of the apostles? What of I Cor. 2:5, I Thess. 1:5, I Peter 1:12 and other descriptions of life-changing ministries? Was this without the Spirit? NO: Then every nuance, every strong touch, every exercise of power came from the Spirit, that man might know the living truth of the Gospel.

Think too of the *application* of the Gospel. Paul's great statement “The law (i.e. its guilt) kills, but *the Spirit gives life*”. This is “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus” which has “made me free from the law of sin and death”. Also, “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty”. Who can gauge the revelation of the Father as Father, as “the Spirit of His Son” takes over the regions of the heart. Who can gauge the responding love for the Father, and for the Son,

once the depths of Calvary are known by the believer? “We love because he first loved us” cries John. “She has loved much because she has been forgiven much”, says Jesus of the forgiven prostitute. Who can see or know, or experience forgiveness from mere words? Who makes it real in the depths, but the Holy Spirit?

### *Revelator of the New Creation*

In II Cor. 5:16 Paul speaks of a false understanding of others, and a false understanding (previously) of Christ. He infers “This was after the *flesh*”. Now he has a better inference. “Let us judge after the Spirit!” Judge whom? Judge the true believer. Judge him according to the flesh (RSV “a human way of thinking”) and you will make mistakes. Why? “For if any man is in Christ he is a new creation”. We see others differently under the Spirit’s love. “Love covers the multitude of sins”. “Love is not suspicious”. The love of God has been flooded into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.

How has that love been flooded in? The answer is, “Love is the natural (evoked) response of man when he sees, acknowledges, and comes under the love of God. This love the Spirit has revealed. This love now takes its natural course, filling up old river beds that had run profoundly dry. Now man loves God, loves his neighbour and loves himself. No psychological urging of him to love himself will get anywhere. Only when he sees how God loves him can he love himself. Only then can he, and will he love others. The Spirit goes on inhabiting him, and taking him to deeper depths of love.

If the Spirit revelates the new creation *now*, be also revelates what it will be in the new-time of eternity. I Cor. 2:6–14 makes this clear. Here the “gifts of God” primarily refer to glorification.

They are so stunning as to have no parallel in this world or age. Yet the Spirit reveals them, these very deeps of God. What a man will be, i.e. his hope, greatly influences what a man now is (I John 3:1–3). The future keeps coming towards us, powerfully, as we keep moving towards it. What will be is greatly helping what is now.

This, then, is further revelation of the love of God.

### **3. THE SPIRIT AND LOVE – AS A WHOLE**

#### **(i) The Fruit of the Spirit**

John 15 is the great chapter on abiding in Christ and so being fruitful. In this sense the fruit of the Spirit are really the fruit of Christ. If we think in terms of man coming to Christ, then that may be termed “fruit”. In Isaiah 53:11 we see the Suffering Servant, and are told that “He will see the fruit of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied”. Redeemed men are his fruit.

Yet we also grasp from John 15 that true fruitfulness is the expression of our lives. Just as Matt. 5:16 says our works glorify God, so the fruit of our lives glorifies the Father. At the same time the fruit of the Spirit or, better still, “the harvest of the Spirit” is that fruit of love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. It may seem to be character development, traits which we begin to make habitual in our lives, by some assistance from the Spirit, yet this is not fully the case.

The love of which we speak is the love of which we have spoken, that is the response of love to the Gospel of love. The joy of which we speak is the

“joy of salvation”, and the peace is “peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”. So we could go down the line. These are all the fruits of grace (cf. Titus 2:11f). They come to be in us because the Spirit has sown the seed of the Gospel which has brought his own harvest of love, joy, peace, and so on.

### (ii) The Way of Love

This fruit of love with its concomitants is the new way of life. Gal. 3:1–6 speaks of “beginning in the Spirit”, and implies “going on in the Spirit” and even “being completed in the Spirit”. Actually this is the way of love, as we shall see.

In Romans 5:5 we are told that our hearts have been flooded with love by the Spirit who, himself, has been given to us. We assume that if he dwells with us, then the exercise of love will be the norm for believers. I Peter 1:22 suggests that this is the purpose of the Gospel, that we should love one another sincerely, from the heart, and in a fervent manner.

Without here going into the modes of love<sup>10</sup> we see that the life we live is lived in the Spirit. That is why Paul speaks in the first chapter of Colossians of the love which they (the Colossians) have *to all the brethren*. He says he has heard of their “love in the Spirit”. Since the Spirit has been working on God’s age-old pattern of love this is not surprising. Through him Jew, Samaritan and

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<sup>10</sup> For a detailed study of love and its modes see Living Faith Study No. 1 (N.C.P.I. 1976) “*The Nature & Meaning of Love*”.

Gentile have come, in practice, into the one Body. Each has been caused to cry “Abba:” so all cry to one another as brother and sister.

So often the Spirit is referred to in terms of love, of unity, and of fellowship. Many miss the basic thrust of I Cor. 12:4–31. Because it has within it one of the few mentions of the gifts they see it as an exposition of the gifts. In fact it is an exposition of the nature of the unity (love) of the Body, and really it is about nothing else. Verses 4–8 should be studied closely. Their theme is “unity in, and because of diversity”. There is diversity in gifts, service and working, but they all relate to the unity. The body is one, the members are one. It is the “One-ness” Spirit who has baptised them into the “One-ness” Body, and each (and all) has drunk of this “One-ness” Spirit. What can there be, then, but “One-ness”? That is, love.

On the way persons have become beguiled by the *means of love*, i.e. the gifts. They have made them ends in themselves. Since gifts simply make love concrete and are deeds which meet true needs, they are subsidiary to love itself. Hence the power exposition of I Cor. 13. The thrust is this:– Gifts without love are empty and a contradiction in terms. Gifts are for love and no other purpose. Love itself is limitless in what it does, bears, believes, hopes and endures. It is never negative, hostile, proud – which some are who see gifts as an end in themselves. One day the gifts will be gone, their interim purpose having been fulfilled. Then love will be seen as the one eternal thing. Whilst in this world love is never apart from faith and hope it is greater than them.

Paul then suggests that the gifts which edify most (cf. I Cor. 8:1–2) should be used. These are closest to love, as the servants of love.

### (iii) The Goal of Love

The gifts, under the Spirit are the *means* of love. Yet love is not aimless. Paul calls it “the highest way” (I Cor. 12:31). It is the way to somewhere, it is the mode of something. It has its goal. This is the goal to which the Spirit leads. He leads as we proclaim God’s love to others, as we live it ourselves, as we share it in the family of God’s people, as we evidence the harvest of the Spirit in our lives. Yes, and the thrust of the last verses of I Cor. 13 is that when the partial has vanished the true and full will be manifested.

I Cor. 3 speaks of what we do here, and of the laying of eternal material in the building of God’s building. Fire will test it, and what is not eternal will be consumed. What is eternal will remain. I Cor. 13:8 tells us it is love that is eternal.

Looked at from another point of view, only that which is sowed to the Spirit will be there at the end – albeit with its harvest! (Gal. 6:8). In “The Spirit and the Eschaton” we will see the ultimate harvest of the Spirit, but in Ephesians we read that it is Christ .in whom all things will be united, and in him all things will be filled full. Nevertheless we are asked to maintain “the unity of the Spirit”, i.e. to act in accordance with it. It is Christ’s fulness which will “fill full all things” (cf. 4:10 and 1:23), but we are to go on being filled with the Spirit. Col. 1:22 tells us that God will reconcile all things to Himself through the Cross.

We mean that in these goals (or, this goal) of God the present operations of love relate to the end consummation of love. The Spirit wishes us to understand that the present life and operations are, in fact eschatological. Their fruits will be seen

at the end, and in a manner of speaking will contribute to the climax of the end. That is the present operation of love is both contributory and processive, and not merely a trial run or practice with a view to the ultimate. Having begun in the Spirit we must become mature in the Spirit. That way of maturity is the way of love. That is the burden of the final verses of I Cor. 13.

#### **4. CONCLUSION ON THE SPIRIT AND LOVE**

We have to confess that we have barely touched the edge of this subject – the Spirit and love. Love can be spoken about, but in fact it is a life to be lived. The Spirit can be spoken about, but he is a Person to be known, a Lord to be obeyed, a Counsellor from whom to receive wisdom. The one way to grieve (vex) him is to live the negatives of non-love. It is also the way to go contrary to what God has planned for us, namely, “the day of redemption”. The way of the Spirit, we repeat, is the way of love.

## **STUDY FOURTEEN**

### **The Flesh and the Spirit**

*Introduction: The Two Realms; Evil Seeking to Subvert the Creation,' The Mind of the Flesh, The Mind of the Spirit; Newness of Spirit by the Spirit; The Continuing Mind of the Spirit; The Way of Walking in the Spirit*

#### **1. INTRODUCTION: THE TWO REALMS**

In Romans 8:5–11 Paul speaks of “the mind of the flesh” and “the mind of the Spirit”. Some, who see a dualism within human nature speak of a part of man being flesh and part being spirit and these two in conflict. This is found in certain Greek forms of thinking, and in Eastern religious dualism. Often it is a thinking that anything material is evil or’ of a lower order of being, and anything unseen is spiritual and of a higher order. This is in no way Judaic or Christian thinking. Because God has created man he is a person, and does not have higher or lower, or good and evil elements. Man gives himself over to evil elements within the universe, if he chooses that way, or he obeys that which is God, and so, good.

Paul can speak of some human beings having “the mind of the flesh” or of having “the mind of the Spirit”. What then, does he mean? Within the world we have both good and evil powers. The Scriptures do not speculate as to the genesis of evil powers. Certain Scriptures lead us to believe that Satan was a high celestial power who became filled with pride in himself, and ceased to submit to God. In fact he rebelled and took a third of the angelic powers with him. (Rev. 12:1ff).

Because of his rebellion Satan has set up a system of his own, and in this not only fallen angels but other spiritual powers take part. Amongst them is fallen man. Hence we have a dualism of a sort, but we can in no way call this a dualism of creation. At the best it can be called a dualism within creation, but it is not really of creation's essential order upon which God pronounced, at its completion that "it is very good".

The *term flesh* can have the simple meaning of *body*, or of humanity, and generally in its weak state ("All flesh is as grass"). However it has a very powerful connotation of evil, and this we will trace. Someone has described flesh in this evil sense as "humanity as conditioned by sin". That is so, although it does not cover all aspects. We must be clear that the body is in no sense evil. It may be used for evil purposes but its various powers and abilities and capacities are not themselves evil.

We are aware that there is flesh and spirit. There is likewise Satan and God, the world-system and God's order. There is the kingdom of darkness, and the kingdom of light. There are the children of the devil and the children of God. There is the old (fallen Adamic) humanity and the new humanity, i.e. the humanity which is Christ and in which the redeemed participate. All these evil elements are linked in one whole system just as all the good elements are linked in one whole system. Hence when there is battle with one portion of either there is battle with the whole. It is on this understanding that we may proceed to the discussion of the Holy Spirit and the unholy flesh.

## 2. EVIL SEEKING TO SUBVERT THE CREATION

We have argued somewhere that man is primarily *spirit*. He is body and mind, soul and other elements, but they are all of one being and that is spirit. When man is true man he can worship God in spirit and in truth, in other words, being in the image of God he has affinity with God, although he does not have Deity. He is, if we wish “man–spirit” and God is “God–Spirit”. The terms are unsatisfactory but indicative of our thought. As man was created it is doubtful that Jesus would have used the statement, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”. Adam, unfallen had no need to be re–born, and whilst a bodily creature did not have the connotation Jesus suggested was that of Nicodemus.

Man was formed of the dust of the earth and God breathed into him and man became “a living being (soul)” He was told he would die (become a dead being) if he ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and we assume that is what happened. His physical death was to follow, but he had death of some kind through his sin.

This is described in Romans 1:19ff where man rejected the nature of God and refused knowledge of him. He became, as an existent “dead to God”. Since God is the true source of life and he refused this he remained in a state of death (cf. Ephes. 2: 1–3, Heb. 9:14, Romans 5:12ff). We saw that at the time prior to the Flood God said, “My Spirit shall not always strive with man because he has become flesh”. Bodily man had always been “flesh”. now he is just flesh. Jesus described the days prior to the Flood saying that they were “eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage”. There

is surely nothing wrong with doing these things, but there is something wrong in doing only these things. Man is not reaching out, fulfilling the powers of his being as created spirit. He lives in the deathstate of separation from God and explores the “deathside” of his fallen being.

We read the Bible with blinkers if we do not see the extent of man’s fall into idolatry, his selfishness, violence and cruelty. True, he does grand things also, and this may well be testimony to the fact that he is in the image of God whether he likes it or not. Even in his death–existence he can never accept his state as the creational norm. Satan is the god of this world, and blinds men’s eyes to the grace of God (II Cor. 4:4). We have seen that from the Fall God prophesied His plan of redemption. Man also had to reject this.

In Ephes. 2:1–3 we find that man is still spirit, albeit not living consonant with his created state. Paul says he walks according to the course (modes) of this world according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now energises the children of disobedience. *Man is spiritually energised by evil spirit*. If man were not spirit in some sense then spirit could not energise him, even evilly. Likewise in Ephesians 6:10ff Paul describes “*spiritual wickedness in the heavenlies*”. He is speaking about wicked spirits who give vent to *spiritual evil*. Such spiritual evil is really the perverse use of created powers as created beings within God’s created universe.

We must now try to answer more fully our own question, “What is flesh?” When Jesus said to Nicodemus, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh” he meant that man as he is now born does not have spiritual comprehension. He is limited to where he has committed himself. Only when a new action takes

place in him, from above, and by the Spirit can he become true (i.e. regenerated) man. Natural generation from human parentage does not allow him to have comprehension he would have were he truly spirit as God had created him.

In I Cor. 2:6–14 Paul puts forward the proposition that unless the Spirit teach redeemed man he will not know the gifts of God. He adds, “The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit, for they are foolishness unto him and he cannot know them because they are spiritual”. The natural or psychical man cannot know, of himself, things of the true spirit or Spirit.

Another way of saying this is that man is blind. He cannot see the universe as it really is, because he cannot see God as He really is. His mind has been gripped by evil, although he would be the last to think he was really evil. His mind has been conformed to *the world*, that is that aeon or system which Satan controls. I John 5:19 says (in the same vein as Ephes. 2:1–3, cf. Heb. 2:14–15) that “the whole world lies in the Evil One”. Even the Jewish religious leaders who thought (and claimed) that they were truly of God were told by Jesus, “You are of your father the devil, and his desires you do”.

### 3. THE MIND OF THE FLESH

In Romans 8:5–11 Paul speaks of “the mind of the flesh”, or as it has also been translated “the mind-set of the flesh”. The word used is “incorrigible”. “It is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” This was “the mind-set” of the people prior to the Flood. God saw that “every thought of the heart was only evil continually”. This is paralleled in Romans 1:19–32 where man sets about to do what he will. He seeks autonomy,

and hopes to control his own world of his making. In one sense he reckons without Satan, who desires to have man for himself, and in the process to debase him (John 10:10a, Heb. 2:14–15). On the other hand, he reckons without God who loves him and sets about to redeem him.

#### 4. THE MIND OF THE SPIRIT

The mind of the Holy Spirit is life and peace, as against the mind of the flesh which is death. The Spirit is the Spirit of love, and the Spirit of life, and he sets out to fulfil the Father's plan to redeem man. The Kingdom of God is said to be, "Righteousness, peace and joy in *the Holy Spirit*." He seeks to have man enter the Kingdom of God.

This, then, makes sense of the years of salvation history which lead up to the coming of Messiah. None of those years is wasted. The Spirit is blowing for good! He moved for beauty, life, and order across the primeval deep. He moves across Israel as a valley of dry bones and regenerates them, and this is some of the prophecy to which Jesus refers when he speaks to Nicodemus, "Are you a teacher in Israel and you do not know these things (of the new birth)?"

We see now the import of the Spirit and John the Baptist. We see the import of the Spirit and Jesus. We see the significance of Isaiah 61:1–2 quoted by Jesus. He is to liberate men and women from their bondage, from sickness and disease, much of which has its origins in evil, and to proclaim the jubilation of the jubilee year, the year when captives, slaves and debtors were fully freed. It shows the significance of the anointing by which Jesus overcame Satan at the testing of the temptation and proved himself true Messiah to lead his people to victory. It gives full meaning to Peter's (later) summary of Jesus' anointing and ministry, "Jesus of

Nazareth whom God anointed with the *Holy Spirit and power* who went about doing all manner of good, and *healing all those who were oppressed of the devil.*” It makes sense of Jesus’ statement, “If I *by the Spirit of God cast out demons*, then has the Kingdom of God come upon you.” That is the Spirit was in Jesus, led Jesus, empowered Jesus so that Satan and evil, the fleshly elements of rebellious creation could be destroyed.

This is why the Cross “destroys the works of the devil” and “destroyed him who has the might of death, even the devil”, and causes Christ to triumph over “principalities and powers, putting them to an open shame”, thus proving that he is “stronger than the strong man” (I John 3:8, Heb. 2:14–15, Col. 2:14–15, Luke 11:21ff). The death and resurrection of Christ provided freedom from guilt, pollution, shame, and the fear of death, and so crippled Satan and his hosts. On the positive side, when man sees the love of God, and the holiness of God, and the pardon of God he repents, believes, and receives his freedom. The Spirit has triumphed over the flesh.

## 5. NEWNESS OF SPIRIT BY THE SPIRIT

“She hath been bound of Satan these eighteen years” said Jesus of a woman who had been jackknifed with a u-shaped backbone. Jesus freed her. He cast seven devils out of Mary Magdalene. He liberated the paralysed man from his sickness, through forgiveness. He hunted down demons and cast them forth, he set out to free men from Satan’s cruelty. He came to give life. Most difficult of all were the religious leaders who were of the mind of the flesh, but did not know it, and would not believe it.

Through Christ the Spirit was the Spirit of liberation. Through the Spirit, following his ascension

Christ was the Lord of liberation. In John 3: 1–14 Jesus speaks of the Spirit blowing where he would. He would, if he willed, blow across the primeval deep, the deadness of Israel, and the firstfruits of the harvest–Pentecost. When he blew and a man came under his influence, he was born anew.

The old flesh received its death–blow. The Spirit worked first upon man, and then in man, after which he worked through man. His convicting power brought men to see the delusions of the “mind of the flesh” and to desire new life. The Spirit worked “in the washing of regeneration and (spirit) renewal”. Man was born again, forgiven, justified, sanctified in that he was now part of the people of God, a member of the living Body of the Church.

In this was the Spirit who had defeated the flesh, and had brought man to be true spirit, the new creation, able to worship God ‘in spirit and in truth’.

## 6. THE CONTINUING MIND OF THE SPIRIT

Two significant passages–Ephesians 4:20–24, and Colossians 3:9–11 – show us that the old man, or the mind of the flesh, fallen man’s participation in Adam, was finished at regeneration. Man is now “renewed in the spirit of the mind”. This is an act which has taken place. Continually, also he is “being renewed in knowledge after the image of Him who created him”. Every day the Spirit is keeping the mind clean and fresh and increasing experience of life in the Spirit. Man then is in the Kingdom which is “righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit”.

At the same time he is faced with unceasing conflict. The world around him is seeking to get him back to old ways of thinking. Powers of evil are persistently giving the old dreams, the old principles. Faithless human reasoning is tempted to get

into the saddle again. Old patterns of training and old habits of the body seek to have expression. Whilst the new man does not have the mind of the flesh, the flesh is seeking to give back to him the mind he had!

The Spirit has a wide canvas on which he works, a broad perspective in which the plan of God is working out. He is concerned personally with each person but he will not allow a privatised holiness, a secluded ghetto sanctification. Man must be out where the battle is. The Spirit will make man strong in Christ, in the Body, in the family, and make him pure and vibrant in action. He will not simply defeat his sin, but raise him up to be courier and proclaimer of victory. How will this be if the man is cowed by evil, introverted in some interior pilgrimage of holiness, some individualistic preoccupation with his problems?

Man must have the continuing mind of the Spirit, being constantly cleansed, refreshed, and defeating evil, even sin within.

## 7. THE WAY OF WALKING IN THE SPIRIT

### (i) The Way of the Conqueror

Ephesians 6:10ff speaks of spiritual warfare, and tells of the armour, the spiritual armour the people of God must wear (and not just the persons of God!). The battle is a close hand-to-hand combat, a wrestling with the very principalities and powers defeated at the Cross. I John 2:14 speaks of young men being strong and having overcome Satan. II Cor. 10:3 speaks of weapons which are not worldly or fleshly, but *spiritual*, that is of the Spirit. Ephesians 6:17 speaks of the "Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God". Such a sword Jesus used in his own conflict against Satan when he said, "It

is written .... “ By this he defeated him.

Romans 8:34ff speaks of the believers being accounted as sheep for the slaughter and being killed all the day long, but also of being “more than conquerors through him who loved us”. Revelation 12:10ff speaks of Satan opposing and accusing the brethren and of them overcoming him.

These passages show us that although the new man in Christ is not powerful of himself, he *is powerful in the Spirit*. Yet he must be prepared for the conflict and must fight every device Satan brings into use such as threatening, oppressing, accusing and even seducing. To have weapons of the Spirit which are mighty to the pulling down of many strongholds of the flesh is a powerful thought.

#### (ii) The Way of Being Led

In Galatians 5 Paul speaks of another kind of conflict. The new man is caught between two powers. They are the flesh and the Spirit. In regard to the Spirit this is the normal situation of the new man. He must walk in the Spirit and be led by the Spirit. Romans 8:14 has it, “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God”. Paul speaks of the power of the flesh, striving lustfully against the Holy Spirit, and seeking to draw the believer into old habits and patterns of the flesh. The Holy Spirit fights the poison and evil of the flesh. The requirement of the believer is that he “go along with the Spirit”, that is that he do what the Spirit commands.

One of the great temptations, having *begun in the Spirit* and having become aware of new strength is to revert to one’s own ego-operations. The old feel of “I can do it.” The old delirium of fleshly

endeavour, of (imagined) human autonomy. These are the ways flesh comes. And no greater delusion is there than that which “law-way” provides. Law-way says, “You can do it”. Paul says sin takes occasion by the law, deceives and slays (Rom. 7:11). So man reverts to what he can do, and not to the law of love (the law of Christ) internalised in the heart as part of the New Covenant, and obeyed by walking in the Spirit. When man reverts to law he reverts to flesh. This is what Paul means in Galatians 3: 1–6 by saying that having begun in the Spirit will they (the Galatians) now end in the flesh? Did they receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Walking in the Spirit has two aspects. In Gal. 5:16 the word *Peripateo*, meaning “walk about” or, perhaps, “walk everywhere”, means that in every case walk by the Spirit, that is, of course according to the leading of the Spirit. In Gal. 5:25 “If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit” has another verb which means to “march in step” as does an army. The sense is “all of you walk concertedly together in the Spirit”.

The point about all this is that the flesh is defeated as believers are subject to the Spirit, led by him and aided by him. The term “walk” is really “live”. One’s walk is one’s life. Other passages such as in Ephesians 5, “walk in love” and “walk in light” (repeated in John’s first Epistle) show us the kind of life which is the opposite to “the mind of the flesh”.

We have by no means finished with the matter of the Spirit’s defeat of the flesh and all forms of (spiritual) evil. This ultimate defeat relates to the eschaton and the Spirit of judgement. What we need to see is that the Spirit gives rebirth, releases from the realm and bondage of flesh. This he does when applying the work of the Cross and

Resurrection. He keeps the new mind in constant renewal, and leads the people of God in love and light, giving them positive modes of living. He involves them in the mopping up operations which stem from the time of the Cross and Pentecost. Ultimately all evil will be cast into the lake of fire.

Until that time we need to be alert, to be constantly filled with the Spirit, and be led by him. True life personally for each believer, and corporately for the people of God is “walking in the it”, i.e. progressing forward at his behest.

## **STUDY FIFTEEN**

### **The Spirit and Eschatology**

*Introduction: The Spirit of the First and Last Things;  
The Spirit of the Things to Come; Conclusion*

#### **1. INTRODUCTION: THE SPIRIT OF THE FIRST AND LAST THINGS**

##### **(a) The Meaning of Eschatology**

Eschatology is the study of the last things, that is the things of the end-time. When fully discussed they include “the last days” – which is a semi-technical term to cover the events of “the Day of the Lord”, all that leads up to the final judgement. It also includes resurrection, the regeneration of the creation – the new heavens and the new earth – the final state of man in glorification, and other related elements.

However it is difficult to define what are “the last days”. For example in Acts 2:14ff, Peter explains the coming of the Spirit in the light of Joel 2:28–32. “And in the last days it shall be, God declares, ‘I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh’”. That shows that the last days stretch from Pentecost to the end. It means we are now in the last days. Eschatology then, in a slightly different sense is the study of the coming things. If we use that sense then the Spirit, from creation has been the Spirit of the coming things. He has always been eschatological. And this is true. From Genesis 3: 15 prophecy has been extant, and has been concerned with “things to come”. On the night of his betrayal Jesus said, of the Holy Spirit, “He will declare to you the things that are to come.” This he has

ever been doing, but in this era, the era that has been called the era of the Spirit, he has been telling us things to come. Two views are held today, (a) That all eschatology is futuristic. It never seems to concern the actual present-time, and (b) Eschatology is already realised (called “realised eschatology”), that is nothing has to be fulfilled. It has all happened and we have to live in the light of that. There is a third way of seeing things, namely eschatology is in the process of being realised. It is happening at present and will go on happening.

Our main point, however, is that the Spirit began his work at creation, and operated as Agent of creation, just as the Father was the Initiator, and the Son the Mediator of that work. In time the Father has been the Initiator of providence and salvation and will be seen at the end-time to be the Initiator of the regeneration of creation (cf. Matt. 19:28 “the regeneration” or “the new world”). The Son is the Mediator in all these things, and the Spirit the Agent. We have seen also that the Spirit yearns for the fulfilment of the plan of God and works to that purpose. He is the Spirit of life, of judgement, and of renewal.

#### **(b)The Eschatological Feasts**

Israel had three great Feasts, those of the Passover, Pentecost and Tabernacles. We would scarcely see them as eschatological except that “Christ our passover has been sacrificed for us”. Calvary refers to the Passover, and the old Passover passes into the new Communion, the celebration of the death. Whilst this ordinance or sacrament looks back to Calvary it is also presently showing the Lord’s death, and this is “until I come”. It looks to the future, and presages “drinking the wine anew in the

Kingdom of God”, i.e. the Messianic banquet to which Jesus often refers.

Pentecost was the Feast of the offering of the first-fruits. With the coming of the eschatological Spirit there was the offering of the first-fruits, realised in the offering of those of Israel, Samaria, and the nations, i.e. the Gentiles. This feast then has been fulfilled, or rather is being fulfilled in “the last days”. The third feast – Tabernacles – is yet to be fulfilled. It is the offering of the whole harvest, the gathering in of the harvest, and praise to God for total fulfilment.

In this regard it is interesting to note in John 7:37–39, which was at the time of the Feast of the Tabernacles, that Jesus gave his great cry for folk to come to him, to drink and believe. If they did so then out of their bellies would flow rivers of living water. Tabernacles was connected with lights, and with the ritual of the priests bringing in water from Siloam, in golden vessels, whilst they chanted from Isaiah 12, “We shall draw water, with joy, from the wells of salvation’. In Isaiah 12:4 it adds “*In that day* you will say...” It points to the ultimate time. The water was poured out by the priests at the base of the altar, thus signifying that salvation, and (the water of) life is linked with sacrifice, or as we see it, Calvary. The flowing waters from the believer are the Holy Spirit. In this sense the Holy Spirit is “the fountain of living waters”, a title normally used for God (eg Jer. 2:13), but now for the Spirit. It is used eschatologically in Rev. 7:17 and 22:17, and this, almost certainly for the Spirit. The Spirit then is linked with Calvary (the Passover), Pentecost, and Tabernacles.

**(c) The Spirit's 'Salvation History'**

Salvation history is of the Triune God, the entire Godhead. The Spirit is the Spirit of things to come. He both shapes them up, and indicates them through prophecy. We have seen the pattern from beginning to end. The Son is eschatological in that what he has created (Col. 1:15–17) he will ultimately unify (Ephes. 1:9–10). The Father is eschatological in that what He has created He will reconcile by the death of His Son (Col. 1:19–21). The Spirit is eschatological in that what he creates he will have fulfilled, purified, renewed. All history moves this way. *Always from the vantage point of the present, everything is building, mounting towards, the ultimate fulfilment.* That is, eschatology is in the process of being realised all the time. Thus in the days of Noah the Flood is coming and is judgement. The Spirit will not strive or judge or dwell as he had. A new era is coming. Following the Flood there is a new era of grace, God covenanting with His whole creation, but with the inception of the Abrahamic covenant all the future is in terms of that covenant. The inception of the Mosaic covenant is still within the broader canvas of the Abrahamic which relates to all the nations, and eventually Israel looks to its fulfilment in the New Covenant. This covenant has as its initial gift, justification, and as its consequent and subsequent gift, the Spirit himself (Gal. 3:13–14).

**(d) The Testimony of Jesus is the Spirit of Prophecy**

Jesus, the Son, the Word, the Messiah, has always been the core and substance of prophecy (cf. I Peter 1:10). So he will be to the end-time. His coming was the word of prophecy. Having come he was the fulfilment of prophecy. His current work

is realising eschatology, and this is yet to be fully realised. Acts 1:8 says that the coming of the Spirit will make his people witness to Jesus, i.e. to have the testimony of Jesus. The Book of the Revelation expands this very powerfully. The conflict in that book is between Satan (and his powers) and those who “have” or “hold” or “bear” the testimony of Jesus.

This makes us look again at Pentecost and the new ministry of the people of God. “It shall come to pass in those days, says the Lord, that I shall pour out my Spirit *upon all flesh*, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy... yea, on my menservants and my maidservants in those days, I will pour out my Spirit; and they shall prophesy”. This is what they did at Pentecost, but it is spoken of for all the days which are the last days “until the day of the Lord come, the great and manifest day”. The proclamation at Pentecost was at once *kerugma* (proclamation, the evangel) and *prophecy*. It is speaking about what God has done to save men, and what He is about doing. In this sense the Spirit is showing “things to come”.

We need to see that *in general* all the new people of God are in the ministry of prophets, although comparatively few are prophets, e.g. Agabus, Judas, Silas, etc., whilst prophetic utterances may happen from time to time, but rather as manifestations of the Spirit (I Cor. 12:7) than the ministry of one called a prophet. Whatever, the element that is of the Spirit, whilst containing exhortation for the present, is also connected with the work of Christ, i.e. “the testimony of Jesus”. In reality “the testimony of Jesus” is that active working of Christ, in and through his people, in order to fulfil the plan of God.

## 2. THE SPIRIT OF THE THINGS TO COME

### (a) The Spirit of Judgement

We previously touched on this aspect of the Spirit's work. We need to repeat what we have said, in slightly expanded form. John spoke of Messiah who was to come, and his words are couched in Isaiah 40, Malachi 3 and 4, relating to the messenger of the covenant, and one coming in the "spirit of Elijah". Jesus later showed clearly that this was John. He had come in this Spirit.

John's statement concerning Messiah was that he would 'baptise with the Holy Spirit and fire'. Messiah, of course, was the sum and essence of the prophecies of the last days. He would come as judge (cf. also Acts 10:42, 17:30). However *his judgement would be by the Spirit*. He would baptise with the Spirit and with fire. "Spirit" and "fire" are Hebraic parallelism, that they stand for the same thing. Jesus himself was to have a baptism of fire. In Luke 12:49ff he says, "I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled! I have a baptism to be baptised with, and how I am constrained until it be accomplished!" He was to go through the fire of suffering. He was to take the judgement of the world. In so doing he would prepare for the Spirit's coming. He would gather the grain into the granary, but, through the Spirit would burn up the chaff with fire unquenchable. Hence he says to the certain of the Pharisees and Sadducees that they are snakes running before a grass or bush fire. They see the judgement. In fact they do not see it! Nevertheless it is coming!

This "spirit of judgement and burning" is mentioned in Isaiah 4:4 (cf. 9:19). The fire in Scripture has at least four meanings:—

- (i) Judgement that destroys,
- (ii) Judgement that cleanses and purifies, taking away the dross,
- (iii) Fire that gives power,
- (iv) Fire that is suffering.

To speak of God as consuming fire is not against speaking of Him as love. In the deepest understanding these two may well be the one, even to “the lake of fire”. Doubtless this is a mystery. The Spirit who comes at Pentecost is the one who at the same time brings the remission of sins for some, and the retention of sins for others. That is judgement cleanses on the one hand and burns up on the other. Hence at Pentecost those who repent (through the Spirit) receive forgiveness and life, and those in the Sanhedrin who hear the same word, and are “cut to the heart” and seek to destroy the apostles have their sins retained.

In Isaiah 11 – that most eschatological of chapters!– Messiah is anointed with the seven-fold Spirit. He then proceeds to judge, and especially with “the ruach of his mouth”, and with “the ruach of his lips he shall slay the wicked”. Likewise in Isaiah 42:1 the Servant will have the Spirit put upon him and “he shall preach judgement to the nations”. The same phrase “breath of his mouth” is used in II Thess. 2:8, “And the lawless one will be revealed, and the Lord Jesus shall slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing and coming.” This latter reference is most important because it really says that the ultimate judgement *will be by the Holy Spirit*, i.e. “the Spirit of judgement, and the Spirit of burning”. Not for nothing is judgement pictured in terms of fire eternal.

We should also see that as the Word is proclaimed in the power of the Spirit, currently there is

judgement taking place. It is either grace received (the forgiveness of sins) or grace rejected (the retention of sins). The one repenting sees that in fact his Judgement has taken place on the Cross and that Judgement has freed him ("He who has died is Justified from sin"; Rom. 6:7). The other refuses the Judgement borne by Christ and so must come into judgement. In these "last days" the Spirit is active in Judgement. The "wrath to come" hangs as doom over a system upon whom climactic judgement must come in "the day of the Lord". Current judgements are described in powerful and terrible terms in the Revelation of John.

### **(b) The Spirit of Hope and Glory**

From the rather fierce and sharp judgmental ministry of the Spirit we turn to the beautiful ministry of hope. This hope is "the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27) and "the hope of sharing the glory of God" (Rom. 5:2)<sup>11</sup>. A number of Scriptures show us the links of the Spirit and our hope of glory.

In I Cor. 2:6–14 Paul says in effect that God had always planned our glory, but that the glory to come has never been envisaged by man. Sinful man could not believe in such great grace, and he has no criteria by which to understand it. Therefore the Spirit has been sent to teach us, for he searches God's deeps and tells them to us, and helps us to know the gifts of God.

In I Peter the writer speaks primarily of suffering and shows us that suffering relates to ultimate glory (cf. II Cor. 3:18 and 4:16), a theme which Paul also expounds. He says, "Rejoice insofar as

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<sup>11</sup> For a detailed treatment of hope see Living Faith Study No. 26 "The Biblical Doctrine of Hope" (N.C.P.I. 1978).

you share Christ's sufferings, that you may also be glad and *rejoice when his glory is revealed*. If you are reproached for the name of Christ you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you”.

Paul, in Romans 8:14–30 has a whole thesis on this score. He says that those who are sons of God are led by the Spirit. He then says that the Spirit of sonship leads to suffering. “If we suffer with him we shall also be glorified with him.” Suffering is not the cost of glory but the way to glory, or the way of glorification (II Cor. 4:16f). He then says that the sons of God will be shown in their glory and when this takes place creation itself will be released from its (current) bondage to corruption. It will share in “the glorious liberty of the sons of God”. He shows in verses 28–30 that suffering conforms us to the image, i.e. to the glory of the Son. However in all this he is speaking of hope, i.e. the hope of glory. In this passage the Spirit is the Spirit of hope. He says that creation groans, and even the believer is convulsed with groaning, even though he has the “first-fruits of the Spirit”. The first-fruits can mean “the first things the Spirit gives, e.g. the fruit of the Spirit, and so on (cf. Rom. 5:5). Yet better still it means the first-fruits of what will be. The Spirit is giving us more than a taste of what will be. Hence “hope makes not ashamed because the love of God (now) is shed abroad in our hearts”. We now experience something of what will be. The first-fruits are not the whole harvest but they are of *the quality* of the whole harvest.

The Spirit is also called the guarantee or pledge (Gk. *arobon*) of what is to come (cf. II Cor. 1:22, Ephes. 1:14). This means an immediate down payment, or a sod of the whole soil, something on which we

can put our hand as an assurance that what has been promised will come to us. This is not only the gift of the Spirit to assure us, but the life of the Spirit within us which keeps us oriented to the glory and inheritance to come. The Spirit keeps us in this anticipation. As the ultimate glory hastens towards us, so do we hasten towards it. This is what Paul means when he says the Spirit makes us long and groan for that day, and his presence rather than satiating us in the present puts a keen edge onto our anticipation.

Of course our hope is not simply for our own glory, although this is wonderful, but seeing that as sharing the very glory of God Himself. Then we shall “see Him face to face” and “we shall be like Him”, as Christ changes these bodies of our humiliation making them like his own body of glory. It is in this hope that the Spirit keeps us free and the dynamic of this hope makes us live in useful manner within this present aeon.

### 3. CONCLUSION

In our study on the new people of God we say that the Spirit uses his church as the means of proclamation, and so of conflict with evil powers. He gives his people “weapons of the Spirit”, and powerful gifts by means of which the enemies are beaten down under the feet of Christ. These things may be studied in the Revelation. It is the saints, clothed in fine linen who follow the Word on his white horse and do battle with evil. These are empowered by the Spirit of power.

We see, too, that as the world is convicted of sin and righteousness and judgement that they who repent are filling up the role of the elect people of God, and so the end is being hastened. In seemingly

dark ways, as in ways of holy light, the Spirit is shaping things up to the end-time, looking for the consummation of the plan of the Father when “the kingdoms of this world (shall) have become the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ”, and “When every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father”, i.e. “When he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power – when every enemy is put under his feet”. At that time the Son shall turn to the Father and give him the Kingdom, that God may be all in all, or, “everything to everyone”.

Then shall the eschatological Spirit, also, “see the fruit of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied”.

## **STUDY SIXTEEN**

### **Living in the Spirit**

*Introduction. That Spirit who is Person,. Man under the Spirit; Experiencing the Spirit, Experiencing through the Spirit, Growth in Maturity: Habituation,'*

#### **1. INTRODUCTION: THAT SPIRIT WHO IS PERSON**

In our fifteen studies on the Person and work of the Holy Spirit we saw that he is person, that he is God, that he works in the unity of the Godhead with the Father and the Son, and that he has deep love for the humanity he helped to create, and—the creation he helped to form and sustain. So deep is that love that it goes to the depths in the Cross, Death and Resurrection of Christ, and then goes on to apply that work to the heart and mind of man until he is born anew, and becoming a new creation is empowered to bear the testimony of Jesus to the uttermost parts of the earth, and to the end of time. We are then, not simply dealing with a theological Entity, but with the Person of the Spirit, God Himself, and to say it more truly, he is dealing with us.

We have seen that he is impassible in that passions do not control or manipulate him, but passible in that he is the very Spirit of the true affections such as love, joy and peace. Being the Spirit of goodness, holiness and righteousness he is perforce the Spirit of burning and of Judgement, else there were no release for repentant man, and no righteous Judgement for the finally impenitent.

What is most stunning is that all mankind passes through the hands of the Spirit. What is beyond belief is that where man is redeemed to God the great gift of the Spirit passes into man!

## 2. MAN UNDER THE SPIRIT

It may seem a strange term to use, but we use it; man is processed by the Spirit. He passes through the hands of the Spirit in order to be a created being. Each person is created by the creative Spirit of life. In this sense he passes through the hands of the Spirit. It is not as though he is never touched by the Spirit. It is a daring phrase to use of true man, but true man is “deep spirit”, because that is what a man is meant to be. He is this because he is to reflect the fulness of the Father, and to be fully a son under Him. Without the Spirit he cannot be “deep spirit”, and so true that he can worship the Father in “spirit and in truth”.

In new birth, being reborn, becoming a new creation, man must be regenerated by the Spirit. How deep this work must be is untellable. Man who is in sin is far gone in depravity as to defy either analysis or description. Because the whole human race is in this condition true objectivity regarding itself or its evil is impossible. At the best it can follow the revelation of God in Scripture, and especially in the living revelation of the Father and Jesus! It is not in a position to tell how far evil has gripped it. Jeremiah spoke of it (17:9), Jesus spoke of it (Mark 7:21ff), and even Paul (Rom. 3:9–18), but even so we cannot hear their words, without the Spirit. In the labyrinthine depths evil has run its terrible course and marred and scarred the original beauty and form of man, and impaired his vision of God, as also his true use of his faculties. There is a bias and a twist, too terrible to be told. Hence the need of the depths of the Spirit to restore or renew man to “deep spirit”. In regeneration man again passed through the hands of the Spirit. This is a strong,

yet tender and intimate processing of the chaos and confusion of the fallen spirit. Being in his hands we should know him, and the truth is we shall never have passed through his hands. We are always dependent upon him.

### **3. EXPERIENCING THE SPIRIT**

We have seen in Romans 8:9–11 that “if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his”. The test of being a believer, a regenerated person is not simply that we have believed Christ, but that we have received the Holy Spirit, and he now dwells in us. In fact the order of the NT is “believe on Christ and receive the Spirit”, meaning that Christ comes to us through the Spirit (cf. Ephes. 3:16, Rom. 8:9–11). Whilst it is true that the Spirit leads us to believe on Christ and does this in an anonymous way, directing our attention to Christ, it is also true that the Spirit comes as God’s gift at the point of repentance and faith. We have seen that repentance and faith are gifts, and their use is evoked by the Spirit through the Word (Romans 10:16–17, Gal. 3:1–3, Acts 2:38). The coming of the Spirit is “the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit”.

This immense work of cleansing, bringing forgiveness, flooding the heart with love, renewing the person, giving a new mind, is often called conversion or Justification, and summed up as regeneration. Others see this crisis as the beginning of regeneration and sanctification. It does not matter. It is a crisis with a view to a process, and a process with a view to a climax. To this magnificent work others add what they call “the baptism in the Spirit”. This, they say, is a baptism for power. Some see it is a baptism for entire sanctification. The debate rages endlessly around these points and the very

mention of the term “baptism in the Spirit” is most emotive for those who deny it is a second work, and those who claim it is.

No matter. One who has been processed into cleansing, forgiveness, freedom and love should also be a man filled with power, and free in the Spirit. If he is not then something is missing and has to be completed, call it what we will. Leaving aside the event of the 120 receiving the Spirit (being baptised in the Spirit), the 3,000 who repented and were baptised into Christ for the forgiveness of sins most surely received the gift of the Spirit. Chapters 8, 10–11 and 19 of Acts must have one thing in common. The power of the Spirit’s coming made them vocal about Christ. If it did not then it was to little, if any purpose. Acts 4:30ff is another account of a great visitation of the Spirit upon the people of God, the outcome of which was a new surge of power.

Let the argument of the initial experience of the Spirit go on, one thing is certain: he who having experienced the Spirit does not witness to Christ, and live in power, service and proclamation has denied the purpose—of that initial experience, or it was never full enough. Why it should not be full is a matter for theological debate, but at the worst it is to do with the reluctant will of the object of the Spirit, man.

#### **4. EXPERIENCING THROUGH THE SPIRIT**

We saw there are two most significant utterances that a man makes when visited by the Spirit in the manner described above. The first is “Abba!” that is, “Dear Father!”. The second is, “Jesus! Lord!” or “Jesus is Lord!”. These two cries actually determine (and reveal) how a man relates to God. In the first case he relates as a son; in the second

as a servant of Christ, or a younger brother acclaiming the elder brother and being subject to him. It also reveals his understanding of creation, as flowing from the Father, and understanding redemption under the Lordship of Christ, as also the confrontation of evil in the great Messianic mission. Through the Spirit we have come into the new and amazing experience of eternal life, and this life is *knowing the Father and the Son* (John 17:3), a relationship which is only possible through the Spirit (John 16:12–15, Gal. 4:6, I Cor. 12:3, cf. I Cor. 2:10f). This peak of experience of knowing the Father and His Son (I John 1:3) is kept alive by the Spirit. In the context of the Kingdom (“Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit”) we live in the fruitfulness of the Spirit, “Love, joy, peace”, etc. (Gal. 5:22–23). By the Spirit we know we abide in him, and he abides in us (I John 3:24, 4:13), and by the Spirit Christ dwells in us (Ephes. 3:16).

We could then talk of the experiences of prayer, unity, fellowship, exercise of the gifts, of the spiritual weapons, of inner power, and so on. We have dealt with these. What concerns us is what becomes real, permanent and continuous with us, not momentary experiences, nor even flashes of grace, but a steady build-up in, and to, maturity. We will seek to examine these.

## 5. GROWTH IN MATURITY: HABITUATION

We have seen that Paul talked about “beginning in the Spirit”. This is easy to define, especially in its context. It is seeing, knowing and living in the fact of the Cross, God’s forgiveness and the grace of God. This initial revelation by the Spirit of the love of the Cross launches us into life in the Spirit, i.e. beginning in the Spirit. Under the heading of “The Flesh and the Spirit” we saw that to

seek to earn merit, justification or salvation by works of the law is a fleshly occupation. It belongs to the pride of man. True redemption is all of grace. Yet this is a revelation which has to break through the pride of man and humble him, which is something that will not happen apart from the Spirit.

We then saw that “going on in the Spirit” must be the same, dependence upon grace in every way. If we seek to live by the principle of works, then we are again living according to the flesh. To “be matured in the Spirit” is again to depend upon the Spirit who keeps bringing to us the grace of God. A little later we see there is a daily experience of the Spirit “at the stretch” which should be the norm for each person, and the people of God in general.

### HABITUATION IN THE SPIRIT

In II Cor. 4:13 Paul says, “Since we have the same spirit of faith as he had who wrote, ‘I believed, and so I spoke’, we too believe, and so we speak.” In its context this verse shows that the obedient believer is not dismayed or crushed by constant and unrelenting opposition. One is not given, as a flash–experience, “a spirit of faith” but one has learned, by habituation to bring this spirit of faith to every situation and contingency. Again in Ephesians 1:16–19 Paul prays for the Ephesians that they may be given “a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him...” He is asking that they do not simply have a flash of revelation, but a steady and ongoing spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God which will build them up in hope and so give a stability to present life. Again in Romans 8:15 Paul says “God has not given us a spirit of slavery again to fear, but a spirit of sonship whereby we (may) cry “Abba!” It is not simply a once–for–all revelation, but a continuing

relationship from this habituated spirit. Yet again in II Tim. 1:7 Paul says, “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power and love and self-control.” The possibilities that lie even in a transient experience of power, love and self-control are good to contemplate. However, a life lived in an habituated spirit of these things would seem to be very rich.

How does this “spirit” come? We need not think of such a spirit as a personalised spirit, anymore than a “spirit of slavery” or a “spirit of timidity” should be thought to be demons or spirits. We develop such traits as the latter through negative thinking, and the former *through the Spirit himself.* He is the source of love, power, a sound mind (self-control, of faith, of wisdom and revelation). It would not be difficult to find Scriptures to support this claim. However, it is as we relate to the Spirit *that* we develop such “spirits”. “As many as are led by the Spirit of God...” How easily are we led by him? How easily do we obey him, listen to him, walk in him? If not easily then we will develop habituation very slowly, if at all. This is “the power that worketh within us” (Ephes. 3:20), but when we are not subject to him, then we live our lives. We live by works and flesh.

Habituation is of course, practice. It is like the athlete training, dieting, running his exercise. The “naturalist” Christian lives by the foolish notion that if everything does not happen, fall into place, come of itself, then it is not spiritual because it is unnatural. They see the use of the mind, and of habituated effort as being “carnal”. Spiritual is something which is almost permanently supernatural, or as some say “spooky”. It does appear that those who buffet their bodies, who toe the line with the Spirit, who test things, who make haste slowly and wisely, avoid the pitfalls of non-

habituation. Just as a practised player seems to play a game so effortlessly, so one habituated will have practised in faith, power, love, and so on. The Spirit is there to teach and to habituate and (so) to mature us.

## 6. LIVING IN THE SPIRIT

Above we have seen some of the elements of living in the Spirit – the initial and powerful act of conversion and cleansing, the new birth and the incoming of the Spirit himself. We saw that all of our living really comes through him. The great facts of worship, prayer, love, fellowship and witnessing flow from his presence, empowerment and teaching.

What then must concern us is always being filled with the Spirit. This is the command of Paul in Ephesians 5:18, “Go on being filled with the Spirit”. In fact it says, technically, “Go on being filled in spirit”, i.e. in one’s own spirit. Well Ephesians talks a great deal about fulness, and being filled, even “to all the fulness of God”. That is a great subject on its own.

A glance at Acts shows that certain men are spoken of as “filled with the Spirit”. In selecting those who were to minister to the widows they looked for men “full of the Spirit” and found seven such. Stephen was one of these and he was “full of grace and power”. At the end of his speech we are told, “He, full of the Spirit .... “ There seems to be two emphases. He was habitually full, but at a crisis unusually filled for that eventuality. Barnabas (Acts 11:24) is said to be “a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith”. All are filled at Pentecost, but we assume that even those filled there have a further affusion in Acts 4 when a special eventuality arose. We must always go on being filled.

There are other such references. In Romans 12: 11 Paul says, “Never flag in zeal, be *aglow with the Spirit*, serve the Lord”. This needs no comment. In Romans 15:13 he speaks of abounding in hope by the Holy Spirit, but this means, firstly, abounding in the Spirit, and the Spirit abounding in one. “May the God of hope fill you with all Joy and peace in believing, so *that* by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope”.

In Philippians 1:19 Paul speaks of “your prayers and the supply of the Spirit”. It could mean, “God goes on supplying the Spirit”, but almost certainly means “that which the Spirit supplies”. That is, when we are filled with the Spirit we are filled in ourselves, because the Spirit from his own fulness supplies what we need. In slightly different vein, in Galatians 3:5 Paul speaks of God who “goes on supplying to you the Spirit”. The thought is not he has come once, but that all the time God is making sure we have the Spirit. This must mean that we live consciously needing the Spirit and consciously living according to his presence and what he supplies.

These passages really tell us we should live continually in the Spirit and at the stretch. Paul may not mean that we must live at a continuous emotional “high”, always abounding emotionally, but he does not leave room for apathy, lethargy, somnolence, dullness and mediocrity. He knows the whole range of actions and operations of the Spirit, and we are called to be ready for all that “the Lord the Spirit” has for us. This is his age. He not only applies the work of Christ, but enlivens for obedience and participation in what God is doing.

Negatively we can fail to be led by the Spirit, to walk in the Spirit, and we can grieve the Spirit and quench him. These latter two will bring swift

and sad consequences. We will know we have failed. However, it is just that sheer passive neglect of the Spirit which can bring us down into the doldrums and uselessness. Hence we are to be obedient and to be filled, to be aglow, to receive the Spirit in continuing relationship, to receive his supply, to work according to his gifts, to be led, to follow him, to be empowered, to work in obedience. This is a decision of the will. This is an attitude of mind. We will be filled or we will not. We will live in the Spirit or we will not.

From one point of view the whole matter is very simple. It is one of obedience. Just to obey the Spirit means to be filled and aglow, and supplied and useful. Who, then, seeing the tireless ministry of the Spirit for man and creation, and knowing his ceaseless ministry to us, and on our behalf, who would not obey him? Who would not love this great Holy Spirit who has done so much, and does so much, who is so intimate and tender, so strong and protective, so vital and empowering?

If we really see and understand even a small degree of his great person and work we will be obedient, we will be constantly filled, and be habituated to those things which make for character, for being filled with all the fruits of righteousness, and which tend to our ultimate glorification.

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There are numerous works on the Holy Spirit by Pentecostal writers, and charismatic scholars. Most of these are experience–centred, but some are theological. Even then, many of them are a mixture of theology and experience. Some Roman Catholic writers have written on the subject.

Two books which examine the Pentecostal–Charismatic approach to the subjects are:–

BRUNNER, Dale     *“The Theology of the Holy Spirit”*  
 HOLLENWEGER, Walter     *“The Pentecostals”*

It should be noted that a study on the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit should be taken apart from any movement of renewal, i.e. should be seen within the context of the Scriptures. This means that the epistemology used by Pentecostal and non–Pentecostal theologians is naturally different.

Articles in the many Bible Dictionaries or Dictionaries of Theology, or Word Dictionaries should be read as they are generally helpful.