

# Rev. 3:1. the Fullness of the Holy Spirit

by Horatius Bonar

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*The Holy Spirit is the fullness and perfection of God, representing His illuminating character, power, wisdom, spirituality, completeness, variety, and universality.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 5:14, John 14:26, Acts 1:8, Romans 15:30, 1 Corinthians 12:7, Ephesians 4:30, Hebrews 9:14, Revelation 3:1, Revelation 4:5, Revelation 5:6

**Topics:** "The Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Empowerment"

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## Description

Horatius Bonar emphasizes the fullness of the Holy Spirit as depicted in Revelation, highlighting His roles as the Spirit of light, power, wisdom, spirituality, completeness, variety, and universality. He reminds us that the Holy Spirit is essential for understanding Christ and living a fruitful Christian life, as a religion without the Spirit is lifeless. Bonar warns against quenching the Spirit, urging the Church to embrace His gifts and presence to illuminate the world and fulfill the mission of spreading the gospel. The sermon calls for a recognition of the Spirit's love and the necessity of His work in our lives and the Church. Ultimately, Bonar encourages believers to welcome the Holy Spirit to restore the Church to its original power and glory.

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## Transcript

"These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars."--Revelation 3:1.

"There were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God."--Revelation 4:5.

"And behold, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth."--Revelation 5:6.

'The love of the Spirit' (Romans 15:30) is too apt to be forgotten by us. We believe the Father's love, the Son's love--but do we as really believe the love of the Holy Spirit? 'God is love;' and that means that the Father is love, that the Son is love, and that the Spirit is love.

It was this loving Spirit who anointed the Son of God that He might preach the gospel to the poor. It was in the power of this loving Spirit that He wrought His miracles of grace and spoke His words of grace. It was 'through the eternal Spirit that He offered Himself without spot to God' (Hebrews 9:14) for us. And this

'anointing' or 'unction' presents Him to us under that character by which He was all along symbolized in the Old Testament--'the holy anointing oil.'

In this Book of Revelation it is as a lamp or 'lamps of fire' that He is made known to us--not the oil, but the lamp itself. He is both--He feeds the light in us, and He is Himself the light. Here we are (though not directly) taught much about this Spirit--as the Spirit of light, and love, and holiness--His personality, His vital agency, His divine and manifold fullness. Seven times over are these words made to fall upon our ears--'He who has ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches,' as if the words of this book were His, as truly as they are those of Christ.

We have much to do with the Holy Spirit--for what would the Bible be without Him? What would we know of Christ without Him? A religion without the Spirit is wholly vain and unprofitable--like a sapless tree, a well without water, a vessel without oil.

Let us mark the characteristics, as given us in the Revelation, in connection with the emblems.

I. Light. The lamps of fire are emblems of His illuminating character and office. All true enlightenment comes from Him. As truly as Christ is the light of the world, so is the Spirit--the former more outward, the latter more inward. When fire is mentioned, it is generally in connection with the shekinah-glory; and, as was the fiery pillar of Israel, so are these lamps of fire to the Church. The saint needs light; the Church needs light; the world needs light. From the Spirit comes the light. It is sanctuary light, temple light, light from the seven-branched lamp, or seven lamps which give light to the holy place.

II. Power. The seven horns represent Him. Power is with Him; divine power; omnipotence. It is power for defense, for attack, for victory over enemies. He is the spirit of power. As such He does His works in us, and enables us to do the work of God. In our conflicts, labors, sufferings, 'fightings without,' and 'fears within,' we have the Almighty Spirit on our side, helping our infirmities.

III. Wisdom. The seven eyes are the emblem of His omniscience. His eyes are everywhere. He sees us through and through. And He comes in to us as the Spirit of wisdom. The four living ones are represented as full of eyes before and behind, implying the fullness of the all-seeing Spirit, as if they were thus 'partakers of the divine nature.' As the Spirit of wisdom rested on Christ, so His wisdom rests on us--for out of His fullness we receive. Wisdom comes to us, not directly, but from and through Him. We were blind, now we see; we see afar off, within the veil, the things which eye has not seen.

IV. Spirituality. They are called Spirits--invisible, yet real; not corporeal, yet real; something which may dwell in us, and influence us--unseen, unheard, unfelt. Spirits, yet not shadows; spirits, yet infinitely personal and real.

V. Completeness. Seven is the 'number of perfection' in Scripture. It is the complete and perfect Spirit who is represented--without defect or weakness; altogether full; full in light, and wisdom, and power. That fullness is divine, not human or finite; the fullness of God; fullness without measure or end; fullness which was completely realized only in Christ, but in us according to our measure.

VI. Variety. This is also indicated by seven. Not mere fullness; but fullness in variety--variety in fullness. Not the uniform fullness of the unvaried sea, but the fullness of the varied earth and sky; all different parts connected together, and making up that wondrous perfection which mere unvarying infinity could not exhibit. The Spirit, with His manifold gifts and graces, is thus represented--the varied perfection of his gifts,

as well as the varied glory of His person; a glory like that of light, whose perfection of whiteness is the result of variety in color. These seven Spirits are what we need, to meet the varying cases and characters of the saints.

VII. Universality. These lamps of fire burn before the throne. As (when the veil was rent) the seven-branched candlestick would appear to be standing before the mercy-seat, so these lamps of fire are seen burning before the throne of God and of the Lamb. They are thus connected with the throne, yet they shed their light far and near over creation. The seven Spirits of God are sent forth into all the earth. They go out beyond the temple, beyond Israel's land; into all the earth; to the nations afar off--'every nation and kindred.' They are sent forth from the throne as royal messengers, to do the work of Him who sits upon the throne, as Christ speaks of the Spirit; 'the Comforter whom the Father shall send in my name.' As Christ was the sent of the Father, and also of the Spirit, so the Spirit is sent of the Father and of Christ. He is connected with 'the throne,' and He is connected with 'the Lamb.' He goes forth to testify of Him, to glorify Him, to reveal Him to the sons of men. This is the work which He is doing now, in a measure, and which, in the coming age, He will do more largely, filling the whole earth with the light of the glory of Immanuel.

Into all the earth He goes, far as 'the gospel' itself, revealing to men that 'gospel,' and revealing that cross of which it brings the 'good news.' For all the Spirit's work gathers round the Lord Jesus, unfolding the divine testimony to His blood, and overcoming the resistance of the sinner's heart, that he may believe that testimony, and be saved.

Into all the earth he goes, raising the dead, illuminating the dark, guiding the perplexed, leading back the wanderer to the fold. To the very ends of the earth these seven lamps are shining. Through them the darkness of the earth has been preserved from being total; through them, here and there bright lights kindled, in some measure dispelling the thick gloom that covers the human race. It is this Spirit that men are quenching. And when He is quenched, and the one Light departs--what will the darkness of the human spirit be! He will not always strive. He may even now be near departing. The long ages of His love may be near an end. O world! Your day of darkness is coming; darkness that may be felt; prelude of the blackness of darkness forever.

O Church of God! Grieve not this Spirit--quench not these lamps of fire. Bid Him welcome with all His gifts, to make you in these last days what you were when first He came down in His divine fullness, and wrought a work in you, and through you, such as amazed, and terrified, and enraged a world, until men in every city rose up, and with weapons of persecution sought to extinguish the new-kindled flame, as too bright for them to bear.

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