



BULLEEN BAPTIST CHURCH

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Series : "The Person & Work of the Holy Spirit"

Sunday February 5, 2006 : Study 2

"AN OLD TESTAMENT OVERVIEW"

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INTRODUCTION

Acts Chapter 2 is the account of the coming in power of the Holy Spirit to the first Christians. This event was the fulfilment of prophecy : by the Old Testament prophets

I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Joel 2:28

: and by Jesus himself

I am going to send you what my Father has promised, but you must stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high. Lk24:49

These prophecies depended on a prior event - Jesus returning to the Father's presence. Now I am going to him who sent me Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. Jn16:4-7

1 : The Old Testament reports God's Spirit at work in human affairs in over four hundred references. Therefore the Holy Spirit was ACTIVE before the coming of Jesus.

2 : The promise of the Old Testament is that God's Spirit would come "in power" at some time in the future. Therefore the picture of the Holy Spirit's work in the OT is INCOMPLETE and can only be truly known and fully appreciated from that time when the promise was fulfilled.

Today's Study is an overview of the Old Testament's teaching about God's Spirit. "Looking backwards" we will see how the Old Testament "prepared the ground" for that full revelation.

A. SUMMARY OF THE O.T. PICTURE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Each of the following points could have many other references; I have chosen the clearest and most concise. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit is active in :

1.. REVELATION

..... the disclosure of who God IS (His CHARACTER / NATURE)

what he REQUIRES (His LAW)

and what he DOES (His ACTIONS in history)

The New Testament reports of the Old : For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit 2Ptr1:21

The main human conduit for Revelation was the prophet, and the inspired Scriptures are the outcome of the process of Revelation, with the Holy Spirit as the AUTHOR and SOURCE. Eg.

King David, "*Israel's singer of songs*" (2Sam23:1) said about his Psalms : The Spirit of the LORD spoke through me; his word was on my tongue. 2 Sam23:2

Ezekiel's call as a prophet : the Spirit came to me ... I heard him speaking to me. He said: "Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites ...say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says'" Ez2:2-4

2. ETHICS

Notice the connection between the presence of the Spirit and the prophet Micah's discernment of right or wrong living : But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the LORD, and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression, to Israel his sin. Mic3:8

Still today, the link between "religion" & ethics is too often MISSED! But the connection is vital!

Hear this, you leaders of ... Israel, who despise justice and distort all that is right; who build Zion with bloodshed, and Jerusalem with wickedness. Her leaders judge for a bribe, her priests teach for a price, and her prophets tell fortunes for money. Yet they lean upon the LORD and say, "Is not the LORD among us? No disaster will come upon us." Mic3:9-11 see also Is1:2-25

Are you a "believer?" How you live MATTERS. The Spirit's role has always been to judge the wrong and illuminate the right. From this OT foundation comes the NT call to right living, in community, through the POWER of the Holy Spirit.

You were called to be free. Do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love. The entire law is summed up in a single command: "Love your neighbour as yourself." Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit . Gal5:13-14 & 25

3. CREATIVITY

Creation shows an extraordinary diversity, intricate design and an abundance of colour and shape and texture. We are made in God's image; and part of that image is an ability to APPRECIATE the incredible creation that surrounds us and to ourselves be CREATIVE.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "See, I have chosen Bezalel and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts to make artistic designs for work in gold, silver and bronze, to cut and set stones, to work in wood, and to engage in all kinds of craftsmanship. Ex31:1-5

All human creativity, in crafts, the arts, industry agriculture is evidence of the image of God in us and the presence of his creative Spirit. This, too, sets the scene in the NT for the Spirit to pour out specific gifts on us to empower our ministry and fellowship and to enable our spiritual life together.

All these gifts are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. 1Cor12:11 ... summing up the previous 11 verses on Spiritual Gifts.

4. EMPOWERMENT

A major association in the Old Testament with God's Spirit is the idea of God powerfully invading human affairs for his purposes. Eg. The Exodus.

Where is he who brought them through the sea, with the shepherd of his flock? Where is he who set his Holy Spirit among them, who sent his glorious arm of power to be at Moses' right hand, who divided the waters before them? Is63:11-12

God's Spirit would also indwell individuals for specific tasks. Eg. Leadership

The LORD said to Moses: "Bring me seventy of Israel's elders who are known to you as leaders and officials among the people. and I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them. They will help you carry the burden of the people. Num11:16-17

Unlike the full gift of the Spirit to the Christian, such indwelling was LIMITED and TEMPORARY.

5. FORGIVENESS

The promise of the Spirit by the prophets spoke of both a "giving" and "removal."

	GIVING	REMOVAL
Ez36:25-27	I will put my Spirit within you and cause you to follow my laws.	I will sprinkle clean water on you and you will be clean
Jer 31:33-34	I will write my law upon their hearts	I will forgive their wickedness and remember their sin no more.
Joel 2:28-32	I will pour out my Spirit	Everyone who calls on the Lord will be saved
THE PROMISE FULFILLED IN JESUS		
Acts 2:38	You shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit	Repent ... for the forgiveness of sins

When the Holy Spirit takes up residence in a person, there is full RESTORATION of an intimate fellowship with God ... with every barrier broken down, for time and eternity.