

## Examining Christian Doctrine

### Lesson 20: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit Part 2 – The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament and Life of Jesus

This lesson will discuss the Holy Spirit's work in the Old Testament as well as the life of Jesus. What we will discover is that the Holy Spirit is more active in human history and in people's lives than we have 'given him credit for.' For the Holy Spirit plays an integral role as a source of power and ability basically in the lives of all of God's people and affairs.

#### The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

##### 1. The Holy Spirit in Creation

The Holy Spirit's involvement in creation is evident from the very beginning of the Hebrew Bible. Genesis 1:2 describes the Spirit of God (Ruach Elohim) hovering over the waters, indicating His role in bringing order and life out of chaos.

- **Genesis 1:1-2** "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters."
- **Psalms 33:6** "By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth"
- **Job 26:13 NKJV** "By His Spirit He adorned the heavens..."

The Spirit in creation is seen as 'hovering' over the waters. This conveys the idea of a bird sitting in a nest, hovering and brooding over her eggs, caring for the new lives. It's a picture of God preparing to bring life into the world through His Spirit.

##### 2. The Holy Spirit's Work in Inspiring Scripture

The Holy Spirit is also depicted as the inspirer of the prophets and the scriptures. In the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit played a crucial role in inspiring the prophets and the sacred scriptures. The prophets of Israel believed that their words were not merely their own but were divinely inspired, originating from the Holy Spirit. This divine inspiration ensured that the scriptures conveyed God's will, wisdom, and plans for His people, providing a reliable and holy foundation for faith and practice.

- **2 Samuel 23:2**: "The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me; his word was on my tongue."
- **Ezekiel 2:2**: "As he spoke, the Spirit came into me and raised me to my feet, and I heard him speaking to me."
- **Micah 3:8**: "But as for me, I am filled with power, with the Spirit of the Lord, and with justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression, to Israel his sin."
- **2 Peter 1:21** "For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit."

##### 3. The Holy Spirit's Work Concerning Individuals in the Old Testament

The Holy Spirit empowered individuals for specific tasks and roles in Israel. This empowerment was often for the purpose of fulfilling God's plans and leading His people. The Spirit's empowerment was crucial for military leaders, judges, and kings to perform their divinely appointed duties. The emphasis in the Old Testament is that the Holy Spirit 'came upon' people, not that He 'indwelt or remained IN people'. This would be a New Covenant distinctive. Thus David would pray for God not to "take your holy Spirit from me" (Psalm 51:11).

There are many instances recorded where the Holy Spirit came upon people in the Old Testament. These include:

**Joseph** (Genesis 41:38)

**Bezalel** (Exodus 31:3; 35:31)

**Moses** (Num. 11:16-17)

**Israel's Seventy Elders** (Num. 11:25-26)

**Balaam** (Numbers 24:2)

**Joshua** (Numbers 27:18; Deut 34:9)

**Caleb** (Numbers 14:24)

**Othniel** (Judges 3:10)

**Gideon** (Judges 6:34)

**Jephthah** (Judges 11:29)

**Samson** (Judges 13:25)

**Saul** (1 Samuel 10:6)

**David** (1 Sam. 16:13)

**Amasai** (1 Chron. 12:18)

**Azariah** (2 Chron. 15:1)

**Jahaziel** (2 Chron. 20:14)

**Zechariah** (2 Chron. 24:20)

**Elijah** (1 Kings 18:12)

**Elisha** (2 Kings 2:9, 15)

**Isaiah** (Isaiah 61:1)

**Ezekiel** (Ezekiel 2:2; 3:24)

**Daniel** (Daniel 4:8-9, 18)

**Micah** (Micah 3:8)

### Some examples of the above references are:

- **Exodus 31:2-5:** "See, I have chosen Bezalel son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with wisdom, with understanding, with knowledge and with all kinds of skills."
- **Numbers 11:25:** "Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke with him, and he took some of the power of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied—but did not do so again."
- **Judges 3:10:** "The Spirit of the Lord came on him, so that he became Israel's judge and went to war."
- **Judges 6:34:** "Then the Spirit of the Lord came on Gideon, and he blew a trumpet, summoning the Abiezrites to follow him."
- **1 Samuel 16:13:** "So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers, and from that day on the Spirit of the Lord came powerfully upon David."

### 4. The Holy Spirit's Outpouring Prophesied

In the Old Testament we have prophecies about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (for Israel and the world), and the promise of the giving of the Holy Spirit in connection with the establishment of the New Covenant.

- **Joel 2:28-32** "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days. I will show wonders in the heavens and on the earth, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved; for on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there will be deliverance, as the Lord has said, even among the survivors whom the Lord calls."
- **Isaiah 44:3** "For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring, and my blessing on your descendants."
- **Ezekiel 36:26-27** "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws."

## The Holy Spirit in the Life of Jesus

### 1. Conception by the Holy Spirit

Jesus' conception by the Holy Spirit affirms His unique identity as the Son of God, fulfilling Old Testament prophecies and demonstrating the divine nature of His birth, essential for His role as Savior.

- **Isaiah 7:14** "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel."
- **Luke 1:35** "The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come on you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.'"
- **Matthew 1:18-20** "This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit."

### 2. The Holy Spirit in Jesus' Baptism

Jesus' baptism marks the beginning of His public ministry, symbolizing His empowerment by the Holy Spirit and the Father's affirmation of His mission to bring salvation to humanity.

- **Matthew 3:16-17** "As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.'"

- **Mark 1:10-11** "Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: 'You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.'"
- **Luke 3:21-22** "When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: 'You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.'"

### 3. Jesus' Empowerment by the Holy Spirit

Throughout His ministry, Jesus relied on the Holy Spirit's guidance and power, demonstrating how believers can live a life empowered by God's Spirit, fulfilling God's purposes.

- **Luke 4:1** "Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness..."
- **Luke 4:14** "Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside."
- **Luke 4:18-19** "'The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.'"
- **Acts 10:38** "how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him."

### 4. Jesus' Teaching on the Giving of the Holy Spirit

In his farewell discourse, Jesus promises that in his absence that he would send the Holy Spirit to his disciples, who would not just be 'with them, but would be 'in' them. Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit as an Advocate and Comforter fulfills Old Testament prophecies and establishes the ongoing presence of God with His followers, guiding them into truth and empowering them for ministry. With this promise, Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would be their teacher (John 14:26), their peace (John 14:27), the one who 'convicts' (John 16:7-11), and would lead them into all truth (John 16:12-15).

- **John 14:16-17** "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you."
- **John 14:26** "But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you."
- **John 15:26** "When the Advocate comes, whom I will send to you from the Father—the Spirit of truth who goes out from the Father—he will testify about me."

### 5. Jesus Empowers His Disciples Through The Holy Spirit

Jesus during his ministry delegated his spiritual authority to the disciples. They, by the power of the Holy Spirit, were able to do mighty works just like he did. Jesus imparts divine authority and the ability to heal the sick and cast out demons, and empower them for their mission. Jesus would eventually 'breathe' the Holy Spirit onto His disciples, empowering them even further. The events of Pentecost fulfill Jesus' promise of the Holy Spirit's outpouring, transforming fearful disciples into bold witnesses who spread the gospel, demonstrating the ongoing work of the Spirit in the Church.

- **Matthew 10:1** "Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness."
- **Mark 6:7-13** "Calling the Twelve to him, he began to send them out two by two and gave them authority over impure spirits... They went out and preached that people should repent. They drove out many demons and anointed many sick people with oil and healed them."

- **Luke 9:1-2** "When Jesus had called the Twelve together, he gave them power and authority to drive out all demons and to cure diseases, and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick."
- **Luke 24:49** ""I am going to send you what my Father has promised; but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."
- **John 20:21-23** "Again Jesus said, 'Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.' And with that he breathed on them and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.'"
- **Acts 1:4-8** "On one occasion, while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: 'Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'"
- **Acts 2:1-4** "When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit enabled them."

## 6. Jesus Warns of the Blasphemy of the Holy Spirit

The Pharisees accused Jesus of casting out demons by the power of Beelzebul (Matthew 12:24; Mark 3:22; Luke 11:15). They attributed His miraculous works to demonic influence rather than the Holy Spirit.

Here's Jesus' Response

- **Matthew 12:31-32** "And so I tell you, every kind of sin and slander can be forgiven, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come."
- **Mark 3:28-29** "Truly I tell you, people can be forgiven all their sins and every slander they utter, but whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; they are guilty of an eternal sin."
- **Luke 12:10** "And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven."

Blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, as described by Jesus, is attributing the miraculous works of the Holy Spirit to Satan or demonic powers. It reflects a deliberate and persistent rejection of the work of the Holy Spirit, even after witnessing His power and truth. The context of Jesus' teaching suggests that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is a sin that goes beyond mere words or actions; it is a condition of the heart that resists the convicting and redeeming work of God's Spirit. Some interpretations suggest that this sin is unforgivable not because God withholds forgiveness, but because the person who commits it refuses to repent and turn to God for forgiveness.