



# *Pentecost Devotional*

**Walking with the Holy Spirit  
for Thirty Days of Spiritual Discovery**

**Week 1 | Days 1 - 6**



# Who is the Holy Spirit?

## Introduction

In May of 2015, the *Calgary Sun* of Calgary, Ontario, Canada, ran an article entitled, “After 23-Year Search, Ontario Man Meets Brother He Never Knew.” The article describes how 68-year-old Dave Smith discovered he had an elder brother while rummaging through papers left behind by his recently deceased mother. The documents revealed that his mother had given up his brother for adoption before Smith was born. Smith then began a search that would last 23 years. He finally located his brother living in Edinberg, Scotland. The brothers have now been united. Smith testified, “It was really amazing for me. It’s like we’ve known each other all our lives.”

Many Christians today are much like Dave Smith. They have a heavenly “Elder Brother” whom they’ve never really gotten acquainted with—the Holy Spirit. Someone once referred to the Holy Spirit as “the God we hardly know.” Another has called Him “the ignored member of the Holy Trinity.”

Frances Chan concurs. In his book, *Forgotten God*, he says, “From my perspective, the Holy Spirit is tragically neglected and, for all practical purposes, forgotten” in many churches today. He continues, “There is a big gap between what we read in Scripture about the Holy Spirit and how most believers and churches operate today.” Chan describes this widespread ignorance of the Spirit as a “prolific disease in the church today.” While Chan is talking about non-Pentecostal Evangelicalism, his indictment could sadly apply to many, if not most, Pentecostal churches today.

During the next 30 days, we will rediscover who the Holy Spirit is and how we may know Him better. We will further discover how He will empower us and enable us to do our part in fulfilling God’s mission in the earth.

Someone may ask, “Can one really have a loving relationship with the Holy Spirit?” When you think about it, this is a strange question. After all, the Holy Spirit is the One who pours God’s love into our hearts (Rom. 5:5). He is the “Third Person of the Trinity.” Just as the Father is God, and the Son is God, the Holy Spirit is God. And, as God, the Holy Spirit is a divine Person. And since He is a Person, then we can know Him and live in relationship with Him.

In writing to the Christians in Philippi, Paul spoke of the “fellowship of the Spirit” (Phil. 2:1). The Greek word here translated “fellowship” is

*koinonia*. It signifies a deep, intimate relationship with another person. Thus, when Paul speaks of fellowship with the Holy Spirit, he is describing a loving, living relationship that we may have with Him.

The night before Jesus was crucified, He met with His disciples in an upper room. He told them that the day was coming when they would enjoy the same relationship with the Holy Spirit that they now had with Him. Jesus began by telling them that He was about to leave them. Then He promised, “I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you” (John 14:18, ESV). This was a promise of the Holy Spirit, whom Jesus said He would send in His place. “I will ask the Father,” He said, “and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you” (vv. 16-17).

Jesus was saying, *When I go away, I will send Someone in my place, Someone just like Me who will walk alongside you just as I have done. And just as I have done, the Holy Spirit will assist, guide, and encourage you. What’s more, He will not only walk beside you, He will live inside you.* As we progress through this study, we will seek to deepen our relationship with this One who both walks beside and lives inside us.

My hope is that once you complete this journey, at least four things will have happened in your life:

- You will better understand who the Holy Spirit is, including His essential nature and work.
- You will personally experience the Spirit’s presence and power in your life.
- You will develop an intimate relationship with the Holy Spirit.
- You will be able to share the Spirit’s blessings with others.



Day 1

## Introduction

**I**n the New Testament Book of Acts is the story of a man named Simon. This man was a powerful sorcerer living in the city of Samaria. He would often astonish the people with his supernatural powers. Many followed him declaring, “This man is the Great Power of God!” Then one day Simon heard Philip the evangelist preaching about the kingdom of God and telling the people about Jesus. He believed Philip’s message and began to follow him.

Soon after this, the apostles Peter and John came down from Jerusalem to Samaria. Simon watched them as they laid their hands on the new Samaritan Christians. To Simon’s amazement, one by one the Holy Spirit came powerfully on each believer. Each one was dramatically filled with the Spirit—just as the 120 disciples had been on the Day of Pentecost.

Simon thought to himself, *In the past, I profited from peddling my cultic wares. If I had this power, I could use it to make even more money.* So, he made an offer to the apostles. “Sell me this power,” he said, “so that, when I lay my hands on people, they too will receive the Holy Spirit.”

When Peter heard this, he became angry. “May your money perish with you!” he said. “Do you really think you can buy and sell the power of the Holy Spirit?” Then, looking Simon straight in the eye, Peter ordered him, “Repent of your wickedness and ask God to forgive you.” Simon was so shaken that he cried out in fear, “Peter, please pray for me that no awful thing will happen to me!”

Because Simon did not understand who the Holy Spirit is, and how He works, he made a grave mistake. Sadly, many today are making similar mistakes, and for similar reasons. This is but one reason we must learn what the Word of God teaches about the Holy Spirit.

In the coming days, we will be examining the person and work of the Holy Spirit. We will learn who He is, what He does, and how we should respond to Him. Our primary source of information about the Holy Spirit will be the Bible—the very book that He himself inspired.

However, we will do more than study about Him; we will get to know Him. While it is important that we know about the Holy Spirit, it is equally important that we know Him personally and receive His power and direction in our lives.

## **Wrong Ideas about the Holy Spirit**

Who then is the Holy Spirit? As with Simon the Sorcerer in our story, there is much misunderstanding on the subject. We will therefore begin our journey by clearing up a couple of false ideas about the Holy Spirit. One wrong idea is the vague notion that the Holy Spirit is some sort of ghost or disembodied spirit being. This idea could be reinforced by some older English translations of the Bible, such as the old King James Version, which refer to the Holy Spirit as the “Holy Ghost.” While this was as a perfectly legitimate term when the KJV was published some 400 years ago, the word *ghost* has a different meaning to people today than it did back then.

Then it simply meant spirit. Today the word ghost speaks of the disembodied soul of a dead person who wanders among the living. This understanding of the Holy Spirit is far from what the Scriptures teach about the Holy Spirit.

Others think of the Holy Spirit as divine energy or impersonal spiritual force emanating from God. As such, the Spirit can be controlled and manipulated. We can thus use Him for our own purposes—much as a sorcerer or wizard would use his magical powers. This is apparently how Simon viewed the Holy Spirit. However, like the first idea, this idea about the Spirit of God is also false. Both ideas can lead to unhealthy, and even sinful, practices in the church.

How then does the Bible present the Holy Spirit?

### **The Holy Spirit is God**

From Scripture we learn that the Holy Spirit is, in fact, God. Sometimes Bible scholars refer to Him as the “Third Person of the Godhead.” This terminology can be a bit confusing. However, it need not be. When Bible scholars speak of the Godhead, they are talking about the very essence or nature of God. The Scriptures reveal God as a Trinity of being. In other words, He is “one God in three divine persons.” He is God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Paul spoke of the Trinity when he wrote, “May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all” (2 Cor. 13:14). Jesus taught that we are to baptize new believers “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19). The point we are making here is that the Holy Spirit is in truth God.

As God, the Holy Spirit has all of the characteristics of God. For instance, He is eternal all-powerful, all knowing, and everywhere present. He is holy, loving, faithful, and just. And, as God, He is sovereign. This means that He can never be controlled or manipulated. No person can ever command the Holy Spirit or use Him for their own purposes. As God, the Holy Spirit has supreme authority over all and the power and right to do as He pleases.

## **The Holy Spirit is a Person**

Not only is the Holy Spirit God, He is also a person. When we say that He is a person, we do not mean that He is a human being. We mean that, as a divine person, He thinks, feels, and wills.

He has a *mind*. Paul spoke of “the mind of the Spirit” who searches our hearts (Rom. 8:27). The Holy Spirit also has *feelings*. The Bible warns us against grieving the Holy Spirit: “And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” (Eph. 4:30). And the Spirit has a *will*. Paul told the Corinthian believers, “All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills” (1 Cor. 12:11, ESV).

It is therefore wrong to refer to the Holy Spirit as “it.” We should always refer to the Holy Spirit as “He” or Him.” And because He is a divine, loving person, we can live in intimate fellowship with Him. We will talk more about these things later. As we progress through this study, we will learn many wonderful truths about the Holy Spirit. For now, we should remember that He is God, and He wants to empower and help you.

### **Walking with the Holy Spirit**

Now that you have concluded today’s reading, take a few moments to complete the following exercise.

- *A Truth to Embrace*: As the Third Person of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit is God. Because He is God, I must worship Him, and because He is a Person, I can know and love Him.
- *A Commitment to Make*: I commit myself to understand the Holy Spirit and know Him better.
- *A Prayer to Pray*: Dear Holy Spirit, as I begin this study about You, open my mind that I may know You and better understand Your ways.
- *A Verse to Memorize*: “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.” (Matt. 28:19)



# Knowing the Holy Spirit

**H**ave you ever met a person who, at first, you wondered if you would like them? However, as you came to know them better, you grew to love and highly respect them. That is how it should be with the Holy Spirit. The better we know Him, the more we come to love and honour Him.

Yesterday, we learned that the Holy Spirit is God. He is the “Third Person of the Trinity.” We also learned that, because the Holy Spirit is a person, we can know Him and live in relationship with Him. The more we know about Him, the better we can know Him personally. One way the Bible reveals the Holy Spirit is through His names. Another way is through the symbols it uses to describe Him. Let’s look at each.

## **Names of the Holy Spirit**

The Scriptures ascribe to the Holy Spirit many names and titles. By reflecting on these names and titles, we can better understand His nature and work. Let’s look at five of the important names given to the Spirit:

*The Holy Spirit.* First, the Bible calls Him the Holy Spirit. It uses this name 94 times, more than any other name. This name reminds us that God’s Spirit is indeed holy. This means that He is utterly and totally untainted by sin and evil. He is the One who enables believers to live Christ-like, holy lives, fully dedicated to serving God.

1. *The Spirit of God.* Second, the Bible calls the Holy Spirit the Spirit of God. The Bible uses this name 25 times (for example, see Gen. 1:2; Rom. 8:14; Eph. 4:30). By calling the Holy Spirit the Spirit of God, the Bible is emphasizing His deity. He is, in fact, the Spirit who is God.
2. *The Spirit of Christ.* Third, the Bible sometimes refers to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Christ, or the Spirit of Jesus (see, Acts 16:7; Rom. 8:9; Phil. 1:19; 1 Pet. 1:11). This name reminds us of the Spirit’s close relationship to Christ and His redemptive work. He is the One who anointed Jesus to fulfill His ministry. Moreover, He is the one who empowers believers to be Christ’s witnesses “to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).
3. *The Spirit of Truth.* Fourth, The Bible refers to the Holy Spirit as the Spirit of Truth. Speaking of the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth” (John 16:13). As the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Spirit is the one who revealed Scripture to the

prophets and apostles (2 Pet. 1:21). He will also guide us in understanding the truth found in Scripture.

4. *The Helper*. Fifth, Jesus called the Holy Spirit the Helper. He said, “I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever” (John 14:16, ESV). The Holy Spirit is thus the One who “comes along side” believers to help, comfort, enable, and empower them to do God’s will.

### **Symbols of the Holy Spirit**

Just as the Scriptures use many names to describe the Holy Spirit, they also use many symbols to do the same. Let’s look at six of those symbols:

1. *A blowing wind*. First, the Bible describes the Holy Spirit as a blowing wind (John 3:8; Acts 1:2). Jesus told Nicodemus, “The wind blows wherever it pleases... So it is with everyone born of the Spirit” (John 3:8). On the Day of Pentecost, the Spirit came as a sound from heaven “like the blowing of a violent wind” (Acts 2:3). Just as the wind is powerful and unable to be controlled, so is the almighty Spirit of God. He goes wherever He wants to execute and fulfill God’s mission.
2. *A blazing fire*. Second, the Bible pictures the Holy Spirit as a blazing fire (Luke 3:16; Acts 1:3). John the Baptist introduced Jesus as the one who baptizes “with the Holy Spirit and with fire” (Luke 3:16). Then, on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit came as a “tongue of fire” and sat on the head of each of the 120 disciples (Acts 2:3). He is the One who will set our tongues aflame to proclaim the gospel to the ends of the earth.
3. *A pouring rain*. Third, the Bible depicts the Holy Spirit as a pouring rain (Joel 2:23-29). The prophet Joel said that God would one day pour out His Spirit on all flesh as “rains” and “abundant showers” (Joel 2:23). That outpouring began at Pentecost and will continue until Jesus comes again. On that Day of Pentecost, Peter announced, “This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people’” (Acts 2:16-17).
4. *A flowing river*. Fourth, the Bible pictures the Holy Spirit as a flowing river (John 7:37-39). Speaking of the Spirit, Jesus promised that the Spirit would one day flow through His followers as “rivers of living water” (v. 38, ESV). Believers are not to be mere containers of the Spirit. They are rather to be channels through which the Spirit flows giving life and blessing to others.
5. *Anointing oil*. Fifth, the Holy Spirit is compared with anointing oil (Acts 10:38; 1Jn. 2:20). In the Old Testament, prophets, priests, and kings were anointed with oil. This anointing indicated that the Spirit of the Lord had authorized and enabled them to fulfill their vocations. When Jesus began His ministry, He spoke of how the Spirit of the Lord was upon Him, anointing Him to accomplish His mission (Luke 4:18-19). John



reminded his readers that they had “an anointing from the Holy One” (1 John 2:20). Today, when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit, He anoints and enables us to do God’s work.

Finally, throughout Scripture the Holy Spirit is described as the *outstretched hand* (or finger) of God. Ezekiel described the Spirit’s coming upon him as “the hand of the Lord” (Ezek. 37:1). In the New Testament, the powerful working of the Holy Spirit is sometimes described as the hand or finger of God. For instance, Jesus cast out demons “by the finger of God” (Luke 11:20; compare Matt. 12:28). And the “hand of the Lord” was with the Christians in Antioch empowering them to reach the lost (Acts 11:21). Today, the Spirit of the Lord still wants to stretch out His hand and work through His people, just as He did in the Book of Acts (Acts 4:30-31).

### **Walking with the Holy Spirit**

Now that you have concluded today’s reading, take a few moments to complete the following exercise.

- *A Truth to Embrace*: I can know more about the nature and work of the Holy Spirit by prayerfully studying His names and symbols.
- *A Commitment to Make*: I commit myself to better understand who the Holy Spirit is and how He works.
- *A Prayer to Pray*: Dear Holy Spirit, fill me now, and help me to understand who You are and what You want to do in my life.
- *A Verse to Memorize*: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever.” (John 14:16, ESV)



Day 3

## The Spirit of Missions

Someone has said that any organization rises or falls on the quality of its leadership. This truth applies to the church. Fortunately however, the church—that is, the true church—is not led by any man. The true church is led by Christ, through the Holy Spirit. Jesus founded the church. Then, when He went back to heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to lead and guide it.

On Day 1, we learned that the Holy Spirit is God and that He is a Person. Then on Day 2, we examined some of the titles and symbols that the Scriptures use to represent Him. From these, we discovered, among other things, that the Spirit of God is holy, powerful, and sovereign—meaning

that He has the right and the power to do whatever as He pleases. No person can ever command the Holy Spirit or tell Him what He must do.

We further learned that, as the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit has come to enable us to fulfill Christ's mission in the earth. Today, we will expand on this thought. We will talk about how the Holy Spirit is the "Spirit of Missions." As such, He fulfills three important missional roles: He is the Executive of the Godhead, the Director of the Harvest, and the Enabler of the Mission. Let's look more closely at each of these three roles.

### **Executive of the Godhead**

First, the Holy Spirit is the Executive of the Godhead. When we say this, we do not mean that He is the boss of God. We rather mean that He is that member of the Trinity responsible to put God's plans into effect. He was sent by the Father and the Son to execute—or to carry out— God's mission in the earth.

Jesus once told His disciples, "I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor [meaning the Holy Spirit] to be with you forever" (John 14:6). A few weeks later, when the Spirit was poured out on the Day of Pentecost, Peter stood up and explained to the crowd what had happened. He said that Jesus had been exalted to the right hand of God. There, He "received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear" (Acts 2:33). In other words, the Father and the Son have joined together to send the Spirit into the world to accomplish God's work.

Now, as Executive of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit is working in and through the church to carry out God's mission. He is moving in all the earth executing the will of the Father and the Son. Our job is to submit ourselves to the Spirit's leading, receive His power, and work with Him in fulfilling God's plan for the nations. Someone explained it this way: God the Father sent the Son; the Father and Son sent the Holy Spirit; and now, the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit send the church.

### **Director of the Harvest**

Second, the Holy Spirit is the Director of the Harvest. Jesus once referred to himself as the "Lord of the Harvest." He instructed His disciples to "ask the Lord of the harvest...to send out workers into his harvest field" (Luke 10:2). Later, He told them that He was going to leave them and return to His Father. However, He would not leave them alone. He would send the Holy Spirit in His place to complete His work (John 14:16-18). Jesus began to fulfill this promise at Pentecost when He poured out His Spirit on His church. Now, the Holy Spirit has taken over Jesus' work and is now the "Director of the Harvest."

As Director of the Harvest, the Holy Spirit directs the work of missions. We see Him doing this throughout the Book of Acts. There, He calls people

into the work. He then empowers them and directs them in the harvest field. Further, when they become discouraged or fearful, He comes to them and encourages them to carry on the work.

As the Spirit of Missions, the Holy Spirit will direct the harvest until the work is accomplished and Jesus comes again. That's why it is so important that every Christian be filled with, and remain full of, the Holy Spirit.

This brings us to our final point.

### **Enabler of the Mission Force**

Not only is the Holy Spirit the Executive of the Godhead and the Director of the Harvest, He is also the Enabler of the Missions Force. He is the one who empowers and equips the harvest workers to accomplish the task. Just before Jesus returned to heaven, He left His disciples with a final command and a final promise. His command was, "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised...for John baptized in water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:4-5). His final promise was, "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

The disciples obeyed Jesus' command and received His promise. On the Day of Pentecost "they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit enabled them" (Acts 2:4). As a result of this powerful spiritual experience known as the baptism in the Holy Spirit, they became effective witnesses of the gospel. The Book of Acts tells the exciting story of their Spirit empowered ministries. The Holy Spirit is indeed the Spirit of Missions. He will inspire, empower, guide, and sustain us in the mission. We will expand on these topics in upcoming days.

### **Walking with the Holy Spirit**

Now that you have concluded today's reading, take a few moments to complete the following exercise.

- *A Truth to Embrace:* I understand the Jesus gave the Holy Spirit to empower the church and to direct it to fulfill God's mission.
- *A Commitment to Make:* I commit myself to do my part in fulfilling God's mission to redeem the nations.
- *A Prayer to Pray:* God fill me now with Your missionary Spirit, and empower me to do Your will.
- *A Verse to Memorize:* "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field." (Luke 10:2)



Day 4

## The Creative Spirit

A Pentecostal pastor was once challenged by a non-Pentecostal colleague. “The problem with you Pentecostals,” he said, “is that you don’t believe that anything can happen until the Spirit moves!” “That’s true,” the Pentecostal pastor admitted. “In fact nothing in all history happened before the Spirit moved over the face of the waters, as is recorded in Genesis 1:2. Had the Spirit not moved, the world would not exist.”

Yesterday, we learned that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Missions. One of His roles as the Spirit of Mission is that He serves as the Executive of the Godhead. By this, we mean that He is that member of the Trinity who is responsible to put God’s plans into effect. Today, we will investigate two ways in the Old Testament that the Holy Spirit went about fulfilling the plan of God. We will discuss the Spirit’s work in creating the universe. Then, we will discuss His work in creating and inspiring the Bible.

### **The Spirit Created the World**

1. *The Spirit who created.* The first way that the Spirit went about fulfilling the plan of God was that He joined with the Father and the Son in creating the universe. The first verse in the Bible says, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth” (Gen. 1:1). The next verse tells us how the Holy Spirit participated in this mighty work: “Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.” Centuries later, in the New Testament, John revealed that Jesus—whom he called “the Word”—also participated in creation (John 1:1-3). Thus, the Holy Spirit was there at the beginning working with the other members of the Trinity creating the heavens and the earth.

The Holy Spirit also participated in the creation of humankind. In Genesis 2 the Bible says that “the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being” (v. 7). Job reveals that it was the lifegiving Spirit of God who gave Adam life. He explains, “The Spirit of God has made me; the breath of the Almighty gives me life” (Job 33:4).

2. *The Spirit who re-creates.* Further, the same Holy Spirit who participated in the creation of the universe and the creation of humans, also participates in their *re-creation*. When Adam and Eve sinned, the loving

fellowship they had with God was broken, and their natures were corrupted. They died spiritually. Since then, to be reunited with God, people need to be spiritually re-created.

On the night of His resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples in an upstairs room. He then “breathed on [or “into”] them and said, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit’” (John 20:22). At that moment, they were recreated from the inside out. Jesus called this experience being “born again.” He told Nicodemus “I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again.... Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit” (John 3:3-7).

The Holy Spirit regenerates us and gives us new life in Christ. Paul wrote, “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Cor. 5:17). To experience this new birth one must come to Christ, repent of their sins, and put their faith in Christ alone for salvation. Have you done that? If not, you can right now. Sincerely pray this prayer:

“Jesus I come to You. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins, and that You rose again on the third day. I know that I am a sinner, and apart from faith in You, I am eternally lost. Please forgive me of my sins and become my Savior and Lord. I now forsake all my sins to follow You. Come into my heart and be Lord of my life. In Your name I pray. Amen.”

### **The Spirit Created the Bible**

The second way the Spirit worked in the Old Testament (and later in the New Testament) to fulfil God’s mission was to inspire the Scriptures. He did this by moving on the prophets and the apostles, giving them the thoughts and words they wrote. Their Spirit-inspired words are found in our Bibles today.

*1. The Holy Spirit inspired Scripture.* Thus, the Holy Spirit is the true Author of the Bible. Peter explained it like this: “Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. 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” (2 Pet. 1:20-21). Note how “men spoke” as they were “carried along” by the Holy Spirit. Though the writers of Scripture often used their own words and terminology, they did so under the Spirit’s inspiration and oversight. Therefore, Paul could write, “All Scripture is God-breathed [meaning Spirit-inspired] and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness...” (2 Tim. 3:16). Because the Bible is inspired by the Holy Spirit, it has power like no other book. It has power to open the heart, enlighten the mind, and convert the soul.

2. *The Holy Spirit illuminates Scripture.* While the Holy Spirit did indeed inspire the Word of God, He does even more. He comes to Christians and helps them to understand what is written. What a wonderful privilege. The very Author of the Bible will come to us and help us to understand the words He inspired. The Scriptures can only be fully understood with the help of the Holy Spirit. We will discuss this subject more on Day 23.

**Walking with the Holy Spirit**

Now that you have concluded today’s reading, take a few moments to complete the following exercise.

- *A Truth to Embrace:* Along with the Father and the Son, the Holy Spirit participated in the creation of the heavens and the earth. He also works in the lives of repentant sinners making them into new creations in Christ.
- *A Commitment to Make:* I will yield myself to the Holy Spirit and allow Him to work in my life shaping me into the image of Christ.
- *A Prayer to Pray:* Dear Holy Spirit, come inside me, and fill me now. Make me to be more like Jesus in all I say and do.
- *A Verse to Memorize:* “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.” (2 Cor. 5:17)



Day 5 |

## The Enabling Spirit

The Old Testament begins dramatically with the Spirit of God moving over the face of the deep. He is working with God the Father and God the Son creating the heavens and the earth (Gen. 1:12; John 1:3). This, however, is just the beginning of the Spirit’s work in Scripture. Throughout the Old Testament, He worked on behalf of God’s people. He enabled the leaders of His people to accomplish the work to which He had called them. Today, we will survey six of those ways.

**Spirit-Produced Wonders**

The first way the Spirit of the Lord worked on behalf of God’s people in the Old Testament was through demonstrations of His mighty power. For instance, in Exodus, God’s Spirit worked powerfully to deliver the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage. According to Jeremiah, the “Sovereign Lord” brought His people out of Egypt “with signs and wonders, by a

mighty hand and an outstretched arm” (Jer. 32:21). You will remember from Day 2 that the outstretched arm of God is a symbol of the dynamic activity of the Holy Spirit. Isaiah adds that God brought His people through the sea by His Holy Spirit who was among them. The prophet wrote, “[By] his glorious arm of power... [He] divided the waters before them” (Isa. 63:11-12). During that time, God also led the Israelites “by a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night” (Exo. 13:21-22). This fiery pillar is emblematic of the leadership and protection of the Holy Spirit over Israel.

### **Spirit-Enabled Leaders**

The second way the Spirit worked on behalf of Israel was by enabling its leaders. Let’s look at three examples:

1. *The Spirit enabled Moses.* God’s Spirit worked in Moses, the great deliverer of the Israeli nation. God first appeared to him as “flames of fire from within a bush” (Exod. 3:2). From the bush, God told Moses that He had chosen him to deliver God’s people from Egyptian bondage. As we learned on Day 2, this divine fire reminds us of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The Bible clearly states that the Spirit was on Moses (Num. 11:17).

2. *The Spirit enabled the seventy elders.* On one occasion, Moses was overwhelmed by the amount of work he had to do. God, however, provided him with an answer. He told Moses to gather seventy elders of Israel. Then, God “took some of the Spirit that was on [Moses] and put it on the seventy elders” (Num. 11:25). Immediately they began to prophesy. They were now ready to help Moses.

Joshua noticed that two men in the camp who had not gathered with the others also began to prophesy. He complained to Moses, saying, “My lord, stop them!” But, Moses replied, “I wish that all the Lord’s people were prophets and that the Lord would put his Spirit on them!” (v. 29). This wish of Moses would one day be fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost, when God began to pour out His Spirit on all flesh (Acts 2:17).

3. *The Spirit enabled Joshua.* Like Moses, Joshua was “a man in whom is the Spirit” (Num. 27:18). Because of this, Joshua was a great leader, and God did many mighty works through him enabling him to lead Israel to conquer the land of Canaan.

### **Spirit-Gifted Craftsmen**

A third way the Spirit worked on behalf of God’s people in the Old Testament was by giving craftsmen the skills they needed to do their work. In the wilderness God commissioned Moses to build the Tabernacle. It would serve as a place where His people could gather to worship Him. God told Moses to build the structure “exactly like the pattern I will show you” (Exod. 25:9). He then chose two men, Bezalel and Oholiab, to lead the

project. God said to Moses, “I have filled [Bezalel] with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts” (Exod. 31:3). This story teaches us that the Spirit of God not only equips preachers and leaders to do their work, He also equips others, like craftsmen, to do to their work well.

### **Spirit-Endowed Judges**

A fourth way the Spirit of the Lord helped the Israeli nation was to endow the Judges with military prowess. After Israel finally settled in the Promised Land, God raised up men and women known as “Judges.” The Spirit anointed them to lead God’s people in battles against their enemies. Let’s look at four of those judges to see how the Holy Spirit worked through them.

1. *Othniel* was the first judge of Israel. The Bible says, “The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, so that he became Israel’s judge and went to war” (Jdg. 3:10). Through the Spirit’s power Othniel gained a great victory over Israel’s enemies. After that, Israel enjoyed 40 years of peace.

2. *Deborah* was the only female judge. She was also a prophet (Jdg. 4:4). She prophesied that Israel would be victorious over their enemies. The Spirit then gave her a plan on how to defeat them. Following that plan, she urged Barak to lead an attack on the Canaanite forces of Sisera. Barak followed Deborah’s instructions and gained the victory.

3. *Gideon* is perhaps Israel’s most celebrated judge. His story is found in Judges 6-8. The Bible says that “the Spirit of the Lord clothed Gideon” empowering him to lead the armies of Israel to victory (6:34).

4. *Samson* is the most puzzling of the judges. At times, he did things contrary to God’s will; nevertheless, the Spirit of God still used him. Once, when he was still a young man, “the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him” (13:35). Sometime later, he came upon a lion and “the Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power so that he tore the lion apart with his bare hands” (14:6). On another occasion, the Spirit came upon him again and he struck down thirty of the enemies of Israel (14:19). On yet another occasion, the Spirit again came powerfully on him, and he slew a thousand Philistines with only the jawbone of a donkey (15:14-15).

The story of the Judges teaches us that God will empower His people by His Spirit to accomplish His work. We should always be open to the empowering work of the Spirit in our lives.

### **Spirit-Anointed Kings**

The fifth, and final, way the Holy Spirit worked on behalf of God’s people in the Old Testament was to anoint and enable Israel’s kings to perform their duties. This is especially true for the nation’s first two kings, Saul and David.



*King Saul* was the first king of Israel. When Samuel anointed him as king, God changed Saul's heart (1 Sam. 10:9). He then went to Gibeah where he met a group of prophets. As he drew near to them, "the Spirit of God came upon him in power, and he joined in their prophesying" (v. 10). This shows that Saul was truly anointed by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of God then helped him win a great victory over the Ammonites (11:6-11). Sadly, however, Saul did not continue to follow God. Finally God withdrew His anointing from Saul and gave it to David (1 Sam. 16:13-14).

*King David* was a man who sought after God (1 Sam. 13:14), and God's Spirit dwelled in him. When Samuel anointed young David as king, the Bible says, "from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power" (1 Sam. 16:13). Unlike others in the Old Testament, the Spirit remained upon David. He even became one of the writers of Scripture. Through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he wrote many of the Psalms in the Bible.

One time David committed a great sin. However, when the prophet challenged him, he quickly repented. David must have remembered how the Spirit had departed from Saul. So he prayed, "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me" (Psa. 51:10).

We, like King David should cherish the Spirit of God in our lives—and we should do nothing that will grieve the Holy Spirit and cause Him to depart from us.

### **Walking with the Holy Spirit**

Now that you have concluded today's reading, take a few moments to complete the following exercise.

- *A Truth to Embrace*: Just as He did with the Old Testament leaders and workers, the Spirit of God stands ready to anoint me and enable me to do the work God has assigned me to do.
- *A Commitment to Make*: I commit myself seek God's Spirit for His guidance and enablement.
- *A Prayer to Pray*: Holy Spirit come, fill me as You did Your servants in the Old Testament, and enable me to accomplish the work You have called me to do.
- *A Verse to Memorize*: "So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power." (1 Sam. 16:13)



Day 6

## The Prophetic Spirit

**E**lijah and Elisha are good examples of how the Holy Spirit worked through the Old Testament prophets. By the Spirit's power, they declared the message of God and performed miracles. When Elijah's ministry was nearing its end, Elisha asked for a "double portion" of the Spirit that rested on his teacher. God then took Elijah up to heaven in a whirlwind. As he went up, his mantle fell to the ground. This mantle symbolized the anointing of the Spirit that had been on the old prophet. Elisha picked up Elijah's mantle and walked to the bank of the Jordan River. With a loud voice, he cried out, "Where now is the Lord, the God of Elijah?" (2 Kings 2:14). He then struck the water of the river with the mantle. At that, the waters divided, and Elisha walked over to the other side. This showed that the Spirit of the Lord who had rested so powerfully on Elijah was now upon Elisha.

Today, we will look at how the Holy Spirit moved on and through the Old Testament prophets. One important way He used them was to reveal Scripture through them. The prophets further spoke of a day when God would pour out His Spirit on all people. Let's look a bit closer at three ways the Holy Spirit used the Old Testament prophets.

### **The Spirit Sent the Prophets**

First, the Holy Spirit sent and empowered the prophets. Isaiah told how God had sent him. He testified, "The Sovereign Lord has sent me, endowed with his Spirit" (Isa. 48:16). The same thing could be said of all of the Hebrew prophets. They were all sent by the Holy Spirit, and they all ministered in the Spirit's power. Ezekiel testified, "[The Lord] said to me, 'Son of man, stand up on your feet and I will speak to you.' As he spoke, the Spirit came into me and raised me to my feet, and I heard him speaking to me. He said, 'Son of man, I am sending you to the Israelites...'" (Ezek. 2:1-3). Even the wicked King Nebuchadnezzar was able to see that the Spirit of God dwelt in the prophet Daniel (Dan. 4:8). All of the true Old Testament prophets were sent and empowered by Spirit of God.

### **The Spirit Spoke through the Prophets**

Not only did the Holy Spirit send and empower the prophets, He spoke through them. King David—who was also a prophet—testified, "The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me; his word was on my tongue" (2 Sam. 23:1). Micah wrote, "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” (Micah 3:8). In other words, the prophets were filled with the Spirit to speak out against evil and to declare God’s righteousness.

At times the Holy Spirit moved through the prophets inspiring them to write Scripture. Peter tells us how this came about. “Above all,” he said, “you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet’s own interpretation. 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” (2 Pet. 1:20-21). In the New Testament, the Spirit spoke in the same way through the writings of the apostles. We therefore believe that “all Scripture is God-breathed” (2 Tim. 3:16), and that the entire Bible, both the Old and New Testaments, is the inspired Word of God and the revelation of God to man. Paul wrote the Christians in Thessalonica, saying, “We also thank God continually because, when you received the word of God, which you heard from us, you accepted it not as a human word, but as it actually is, the Word of God, which is indeed at work in you who believe” (1 Thess. 2:13).

### **The Prophets Told of the Spirit’s Outpouring**

The Old Testament prophets further spoke of a day when God would pour out His Spirit on all flesh. This universal outpouring would begin with the Spirit’s coming upon the Messiah. Seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus the prophet Isaiah quotes the Messiah as saying, “The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to...proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour” (Isa. 61:1-2). Jesus read from this very passage when He began His ministry (Luke 4:18-19). He then went out and fulfilled His ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit. We will talk more about this on Day 8.

Further, according to the prophets, the day was coming when the Lord would pour out the Spirit on all humanity. Under the Old Covenant, the Spirit was given only to certain prophets, priests, and leaders. And, He was given only at certain times to enable these leaders to perform certain tasks. However, the prophets told of a day when God would pour out His Spirit on all flesh. Speaking on God’s behalf, Joel prophesied, “And afterward, 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. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days” (Joel 2:28-29).

That prophecy was first fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost when the ascended Lord poured out the Holy Spirit on the waiting believers. The Bible says,

“When the Day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them.” (Acts 2:1-4)

Peter then stood and explained what had happened. He said, “This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people.’” (Acts 2:16-17)

This ancient prophecy is still being fulfilled today. God is still pouring out His Spirit on anyone who will commit himself or herself to His mission and humbly seek His face. Jesus promised, “Your Father in heaven [will] give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” (Luke 11:13). Will you claim the promise today?

### **Walking with the Holy Spirit**

Now that you have concluded today’s reading, take a few moments to complete the following exercise.

- *A Truth to Embrace*: I understand that the Old Testament prophets did not speak from their own minds but they spoke by the Spirit.
- *A Commitment to Make*: I commit myself to yield my mind and thoughts to the Spirit and invite Him to speak to me.
- *A Prayer to Pray*: Dear Holy Spirit, I open myself to You. Speak to me and work in me to accomplish Your will in my life.
- *A Verse to Memorize*: “This is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘In the last days,’ God says, ‘I will pour out my Spirit on all people.’” (Acts 2:16-17)