

The Spirit in the Old Testament

1 December, 2010

By Rev. Lonny R. Bower

Scripture References – Genesis 1:1-2, 26, 2:7, 6:3, 41:38-39; Exodus 31:1-6; Numbers 11:16-17, 25; 1 Samuel 16:13; Job 33:4; Psalm 51:10-12; Isaiah 63:10; Ezekiel 11:5, 37:9-14; Acts 7:51; 2 Peter 1:20-21

Unit Theme: The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

Central Truth: The Holy Spirit was active throughout the Old Testament era.

Focus: Examine and appreciate what the Bible reveals about the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament.

Key Verse: Zechariah 4:6 - *...Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit, Says the Lord of hosts*

Introduction:

It is not through education, training or even mentorship that we come to knowledge of the Holy Spirit. Sure we may attain secondhand knowledge of Him, but He wants to give us firsthand knowledge. I liken this to my children, I can raise them and train them in the word of God, but they must choose for themselves whether they are going to serve God or not. They must find their own faith; my faith is secondhand to them. The Lord has given us many examples in scripture of how the Holy Spirit interacts with His servants, what He is saying is “there is more to this story, I want to do the same thing for you, I want to give you your own story.” The choice, He leaves totally up to us. What’s your story, is it yours or someone else’s?

I. Creating and Life Giving – Genesis 1:1-2, 26, 2:7; Job 33:4; Ezekiel 37:9-14

In our society there is much speculation over the origin of life. This speculation has led to much debate and unfortunately spawned division. However, let’s take a closer look at the issue of the origin of life. First, there is no denying that there is life, we are living evidence of this fact, but where did life begin? If you were to survey the citizens of society 100 years ago the overwhelming response would be, life began with God, the response is much different today however. There are few that will state their belief in creation of life by a divine being. So what else is there, if God didn’t create life then where did it come from? Unfortunately society’s citizens have been their own worst enemy. Since science requires that an event be repeatable and observable, in an attempt to explain the origins of life they have ruled out God. This leads quickly to a conundrum because neither the creationist nor the “non-creationist” was present at the beginning of life to observe. So both are left to examine the evidence – life itself. As creationist we believe that the almighty God stepped out of eternity and into time and created all life and in fact is the enabler and continual creator of life. He simply has not stopped. The “non-creationist” on the other hand believes that everything we see around us, including us – just happened. They try to prove their point through science and thereby cause many would be creationist to doubt their faith, they speak as though they were there at creation and try to explain how it all came together, but they lack one major thing – a witness. They have no one who can stand up and say, “I was there and everything they have said about creation is true.” So it comes down to belief. Creationist and “non-creationist” alike both simply believe, but creationists have an advantage that is we have a key witness, one who was not only there in the beginning, but took part in creation – the Holy Spirit.

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The irony here is that the “non-creationists” are driven by skepticism, that is, they choose not to believe in anything they cannot measure or observe and thereby have become the greatest of all hypocrites (they cannot measure or observe their own theories of life)! They are their own witness, alone in a world that was created by the almighty God, but because of their rebellion and willingness to go their own way and reject the divine verdict; they will one day serve out their sentence. God will give them what they want – eternity without Him! Creationist on the other hand will one day have our star witness come to our rescue and deliver us out of an ungodly society. In the end both will know the truth because the Holy Spirit will reveal it.

➤ **Note Taker:** What did Job declare about the Holy Spirit?

II. Striving with Sinners – Genesis 6:3; Isaiah 63:10; Acts 7:51; Psalm 51:10-12

The Lord is patient with His servants, if He wasn't I would have been snuffed out a long time ago. His patience however is no reason to abuse His grace or take His mercy for granted. His patience has our best interest in mind, as He waits for us to surrender to Him and give up our rebellious ways. One thing is for certain though there comes a time, albeit unknown to us, when the Lord says enough. David recognized this, and it prompted Him to pray “take not your Holy Spirit from me.” Now it should go without saying, but we are hard headed at times and simply don't want to admit that there is an end to the Lord's patience. His patience is not for us to tempt, but to recognize and do as David did – reverently seek His forgiveness. It is the Lord's desire to have His Spirit rule over us. This is one meaning to the term strive and one that carries great significance. Consider the life of the sinner who does not have the Spirit of God ruling over them, they are genuinely without hope. We on the other hand cannot continue to live a life of sin because the Spirit has taken His proper place in our life and rightfully rules over us and the only thing that can drive Him off is our continual unrepentant rebellion.

➤ **Note Taker:** What does it mean to “vex” the Holy Spirit and how can this happen?

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III. Enabling for Service – 1 Samuel 16:13; Numbers 11:16-17, 25; Exodus 31:1-6; Genesis 41:38-39; Ezekiel 11:5; 2 Peter 1:20-21

We have a preponderance of evidence in the scriptures of the Holy Spirit enabling His servants for service and we have only read a few. Let me remind you however that the Holy Spirit knows no limits when it comes to people. That is, there are plenty of examples of Him using the ungodly as well in order to fulfill His divine purpose. We will never fully know the extent of His enabling in our own lives. He is always there working behind the scenes yet we are so often blind to His power. It is the Holy Spirit that is the great enabler, motivating His people to do the impossible. Those who are fully ruled by Him only know the truth of this statement for each one of them can share a testimony of the impossible made possible. Think about this for a moment, how is it possible for a sinner (whose heart is deceitful and desperately wicked) (Jeremiah 17:9), to change? The answer is in the Holy Spirit, for it is He who draws us to the Father, it is He who convicts of sin it is He who extracts the darkness from our hearts and leads us to the everlasting light. Beyond a doubt, the Holy Spirit is our enabler!

➤ **Note Taker:** What is the Spirit's relationship with the scriptures?

Conclusion:

How have you allowed the Holy Spirit to change your life? Have you empowered Him to fully rule over your desires. These are faith challenging questions that the Lord wants to give you the answers to. God is not a respecter of persons, in every generation He is actively seeking out those who would let Him have His way. He desires to bring lasting change that religion knows nothing of and He desires to set us free from the ways of the carnal nature that lead to death. One Day we will stand side by side with the saints of old, the heroes of the faith – I wonder what our story will be? For this reason I find myself often praying the prayer of David, “take not your Holy Spirit from me.” Our greatest testimony lies ahead, when we finish the race and receive a crown of glory that none of us deserve, we’ll take it off and rightfully place it at the feet of the one to whom it belongs – Jesus! This is the day the Holy Spirit is leading us to and I don’t want to miss it!

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Except where I have paraphrased all scripture is taken from the NKJV unless otherwise noted.

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