

*Welcome to the fifth study....*

# WALKING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

PART ONE: OLD TESTAMENT

By

Rev. Dr. Brian Hooper

## PREFACE TO WALKING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT - OLD TESTAMENT

From the 1960's the "Charismatic Renewal" began to sweep New Zealand. Mainline churches, as well as the Pentecostal churches, were beneficiaries. Books describing the work of the Holy Spirit in people's lives began to appear in Bible bookshops. By the early 1980's there were thousands of titles on the new Pentecostal movement. The Holy Spirit had renewed my spirit and many of my friends experienced renewal. So I decided to write a book on the subject also. A nearby Presbyterian minister, the Rev. Peter Armstrong, had seen blessing come to our area so I approached him. He said something like this: "Many books on the movement and human testimonies have been written. What is lacking is a book on the biblical references to the Holy Spirit. Have you considered writing a commentary on the Holy Spirit?" I knew of a verse-by-verse New Testament commentary by Dr John Rae - and a Catholic one on the whole Bible (Montague) that outlined the work of the Holy Spirit in a general manner. Both these books were sympathetic to this fresh movement of the Holy Spirit in the world.

In 1983 I received a call to the Raumati Baptist Church near Wellington, New Zealand and left my Assistant-Principal's position at Warkworth School. Work on my commentary on the Holy Spirit stopped. I had been trained as a Congregational minister but had been teaching for twenty-two years. I loved teaching. Now God was changing my calling – to that of pastoring. As part of my pastoral task, I wrote daily Bible reading notes for my congregation and issued them to each attendee on Sundays.

My first series was WALKING WITH JESUS. Although aimed at new converts, it was suitable for mature Christians as well. When this was finished it was logical to look at the Old Testament with a series on WALKING WITH GOD THE FATHER. By the time this was finished many in our church were experiencing the Holy Spirit in a new dimension. So I began WALKING WITH GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT.

While pastoring, I had been doing a Bachelor of Arts degree and needed a final thesis. With the permission of the university I wrote my thesis on "The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament". This entailed revisiting the commentary I had begun a few years earlier, and reworking my Bible reading notes on the Holy Spirit. My Masters degree in Theology followed with "The Holy Spirit in the New Testament". Thus I completed a verse-by-verse commentary on the Holy Spirit from Genesis to Revelation.

In April 2001 I received an invitation to pastor the St. James (Presbyterian) Church in Whitby, near Wellington, New Zealand. During my time there I preached a series of sermons on WALKING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT as seen in the Old Testament. My pastoral period at St James ended in December 2002. Mrs Tricia Wood, who led a home group in Whitby, asked if I would continue the series in her home. This I was happy to do so WALKING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT in the New Testament was birthed.

# INTRODUCTION

**In the first part** of “WALKING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT” (Old Testament) we shall see God's Holy Spirit at work in creation - and how God's Holy Spirit affected the lives of patriarchs like Noah and Joseph, prophets like Elijah and Elisha, and ordinary people like Bezaleel and Gideon.

**In the second part** to come (New Testament) we will see the Holy Spirit enter the lives of such as Elizabeth and her son John the Baptist, empower Jesus Christ, and learn how the Holy Spirit can effectively change your life.

**THE OLD TESTAMENT** teaches us that the Spirit is an agent in creation (Genesis 1:2), vitalises the human organism (Genesis 2:7 and Job 26:13), sustains what has been created (Psalm 104:30 and Job 34:14). But also, the Holy Spirit visited, and moved upon and in, certain Old Testament personalities for very specific purposes. The Holy Spirit was not generally available to all believers in the Old Testament times. When Jesus came he promised his followers that when he left them to return to the Father the Holy Spirit would be sent as his permanent replacement.

**The Old Testament word for Spirit is *ruach***, which is usually rendered *pneuma* in the Septuagint (the Greek version of the Old Testament - referred to as LXX because 70 men translated it). In the Greek New Testament the word for Spirit was also usually *pneuma*.

**The Spirit of God in the Old Testament is revealed and expressed** in three vital areas:

1. **THE INTELLECTUAL LEVEL** - The *ruach* is the Spirit of wisdom, understanding and knowledge (Exod. 28:3; 35:3,31 Deut. 34:9; Job 32:8, Num. 11:16,17 etc.)
2. **THE MORAL LEVEL** - The *ruach* is also the Spirit of holiness (Ps. 51:11; Isa. 63:10)  
This is the Spirit that 'rules' or 'judges' within us (Gen. 6:3).
3. **THE RELIGIOUS LEVEL** - The *ruach* worked through people and is most clearly seen in the prophets (Hos.9:7; Ezek.2:2; 3:24; Zech. 7:12; Amos 3:7 etc.)

# AN OVERVIEW OF WALKING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

## OLD TESTAMENT

- |     |                                       |                                  |
|-----|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1.  | <b>THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CREATION</b>    | <b>Genesis 1-8 Job 26 / 33</b>   |
| 2.  | <b>JOSEPH AND THE HOLY SPIRIT</b>     | <b>Genesis 41 (and his life)</b> |
| 3.  | <b>BEZALEEL AND THE HOLY SPIRIT</b>   | <b>Exodus 28 and 31</b>          |
| 4.  | <b>MOSES AND THE HOLY SPIRIT</b>      | <b>Numbers 11</b>                |
| 5.  | <b>GIDEON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT</b>     | <b>Judges 3-11</b>               |
| 6.  | <b>SAMSON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT</b>     | <b>Judges 13-15</b>              |
| 7.  | <b>KING DAVID AND THE HOLY SPIRIT</b> | <b>1 Samuel 16 / 2 Samuel 23</b> |
| 8.  | <b>ELIJAH AND THE HOLY SPIRIT</b>     | <b>1 Kings 18</b>                |
| 9.  | <b>ELISHA AND THE HOLY SPIRIT</b>     | <b>1 Kings 18 and 2 Kings 2</b>  |
| 10. | <b>THE SPIRIT AND THE PROPHETS</b>    | <b>Daniel, Isaiah etc. etc.</b>  |

## NEW TESTAMENT

- |     |  |                                   |
|-----|--|-----------------------------------|
| 11. | <b>THE SPIRIT PREPARES FOR JESUS</b>     | <b>Matthew 1 and Luke 1</b>       |
| 12. | <b>FROM BIRTH TO PUBLIC MINISTRY</b>     | <b>Luke 2-4 Matthew 3 John 3</b>  |
| 13. | <b>JESUS TEACHES ON THE SPIRIT</b>       | <b>John 3</b>                     |
| 14. | <b>THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE GOSPELS</b>    | <b>Matthew Mark Luke John</b>     |
| 15. | <b>JESUS MINISTERS IN POWER</b>          | <b>Mark 3 Matthew 12 John 6</b>   |
| 16. | <b>JESUS PROMISES THE LIVING WATER</b>   | <b>John 7 and Luke 11 / 12</b>    |
| 17. | <b>JESUS REVEALS THE HOLY SPIRIT</b>     | <b>Matt. 22 Mark 13 John 14</b>   |
| 18. | <b>THE ACTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT</b>       | <b>The Acts of the Apostles</b>   |
| 19. | <b>THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE LETTERS</b>    | <b>Romans to Jude</b>             |
| 20. | <b>THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE REVELATION</b> | <b>The Book of the Revelation</b> |

We have put the overview of the Holy Spirit on one page this time. Although WALKING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT (Old Testament) and WALKING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT (New Testament) are two separate study series, the work of the Holy Spirit is continuous throughout the Bible. The Fatherhood of God is present in the Old, but revealed in the New. Jesus is veiled in the Old and very evident in the New. **But the gentle, unobtrusive yet sometimes dynamic work of the Holy Spirit is throughout.**

## THE HOLY SPIRIT IN CREATION

Walking with the Holy Spirit begins way back when God created our world. The Old Testament believers experienced a little of walking with the Spirit - some more than others. Even those privileged disciples and followers of Jesus needed to wait for the very special Companion Jesus would give them when he ascended. For he said: *"Unless I go away, the Counsellor (Holy Spirit) will not come to you."* John 16:7

It is hard to visualise in our minds the person of the Holy Spirit of God. If we are asked to visualise the 'Father' we can - according to our conceptions. The vision of the Father that was given to Daniel is described in Daniel 7:9 as *"...and the Ancient of Days took his seat. His clothing was as white as snow; the hair of his head was white like wool."* And it is easy to visualise Jesus - for he was a man whose appearance was like other men of the New Testament era. But to visualise the Holy Spirit - that is not so easy. Yet God in his wisdom has given us images in the Bible that can help us understand the character of the Holy Spirit even if we cannot visualise his contours.

The Holy Spirit is consistently revealed as the giver and energiser of life. This revelation is accompanied by a variety of pictures. The Spirit is like a mother bird in Genesis; like a cloud and fire in Exodus and Numbers; and like anointing oil in Leviticus and 2 Kings.

**Reading:      THE HOLY SPIRIT LIKE A HOVERING BIRD      Genesis 1:2**

In Genesis 1:2 the Holy Spirit is like a mother bird brooding over her nest and cherishing her young. The words 'hovering over' indicate a caring bird providing for and protecting its young (See Deuteronomy 32:11 and Isaiah 31:5). This is a beautiful picture of God the Holy Spirit beginning to build the nest and not resting until out of the chaotic and seething waters; the wild and hissing gases; and the desolate universe emerges life and with it, eventually, the human family. (See Job 33:4 and Psalm 104:30.)

George Smeaton was a Professor of Exegetics in the New College at Edinburgh, Scotland over a hundred years ago. He was considered one of the ablest theologians to write on the subject of the Holy Spirit. Ordained into the ministry in 1839, he published his first book on the Holy Spirit in 1882 and died in 1889. This is what he wrote on the Holy Spirit in creation and on the Holy Spirit being the breath of life:

*"The Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters"* (Genesis 1:2). The term Spirit (*Ruach*) denotes a BREATH, a WIND, and also an intelligent Being. The designation "the Spirit of God," denotes two persons - God and the Spirit of God, like the analogous title "the Son of God." It implies distinct personality, and indicates that He is from God, or of God. The action here ascribed here to Him, in connection with the creation of all things, seems to be a metaphor taken from the incubation of a bird, and sets forth how the Spirit, dove-like, sat brooding over the dark abyss and made it pregnant (Milton).

*"By His Spirit He garnished the heavens"* (Job 26:13). He is called God's Spirit ("His Spirit") to show that He is of the same essence with God and from Him. When it is said that He who garnished the

heavens is the Spirit of God, we are not warranted to interpret the words in any other way than as a declaration that the personal Spirit - elsewhere called the finger of God and the power of God - adorned the heavens, and framed them to display the divine glory.

*"The Spirit of God made me and the breath of the Almighty has given me life." (Job 33:4)*

The reference to a personal agent standing in a unique relationship to God - that is, from God, but personally distinct - is too express to be evaded by any subterfuge.

*"You send forth your Spirit, they are created; And You renew the face of the earth." (Psalm 104:30 NKJV)*

There the Psalmist speaks of God's manifold works according to their order. He shows that God gives the animals their food ; that He hides His face and they are troubled ; that He takes away their breath and they die ; that He sends forth His Spirit, and a fresh succession or race of animated beings is created. The title "Thy Spirit" distinguishes between the uncreated and the finite Spirit, and proves that the Spirit of God is the fountain of life; and that creation, amid all its necessary changes, receives from Him its renovating or rejuvenating power. The blossom and decay of vegetation ; the succession of races on the earth's surface ; the bias impressed on various minds ; the skill in arts ; the manifold gifts which hold society together, - are all the workmanship of the Spirit.

*"The Lord God formed man from the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being." (Genesis 2:7).* When God breathed into man the breath of LIFE (or LIVES, for it is plural), we must understand life in the Holy Spirit as well as animal and intellectual life. Adam had the Spirit in the state of integrity, not only for himself but for his seed ; and he walked after the Spirit as long as he stood in his integrity.

#### DISCUSSION POINTS

1. Why is the Holy Spirit like a mother bird?
2. What is the work of the Holy Spirit in creation?
3. What stood out, and impressed you, from the comments by George Smeaton?
4. How do you understand George Smeaton's final paragraph on Genesis 2:7?

**Reading: THE HOLY SPIRIT BEYOND CREATION**

**Genesis 6:1-8**

*"My Spirit will not always contend with (remain in) man."*

How sad it is to find that the next time we have a reference to God's Holy Spirit it is in circumstances so different from his work of lovingly creating. It seems that God's Spirit is about to be withdrawn from humans or act in some kind of judgement. The NIV has, 'My Spirit will not contend with man forever.' The NIV has an alternative note: 'My Spirit will not remain in'. The words underlined have a difficult Hebrew word behind them. The word *dun* could mean 'contend' or 'strive' - meaning that God's patience is closing and he is going to withdraw the remaining influence of the Spirit. It could mean 'not remain

in' indicating that their length of life is going to be reduced. The verse goes on to say that the human race is 'mortal' and the length of our life will henceforth be but 'one hundred and twenty years'.

The Spirit was active in the human race. The passage goes on to speak of the human race being mortal, and gives the length of life as 120 years. It seems that the influence of the Holy Spirit will be reduced and this means that evil will increase and length of life decrease.

**Reading: THE DOVE A SYMBOL OF THE HOLY SPIRIT Genesis 8:6-12**

Dr. A. B. Simpson has a positive picture of the work of the Spirit as seen in the dove that was sent out from the ark by Noah. He sees three stages in the work of the Holy Spirit:

1."First we have the dove going from the ark and finding no rest upon the wild and drifting waste of sin and judgement. This represents the Old Testament period when the Holy Spirit visited this sinful world and finding no resting-place went back to God.

2. Next, we have the dove going forth and returning with the olive leaf in her mouth, a symbol and a pledge of peace and reconciliation. This represents the next stage of the Holy Spirit's manifestation, the going forth in the ministry and resurrection of Jesus Christ to proclaim reconciliation to a sinful world.

3. At length, the dove goes out from the ark and does not return, but makes the world its home, and builds its nest among the people. This is the third and present stage of the Holy Spirit's blessed work. [From THE HOLY SPIRIT by Rev. Dr. A.B. Simpson.]

**DISCUSSION POINTS**

5. Explain the work of the Spirit of God in the area of judgement.
6. Dr Simpson gives three positive stages in the work of the Spirit. Can you amplify each of his three points from your own experience?

## JOSEPH AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Joseph's story is told from Chapter 30 through to the end of Chapter 50 in the Book of Genesis. In fact, Genesis ends with the death of Joseph. In some ways it is a sad story because Joseph's father had two wives that competed with each other for his affection.

Genesis 29 tells the story of Jacob, as an unmarried man, going to work for his uncle Laban. Laban had two daughters - Leah and Rachel. Verses 15 on tell how Jacob asked for the hand of the younger daughter Rachel in marriage, and how the scheming Laban agreed - providing Jacob worked for Laban over a period of seven years before she was given away. Because of the strength of their love for each other (see Genesis 29:20) Jacob worked the seven years while Rachel waited. If that wasn't a testing time - worse was to come. At the end of the seven years when Jacob could rightly claim his bride there was some wedding night trickery involving Leah - not Rachel. According to the ancient custom of the time, the bride was given to the groom at the end of the reception in the dark! (This is why it is called 'Reception' today.) When he woke up next morning Jacob was so angry... Laban tried to appease Jacob, and moderate his scheming action by permitting Rachel to be married to Jacob as well. This wasn't the kind of arrangements conducive to a happy marriage and the rest of the account in Genesis - with the two wives Leah and Rachel living in an unhappy home situation - tells its own story.

In the threefold marriage situation of Jacob, Leah and Rachel, Jacob's love for Rachel above Leah was obvious. Leah, however, was the one who bore him children while Rachel was seemingly unable to bare children. Leah, with each child she bore, felt that she was gaining Jacob's attention ("Now he will love me for sure!"). Although she was obviously the wife given most attention, Rachel felt that her barrenness was alienating Jacob. Even so, Rachel had been praying to God and the Scriptures (30:22) tell us that God answered her prayers. Rachel finds herself pregnant and her first child, a baby boy, is Joseph. At his birth she said, "May the Lord give me yet another son." ((30:24). The Lord did - and his name was Benjamin (35:18). Sadly, Rachel died giving birth to him.

The story of Joseph begins in Genesis 37 verse 1. He was seventeen years of age and his half-brothers continued the family discord by being extremely antagonistic towards Joseph. His story is well worth reading even though it traverses several Bible chapters:

- **Joseph is sold into slavery**                      Dreams, sold into slavery. **37:1-36**
- **Judah and Tamar** [Lust + a desire to preserve a family line = Sin.] **38:1-30**
- **Joseph is thrown into prison**              Potiphar's house, two dreams. **39:1-40:23**
- **Joseph is placed in charge of Egypt**      Pharaoh dreams, appoints. **41:1-57**
- **Joseph and his brothers meet in Egypt**      Silver cup, identity. **42:1-45:28**
- **Jacob's family moves to Egypt**      Jacob to Egypt, blesses Pharaoh **46:1-47:25**
- **Jacob and Joseph die in Egypt**      Jacob blesses, dies. Joseph dies. **47:26-50:26**

**Reading: Genesis 41:1-40 FROM PRISONER TO PRIME MINISTER**

Having read this part of Joseph's story we will make some comments about it:

Verses 1-12

The heathen Pharaoh of Egypt has two dreams. They are different in content but have a similar theme. After the first he wakes up, muses on the dream, falls asleep again and dreams the second. We are not told the source of the dreams - whether natural, supernatural (e.g. from the demonic realm) or from God. What we can be sure about was that God was certainly in the understanding of them.

Verses 8-13

Pharaoh called for his magicians and wise men. These seers were common in the palaces of ancient rulers. They had power (Exodus 7:11-12) but were unable to interpret Pharaoh's dream. Then the Pharaoh's cup-bearer spoke up and informed him of the time Joseph correctly interpreted his dream. The Pharaoh is about to get a lesson in theology!

Verses 14-16

When Joseph was called by Pharaoh if he was not prepared for the request he was certainly prepared for whatever the Pharaoh might require of him. Joseph walked close to his God. Joseph was clear in his response to Pharaoh's anguish: He told him that God would (a) give an answer and (b) set his mind at rest. What a remarkable response!

Verses 17-36

Joseph gave Pharaoh a survival plan! God had provided a way to prevent starvation of the nation in seven to fourteen years time. But God had a far greater agenda and reason for the Egyptians being preserved from calamity.

Verses 37-40

It is interesting that Pharaoh's advisers were impressed also (37). They could have been excused for supporting their own magicians and wise men. After all, Joseph was basically a prison inmate washed and shaved to have an interview with Pharaoh.

<b>THE HOLY SPIRIT AND JOSEPH</b> <b>Genesis 41:38</b>
--

*Pharaoh said, "Who could do it better than Joseph? For he is a man who is obviously filled with the spirit of God."* NLT

Joseph, brought from the dungeon to interpret Pharaoh's dream, impressed the head of Egypt. Pharaoh asked: "*Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the Spirit of God?*" NIV Some have wondered whether Pharaoh was able to make a statement like that since a reference to the Holy Spirit would be out of character in statements by pagan rulers. It is true that Pharaoh would not know the one true God and have little or no understanding of the Spirit of God. Yet he obviously saw a special quality in Joseph that could only be accounted for by the presence of the supernatural in some form. [Daniel 3:24 has Nebuchadnezzar saying, "The fourth looks like the son of the gods." And the Centurion at the cross says, "Surely this man was "a" (or "the") Son of God."]

Similarly, Pharaoh recognised the presence of the supernatural in Joseph – and in actual fact God the Holy Spirit WAS that supernatural quality. Matthew Henry (born 1662) says three things about Joseph:

- (1) He is a man in whom THE SPIRIT OF GOD is.**
- (2) He was made Prime Minister of State – second only to Pharaoh.**
- (3) Pharaoh gave him a new name (Zaphnath-paaneah) “A revealer of secrets”**

'Pharaoh made Joseph the food administrator of Egypt, and appointed him the grand vizier or Prime Minister. He set him in command over the entire kingdom, next to himself. He had his own signet ring placed on Joseph's hand, as a badge of authority, empowering him to issue official edicts. He had him clothed in special garments reserved for Egypt's mightiest men, and a special distinguished-service chain placed about his neck. Joseph was to ride in a chariot and be regarded as second only to the king. A special official would call out to the people "Abrek!" This probably meant, "Pay attention" or "Bow the knee!" or something similar. It was to be made clear to all the people that an outstanding man of ability, character and authority was before them. He was to be in complete control of affairs that meant life or death to multitudes. Privilege and responsibility vied with each other in that moment of recognition and investment. The challenging words of Mordecai to Esther might well have applied to Joseph: "Who can say but that you have been elevated to the palace for just such a time as this?" NLT'.  
The Wycliffe Bible Commentary - contributor to Genesis, Dr.Kyle Yates.

#### DISCUSSION POINTS

7. What was the source of Pharaoh's dream? Was it natural (his mind mulling over how to feed his nation in the future); was it supernatural (of demonic origin); or was it from God? Please give a good reason for your answer.
8. . Pharaoh recognised the presence of the spirit of God in Joseph. What do you think he actually saw in Joseph to cause him to come to that conclusion?
9. What do you think Pharaoh meant by the word "spirit"?
10. What do you think Pharaoh understood by using the word "God"?
11. The words to Esther by Mordecai could have applied to Joseph: "Who can say but that you have been elevated to the palace for just such a time as this?" Assuming these words are true for Joseph too - give reasons for applying them to Joseph.
12. Pharaoh also gave Joseph a wife (41:45) a young woman named Asenath, the daughter of Potiphera, a priest of Heliopolis. Joseph was 30 when he entered the service of the Pharaoh. How do we reconcile Joseph's faith in the one true God with his receiving a wife - the daughter of a heathen priest?

## BEZALEEL AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

**Reading:** Exodus 28:1-5 **GOD’S SPIRIT AND THE PRIESTLY GARMENTS**

**Key verse:** [The Lord said to Moses Exodus 25:1 through 28:3] *“Tell all the skilled men to whom I have given wisdom in such matters that they are to make garments for Aaron, for his consecration, so he may serve me as priest.”*

Aaron had humbly served Moses as his prophet (Exodus 7:1) but was now being advanced by God to serve as a priest. For this honoured role special garments were required. These garments would bring ‘glory’, ‘beauty’, ‘dignity’ and ‘honour’ to both Aaron and the Lord. The beauty of Aaron would point to God and the carefully planned and made garments pointed to a perfect Jesus to come. So God used His Holy Spirit to be the channel of the required wisdom. God is the source of wisdom (Psalm 104:24, Proverbs 3:19, Daniel 2:20, Romans 11:33). The Garment Makers received Holy Spirit Wisdom. The Holy Spirit honoured the garments that pointed to Jesus.

**Note:** I am indebted to the Wycliffe Commentary (Moody Press Chicago) for the information on the priests’ garments. Exodus contributor: Dr. Philip C. Johnson.

- **THE EPHOD 6-14 THE PRIEST ON BEHALF OF THE PEOPLE**

This was the most distinctive part of the high priest’s garments. It was a kind of waistcoat or apron, elaborately embroidered. It consisted of two pieces, front and back, joined at the shoulders by straps or ‘shoulder pieces’ (v.7), and bound around the waist by a girdle that was part of the ephod itself (v.8). On each shoulder strap was an onyx stone in a setting of gold filigree, upon which were engraved the names of the twelve tribes of Israel, six on each stone. Thus symbolically, the priest bore upon his shoulders the burden of all Israel as he represented them before God. The colours and material of the ephod (v.6) answers to the colours and texture of the sanctuary - thus identifying the sanctuary and the minister. Instead of cherubim, however, the ephod was embroidered throughout with fine gold wire, woven in with the other colours.(v.8).

- **THE BREASTPIECE 15-30 THE PRIEST CARRIED THE PEOPLE**

The breastplate or “pouch” of judgment was a bag of the same material as the ephod. It was made of one piece of material, folded over to form a pouch nine by nine inches (23 x 23 cm) Fastened into this pouch in settings of gold were twelve precious stones, four rows of three each, upon which were engraved the names of the twelve tribes. The pouch was held to the ephod by means of two chains of gold, which linked into gold rings at the upper corners of the pouch and attached them to the shoulder pieces of the ephod (vv.22-25). Through other rings at the bottom corners, the pouch was secured to the girdle of the ephod by means of bands of blue lacing (vv.26-28).

As the high priests ministered in the sanctuary, he bore the burdens and needs of his people not only in the place of strength, upon his shoulders, but also upon his heart, that with wisdom and compassion he might be their mediator before Jehovah (v.29).

The identity of some of the stones in the breast-piece is very uncertain. The following is traditional translations – and Wycliffe’s consensus of opinions of Bible scholars:

	<u>KJV</u>	<u>NIV</u>	<u>TLB</u>	<u>Wycliffe Commentary</u>
<b>First row</b> Verse 17	Sardius	Ruby	Ruby	Carnelian or red Jasper
	Topaz	Topaz	Topaz	A yellow or green stone possibly Chrysolite.
	Carbuncle	Beryl	Emerald	Emerald or rock chrystal.
<b>Second row</b> Verse 18	Emerald	Turquoise	Carbuncle	A red stone (not emerald) either ruby or garnet.
	Sapphire	Saphire	Sapphire	More likely lapis lazuli
	Diamond	Emerald	Diamond	Crystal or Sardonyx (No evidence of diamonds)
<b>Third row</b> Verse 19	Ligure	Jacinth	Amber	A stratified red and white stone –jacinth or cairngorm.
	Agate	Agate	Agate	Yes. A red opaque stone.
	Amethyst	Amethyst	Amethyst	Yes. A clear purple stone.
<b>Fourth row</b> Verse 20	Beryl	Chrysolite	Onyx	Either Beryl, Chalcedony or yellow Jasper.
	Onyx	Onyx	Beryl	Yes. As Onyx today.
	Jasper	Jasper	Jasper	Beryl or green Jasper.

- THE ROBE 31-35 THE PRIEST PROCLAIMS THE WORD

It was woven of one piece of cloth, with armholes but no sleeves. It was put on over the head and probably reached the knees. Around the edge of the skirt small golden bells alternated with pomegranates of twisted yarn. The pomegranates have been taken as symbols of the Word of God, a sweet and refreshing fruit, and the bells as the sounding forth of the Word.

- THE TURBAN 36-38 THE PRIEST ATONED FOR THE PEOPLE

The head-dress of the high priest was a turban of fine white linen (v.39) upon the front of which was affixed, by means of a band of blue lace, a gold plate on which were engraved the words, “Holy to Jehovah.” Thus was the office and person of the high priest marked out by God before the people, until ‘the Holy One should come’ (See Hebrews 7:26). [The AV, ASV term is ‘Mitre’ but the head-dress bore no resemblance to the Mitre.] It more likely resembled the common turban of the East. Verse 38 says the turban was so that “Aaron may bear their sins” (one translation). The high priest was exalted into an atoning mediator of the whole nation; and an atoning intercession was associated with his office.

- THE TUNIC and SASH 39-41 THE PRIEST EMBRACED THE PEOPLE

The tunic or coat was woven of linen a check pattern and was worn close to the body, beneath the robe of the ephod. According to Josephus (*Antiq.III 7.2*), the tunic reached to the feet and had tight sleeves. It was bound about the body with a richly coloured sash or girdle embroidered like the tapestries of the sanctuary.

• THE UNDERGARMENT 42-43 THE PRIEST IN PLACE OF THE PEOPLE

Beneath the tunic the priests wore linen breeches or drawers. Linen was a costly and highly prized cloth in those days, so that even the least of the priest's garments were made of the finest material. By these garments the priests appointed by Jehovah were officially marked as his representatives. To fail to wear them, and thus approach the tabernacle (v.43) as in their own virtue and personal right, was to bring upon themselves judgment and death.

DISCUSSION POINTS

13. The Ephod. On shoulder and by heart the priest acted on behalf of the people. Explain the meaning of the Ephod as it applies to the Hebrew people and to us.
14. The Breastpiece was a bag with twelve precious gems. Please give its meaning.
15. The Robe carried pomegranates and bells and spoke of the Word of God. Explain.
16. The Turban identifies the high priest as a sin-bearer, mediator, and intercessor. Please explain how Aaron or his successors meant this, and its meaning today.
17. The Tunic and Sash were tight body garments. What did they mean?
18. The costly Undergarment spoke of the priest representing the people. How?
19. On the topic below, how could being filled with the Spirit help Bezaleel's task?

**Reading: Exodus 31:1-11 THE HOLY SPIRIT AND BEZALEEL**

Of Bezaleel the Scripture says, *"I have filled him with the Spirit of God."* Exodus 31:3

This was clearly the ability to work as a craftsman. This ability was a spiritual gift, equipping the person for special service to God. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit was sent to convey a gift, a skill or empower the chosen individual. Not all in Old Testament times were recipients of the gifts or the power of the Holy Spirit. But some were – like Bezaleel. It is to these examples we can turn to help us understand the type of endowment or enduement the Holy Spirit might give us.

In Chapter 35:31 there is a further reference to Bezaleel:

*And Moses said to the children of Israel, "See, the Lord has called by name Bezaleel the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. **And He has filled him with the Spirit of God, in wisdom and understanding, in knowledge and all manner of workmanship.**"*

## MOSES AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

**Reading: Numbers 11:1-17 SOME OF THE SPIRIT ON MOSES**

A very interesting verse is Numbers 11:17 where God says: *“I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them (seventy of Israel’s elders).”* NIV

It is interesting in that it says “I will take **of** the Spirit that is on you.” and “put **the** Spirit on them.” This is an accurate, careful translation and reveals three important facts:

1. The Holy Spirit was on or upon Moses (not in), and would be on (not in) his elders. There was a temporary and limited expression of the Holy Spirit in Old Testament times. The Spirit wasn’t permanently indwelling believers as is the situation this side of the cross. For example, “The Spirit of the Lord came upon” Othniel (Judges 3:10). “The Spirit of the Lord came upon” Gideon (Judges 6:34). “The Spirit of the Lord came upon” Jephthah (Judges 11:29). “The Spirit of the Lord began to stir” Samson (Judges 13:25) and “came upon him in power” ) Judges 14:6, 14:19, 15:14.
2. The Holy Spirit would not be completely removed from Moses. In fact, there is no suggestion that Moses would have any loss at all. “I will **take of the** Spirit” simply means that, like Adam’s rib, and the creation of a woman - there was a vital and intimate connection but no actual loss of functioning. Indeed, there was a gain. For the verse goes on to say, “They will help you carry the burden of the people so that you will not have to carry it alone.” Moses experienced the widow’s supply of oil.
3. God would put the Holy Spirit upon the seventy chosen elders. Not in any ‘watered-down’ or depleted measure, but in a full measure as if they had come from God – and not through Moses. What God was saying was not that some of the Spirit in Moses would be taken out and put upon the elders – but what had been poured upon Moses would also be poured upon the seventy elders. And was it ever...

You would think that a whole lot of rebellious people complaining about Moses would be the most unlikely setting for a remarkable work of the Holy Spirit. Yet it was in response to grumbles and groans that God powerfully visited the nation. To some extent, we can sympathise with the people. We can certainly understand why they grizzled. As they journeyed through the wilderness the memory of their deliverance from the harsh oppression of Egypt began to fade. What they had to eat there became more vivid in their minds. So the pilgrims became dissatisfied with the food God was providing and longed for the food they used to have (verses 4-9). Verse 10 says that God became angry. This was because the people had rejected God’s gracious provision of the heavenly manna. Moses was a caring, sensitive leader and their weeping deeply distressed him. He felt himself to be almost at the end of his endurance. Although the Bible says that God was angry, God’s anger was confined to the fact that the people rejected His food. God does read the heart, and He knew Moses could not cope. Moses was powerfully anointed by the Holy Spirit for his task as leader. God’s answer to the situation was both 1. PRACTICAL and 2. SPIRITUALLY powerful. He replaced the manna with “meat on the wing” – for a whole month – until they loathed it. That was the practical lesson. But God also came down to talk with Moses and multiply His Holy Spirit. Numbers 11:17 says: *“I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit that is on you and put the Spirit on them.”*

## DISCUSSION POINTS

20. What is the difference in the way the Holy Spirit affected believers in the period up until the death of Jesus Christ compared with the period following the death of Jesus Christ (a period that has lasted right up to this day)?
21. When the Lord promised to take of Holy Spirit and put the Spirit on the 70 elders, what did God mean?

### **Reading: Numbers 11:18-25 THE SEVENTY ELDERS PROPHECY**

Before the Lord powerfully visited his people he did need to teach them a lesson. He answered their demands for meat by giving them so much that it ‘came out of their ears’ – we might suggest. They got it and became sick of it.

As a boy I lived in Auckland and went to a school near a sweet (candy) factory. What a wonderful smell came out of that place! How I wished for an invitation to visit with no holds barred! I remember asking a worker whether she was ever allowed a sweet as she packed them for distribution. Her answer surprised me. “We can eat as much as we like. The first day I ate a lot – felt sick overnight. From then on I only had one or two each day!” So it was with God’s people. Verse 20 says that they ate meat for twenty days until it came out of their nostrils. They loathed it. Can we learn a lesson from this incident? Before God can empower us with His Holy Spirit and give us the benefits of “walking in the Spirit” we need to be sick of the flesh! We are not to desire the earthly, material, sensuous temporary food but the food of eternity. The people of Moses’ time rejected a simple, but nourishing and regular food. It was the simple, but heavenly food of walking by faith in a barren land and through a time of testing and learning. Better things were to come. Verse 25 says:

*“Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke with him (Moses), and He took of the Spirit that was on him and put the Spirit on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but they did not do so again.”*

This verse (verse 25) mentions the Spirit three times:

1. The Lord “took of the same Spirit” that Moses had gloriously experienced.
2. The Lord “put the Spirit on the seventy elders”.
3. The moment the “Spirit rested on” the seventy elders, they prophesied.

The moment the Spirit rested on them the seventy elders prophesied! What a mighty moment! The study notes in my NIV Bible say, “...they gave ecstatic expression to an intense religious experience (see 1 Sam 10:5-6,18:10, 19:20-24; 1 Kings 10:29).” We need not be worried about the words that say after receiving the Holy Spirit, “they did not” prophesy again. ‘The temporary gift of prophecy to the elders was primarily to establish their credentials as Spirit-empowered leaders.’ (see NIV study notes).

The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament was a visiting Person by the grace of God. Pentecost brought the Holy Spirit permanently residing in every believer (John 14 :16-17).

**Reading: Numbers 11:26-30 ELDAD AND MEDAD TASTE THE SPIRIT**

This is an interesting part of the story! For some reason two of those selected by Moses were detained in the camp. Yet when the Spirit of God rested upon the others who had assembled around the sacred tent, the two absentees received also. The tent of meeting God's glory rested. But God in His grace unexpectedly released the Holy Spirit on Eldad and Medad also. Can you imagine the scene? Without any driving desire on their part; or clear understanding of what might occur, they were mightily touched by the Holy Spirit of God and found their hearts reaching out to God in Spirit-inspired praise and worship. The miracle is that God visited in this way. Another is that God came to those who were left behind – away from God's tent of meeting where everyone knew God's glory rested. These two might even have been quite despondent thinking they were missing out on an important gathering. They might have been anxious to complete some matter that had delayed them in getting to the Tent. But God knew their situation, whatever it was. Perhaps if God had not visited them, the people may have thought that God had set them aside from blessing. God, with wonderful wisdom, established their credentials also. Also, God's sovereignty was demonstrated.

[Personal Testimony: It was in early 1973 that God poured His Spirit upon me – unexpectedly – whilst driving an empty school bus back to my school. As my heart was lifted up in praise whilst driving along, God visited me.....]

**DISCUSSION POINTS**

22. When the Holy Spirit came upon the seventy elders, was Moses affected spiritually in any way?
23. When the Holy Spirit came upon the seventy elders, was Moses affected practically in any way?
24. Why do you think Eldad and Medad were absent from the initial gathering?
25. Discuss why God, nevertheless, included them in the outpouring?
26. What do you think the outpouring on the seventy elders achieved?
27. Was God giving a message through the outpouring. What do you think it was?

**Further reading:**

Balaam and the Holy Spirit  
Joshua and the Holy Spirit  
Othniel and the Holy Spirit  
Gideon and the Holy Spirit  
Samson and the Holy Spirit

Numbers chapters 23 and 24.  
Numbers 27:12-23 and Deuteronomy 34:1-10  
Judges 3:7-11  
Judges 6:25-7:25  
Judges chapters 13-15

## GIDEON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Book of Numbers traces the story of the Hebrew people from Mount Sinai to the plains of Moab on the border of Canaan. In our last study we looked at an occasion when the Holy Spirit came upon seventy elders as the Hebrew people journeyed from Sinai to Kadesh (10:11-12:16). The Hebrew people journeyed on from Kadesh. Twelve spies were sent into the land and except for Joshua and Caleb, who gave a positive report, the other ten gave a negative report (Chapter 13). Arriving eventually at the plains of Moab Israel prepared to take the Promised Land. They sought permission of King Sihon of the Amorites to pass through his territory. Sihon refused. Instead, he sent a massive army to defeat the invading Israelites (Numbers 21:23). The Israelites had a resounding victory and travelled on to Moab.

## BALAAM AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

King Balak of Moab “saw all that Israel had done to the Amorites, and was terrified” (Numbers 22:2). So he sought the help of a ‘soothsayer’ called **Balaam**. King Balak wanted Balaam to curse Israel. Although Balaam was not a Hebrew, and not known as a prophet of Israel, God saw fit to speak through him:

**Reading: Numbers 22:4-14 GOD TELLS BALAAM ISRAEL IS BLESSED**

King Balak is undeterred. He sends more distinguished ambassadors and offers a greater reward for cursing Israel. “Even if Balak gave me his palace filled with silver and gold, I could not do anything great or small to go beyond the command of the Lord my God.” Balaam did, against God’s wishes, travel back to visit King Balak (Numbers 22:21-23:29). In Chapter 22:21-38 we read about the Angel of the Lord blocking the way for Balaam and his donkey – and the remarkable incident of the donkey speaking! Chapter 23:1-29 recounts the three times King Balak takes Balaam to three different places where he expects Balaam to curse Israel – but on each of these three occasions Balaam speaks the message that the one true God has given him. It is in Chapter 24 that we read about the Spirit of God coming upon Balaam during the giving of the third message:

**Reading: Numbers 24:1-11 THE SPIRIT OF GOD UPON BALAAM**

King Balak wanted Balaam to curse Israel. But Balaam was in touch with God and could only give words of blessing each time. At Balak’s third attempt to get the prophet to utter ‘acceptable’ prophecies there is a difference: Chapter 24 verse 2-4 tells us that:

*When Balaam looked out and saw Israel encamped tribe by tribe, the **Spirit of God came upon him** and he uttered this oracle: The oracle of Balaam son of Beor, the oracle of one whose eye sees clearly, the oracle of one who hears the words of God...” NIV*

God came upon this non-Israel prophet in a remarkable way! The Holy Spirit inspired word given by God through the prophet was truly God’s message to a manipulating king. This event tells us that if our hearts stand for righteousness against all opposition; and if we seek to cultivate a close walk with God (as Balaam seemed to have done in his dealings with the king; God will use us and speak to others through us. We never need to feel we have exhausted God. We should never feel we have experienced everything God has for us. We should always be expectant. He is unexpected often – for our good.

## JOSHUA AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

Having subdued Moab, and occupied that land in preparation for entering the Promised Land, temptation came in two forms: 1. The Israelites were tempted to join in the worship of the Moab ‘gods’ and 2. The women of Moab became a temptation for Israelite men. The sad outcome, recorded in Chapter 25 was that 24,000 Israelites died. Chapter 27 records the preparation for Moses to hand over his leadership of the Hebrew people to Joshua – a man *“in whom is the Spirit”*.

**Reading: Numbers 27:12-23 JOSHUA – SUCCESSOR TO MOSES**

Joshua and Caleb were the two heroes in the darkest hours of Israel’s apostasy (Chapters 13 and 14). It was fitting that one of them should be chosen to succeed Moses. It is also appropriate that Joshua is said to be a man “in whom is the Spirit”.

## OTHNIEL AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

From The Book of Numbers we move through Deuteronomy and Joshua to the Book of Judges. The Holy Spirit is mentioned seven times in Judges as follows:

- |           | Judges |   |
|-----------|--------|---|
| • OTHNIEL | 3:10   | “The Spirit of the Lord came upon him”.<br>(Identifying him before Israel as their leader.) |
| • GIDEON  | 6:34   | “The Spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon”.<br>(As he faced Israel’s Midianite enemies.)     |
| • JEPHTAH | 11:29  | “The Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah.”<br>(As he advanced against the Ammonites.)     |
| • SAMSON  | 13:25  | “The Spirit of the Lord began to stir him.”<br>(As he became a man.)                        |
| • SAMSON  | 14:6   | “The Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power.”<br>(He tore a lion apart.)                 |
| • SAMSON  | 14:19  | “The Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power.”<br>(And he struck down 30 Ashkelon men.)   |
| • SAMSON  | 15:14  | “The Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power.”<br>(To kill a thousand Philistines.)       |

**Reading: Judges 3:7-11 THE SPIRIT CAME UPON OTHNIEL**

The Book of Judges portrays a very dark period in Israel’s history. The Book of Joshua before it marks a triumphant period. The Books after (Ruth Samuel) reveal the rise of power and influence. Judges occupies four and a half hundred years of darkness and difficulty between Joshua and the new land and Samuel who helped usher in the monarchy. Yet as Dr A.B. Simpson says, ‘God loves to use the darkest clouds as His background for the rainbows of his most gracious manifestations.’ When circumstances are at their worst; when Satan is at his fiercest; God the Holy Spirit can intervene.

OTHNIEL was the first of Israel’s judges. By the power of the Holy Spirit he conquered the mighty king of Mesopotamia. But how did Othniel get catapulted into prominence? Before God mightily uses

someone He prepares. In Joshua 15:16-17 we read that after Caleb had conquered Hebron there was an adjacent ‘city of books’ (Kirjathsepher). To the warrior who would subdue it he offered his daughter Achsah. Perhaps the lovely Achsah spurred him on – but nevertheless Othniel was the hero who gained both the city and a wife. Notice carefully verses 10 and 11. The defeat of the king – and the resultant era of peace in the land for forty years – is directly attributed to the ‘Spirit of the Lord.’

God has probably prepared you for something – and you may not know what it is. Be ready for an empowering of His Holy Spirit for service. Just as victory over the enemy and peace was the result – the Spirit will bring to you victory and release. Be ready!

## GIDEON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

### **Reading: Judges 6:25 - 7:25 WHEN THE SPIRIT CAME UPON GIDEON**

There was Gideon hiding away in the winepress out of sight of his enemies when the Angel of the Lord appeared. It is almost as if the divine messenger said, “I can see you hiding away there. You may be scared of your enemies but the lord is with you – you mighty man of bravery. (6:11). We can take heart from this for God often takes the weak and makes them strong by His Spirit. It is as if God wanted to demonstrate this principle by deliberately reducing the warriors of Gideon from 32000 men to 300 (Chapter 7:2-8). These 300 men alone put the enemy to flight.

We can see by 6:33 that the migrating herdsmen ‘joined forces’ to attack Israel. Each spring the vast numbers of warlike herdsmen devastated the farming families of Israel. As each spring approached the Israelites would become more and more fearful. Gideon’s response was twofold:

- (1) To honour and worship the Lord (6:24).
- (2) To prepare to resist the enemy (6:35).

What happened was like the unfolding drama of a victory play:

- ACT 1      God’s people are mercilessly defeated by the enemy (see 6:1-6). Satan and his evil ones are like that when they attack us.
- ACT 2      ‘The Angel of the Lord’ intervenes. (Many believe that this messenger from God is actually God in the form of Jesus Christ in his eternal state. Every mention of ‘The - not ‘an’ – Angel of the Lord’ occurs in a passage of Scripture that has the person to whom he appears worshipping the ‘Angel’ or acknowledging that the ‘Angel’ is God.) This incident of the intervening ‘Angel’ assures us that our eternal Jesus Christ will intervene when Satan and his followers attack us.
- ACT 3      The Spirit of God empowered Gideon (6:34). The phrase ‘Spirit ...came upon’ means ‘clothed’. This vivid figure is used only here; 1 Chronicles 12:18 and 2 Chronicles 24:20. It emphasises that the Spirit of the Lord empowered the human agent and acted through him.

## JEPHTHAH AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

### Reading: Judges 11:1-33 THE SPIRIT CAME UPON JEPHTHAH

When you read the account carefully you will see that the Ammonites made a false claim to the land Israel was occupying. Jephthah answers graciously and fully. But the moment the Ammonite king rejects the response the Lord acts:

*'Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah ...and he advanced against the Ammonites.'* NIV

The early verses of Chapter 11 tell us that Jephthah was the son of Gilead and a prostitute. The brothers in his family drove him out because he was 'the son of another woman'. This was not his fault- or sin – and God seems to take delight in using those who are despised. Ishmael was the son of the first-born but Isaac was chosen. Esau was the father's favourite but Jacob was chosen. Joseph was the wronged, persecuted, outcast son but rose to prominence. Moses, the son of a race of slaves, led his people to freedom. David was the despised son of Jesse's house but anointed to be king by Samuel. And, of course, Jesus of Nazareth was 'despised and rejected'. The Holy Spirit is not ashamed to use despised people. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah and 'the Lord gave them (the intruders into his hands' (11:32).

Thus we have five more Old Testament characters affected by God's Spirit:

		<u>The purpose of the Spirit's attendance:</u>
• Balaam	Nu. 24:2	To prophesy that God would bless Israel.
• Joshua	Nu. 27:18, Dt. 34:9	To authenticate Joshua as Israel's leader.
• Othniel	Ju.3:10	To identify Othniel as Israel's leader.
• Gideon	Ju.6:34	To empower Gideon to defeat the enemy.
• Jephthah	Ju.11:29	To empower Jephthah to defeat the enemy.

### DISCUSSION POINTS

28. For each of these five discussion points take the five men (e.g 28 is Balaam 29 is Joshua etc.) and describe them as follows:
29. (a) Give their name (b) note the identifying Scripture reference as above (c) give
30. an account of each one's standing before God [e.g. Balaam was a heathen but
31. somehow he heard God's voice etc. ] Analyse each one's commitment to God (d)
32. Explain the manner in which the Holy Spirit attended/affected each one (e) and, finally, is there any lesson from each example that may apply to you or me today?

## SAMSON AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

We have arrived at that most intriguing Old Testament hero – Samson the strong man!  
He was strong – as long as his hair was long... The NIV notes on 13:1-16:31 say:

Samson (from the tribe of Dan), like Ehud (from the tribe of Benjamin), was a loner, whose heroic exploits involved single-handed triumphs over powerful enemies. His story therefore balances that of Ehud (3:12-30). He typifies the nation of Israel – born by special divine provision, consecrated to the Lord from birth and endowed with unique power among his fellowmen. The likeness is even more remarkable in light of his foolish chasing of foreign women, some of ill repute, until he was cleverly subdued by one of them. In this he exemplified Israel, who during the period of the Judges constantly prostituted itself to Canaanite gods to its own destruction.

This study looks at the relationship the Holy Spirit had with Samson. There are four mentions of the activity of the Holy Spirit in connection with Samson. They are:

- |     |   |          |
|-----|---|----------|
| [1] | As he enters the threshold of adulthood           | 13:25    |
| [2] | When he encounters a lion                         | 14:6     |
| [3] | When he defeats 30 men at Ashkelon                | 14:19    |
| [4] | When he burst his bonds and killed a thousand men | 15:14-15 |

The first occasion occurs after the story of his conception, birth, and youth has been given in Chapter 13. The heavenly personage called ‘The Angel of the Lord’ has quite a part to play and we covered this fascinating aspect in our study of ‘The Angel of the Lord’ in the series on ‘Finding the Son – Old Testament’.

**Reading: THE SPIRIT BEGINS TO STIR SAMSON Judges 13:1-25**

We have noted that Samson experienced the moving of the Spirit four times.  
Did you notice the ‘progression’ of others affected each time? (0 to 1 to 30 to 1000).  
We will discover that his final activity (16:27-30) exceeded 3000.

Here is a ‘sermon outline’ of the activity of the Spirit of God in Samson:

1. The Spirit EMPATHISED with Samson – as he “began to stir him” (13:25).
2. The Spirit EXERCISED Samson’s physical frame by the power of the Spirit. (14:6).
3. The Spirit ENERGISED Samson - to kill 30 men. (14:19)
4. The Spirit ENABLED Samson to break his bonds (15:14) and
5. The Spirit EMPOWERED Samson to slay 1000 men. (15:15).

When we ‘empathise’ with someone, we ‘come alongside’ and share our joy or grief with that person. ‘Coming alongside’ is a good term in connection with the Holy Spirit for the word for ‘Comforter’ or ‘Counsellor’ Jesus uses in John 16 is the Greek word *paracletos*. The ‘para’ part is used in our English words such as ‘parallel’ and ‘parallelogram’. That is, ‘things that go along close together...following the same path, travelling in the same direction, and remaining the same distance apart, even following the same path when going round bends etc.’ Empathising is being close by no matter the twists and turns of the other person.

The NIV Bible says, “*the Spirit of the Lord began to stir him.....*” I like that! The Holy Spirit often begins by gently nudging and stirring to life. In my own personal experience I sensed the presence of the Spirit when I came to that place where I felt spiritually dry and in need of refreshing. In this state I cried out to God to refresh me – and He did. It was September 1971. May I respectfully suggest to any Christian who fears the inner work of the Holy Spirit – or who may not have reached the place where there is a hungering and thirsting for more of God – that the Holy Spirit responds to earnest desire. It is quite possible for us to be ‘born of the Holy Spirit’ but never, ever, experience an inner release of the Spirit or an empowering of the Spirit.

**Reading: THE SPIRIT CAME UPON HIM IN POWER Judges 14:1-7**

Wrestling a lion would seem to me to be the best ‘exercise’ one could engage in. But in subduing the lion, Samson reveals the Spirit of God as the exercising force – the source of physical strength. I quote from the book ‘THE HOLY SPIRIT – Volume 1’ by Rev. A.B. Simpson D.D.

“There is no more remarkable figure in the Bible than the sturdy giant of Timnathserah, who represented in his own body, as no other man has ever done, the connection between physical strength and the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The strength of Samson was not the result of physical culture and unusual size and vigour of bone, muscle, or members but was entirely due to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him and working through him.”

**Reading: THE SPIRIT IN SAMSON DEFEATS 30 MEN Judges 14:10-20**

The Bible says that Samson “liked the woman” but she couldn’t hold the answer to the riddle. She was torn between family and tribal loyalty – and a new loyalty to her husband. We can acknowledge she was in a difficult position. And it was quite mean of her Philistine friends to work on her the way they did. She was a good actress –crying for the seven days of the feast until she wore Samson down.

Out of this betrayal Samson extracted a kind of justice. First he recognised that the wicked men had “plowed with his heifer”. He did not condemn his wife – he did condemn her friends. He struck down 30 Philistines – stripped them of the clothing and gave the clothes to the ones who had given him the correct answer to the riddle.

But one very clear fact emerges from this fascinating account containing a swarm of bees; a wedding; a riddle; and a bride who cries for seven days. What a mixture of ingredients! The one clear fact is the presence and power of the Holy Spirit!

*“Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon him in power. He went down to Ashkelon, struck down thirty of their men, stripped them of their belongings and gave their clothes to those who had explained the riddle.”*

God has a plan involving a person He wants to energise and the Holy Spirit. The process can take twists and turns – but God has a time for the working of His Spirit. And through the energising of someone by His Spirit, God will accomplish His will.

**Reading: POWER TO BREAK BONDS AND SLAY 1000 Judges 15:9:20**

This is an interesting segment in the story of Samson. The Philistine army make a show of strength to the people of Judah. And Judah trembles. So, in turn, Judah makes a show of strength to Samson. Three

thousand men go to the cave where Samson is to tie him up. They were aware of his physical abilities so they didn't just converge on him. They sought his consent to be tied up. Surprisingly, Samson willingly agreed. But nothing, it seems, could hold him. He easily broke the bonds and finding an implement nearby proceeded to have a wonderful time of physical exercise.

Let us observe the spiritual principles of being EMPOWERED by the Spirit of God:

1. A pre-existing confidence in the empowering ability of God. (God gave it – 13:5.)
2. A compliant strategy to pacify the enemy. (v12)
3. A compliant strategy to pacify misguided supporters. (v13)
4. A trust in God's Spirit to overcome the odds. (v14)
5. A willingness to use whatever lies at hand to accomplish the victory. (v15)
6. A willingness to throw away a method that had been useful in the past. (v17)
7. God rewards and refreshes the obedient believer. (v19)

POSTSCRIPT:

The Bible doesn't mention the involvement of the Spirit in the end of Samson's life. But I sense the Spirit was active in his final moments. Chapter 16: verses 23 to 31 tell the story of blind Samson bringing the temple of Dagon crashing down – and killing ***“many more when he died than while he lived”*** (v30).

#### DISCUSSION POINTS

33. Why do you think the very special 'Angel of the Lord' visited Samson's mother, then father, to announce the birth of a rather unique baby?
34. Explain the seeming contradiction of Samson being a foolish, and in many ways, an 'unspiritual man' – and the fact that God's Holy Spirit seemed to have a special relationship with him.
35. How do you explain the fact that the Holy Spirit empowered Samson to kill a lion? Does this not seem a little inconsistent with the Holy Spirit's nature?
36. In Judges 15:14-15 the Spirit empowered Samson for two activities. What are your comments on these happenings?
37. The Scriptures do not say that Samson was empowered at the end of his life. Was he empowered by the Spirit for the greatest victory of his life (please comment)?

## KING DAVID AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

We have now arrived at the books of SAMUEL and KINGS. For the first time in the Bible we encounter “spirit” opposition to the “Holy Spirit”:

You may wish, in your own time, to go through the following scriptures and thus obtain an overview of the Spirit of God - and also an awareness of the evil 'spirit' activity.

### THE SPIRIT OF GOD

1 Samuel 10:6  
 1 Samuel 10:10  
 1 Samuel 11:06  
 1 Samuel 16:13  
 1 Samuel 19:20  
 1 Samuel 19:23  
 2 Samuel 23:2  
 1 Kings 18:12  
 2 Kings 2:16

### EVIL SPIRITS

1 Samuel 16:14b  
 1 Samuel 16:15  
 1 Samuel 16:16  
 1 Samuel 16:23  
 1 Samuel 18:10  
 1 Samuel 19:9  
**1 Samuel 28:7,8**  
 1 Kings 22:22,23,24

Except for the highlighted 1 Samuel **28:7-8**, all the verses above, both Spirit and “spirits” have the Hebrew word RUACH for “spirit”. By reading the context one can easily determine whether the “Holy” Spirit or evil spirit is meant. The word “RUACH” means “breath/wind” and can be used of either a good or evil spirit. Mostly, it is used of God’s Holy Spirit. 1 Samuel 28:7-8 is unique. The Hebrew word “OWB” means “prattler/ventriloquist/familiar” spirit. In other words, an “impersonating” spirit – imitating God’s Holy Spirit – an evil fake from the satanic realm! So first of all, let us take a look at this "impersonating spirit" (*owb*) as it is recorded in The Amplified Bible:

*Then Saul said to his servants, "Find me a woman who is a medium [between the living and the dead], that I may go and enquire of her." His servants said, "Behold, there is a woman who is a medium at Endor."*

*So Saul disguised himself, put on other raiment, and he and two men went and came to the woman at night. He said to her, "Perceive for me by a **familiar spirit**, and bring up for me the dead person whom I shall name to you."*

*"The woman said, "See here, you know what Saul has done, how he has cut off those who are mediums and the wizards, out of the land. Why then do you lay a trap for my life to cause my death?" And Saul swore to her by the Lord saying, "As the Lord lives, there shall be no punishment come to you for this." The woman said, "Whom shall I bring up for you?" He said, "Bring up Samuel for me."*

*And when the woman saw Samuel she screamed, and she said to Saul, "Why have you deceived me? For you are Saul! The king said to her, "Be not afraid; what do you see?" The woman said to Saul, "I see a god [terrorising superhuman being] coming up out of the earth!" He said to her, "In what form is he?" And she said, "An old man comes up, comes up, covered with a mantle." And Saul perceived it was*

*Samuel, and he stooped with his face to the ground, and made obeisance. And Samuel said to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me, to bring me up?" (Verses 7-15)*

This is a very alarming warning to believers from the Bible. Evil has not changed down the centuries. Modern 'spiritism' is the same as it always was. The lesson for believers is clear: 1. As we walk in God's Holy Spirit, we need to be aware that there are satanic followers – spirits that try to affect our walk. 2. We need to shun “spiritism”.

Dr Fred Young (Professor of Old Testament, Central Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City writing for the Wycliffe Bible Commentary - Moody Press) says:

"That the spirit of Samuel actually appeared was the view of the ancient rabbis. (Also the early church fathers such as) Justin Martyr, Origen, and Augustine. Tertullian and Jerome maintained that the appearance of Samuel was a diabolical delusion. With the apparition of Samuel, the woman, either by the fact of Samuel's appearance, or by her intensified perception in the state of clairvoyance, recognized that it was Saul who sought her help. ...modern commentators are almost unanimous in the opinion that the departed prophet did really appear and announce the coming destruction of Saul and his army. They hold, however, that Samuel was brought up not by the magical arts of the witch, but through a miracle wrought by the omnipotence of God."

#### DISCUSSION POINTS

38. Firstly, unless you have strong feelings to the contrary, it seems that it was God - not the medium - who brought Samuel 'back up'. What does this tell us about God's view of such activities as Saul and the woman were involved in?
39. One thing is sure, the existence of supernatural evil spirits certainly attests to the existence of the supernatural. But why must we not go down that track to find 'spirituality' or 'God'?
40. What does the appearance of Samuel the prophet tell us about life after death?
41. Saul, when confronted by the appearance of Samuel, bowed down to him. Perhaps it was not in worship, but give your own description of his emotions at that point.

**Now we resume the main subject of our study - the work of the true, Holy Spirit.**

### THE HOLY SPIRIT AND KING SAUL

**Reading: EARLIER TIMES: SAUL AND SAMUEL 1 Samuel 9:15 – 10:11**

Saul was the first king of Israel, the son of Kish, of the tribe of Benjamin. The story of Saul occupies most of the chapters of 1 Samuel (chapters 9-31). However, God's chosen servant did not honourably fulfil his appointed task as the one chosen by God. Three times (one posthumously), the prophet Samuel had to forcibly remind Saul that he was not fulfilling the terms of his appointment by God. (13:7-10, 15:22, Ch. 28.) Part of the problem is that the people wanted a king like the other nations (1 Samuel 8). Rejecting the spiritual leadership of God – mediated through the prophetic ministry of Samuel – the people demanded a king. God allowed this and Samuel graciously carried out the permissive will of God.

*As you approach the town, you will meet a procession of prophets coming down from the high place with lyres, tambourines, flutes and harps being played before them; and they will be prophesying. The Spirit of the Lord will come upon you in power, and you will prophesy with them; and you will be changed into a different person. once these signs have been fulfilled, do whatever your hand finds to do, for God is with you. 1 Samuel 10:5-7*

This is a most remarkable passage! We need to read verses 9-11 also. Here we find an amazing group of people called “prophets”. Samuel would be associated with such a group. These groups were small communities of men who banded together in spiritually decadent times to preserve and cultivate spiritual things. In so doing, God released the gift of “prophesying” among them. And what, precisely, was this prophesying? Most likely the ability, given by God, of speaking words of profound spiritual truth. But the character change of the “prophet” at that moment was real too! It is a pity that the character change in Saul (“you will be changed into a different person”) was not permanent.

There are two occasions the “Spirit came upon Saul”. We have read about the first. In Chapter 10:10, it was to authenticate his leadership. In the second case, chapter 11 verse 6, it was to provide the impetus to defeat the cruel, blackmailing Ammonite Nahash. So thus far in our looking at the Spirit’s working in the Bible, we have become aware that God’s Spirit can come upon His servants powerfully – and the two main reasons are:

- (1) **to inaugurate a new ministry or era, and**
- (2) **to defeat the enemies of God’s people.**

In these two aspects we see a foretelling of the work of the Holy Spirit in us today.

- (1) The Holy Spirit initiates, and is the facilitator of our 'new life' and endows us with appropriate ministries and (2) through us fights the devil and all his works.

**Reading: SAUL EMPOWERED TO WIN A BATTLE 1 Samuel 10:12-11:11**

Our key verse is 1 Samuel 11:6. Both times the Spirit came upon Saul in 'power'. In 10:10 it was a sign to authenticate his leadership. The presence of the Spirit linked God's sovereignty with earthly kingship. The second time the Spirit came upon Saul was to defeat the cruel, blackmailing Ammonite Nahash. It seems to be part of God's strategy to endow Israel's brave deliverers with exceptional strength and courage by God's Spirit (see 10:6,10 - also Judges 14:6,19; 15:14). So it seems that so far in the Bible we have become aware that God's Spirit can come upon His servants powerfully for two main reasons.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT AND KING DAVID

**Reading: THE HOLY SPIRIT CAME UPON DAVID 1 Samuel 16:1-14**

Bethlehem was a little town 8 kilometres south of Jerusalem. How very significant that the town of Jesse was also the town where our Lord Jesus Christ was born. Once called Ephrath (Genesis 48:7) Bethlehem became known as the ‘town of David’ (Luke 2:4). If David foreshadows the Lord Jesus we may notice some common characteristics:

- (1) **God is more interested in the inner disposition and character of His chosen one (see verse 7). See also 1 Kings 8:39; 1 Chronicles 8:29; 1 Chronicles 8:29; Luke 16:15; John 2:25; Acts 1:24.)**
- (2) **The Lord's chosen one is a shepherd (see verse 11). See also 2 Samuel 7:7-8; Psalm 78:71.**
- (3) **There was a point where both David and Jesus were anointed and appointed for service. In the case of Jesus it was at His baptism. V 13, 'from that time on the Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power. 'From the moment the Spirit in the form of a dove alighted upon Jesus He ministered in power.**

We need to note the decline of King Saul. Verse 14 tells us that the Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul. Not because David had been anointed - for it says '*had departed*'. It was because of his disobedience (Chapter 15:22,24). The departure of the Spirit of God left a vacuum which satan quickly filled – a possession permitted by God. If we wilfully disobey and lose our protection we cannot blame God for our openness to evil. He permits evil to affect us, but it is not His will.

**Reading: THE SPIRIT AND SAUL'S MEN 1 Samuel 19: 9-24 (vv20,23)**

Don't be confused by verse 9. God permits – not directs – that which is contrary to His will. The NIV Study Bible notes explain: 'evil spirits are subject to God's control and operate only within divinely determined boundaries (see Judges 9:23; 1 Kings 22:19-23; Job 1:12; Job 2:6 compare 2 Samuel 24:1 with 1 Chronicles 21:1)'.

Saul sent men in waves, and each successive wave was affected by God's Spirit and prophesied. Three times Saul sent of his men to capture David. Each time they came under the influence of Samuel and his Spirit-filled men. Finally Saul himself went - and it is recorded that God's Spirit came 'even upon him'. But it was too late!

**Reading: THE SPIRIT'S FINAL WORDS THROUGH DAVID 2 Samuel 23:1-7**

These were probably the last poetic testimony (in the manner of his psalms) perhaps composed at the time of his final instructions and warnings to his son Solomon (see 1 Kings 2:1-10). David was deeply conscious of God's Spirit at work in him enabling him to speak under the Spirit's guidance. Dr A.B. Simpson says:

“The first effect of the Holy Spirit upon David (1 Samuel 16:23) is shown in the next reference, in the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter of 1 Samuel and the 5<sup>th</sup> verse where we read that 'David went out wherever Saul sent him, and he behaved himself wisely.' This was not only an anointing with power, but an anointing also of wisdom and grace enabling him to live a true life and to commend himself to this master and to all men.”

## ELIJAH AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

The prophetic ministry of Elijah is recorded in 1 Kings Chapters 17-19, Chapter 21 and in 2 Kings Chapters 1 and 2. We set out the events in his life as follows:

1 Kings 17	1-6	Elijah is fed by the ravens.
	7-24	Elijah visits a poor widow and her ailing son.
1 Kings 18	1-15	Elijah and Obadiah – a Godly servant of King Ahab.
	1-45	Elijah on Mount Carmel – and the fire of the Lord.
1 Kings 19	1-9	Elijah flees from Jezebel and ends up in a cave.
	10-18	Elijah hears God tell him to return and anoint Elisha.
	19-21	Elisha forsakes everything to follow Elijah.
2 Kings 1	1-18	Elijah witnesses God’s judgment on King Ahaziah.
2 Kings 2	1-18	Elijah ascends to heaven in a whirlwind.

Let us look at these events in the life of an amazing prophet one by one. There are three references to the Spirit of God in the account of Elijah’s life, (1 Kings 18:12 and 2 Kings 2:15 and 16). If this seems meagre, there is throughout the events we read about the unmistakable hand of the Lord’ upon and with him. Such is the importance of this man and his ministry that the very special ‘Angel of the Lord’ visits him three times (1 Kings 19:7, 2 Kings 1:3, and 1:15).

Elijah faced a life-and-death struggle with the false religion of Baalism – the worship of Baal. It had taken hold in Elijah’s day and was not eradicated when Elijah was finally whisked to heaven by heavenly taxicab! Baalism continued and intensified after Elijah during the time of Elisha. After a lot of bloodshed, the priests of Baal were purged and wicked King Ahab’s line was overthrown. Reforms came with the rule of King Jehu.

‘Elijah’s rugged figure became a model of the ideal prophet in Israel. Jesus fulfilled 40 days and nights of desert fasting as Elijah had done; many believed he was a reincarnated Elijah (1 Kings 19:8; Matthew 4:2; 16:14).’ – NIV Bible Study Notes.

### ELIJAH IS FED BY THE RAVENS

**Reading: THE LORD COMMANDS RAVENS TO FEED ELIJAH 17:1-6**

Elijah’s name means “The Lord is my God”. This was essentially his message. He was sent to oppose vigorously, by word and action, both Baal worship and those who engaged in it. Kings and priests were supposed to be anointed to serve as official representatives of the Lord, leading them in God’s perfect way. But since the days of King Jeroboam the northern kingdom had not had such a priest (1 Kings 12:31), and its kings had all been unfaithful. Now, in a time when Ahab was blatantly promoting the worship of Baal, the Lord sent Elijah (and after him Elisha) to serve as a representative – just as he had sent Moses so long ago. It might be helpful to see a list of the kings up to Elijah’s time – remembering that the Hebrew people had divided into two rival kingdoms:

THE EARLY RULERS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

{ Based on Edwin R.Thiele }

**ISRAEL**

**JUDAH**

		<i>Rehoboam</i>	930-913	<i>Set up pagan shrines. Built golden-calf centers.</i>
Jeroboam I	930-909	<i>Abijah</i>	913-910	<i>Followed his evil father.</i>
		<i>Asa</i>	910-869	<i>First of two Godly kings.</i>
Nadab	909-908			
Baasha	908-886			Killed Nadab : Calf worship
Elah	886-885			When drunk, killed by Zimri.
Zimri	885			Killed Elah; ruled seven days.
Tibni	885-880			Was Tibni killed off? <sup>1 Ki 16:22</sup>
Omri	885-874			A rival king - by the people.)
Ahab	874-853			<b>Elijah confronts Ahab.</b>
		<i>Jehosophat</i>	872-869	<i>Shared co-regency with Asa</i>
		<i>Jehosophat</i>	869-848	<i>Ruled by himself</i>
Ahaziah	853-852			<b>Elijah speaks Ahaziah's death</b>
Joram	852-841			<b>Elisha's ministry time.</b>
		<i>Jehoram</i>	848-841	<i>An evil king.</i>
		<i>Ahaziah</i>	841	<i>An evil king.</i>
Jehu	841-814			<b>Elisha's ministry time</b>
		<i>Athaliah</i>	841-835	
		<i>Joash</i>	835-796	
Jehoahaz	814-798			<b>Elisha's ministry time</b>
Jehoash	798-782			<b>Elisha's ministry time</b>

We have continued the kings' list beyond Elijah to include Elisha. These two men were chosen and anointed by God to be one ministry - one to follow the other. Both ministered in the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. It is a pity that the kings they challenged were not walking in that same Spirit. Some were though - five kings of Judah did so.

Because the kings are to us merely names, and because they were so ungodly, we don't usually hear much about them. But to get a clearer understanding of what Elijah and Elisha faced, and why God had to act through these two men, let us look at a 'mini biography' of each king - who were supposed to lead God's chosen and special people.

**But first of all, why did the Hebrew people divide into two camps? After arriving at the promised land, following the exodus under Moses, they needed to live in it. Ten of the tribes lived above the Dead Sea and up past the sea of Galilee in the north. Judah and Benjamin occupied land from the top of the Dead Sea downwards. There was always tribal rivalry and a greater rivalry between the "Texas" of the tribal "states" Judah, and the smaller territories above it.**

When Solomon died the unthinkable happened. The united kingdom he had inherited from his father David soon split into two. Solomon's son Rehoboam, who lived in Jerusalem in Judea, was appointed king. He travelled north to visit the northern tribes expecting that they would affirm him as his father's successor. (*Rehoboam went to Shechem, for all the Israelites had gone there to make him king.* <sup>1 Kings 12:INIV.</sup>) But they had a request before they would automatically accept Solomon's son as king: "*Your*

*father put a heavy yoke on us (taxes), but now lighten the harsh labour and the heavy yoke he put on us, and we will serve you." 1 Kings 12:4 NIV. Rehoboam asked for three days in which to consider the request. During that time, Rehoboam's older counsellors urged leniency ("If today you will be a servant to these people and serve them and give them a favourable answer, they will always be your servants." 12:7) but the young men, who had grown up with the king said he should reply, "My father laid on you a heavy yoke; I will make it even heavier. My father scourged you with whips; I will scourge you with scorpions." (12:11) The elders of the north rejected the arrogant young king and went on to anoint their own king, the Ephraimite Jeroboam. Solomon's economic empire collapsed. The conquered areas of Damascus, Ammon, Moab and Edom broke away and regained their own independence thus depriving Jerusalem of tribute money. Because the two rival camps were now not acting together, trade through them dried up. And they both also dried up spiritually and morally as we shall now observe through their leaders.*

### **KINGS OF JUDAH - THE SOUTHERN KINGDOM**

REHOBAM                      Reigned 17 years                      1 Kings 12:1-24 and 14:21-31

After being humiliated by the Northern tribes, Rehoboam returned to Jerusalem and amassed a fighting army from Judah and Benjamin of 180,000 fighting men with the intention of teaching the north a lesson. But 1 Kings 12:22-24 says: *But this word of God came to Shemiah the man of God: "Say to Rehoboam son of Solomon king of Judah, to the whole house of Judah and Benjamin, and to the rest of the people, 'This is what the Lord says: Do not go up to fight against your brothers, the Israelites. Go home, every one of you, for this is my doing.' " So they obeyed the word of the Lord and went home again, as the Lord had ordered.*

Sadly, this good beginning did not last. 1 Kings 14:21-31 tells us that pagan high places and shrines were set up allowing abominable practices such as male shrine prostitutes. Egypt invaded a much weaker Judah and carried off pure gold treasures from the temple. And *"There was continual warfare between Rehoboam and Jeroboam." 1 Kings 14:30.*

ABIJAH                              Reigned 3 years                              1 Kings 15:1-8

Abijah *"committed all the sins his father had done before him; his heart was not fully devoted to the Lord his God, as the heart of his forefather David had been. 1 Kings 15:3.*  
*"There was war between Rehoboam and Jeroboam throughout Abijah's lifetime. V6. He made war to try to recover the 'lost' ten tribes and bring them back into the fold. He also had many wives as his father and grandfather had before him. He reigned three years.*

ASA                                      Reigned 41 years                              1 Kings 15:9-24

King Asa marks a dramatic change! The Bible records it for us to read and rejoice over:  
*Asa did what was right in the eyes of the Lord, as his father David had done. He expelled the male shrine prostitutes from the land and got rid of all the idols his fathers had made. He even deposed his grandmother Maacah from her position as queen mother, because she had made a repulsive Asherah pole. Asa cut down and burned it in the Kidron Valley.*

JEHOSHAPHAT      Reigned 25 years      1 Kings 22:41-50

Jehosaphat was Asa's son. What a joy to read 1 Kings 22:43 *In everything he walked in the ways of his father Asa and did not stray from them. He did what was right in the eyes of the Lord.* The verse concludes with a seeming compromise: *The high places, however, were not removed, and the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense there.* At first glance it seems that the Godly king has permitted some heathen worship. But the NIV notes on 1 Kings 3:2 and 15:14 explain that from the time that the Israelites first entered Canaan they followed the Canaanite custom of locating their altars on high hills, probably on the old Baal sites. Worship at a variety of places was considered normal prior to the building of temple and the practice continued even after the temple was built. In short, pagan worship on the high places was abolished and the high places were reclaimed for the worship of the one true God. Died in 848 B.C.

JEHORAM              Reigned 8 years      2 Kings 8:16-24      2 Chronicles 21:4-20

When Jehoshaphat died, his son Jehoram became king. He was thirty-two years old. The Scriptures (v18) tell us: *He walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, as the house of Ahab had done, for he married a daughter of Ahab. He did evil in the eyes of the Lord.*

Jehoram introduced Baal worship in Judah, as Ahab had done in the north. Baal worship now spread to the southern kingdom at the same time as it was being restricted in the north by Ahab's son Joram (2 Kings 3:1-2). **Elijah mostly prophesied to the Northern Kingdom but here we have a letter written by Elijah to Jehoram of the Southern:**

*'This is what the Lord, the God of your father David says: 'You have not walked in the ways of your father Jehosaphat or of Asa king of Judah. But you have walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and you have led Judah and the people of Jerusalem to prostitute themselves, just as the house of Ahab did. You have also murdered your own brothers, members of your father's house, men who were better than you. So now the Lord is about to strike your people, your sons, your wives and everything that is yours with a heavy blow. You yourself will be very ill with a lingering disease of the bowels, until the disease causes your bowels to come out.'* (2 Chronicles 21:12-15)

Edom revolted from under the rule of Judah, and the Levitical city of Libnah revolted at the same time. (The Levites did not have a territory but owned cities.) Jehoram died from the disease Elijah had accurately predicted (2 Chron. 21:18-19). The Arabians and Philistines killed all of Jehoram's sons except Ahaziah, the youngest, who became king.

AHAZIAH              Reigned 1 year      2 Kings 8:25-29, 9:29 & 2 Chronicles 22:1-20

Ahaziah was twenty-two years old when he became king. 2 Kings 8:26-27 says: *His mother's name was Athaliah, a granddaughter of Omri king of Israel. He walked in the ways of the house of Ahab and did evil in the eyes of the Lord, as the house of Ahab had done, for he was related by marriage to Ahab's family.* 2 Chronicles 22:3 adds: *For his mother encouraged him in doing wrong.* He was hunted and killed by King Jehu of Israel.

**The completes those southern kings who reigned during the combined ministry period of Elijah and Elisha. However, the two prophets mostly spoke to the northern kings. We now list the northern kings with a little bit about each of them.**

## KINGS OF ISRAEL – THE NORTHERN KINGDOM

JEROBOAM 1                      Reigned 22 years              1 Kings 12:25-14:20

*After seeking advice, the king made two golden calves He said to the people, "It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem. Here are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of Egypt." One he set up in Bethel, and the other in Dan. And this thing became a sin.*

*Jeroboam built shrines on high places and appointed priests from all sorts of people, even though they were not Levites. He instituted a festival on the fifteenth day of the eighth month, like the festival held in Judah, and offered sacrifices on the altar. This he did in Bethel, sacrificing to the calves he had made.*

1 Kings 12:28-32

His downfall was foretold by the prophet Ahijah (1 Kings 14:7-18 [This is worth reading](#)).

AHAB                              Reigned 22 years              1 Kings 16:29 -22:40

*Ahab, son of Omri, became king over Israel, and he reigned in Samaria over Israel 22 years. Ahab, son of Omri, did more evil in the eyes of the Lord than any of those before him. He not only considered it trivial to commit the sins of Jeroboam son of Nebat (who rebelled against King Solomon 1 Kings 11:26 etc.), but he also married Jezebel daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians, and began to serve Baal and worship him. He set up an altar for Baal in the temple of Baal that he built in Samaria. Ahab also made an Asherah pole and did more to provoke the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger than did all the kings of Israel before him. 1 Kings 16:29-33 What an indictment on the king!*

Jezebel introduced Baal into Israel and with it licentious orgies of the goddess Ashteroth. She killed all the prophets of the Lord except one hundred hidden by Obadiah (1 Kings 18:4; cf. 19:14). At this critical period in the history of Israel, God raised up Elijah, whose faithful ministry culminated in the conflict with the prophets of Baal on Mount Carmel (1 Kings 18). The greed of Ahab and Jezebel led to trumped up charges against Naboth, the owner of a vineyard that adjoined the king's palace. Naboth was found guilty, stoned to death and Ahab took over the vineyard. For this crime, God spoke to Elijah:

*Go down to meet Ahab king of Israel, who rules in Samaria. He is now in Naboth's vineyard, where he has gone to take possession of it. Say to him, 'This is what the Lord says: Have you not murdered a man and seized his property?' Then say to him, 'This is what the Lord says: In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, dogs will lick up your blood - yes, yours!' 1 Kings 21:17-19 The fulfilment came in 1 Kings 22:34-38:*

*But someone drew his bow at random and hit the king of Israel between sections of his armour...The blood from his wound ran on to the floor of the chariot...So the king died and they brought him to Samaria, and they buried him there. They washed the chariot at a pool in Samaria (where the prostitutes bathed), and the dogs licked up his blood, as the word of the Lord had declared.*

AHAZIAH                      Reigned 2 years              1 Kings 22:51-2 Kings 1:18

1 Kings 22:52 says: *He did evil in the eyes of the Lord, because he walked in the ways of his father and mother and in the ways of Jeroboam (the first and idolatrous king of Israel) who caused Israel to sin. He served and worshipped Baal and provoked the Lord, the God of Israel, to anger, just as his father had done.*

The whole point of these few examples from Hebrew history is to demonstrate that where the Holy Spirit is not permitted to guide and operate, where God is rejected, despised and forsaken in favour of immoral personages and practices - Godliness disintegrates utterly.

God's Spirit moved through Elijah. We take up this faithful man's story now.

### ELIJAH VISITS A POOR WIDOW AND HER AILING SON

**Reading:      MIRACULOUS FOOD: A MIRACULOUS RECOVERY      17:7-24**

The Holy Spirit brought Elijah into the picture at a time of great need. This story of the widow, her son and Elijah is a wonderful illustration of how God meets our needs. The story is straightforward. The lessons are many and varied. Here are some questions:

#### DISCUSSION POINTS

42.      What are the spiritual lessons we can draw from the following?
- (a)      The widow was not an Israelite but a pagan (Luke 4:25-26).
  - (b)      Zarephath was a coastal town between Tyre and Sidon in the territory Ruled by Jezebel's father (1Kings16:31).
  - (c)      God told Elijah to go to the very place where Baal worship came from.
  - (d)      "As surely as the Lord **your** God lives.." the widow said. v12
  - (e)      The widow is asked to give all she has to the bearer of God's word. vv13-14
  - (f)      The widow did as she was told. (Why?)
  - (g)      God gave a pagan woman food but withheld food from Israel. 1 Kings 17:1
  - (h)      "Did you come to remind me of my sin and kill my son?" v18 but see v24
  - (i)      Why did the God who promised life v14 bring death instead?
  - (j)      This was the first instance of raising the dead in Scripture.

### ELIJAH AND OBADIAH – A GODLY SERVANT OF KING AHAB

**Reading:      ELIJAH AND OBADIAH MEET EACH OTHER      1 Kings 18:1-15**

One of the surprises from the Scriptures when we read the life of Elijah is that there is only one reference to the Holy Spirit of God. It is a surprise because there is no doubt that Elijah walked and ministered in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is simply evident that the Holy Spirit was with this brave prophet and representative of the one true and almighty God.

The words of Obadiah, "I don't know where the Spirit of the Lord may carry you when I leave you." came out of Obadiah's extreme reluctance to pass on Elijah's message to the king. "If I go and tell Ahab and he doesn't find you, he will kill me!" Obadiah had added. In other words, Obadiah was running scared! Nevertheless, the statement of Obadiah also reveals that he had some understanding of the Holy Spirit of God and of the Holy Spirit's possession of Elijah for his statement has several affirmations within it:

- The Spirit of God controls and guides Elijah.
- The Spirit of God can take a person and place that person where God desires.
- The person who recognises these functions of the Spirit may not know beyond this.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

43. What are the spiritual lessons we can draw from the following?
- (a) "Go and present yourself to Ahab and I will send rain on the land." 18:1
  - (b) Why did God say this? Israel had not repented.
  - (c) "Ahab, though an Israelite, was ungodly. Obadiah, his servant, was godly.
  - (e) "Go, tell your master 'Elijah is here'."
  - (f) **"I don't know where the Spirit of the Lord may carry you...."**
  - (g) "Haven't you heard what I did while Jezebel was killing the prophets?"
  - (h) "I hid 100 of the Lord's prophets in two caves - fifty in each - with water."
  - (i) "And now you tell me to go to my master and say, 'Elijah is here' "
  - (j) "As the Lord Almighty lives, whom I serve, I will surely present myself to

Ahab today.

## ELIJAH ON MOUNT CARMEL – AND THE FIRE OF THE LORD

**Reading: ELIJAH CHALLENGES THE PROPHETS OF BAAL 18:16-46**

This event is the high point of Elijah's ministry and the most public demonstration of God's mighty power in the face of false religion. Let us take a look at some key points:

Vs 17 Ahab calls Elijah a "trouble-bringer" and holds Elijah responsible for the drought.

Vs 18 Elijah responds immediately by telling Ahab that the source of the trouble was not Elijah – or the drought – but Ahab and his father's departure from the one true God.

Vs 19 Mt Carmel was a high ridge next to the Mediterranean Sea.

Vs 20. From here on in our passage, Elijah acts in incredible faith. He has a plan in his mind and he expects God to do something extraordinary. Elijah expects God to bring down fire from heaven. I find it fascinating that Elijah says that he is the only prophet of God left – and that Baal has four hundred and fifty.

## DISCUSSION POINTS

44. This is the big question: How do you explain the incredible faith Elijah had in setting the whole situation up and expecting God to answer in the dramatic and effective way that he did?
45. What do you think happened to the hundred prophets Obadiah hid in the cave (1 Kings 18:13) for Elijah says to Ahab that he, Elijah, is the "only prophet left". What does he mean by this? Does it mean 'only one' operating or what?
46. The wonderful demonstration has an interesting ending: Rain is promised and starts to come. But there is another interesting ending: Verse 46 says "The Power of the Lord came upon Elijah". He ran back ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel. Discuss the "power" that came on Elijah and his running ahead of Ahab.

## ELIJAH RUNS AWAY AND ENDS UP IN A CAVE

**Reading:      DISCOURAGED, ELIJAH FLEES TO GOD’S MOUNTAIN    19:1-9a**

It is remarkable that after such a momentous demonstration of God’s mighty power on Mt Carmel, Elijah is afraid of Jezebel and her threats. The NIV notes put it aptly:

In spite of Elijah’s great triumph in the trial on Mount Carmel and the dramatic demonstration that Elijah’s God is the Lord of heaven and earth and the source of Israel’s blessings, Jezebel is undaunted. Hers is no empty threat, and Ahab has shown that he is either unwilling or unable to restrain her. So Elijah knows that one of the main sources of Israel’s present apostasy is still spewing out its poison and that his own life is in danger. NIV Study Note for 1 Kings 19:3

So he runs from the far north to the southernmost city of Judah – Beersheba (a distance of around 130 miles or 200 kilometers). Here he prays to God in desperation and depression, “I have had enough Lord. Take my life.” He then fell asleep with exhaustion. The Scriptures say, “All at once an angel touched him (v5).” Whether this means immediately after he fell asleep – or it is meant to emphasise the importance of the visitation by the angel – I do not know. What is certain, is that the heavenly angelic being is none other than ‘**The Angel of the Lord**’ (v7) – the pre-incarnate Jesus Christ. He was gentle (“touched him”) and yet spoke with authority (“Get up and eat.”) Nearby was freshly-baked bread and a jar of water – exactly suited to his needs. He ate and drank then fell asleep again. Allowing Elijah that sleep, the ‘Angel’ visited again and told him to eat and drink for the strengthening of his body to enable him to trek south-west to Horeb.

## ELIJAH HEARS GOD TELL HIM TO RETURN AND ANOINT ELISHA

**Reading:      GOD REAFFIRMS HIS CALL TO ELIJAH                      1 Kings 19:9b-18**

Verse 10      By answering the Lord as he did, Elijah implied that all the efforts the Lord had put into establishing of the Sinai covenant in Moses’ time, had come to nothing. “They have rejected your covenant, broken your altars, and put all your prophets to death except me.” Elijah was clearly disheartened and discouraged. God in his compassion responded by telling Elijah to stand on the mountain “in the presence of the Lord.”

Verse 12      God was not going to obtain victory through any wind, earthquake or fire. His way from now on would be in a “whisper” – through Elijah and Elisha (v16). The Lord gave Elijah the opportunity to answer his previous question but Elijah gave the same answer (v14). This indicated that he did not understand the (wind-whisper) answer God had just given. So God clearly spells out what Elijah has to do next – which includes anointing Elisha to be Elijah’s successor.

### DISCUSSION POINT

47.      Verse 11 is spiritually significant for all of us. The Lord tells Elijah to 1. “Go out” 2. “stand on the mountain” and 3. “In the presence of the Lord.” This contains lessons for us. Explain, perhaps by personal example, what it may mean for you.

## ELISHA AND THE HOLY SPIRIT

### THE RULERS OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH IN THE TIME OF ELISHA (Edwin R.Thiele)

<b>ISRAEL</b>		<b>JUDAH</b>	
Ahab	874-853		<b>Elijah confronts Ahab.</b>
		<i>Jehosophat</i> 872-869	<i>Shared co-regency with Asa</i>
		<i>Jehosophat</i> 869-848	<i>Ruled by himself</i>
Ahaziah	853-852		<b>Elijah speaks Ahaziah's death</b>
Joram	852-841		<b>Elisha's ministry time.</b>
		<i>Jehoram</i> 848-841	
		<i>Ahaziah</i> 841	
Jehu	841-814		<b>Elisha's ministry time</b>
		<i>Athaliah</i> 841-835	
		<i>Joash</i> 835-796	
Jehoahaz	814-798		<b>Elisha's ministry time</b>
Jehoash	798-782		<b>Elisha's ministry time</b>

We now move from the ministry period of ELIJAH to that of ELISHA. There is a little bit of overlap as Elijah identifies his successor. But that is in keeping with God's plan. The spiritual and moral state of the land was at a very low level and God had two very special men follow each other, rather than minister together, for the fullest effect. Even so, the people of God did not rise to the covenantal position God had in mind for them so ended up being led away into being made captive to foreign powers. The ministries of Elijah and Elisha were timely and historic demonstrations that the God of Israel cared about his people, could be called upon in time of need, had a compassionate heart, but permitted judgment for sin and could preserve a people of God if they let him do so.

There are many stories of Elijah and Elisha demonstrating the power and presence of God so our study this time is fulsome in sections of the Scripture and sparse in my comments. As you complete reading these wonderful events in the lives of these two Spirit-filled men, your own life will be challenged and enriched. The key verse for both men is:

***“Let me inherit a double portion of your spirit.”*** 2 Kings 2:9. From Deuteronomy 21:17 we read that the husband, when giving of his property to his sons, must give the firstborn “a double share of all he has. That son is the first sign of his father's strength.” It is significant that Elisha asked Elijah to consider their relationship a kind of spiritual ‘father’ and ‘son’ – and in keeping with Deuteronomy 21:17 asked for a double portion of what Elijah had to pass on. It did not mean being twice as effective as Elijah. But it certainly meant being considered the recipient of the Godly strength that had been resident in Elijah. The word ‘spirit’ may not have been used explicitly of the Holy Spirit but it did mean ‘breath’ indicating the ‘God-strength’ Elijah walked in. This ultimately means the personal presence and power of the Holy Spirit in any case.

## ELISHA FORSAKES EVERYTHING TO FOLLOW ELIJAH

**Reading: ELIJAH THROWS HIS CLOAK AROUND ELISHA 1 Kings 19:19-21**

By throwing his cloak around Elisha, Elijah designated the other prophet as his successor. Elisha was obviously from a wealthy family with his own property. It was quite a sacrifice to burn his means of livelihood but it clearly showed the break he was making with his past – and his commitment to a future as Elijah’s attendant and successor.

### DISCUSSION POINT

48. Verse 21 (of 1 Kings 19) is interesting! When Elisha asked Elijah if he could go back and kiss his father and mother ‘goodbye’ Elijah replied. “Go back. What have I done to you?” What do you make of this strange response?

## ELIJAH WITNESSES GOD’S JUDGMENT ON KING AHAZIAH

**Reading: FIRE FROM HEAVEN TWO MORE TIMES 2 Kings 1:1-18**

This is a most amazing story. The king of Samaria injures himself and asks his messengers to consult a heathen ‘god’ to see whether he will recover. So **The Angel of the Lord** visits Elijah with the instruction to intercept the messengers and ask them why they wish to consult Baal-Zebub in preference to the God of Israel and also to tell the messengers that the Lord of Israel has said that the king will surely die. By the description given to the king, Ahaziah identifies Elijah and sends out a warrior contingent of fifty men. They are zapped!

So another group of fifty are sent out by the king. They are zapped too! The third group have a captain who has a problem with his knees and rattles his way to Elijah. This man pleads for his life. **The Angel of the Lord** again made an appearance and instructed Elijah to accompany the captain. Elijah delivered his message to the king. The Bible simply says: “So the king died.” But adds, “according to the word of the Lord that Elijah had spoken.”

## ELIJAH ASCENDS TO HEAVEN IN A WHIRLWIND

**Reading: AS THEY WERE WALKING AND TALKING.... 2 Kings 2:1-18**

Elisha was a devoted follower of Elijah. Elisha was aware that Elijah’s ministry was almost finished and his departure near. “As they were walking along and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind.” Elijah, like Enoch before him (Genesis 5:24), was taken up to heaven bodily without experiencing death. And like Moses (Deuteronomy 34:4-6), he was taken away outside the promised land without leaving a grave.

## A GROUP OF YOUTHS MOCK ELISHA

**Reading: AS ELISHA WAS WALKING ALONG THE ROAD 2 Kings 2:23-25**

“Go on up!” has two interpretations. Elijah and Elisha were known to frequent Samaria and may even have had their residence there (2 Kings 5:3). The youths from Bethel may have been telling Elisha to ‘Go on up to your home’. The other possibility is that they were jeering at Elisha with his bald head telling him

to 'go up' to heaven as Elijah had done. The problem of baldness was rare among ancient Jews and luxuriant hair was a sign of strength and vigour (2 Samuel 14:26). By calling Elisha "baldhead" the youths were expressing the city's utter disdain for the Lord's representative, who, they felt, had no power.

Here follows the remaining major events in the life of Elisha. They are set out as a series of readings. Following them are 'Discussion Points' to establish the lessons the events teach:

"Sell the oil and pay your debts..."	<b>2 Kings</b> 4:1-7
A test of a mother's faith when her son dies	4:8-37
Death in the pot; "Get some flour and put it in the pot."	4:38-41
The miraculous feeding of a hundred	4:42-44
Naaman healed of leprosy	5:1-27
As an axe was swung, its head flew off	6:1-7
The king of Aram makes war with Israel: "O Lord, open the king's eyes"	6:8-23
The king of Aram lays siege to Samaria causing famine - Elisha's predicts	6:24-7:20
The Shunnamite woman loses house and land : Elisha predicts a famine	8:1-6
Elisha predicts a murder and confronts the plotter- Elisha predicts kingship	8:7-15

#### DISCUSSION POINTS

49. Homework: Read the above ten passages of Scripture and write out a summary of Elisha's life contribution to the work of God at that time of his ministry.

After Elijah and Elisha there were many prophets. There is not the space to deal with each one in detail – so we name each prophet and note a work of the Spirit in each one.

#### **Reading: I Chronicles 12:1-22 (18) AMASAI EXPERIENCES THE SPIRIT**

*"Then the Spirit clothed himself with Amasai."* A relatively unknown man in a place of trust looking after thirty warriors was clothed by the Spirit causing him to exclaim:

'We are yours, O David! We are with you! Success to you! Success to your helpers! Your God will help you!' So – by the Holy Spirit Amasai proclaimed:

- That he and his friends were owned by King David.
- That David might have personal success.
- That David's helpers might have success.
- That David's God would give success.

#### **Reading: 2 Chronicles 15:1-19 (1) AZARIAH AND THE SPIRIT**

The most important aspect of this passage is that when the Holy Spirit came upon Azariah, King Asa listened to the prophet and carried out reforms. Thus the chapter ends with 'There was no more war until the thirty-fifth year of Asa's reign.' The Spirit of God is given credit for affecting the state of a nation through a willing king and a Spirit-led prophet. The same principles apply today. [Note: There were twenty-five men named AZARIAH in the Bible.]

## THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE PROPHETS

### **Reading: 2 Chronicles 20:1-30 (14) JAHAZIEL'S HOLY SPIRIT WORDS**

Jahaziel was a Levite and descendent of Asaph who encourages Jehosaphat and his army against an invading host. Verse 14 says that the Spirit of the Lord came upon him and he gave Jehosaphat the following Holy Spirit-inspired words:

- *Do not be afraid or discouraged – the battle is not yours but God's*
- *March against them – you will not have to fight the battle*
- *Take up your positions – stand firm – see the deliverance the Lord will give you*
- *Do not be afraid or discouraged (repeated) – go out and face them tomorrow*
- *The Lord will be with you.* [This could easily be a message for you or me today.]

### **Reading: 2 Chronicles 24:17-27 (20) ZECHARIAH'S SOLEMN WORD**

When the Spirit of God came upon Zechariah it was for the purpose of delivering a solemn word to the officials. After Jehoiada's death, Zechariah reproved the idolaters and announce God's judgment against them. The king ordered he be stoned – and he was – in the house of the Lord. His dying words, may the Lord see this and call you to account,' came true. It is sad when God has to deliver a painful word and even sadder when God's mouthpiece loses his life in the conveying of it. Perhaps the lesson for us is that sometimes the Spirit may ask us to deliver an unpleasant message. Be sure it is of God though. God had Zechariah say: *Why do you disobey the Lord's commands? You will not prosper. Because you have forsaken the Lord, he has forsaken you.*

### **Reading: Nehemiah 9:1-38 (30) BEZALEL – SKILLS OF THE SPIRIT**

Verse 20 makes reference to Israelite craftsmen receiving Holy Spirit help - seen in Exodus 31:3 being especially true of Bezalel: *'I have chosen Bezaleel...and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts...'* The Holy Spirit is a Spirit of knowledge. Verse 30 reveals that God was continually communicating with his people, yet his people wouldn't listen. So in the end they were taken into captivity. The significance for us is that in the centre of revival is this magnificent prayer. In the centre of the prayer are two powerful references to the work of God' Spirit. In the first he instructs, in the second he warns.

### **Reading: Psalm 51:1-19 (11) DAVID PLEADS FOR THE SPIRIT**

This psalm, reflecting the most sorrowful of all of David's psalms portrays his human, distressed spirit, flanking but coming close to the mighty, merciful, loving, forgiving spirit. 'Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me...' cries David. The full term 'Holy Spirit' is only found twice in the Scriptures. Isaiah 63:10-11 is the other. It is by the (Holy) Spirit that God gives his people 'a new heart...a new Spirit' to live by his will (Ezekiel 36:26-27; Jeremiah 24:7, 32:39; Ezekiel 11:19; 18:31.)

### **Reading: Isaiah 63:7-19 (10-11,14) THE HOLY SPIRIT IS POWERFUL**

Three times the Spirit is mentioned twice as the Holy Spirit and once as the Spirit of the LORD. And all within the context of a prayer. The prayer begins by praising God for all his goodness (7-9); confesses

the nation's rebelliousness and yet acknowledges God's glorious deliverance (10-14). In the very middle of God's deliverance and presence there is the three-fold mention of His Holy Spirit. Verse 10 reveals that the Holy Spirit can be grieved (Ephesians 4:30). The Holy Spirit is a person.

**Reading: Ezekiel 1:16-28(19-21) EZEKIEL AND THE SPIRIT**

There are more mentions of the Spirit in Ezekiel than in any Old Testament book. We have chosen this passage as there are three references close together.

- The first in verses 19-20 indicate that wherever the Spirit went the living creatures would go. This reveals a unity and a co-ordinating between Spirit and creatures.
- The second in verse 20 says that the Spirit of the living creatures was in the wheels too. So there was a further act of unity between creatures and wheels.
- And the third mention of the Spirit in verse 21 repeating with emphasis that the Spirit was in the wheels in all its manoeuvrings. All four rims were full of eyes.

The rims were high and awesome. The Holy Spirit of God searches our every motive.

**Reading: Joel 2\*18-32 (28) JOEL AND THE OUTPOURED SPIRIT**

From verse 18 Joel turns to the blessings God will bestow upon a repentant people. God will respond to the prayer of verse 17. he will restore and bring grain, new wine and oils. These were the three basic foods. From grain came bread; the fresh juice of the grape was their drink; the oil for cooking and lighting. We can see a picture in these of our Lord Jesus Christ who was the 'Bread of life', 'The Vine' and 'The light of the world'. What does this passage point to? Pentecost? Partly. It does mean God will pour out his Spirit on the Jews for verse 28 says 'your sons and daughters, your old men, your young men'. We can say that Joel had a vision of the new triumphant age beyond the cross and its victory.

**Reading: Micah 2:1-13 (7) and 3:1-12 (8) MICAH FILLED WITH POWER**

In Micah 2:13 the prophet records God's words (verses 7b-13) that include "Is the Spirit of the Lord angry?" - or "impatient" or "discontented". God answers his own question. He is not impatient. He has not become discontented. His acts of judgment upon Israel are not the result of some change in his character. He is the same God as he has always been. It is the people who have changed. They had risen up against God as if he were the enemy (2:8) and did not want to hear his word. (2:8-11). False prophets were ready to preach (of lust and pleasure) the people wanted to hear. They disregarded the fact that the Holy Spirit was given, not to promote fleshly enjoyment but to deal with sin. What a contrast between the only two verses about the Spirit in Micah! The first records God as asking if the Spirit is 'angry'. The second, has Micah declaring with confidence that he is filled with power - the Spirit of the Lord enabling him to boldly proclaim God's words..

**Reading: Zechariah 7:1-14 THE PROPHETS' WORDS OF THE SPIRIT**

The last clear reference to God's Spirit in the Old Testament is verse 12. It clearly states the words all the prophets of the past gave, by the Spirit, have been disregarded. What a final comment before God's people await the ushering in of the New Testament message.

## SUPPLEMENT TO STUDY 10

### JAHAZIEL'S HOLY SPIRIT WORDS: 2 Chronicles 20:14

Then the **Spirit of the Lord** came upon Jahaziel ..... v15 And he said, “Do not be afraid nor dismayed because of the great multitude, for the battle is not yours but God’s. ....17. You will not need to fight in this battle. Position yourselves, stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, who is with you, O Judah and Jerusalem! Do not fear or be dismayed; tomorrow go out against them, for the Lord is with you. 18. And Johoshaphat bowed his face to the ground, and all Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem bowed before the Lord, worshiping the Lord.”

### ZECHARIAH'S HOLY SPIRIT (SOLEMN) WORD: 2 Chronicles 24:20

Then the **Spirit of God** came upon Zechariah the son of Jehoida the priest, who stood above the people and said to them: “Thus says God: ‘Why do you transgress the commandments of the Lord, so that you cannot prosper? Because you have forsaken the Lord, He also has forsaken you.’”

### DAVID PLEADS FOR THE HOLY SPIRIT: Psalm 51:10

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, And do not take **Your Holy Spirit** from me.”

### ISAIAH SAYS THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT IS POWERFUL Isaiah 63:10

Isaiah recalls past historic events and says: “10. But they rebelled and grieved **His Holy Spirit**, so He turned against them as an enemy, And he fought against them. 11. Then he remembered the days of old, Moses and his people saying: Where is He who brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of His flock? Where is He who put **His Holy Spirit** within them? ..... 14. As the beast goes down into the valley, And the Spirit of the Lord causes him to rest, So You lead Your people, To make Yourself a glorious name.”

### EZEKIEL AND THE HOLY SPIRIT Ezekiel 1:19

19. “When the living creatures went, the wheels went beside them; and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up. 20. Wherever **the Spirit** wanted them to go, they went, because there **the Spirit** went; and the wheels were lifted

together with them, for **the Spirit** of the living creatures was in the wheels. 21. When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up together with them, for **the Spirit** of the living creatures was in the wheels.”

#### JOEL AND THE OUTPOURED SPIRIT Joel 2: 28

“And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out **My Spirit** on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions, And also on My menservants and My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.”

#### MICAH FILLED WITH HOLY SPIRIT POWER Micah 2:7 and 3:8

“You who are named the house of Jacob: Is **the Spirit of the Lord** restricted? Are these His doings? Do not My words do good to him who walks uprightly?

But truly am I full of power by the **Spirit of the Lord**, and of justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin.

#### ZECHARIAH: HOW THE PROPHETS WERE TREATED Zechariah 7:12

“Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the Lord of hosts had sent by **His Spirit** through the former prophets. Thus great wrath came from the Lord of hosts.”