

(The Ministry of the Spirit) in the Old Testament

by Zac Poonen

The Holy Spirit played a crucial role in creation, redemption, and the life of believers in the Old Testament, and His presence is essential for a New Testament church.

Duration: 1:34:15

Topics: "Evangelism", "Stewardship"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of giving and serving others. He uses the story of the widow in 2 Kings chapter 4 as an example of the church being in debt because it has not preached the gospel to the whole world. The preacher encourages the audience to not rest until they have fulfilled their responsibility to share the gospel and make disciples. He urges them to give out and clear their debt by distributing books and resources to others. The sermon emphasizes the need for the church to fulfill its mission and not neglect its duty to reach others with the message of salvation.

Transcript

Let us bow our heads in prayer. Let's fix our eyes on Jesus as we seek to enter this meeting. The Lord says, be still, relax, let go and know that I'm God.

Let go the things you're clinging on to and the things that you're attached to. Know that I'm God. We need to know Him.

We want to be open. God reveals Himself to us through His word and through His spirit. May there be a burning desire in your heart.

God answers you according to the hunger of your heart. If any man thirsts, any woman thirsts, let him, her, come to me, says Jesus. If anyone is thirsty, let that person come to me.

May we come to him with a thirst tonight, with a heart that is cleansed from every defilement. Do business with God. Be serious.

Settle everything. Finish with the past. Anything that needs to be confessed, confess it now.

Anything that needs to be settled with somebody else, tell God you'll settle it at the very first opportunity. Ask Him to cleanse you in the blood of Jesus. For shed for sinners, come to Him with boldness, confidence.

Don't let the devil make you feel condemned. God loves you. He wants to draw you to Himself.

Heavenly Father, we come to you because you've called us. We are your children. We have the right to come to you.

We're not strangers. We are your children and we come to you because you are our Father. And we ask you, Lord, to pour out your spirit on us.

Give us revelation as we look into your word. This evening, we come to you in faith with hearts that are opened, cleansed. We want to follow you radically.

God, move in our midst. We pray this evening. Confirm your word with signs following.

We trust you, Father. We trust you. We're not ashamed to acknowledge that you're the living God.

And we trust you that you'll do more than we can ask or think. Your spirit rests upon us. We wait upon you, Lord.

We have no confidence in ourselves. We pray that you'll give us the spirit of prophecy. Spirit of prophecy will rest upon all of us that we can hear your word directly from your spirit.

We trust you. In Jesus' name, Amen. Okay, let's take our seats.

These three evenings, we're going to have three Bible studies on the ministry of the Holy Spirit. And we're going to see it in three sections. We're going to study, first of all, the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, and then the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus or in the Gospels, and then the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church, as we read in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles.

And as we study it, the important thing is not just to get knowledge, but that our hearts will see something of what God wants us to have and of how God worked through the ages. First of all, I want you to notice that the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the very second verse of the Bible. It says, when the earth was in that shapeless, dark, empty condition, it says, the Spirit of God, Genesis 1-2, moved over the surface of the waters.

And when you come to the end of the Bible in Revelation 22-17, you see the Holy Spirit saying, Come, come and drink, whoever is thirsty. So the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the first page and the last page of the Bible, and all the way in between. And when we study the Holy Spirit, we must remember that without the Holy Spirit, we are not going to be able to understand.

We need power from God. We need revelation from God to understand His Word, to understand His ways. So often when we are seeking to know God's will, it is the Holy Spirit who is going to guide us.

The Bible says, those who are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Those who are born of the Spirit of God, they are the children of God. Those who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God.

God wants us to grow up from being children to sons. And it is all by the Holy Spirit. And right there in the beginning of Genesis 1, you see God's Word going forth every day.

God said, God said, God said. And right from verse 2, the Holy Spirit was moving on all those six days and changed that ugly earth into something beautiful. So right there in the first chapter of the Bible, you have a picture of what the Holy Spirit can do in your life.

Take something which is, your life may be like it is described in verse 2, formless. That means you are ugly. Ugly means not Christ-like.

Anything that is not Christ-like is ugly, where things are not in proper place. You have got too much of one thing and too little of another. You know how some people are so strict and no grace, and some people are so wishy-washy, no strictness.

It's like having one ear so big and another ear so small. It's ugly. The glory of God was seen in Jesus Christ, full of grace and truth.

Beauty is in balance, grace and truth the same size, ears the same size, eyes the same size. It's not enough to have grace and truth. You must have it the same proportion.

So when it says formless, shapeless, ugly, that's what the Holy Spirit wants to change. Empty. The earth was shapeless, empty and dark.

Empty. No content. And God wants to fill that.

That's all the Holy Spirit's work. So the Holy Spirit's work there in the first paragraph of Scripture is to make us beautiful, to fill us and to bring light. Not only light for ourselves but make us a light to other people.

So we have to go through this very quickly because I want to try and cover the whole Old Testament and try and point out some of the major things that we see in the Old Testament about the ministry of the Holy Spirit and how it applies to us. So if you have a Bible you can turn quickly. I'll be going through from Genesis to Malachi.

Chapter 3 verse 24. It's the first time we read of fire in the Bible. Fire.

And you know that John the Baptist said that Jesus will baptise us in the Holy Spirit and fire. So it's good to see the first time that fire comes in the Bible here. It's after sin has come into the world and there's this sword of fire.

A flaming sword going around the tree of life. The Holy Spirit guarding the way to the tree of life that man does not approach it who's not willing to let that sword fall upon him. You know I cannot receive the life of God if I'm not willing to let the Holy Spirit slay the life of Adam that I've received.

If we bear the life of Jesus. It's no use praying for the power of the Holy Spirit if I'm not willing to let that sword of fire slay something in me. That's the way to the tree of life.

Now that was not there before sin came. Before sin came there was no sword. There was no fire there in front of the tree of life.

Adam could go straight to it. And if we had no sin we could have gone straight to the tree of life and partaken of God's own nature. But we can't.

Today there's a fiery sword. The Holy Spirit putting to death the life of Adam. It's there in picture right at the beginning of scripture.

And very often we don't have more. I mean people experience the Holy Spirit a little bit and don't experience more because they're not willing to let the Holy Spirit slay something in them which he shows them. It's from Adam.

That's not from Christ. So I want to ask you all a simple question. Do you want to get rid of everything in your life which you got from Adam? Or only some of the bad things? Like King Saul wanted to kill the bad sheep but not the good sheep.

If you're serious about getting rid of everything I just want to tell you the Holy Spirit will cooperate with you 100%. And you'll be a different person. Okay.

In chapter 6 verse 3 we read about a mention of the Holy Spirit. God says, My spirit will not strive with man forever. He gave him a long time.

120 years it says in this verse. It's a principle. God's patience is not unlimited.

The Holy Spirit keeps on speaking, speaking, speaking, speaking. One day he stops speaking. And that's the end.

And that's when a man has committed the sin against the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit stops speaking to him. And then he keeps on living in sin.

My spirit will not strive with man forever. So don't resist the Holy Spirit. That's the message we get from there.

God made. There he waited 120 years. God waits a long time with many of us.

Thank God he doesn't give up. The first time we say no. He pleads, he pleads, he pleads, he pleads.

But remember, every year that those people resisted, time was running out. Finally, 120 years. They didn't know it was 120 years.

They thought it would be forever. It was not forever. Don't think the Holy Spirit pleads with us forever.

He's certainly not going to plead with us for 120 years. But what I'm trying to say is there's a time limit to God pleading with you to set something right. He'll tell you to set something right and you don't do it.

He'll tell you maybe another meeting, set that right, you still don't do it. He'll tell you after six months, set that right, you don't do it. One day, he won't bother you anymore.

He will not bother you anymore. He'll say, go ahead, do what you like. It's tragic.

It's tragic when that day comes. That is why the Bible says, today if you will hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as they did in the wilderness. Let's move on.

Chapter 8, verse 7 and 8, we see a picture of the Holy Spirit again. It's in the Noah sent out a crow, a raven means a crow, out of the ark. The waters had not subsided.

The crow went round and round and never came back to the ark. He sent out a dove, verse 8, that's a picture of the Holy Spirit, a dove rested upon Jesus. The crow is a picture of the flesh, the life of the flesh.

And the dove is a picture of the life of the Holy Spirit. He sent out a dove, the dove did not find, verse 9, a resting place and came back to the ark. But the raven never came back.

Why did the raven, the crow, not come back? You know why? Because when he saw, went out onto the earth, he found all these dead bodies, carcasses of animals and human beings. And he said, boy, this is a chicken biryani for me, this is a feast. I never got anything like this inside the ark.

Think what Noah was withholding from me, this is where I am going to be. And he rested on one carcass and another carcass and another carcass. He never wanted to come back.

That world out there covered with water, with all those dead carcasses, is a picture of today's world. And when a carnal Christian goes out from the church to the world, he finds a lot of things, dead stuff. Movies, TV programs, dead carcasses, dirty books, pictures, internet pornography, all of that.

And this chap says, this is wonderful, we don't get anything like this in the church. It's so boring inside the ark there. This is great.

And the crow just lives out there. Maybe he comes to the ark on Sunday mornings, that's just for namesake. But his life is out there on those dead carcasses.

But the dove, the one who is sensitive to the voice of the Holy Spirit, when he goes out, after all we have to go out into the world, we have to live there, we have to earn our living, goes out, he doesn't find a resting place, everything. He says, no, I don't want that. Turn around there, I don't want that.

Another dead carcass of a pig or an elephant, no, I don't want that. What shall I do? Everything in the world is so empty and dead. Let me go back to the fellowship of my brothers who love the Lord Jesus.

And he comes back to find his place in the church. There are two types of people sitting here, the raven and the dove. You know which one you are.

Exodus chapter 3, we read about God appearing to Moses, verse 2, in a burning bush, again a picture of fire, a picture of what God wanted Moses to be. God wanted Moses to be like that burning bush, not a bush that sets itself on fire, but that receives God and God becomes the fire inside that bush. You know that's what God wants you to be.

It says that God tabernacled in the bush, God dwelt in that bush. Later on, Moses never forgot it. In Deuteronomy 33, he speaks about the God who dwelt in the bush.

He never forgot it all his life. You can't forget a man whom you have met in your life who is on fire for God. You may disagree with him, you may criticize him, but you can never forget him.

You know, Jesus stirred the greatest emotions in people. He stirred the greatest emotions in people. There were people who so fervently loved Jesus that they would die for him.

And then there were people who so fervently hated him that they wanted to kill him. That's the mark of a spirit filled man. When you are filled with the Holy Spirit, you will draw people who love you so much they will be willing to give their life for you.

And you will also see people who hate you so much that they want to kill you and tear you to pieces. That's the mark of a spirit filled man. If you are the type of person who does not stir any emotions in anybody, people who don't love you too fervently and don't hate you too fervently, I'll give you a solution for that.

Be filled with the Holy Spirit. That's what you need. To be like this burning bush, aflame for God.

My brothers and sisters, just think of all of us become like this. Don't be afraid of people hating you. They hated Jesus and Paul like anything.

Because the devil hated them. And then there were also few people who loved them so much they'd lay down their lives for Jesus and Paul. That's the type of person we must be.

We must not be this moderate, mediocre type of person who neither stirs great emotions of hatred or great emotions of love. When the Spirit of God, the angel of fire came into that bush, he could stop, Moses stopped and God could speak. Ok, we got to move on.

In Exodus 13 and verse 21, we see another picture of the Holy Spirit, the pillar of cloud. It says, came into the Israelites to lead them. The pillar of cloud, it was a pillar of fire at night.

Psalms 105.39, don't turn to it, just let me mention it, says the cloud was to give them a shadow during the day time and the pillar was to give them light at night time. It served a function. When it says in Psalm 91.1, he who dwells in the secret place of the most high shall dwell under the shadow of the Almighty.

That's the Holy Spirit. I want to dwell in the secret place, in the cleft rock, the rock that was smitten for me, because there I will dwell under the shadow of the Almighty, the Holy Spirit's shadow upon me, protecting me from the heat, like that pillar of cloud protected these two million people from the heat of the sun during the day time. Can you imagine what it is, walking for 40 years, if there was no cloud there? There was a permanent cloud over their heads, protecting them from the heat of the desert for 40 years.

And that's the thing that we need to protect us from the heat of this world and the devil, the shadow of the Almighty. And that's the Holy Spirit. And to give us light at night so that we know where to go.

Can you imagine walking without a light in a pitch dark night in the desert, full of poisonous snakes and what not? That's the Holy Spirit, at day time, night time, 24 hours, the Holy Spirit. These are all pictures. Turn to Exodus chapter 31, or chapter 17 first of all, another picture of the Holy Spirit where it says Moses smote the rock, that's the picture of Christ being smitten in verse 6, and as soon as he smote the rock, the rivers of living water came out of the rock.

Those are not little trickles. Remember there were two million people who wanted water. Bangalore's population is six million.

This is two million people, one third of Bangalore's population needed water in the desert. It was not little trickle. It was rivers that flowed out of that rock.

The picture of the Holy Spirit that flows out because Jesus was smitten on Calvary. Chapter 31, a beautiful verse that tells us that when the tabernacle was being built, when the tabernacle was being built, God called, it says, I have called Bethelil verse 1, and I called by name Bethelil, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, and I filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom, knowledge. I have also called verse 6, Aholia.

So here was a man, in order to build the tabernacle, he had to be filled with the Spirit of God in wisdom and understanding and knowledge. How shall we build the church today? There was a picture, the tabernacle in the Old Testament is a picture of the church and the main qualification for this guy who built the tabernacle was he was filled with the Holy Spirit. How foolish we are when we think that with our human ability, our musical ability, our cleverness and our intelligence we can build the church or preach the word.

Folly of follies. Chapter 40, Exodus chapter 40, and verse 38, it says here, throughout all the journeys of the Israelites, all the wilderness for 40 years, the cloud was on the tabernacle. The tabernacle is a picture of the church and the most important thing that we need in the church is not a pattern, it's the cloud, it's the fire, it's the fire of God that distinguished the tabernacle from all other tabernacles.

How shall we say we are a New Testament church compared to other churches? Is it because we have a pattern? That we don't have a pastor and we allow many people to share the word in our meetings? Or that we don't have a priest, you know a lot of people get worked up by these things, somebody calls himself a pastor, somebody calls himself a bishop and somebody, they have crosses around their neck and caps on their head and all. Yeah, I am against all these things, but I tell you a lot of people are against all these things, don't have the fire. So it doesn't make a difference whether you have a cross around your neck or no cross around your neck.

The mark of a New Testament church is not that we don't have pastors, we don't wear crosses around our neck, we don't wear a cap on our head, that is not the mark of a New Testament church. Are we speaking in tongues? No, the mark is the fire. The fire on the tabernacle distinguished it from all the other tabernacles in the world.

And if the fire of God is in the midst of your meetings, in your home, in your life, that is a New Testament church. And I would rather go to a church where a bishop sits with a cross and there is a fire of God there than in a church where people glory in their doctrines and there is no fire. Any day, I look for the fire, I don't look for a pattern.

Pattern is a form. The tabernacle, all the poles are the right size, and the boards are the right size, and the color of the curtains are the right size. I couldn't care less for those things.

It's good, we should follow the pattern. But the important thing is the fire. If you have the pattern and you don't have the fire, that means God is not happy.

Remember that my brothers and sisters. Some people come here and think, oh, let's make a church in our hometown. We are going to gather people and we are going to follow the same pattern they have in Bangalore.

It's not a pattern, it's the fire you need. And that's a mistake a lot of people have made. We go to Leviticus.

In Leviticus chapter 10 we have a warning. First of all we read in Leviticus chapter 9 that the fire of God fell upon the offering. In Leviticus 9.24 the fire came out, a picture of the Holy Spirit.

And then we read in the next verse that two sons of Aaron took strange fire and offered it before the Lord. Strange fire means trying to duplicate the ministry of the Holy Spirit. That's also pictured in the Old Testament.

Some people saw, hey, this is fantastic, the fire fell over there. Now we are also preachers, let's try and impress people, we are going to duplicate that. Lot of people have tried to duplicate the ministry of the Holy Spirit by stirring up emotions, by whipping up people's feelings and producing a strange fire.

It looks like that. But God is so angry with it. It's not just something we can ignore.

It says God was so angry with them, verse 2, that the fire came out from God a second time and this time consumed both of these people and they died before the Lord. And Moses said, this is what the Lord spoke, saying, if anyone comes near me, I must be treated as holy and I must be honored. Don't try and play the fool with me and try to imitate the work of the Holy Spirit by whipping up emotions.

I have seen some brothers in our churches who have got some type of Pentecostal background or whose only understanding of the Holy Spirit has come not from the Bible but from Pentecostal churches. When I see them leading the meetings in their churches, they do exactly the same thing. This old Pentecostal habit doesn't leave them.

Somehow whip up the emotions, somehow get everybody to say Hallelujah, Amen and get everybody excited and that's the Holy Spirit. I thought we would never see it in our churches. We are seeing it.

False fire. Don't play the fool with God. Don't try to imitate the Holy Spirit.

Don't try to whip up emotions just to get everybody excited in the meeting so that they can go back and say, Oh brother, that was God in our meeting. What is the use of a hundred undiscerning people saying that this Holy Spirit was in the meeting when it was only a false fire worked up by you. God hates it.

If it's not the Holy Spirit, He doesn't need your help. You preach God's Word and the Holy Spirit will do the rest. Don't try to whip up emotions.

You see that in a lot of Pentecostal churches. They whip up emotions so people are all excited. It's all human.

Why do I say that? Because it doesn't deliver neither the pastor nor the people from the love of money. That's why I say it's human. It doesn't deliver them from anger.

They lose their temper. What type of Holy Spirit is that? They are not filled with love for God's people. They are filled with love for people in their own sect.

False fire. Leviticus 14, verse 13-18. We see another example of the Holy Spirit and that is, I don't have time to go into this, Leviticus 14, verses 14-18.

We read about the cleansing of the leper. The leper is a picture of us sinners. It says here, the leper must first be cleansed by putting a little blood on his ear, thumb of his right hand and big toe.

Symbolizing the cleansing of the blood of Jesus Christ all the way from top to bottom of all our sin. Then, after he's cleansed of his sin with the blood on this leper, the priest would take a little bit of oil and put the oil on top of the blood. That is, he must put a little bit of the oil on, verse 17, on top of the right ear and the

right thumb.

Then he's already put the blood there on the thumb and the big toe and the ear. And now he puts on top of the blood the oil. Symbolizing that the Holy Spirit cannot work where the blood of Christ has not cleansed you first.

You first put the blood and then put the oil. If you're not cleansed in your life, the Holy Spirit cannot work. So, that's a picture of the initial ministry of the Holy Spirit when we are cleansed and we are born again.

We are born of the Holy Spirit. But that's not all. After we are born of the Holy Spirit, then the rest of the oil, verse 18, he'll pour upon the head.

That is the baptism in the Holy Spirit. It's all there in the Old Testament. Amazingly pictured by God for those who have eyes to see.

Now we go to the book of Numbers. And in the book of Numbers again we see, Numbers chapter 11, verse 17. Moses once said to the Lord, Lord, this is too much for me to handle all these two million people.

I can't do that alone. Do you think God did not know that? Sometimes we think God does not know the burdens we are bearing. Oh God, nobody is taking any responsibility in the church.

I have to do it all alone. Do you complain like that? You know, in every church in the world, we have multitudes of irresponsible children of God. Born again people.

We have seen that through 29 years, 28 years of conferences in Bangalore. People who volunteer to take a responsibility in a conference don't fulfill their responsibility wholeheartedly. Some do it so faithfully.

Some take it casually. People who volunteer to clean the CFC hall won't turn up. The church everywhere, including the best churches, are filled with irresponsible believers.

You will find 10%, 15% who take the responsibility. What shall they say? I have seen that in the ministry of the word. Multitudes of irresponsible people who don't study the word, who don't take time to get to know God and have nothing to say.

And then the burden may fall on a few people. Are we going to go to Moses and say, Lord, you left me to bear all the burden alone. That's what he said.

As if God did not know. And see God's answer. You know Moses said, if you are going to deal with me like this, number 1115, kill me.

I don't want to live like this. God said no. Call me 70 men.

I am going to distribute the responsibility among 70 people. And now listen to this. This is very important.

When I come down, I will take the spirit that is upon you, verse 17, and put it on them. And they shall bear the burden of the people. How much power did Moses have? The power of 70 people.

God said, it's too much for you. Okay, I will reduce your power by 1. I will reduce it to 1 70th of what you have now. And I will distribute it among the others.

Okay, if you want it that way. That teaches me one thing. In the power of the Holy Spirit, you can do the work of 70 people.

Amazing. And if you complain to God, he will give you 70 co-workers, your power will get reduced to 1/70th, about 1.5% of what it was in the beginning. Leave it to God.

If somebody else does not do his work, God will give you a double portion to do that. And the third person does not do his work, God will give you a triple. A fourth person who is supposed to do something, does not do it, God will give you four times.

70 people do not do their work, God will put 70 people's power on you. Do not ever complain again. It is amazing what the Holy Spirit can do.

I have experienced this numerous times. When I said, Lord, how can I do this? I wish somebody would bear that responsibility with me. Okay, they don't.

God puts double, triple, four times, five times, six times. It is not me. I know it is not me.

People think it is me. It is not me. I believe that if there is a job for 70 people and 69 of them are irresponsible, God will put the power of 70 people on me through the Holy Spirit.

Can you have faith for that, elder brothers? Do not ever complain that other people are not doing their job, unless you want your power to be reduced to one and a half percent of what it is now. Okay, then we go to chapter 24. Now I want to give you a little warning about the Holy Spirit's ministry, and that is, you see in the Old Testament that the Holy Spirit, it is amazing, Numbers 24 verse 2, Balaam lifted up his eyes and the Spirit of God came upon him.

Isn't that amazing? Did you ever know that the Spirit of God came upon Balaam once upon a time? That guy who later on went after money, and in the book of Joshua, he is called a sorcerer. The evil spirit came upon him. It happened to Saul.

Once he had the Holy Spirit, later on he had the evil spirit. So it is possible for a person who is once anointed by the Holy Spirit, because he goes after money, to have the evil spirit come upon him. He still may do miracles and do so many things, but it is an evil spirit.

There are lots of people like that, who cast out demons, do miracles, do prophesy, and the Lord will finally say to them, I never knew you. So that is a warning, that just because we can do certain wonderful things and the Holy Spirit is upon us, does not mean that we are godly. The Holy Spirit was upon Balaam and the Holy Spirit was upon Elisha.

If you wanted advice, to whom would you go? Whom would you go to? Elisha or Balaam? Just because Balaam can do some miracles? No. Don't just go by the fact that the Holy Spirit is on somebody. Okay, another verse in Numbers is 27.18, where the Lord told Moses, now take Joshua, and a man in whom is the spirit.

See, Moses was about to die and the Lord said, now you got to get somebody to take over your job. And I tell you, I really respect Joshua. As I said earlier, he was one of those rare people who could carry on the anointing to a second generation.

I respect Elisha. He was one of those rare people who carried on the anointing in a double portion to the second generation. What fantastic examples! We need people like that, who can carry on the anointing that is on the church into a second generation and perhaps with a double portion.

He says, call Joshua. You know, the Lord was observing Joshua for many years. He didn't just pick him out from a hat, pull out a name, okay, Joshua.

No, He observed all those people for many years and He said, call Joshua. He's the one. Put your hand on him, anoint him.

So that's how Joshua was chosen. And I want to turn to another verse now in the book of Judges. In the book of Judges, we read a number of people like Othniel and Jephthah and Gideon and Samson upon whom the Holy Spirit came.

And I want you to see one verse, Judges 6.34, where it says, the Spirit of God, the literal translation is clothed Gideon. That's one verse that teaches us that in the Old Testament, the Spirit of God was like a shirt, a dress. It covered a man's nakedness.

Nakedness means impotence, helplessness, powerlessness. A shirt of power came upon him. And with 300 people who could defeat the Midianites, Samson could tear a lion to pieces.

He could take a jawbone of an ass and kill 1000 people because the Spirit of God came upon him. You read in Judges chapter 15. But he could not overcome the lust for Delilah within him.

It was like a dress. You see my shirt, you know that. My shirt does not change my nature.

And a shirt of power did not change Gideon's nature. Later on we read Gideon worshipped idols. Samson fell into adultery repeatedly, not just once, because the shirt did not change him on the inside.

It gave him the ability to fulfill a ministry. And that's all it was in the Old Testament. Old Testament experience of the Holy Spirit was like a shirt.

Some people were godly, like Elijah and Elisha and Moses and Joshua. Some people like Balaam, Samson and Gideon were not godly. But the Spirit of God was upon them.

Okay, another verse, 1 Samuel chapter 10. A beautiful verse where Samuel tells King Saul, the Spirit of God will come upon you and you will be changed into another person. I like to quote that verse to many people today.

Beautiful verse. When the Spirit of God fills you today in the New Covenant, you will be changed into another person. I can testify that in my life.

That the timid, shy person disappeared and someone, some other person came forward when the Holy Spirit came and filled my life. And He will do the same in your life. He will take away the timidity.

He will take away the fear of man. He will take away, you know, that's what happened to the Apostles in the day of Pentecost. The Spirit of God, it was not a gradual deliverance over a period of 10 years.

One moment, they were locked inside the room for the fear of the Jews. The Holy Spirit came upon them. They opened the doors and told the chief priests, you fellows crucified the Son of God.

What was it that changed those people? It was not a pep talk. It was the Holy Spirit. So, you'll be changed into another man.

Claim that promise from God. And it actually happened in verse 10 when the Holy Spirit came upon him. But you know that many times it says like chapter 11 verse 6, Spirit of God came upon Saul mightily and all that.

But later on, we read that the Spirit of the Lord departed from him. And then it came upon David in 1 Samuel 16. We read the Spirit of God came upon David in verse 13 and verse 14 it says the Spirit of the Lord, 16, 14 departed from Saul.

And as soon as the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, an evil spirit terrorized him. Did you know that Satan is a terrorist? He was the first terrorist. It says here in this verse that the evil spirit terrorized him.

That's what evil spirits do. They frighten you. They terrorize you.

It's evil spirits that give you these frightening dreams. That frighten you in the middle of the night. That frighten you at different times with all types of things.

That terrorize you. The solution to all that is to be filled with the Holy Spirit. And you can be filled with the Holy Spirit if you open your heart to the Lord and let him rule.

But the Spirit of the Lord terrorized Saul and Saul took a spear and tried to kill him. It says here he took a spear and tried to throw it on David later on and tried to kill him. Many times it's amazing how when an evil spirit comes upon a person and he sees a spiritfull servant of God.

Even today, sometimes I've seen people who try to attack me with words today not with spears. I say, I don't even know that child. What's he got against me? I've never done anything against him.

It's an evil spirit that's stirring him up against someone he sees who is filled with the Holy Spirit. Do something. Throw a spear.

Kill him. Who can prompt you to attack a servant of God? It can only be the evil spirit. There's a lot of it going around the world today even among so-called Christians.

Further, I want you to turn to 1 Samuel and chapter 23. David says how the Holy Spirit spoke through him. That was another ministry of the Holy Spirit speaking God's word.

That's how David wrote those psalms, those beautiful psalms. He says the Spirit of the Lord spoke by me and his word was on my tongue. So he explains to us how he wrote inspired scripture and that is an example for us also today how we are to serve God in the spoken ministry.

The Spirit of the Lord must be upon me, speaking through me. His word must be on your tongue. Okay.

Now we go to 2 Kings chapter 2 where we read about Elisha following after Elijah. And repeatedly Elijah said, no don't come, don't come. He said, no I'm going to come.

And when he finally comes to the final point where Elijah says, I'm going, he says, what do you want? And he says in verse 9, please, please let a double portion of your spirit be upon me. Elisha had walked with Elijah for many years and he knew the secret of this man's life is the Holy Spirit. Have you discovered

when you met a man of God whom you have respected that the secret of his life is the Holy Spirit? Not human ability, not clever mind, not Bible knowledge.

There are lots of people with cleverer minds and better Bible knowledge who can't speak to your heart. It's the Holy Spirit. And when you see that, I remember in my younger days, I met lots of great Bible scholars who could explain so many things, but it didn't make my heart burn.

It filled my head with knowledge and made my head bigger and bigger and bigger. But now and then I would meet a man whose words would make my heart burn. And as a young Christian, I said, Lord, that's the type of man I want to be.

I don't want to be a type of man who fills people's heads with knowledge, makes them bigger and bigger and bigger and bigger. I want to be a man whose words will make people's hearts burn. Elisha knew that the secret of Elijah's ministry was the Holy Spirit's power.

And this is what we need to recognize as well. The Holy Spirit's power is what we need. That's the thing that made these great men in the Old Testament completely different.

And that's what will make you a completely different person, can change your ministry. Further, I want you to turn to 2 Kings chapter 4. And here we have another example of the Holy Spirit's ministry in the first seven verses. Here's a widow, a picture of the church.

The church is always pictured as a widow. Jesus pictured it as a widow going to a judge for justice. Here is a widow who comes to Elisha and says, I am in debt.

The church is in debt. In what way? We have not preached the gospel to the whole world yet. Jesus gave us a job to do, to preach the gospel to the whole world, to make disciples in every nation.

It's not been done. That means there's a debt. The work is not completed.

I don't know whether you feel that sense of debt. Supposing you are in a family where the father is very heavily in debt. Let's say your father owes 10 lakhs of rupees to somebody.

And you, he's got three sons and three daughters and they're all working. And they've got good jobs. But they don't do anything to clear their father's debt.

What would you call such children? Make that poor father struggle with that debt. And supposing one of the sons says, okay, dad, from my earnings I'll sacrifice and give you to clear that debt. And the other five are irresponsible.

No, we want all the money for ourselves. If dad's got a debt, let him clear it himself. This is the way it is in the church.

Jesus said, go into every nation and make disciples. It's a debt we have. But a lot of God's children are not bothered.

I've got to get on in life. I've got to earn my living. I've got to do various things.

What about this debt? What about the life? What about the word of God that changed your life and made you a disciple and made you such a good Christian? That's put you into debt to all the other people in the

world, all the other Christians around you who haven't heard this Gospel. That's why I keep saying, why don't you give them a book? Why don't you buy a book for five rupees and give it to people? Why don't you buy a hundred copies of that book and give it out to a hundred people in the next year? Clear your debt. How much does it cost? Does it cost much? Is it much to spend fifty rupees a month? Why don't we do it? Because we're like those irresponsible children in a family who don't do anything to clear the family debt.

I want to say the church has got a family debt. We've got to clear it. We read here that creditor has come to take my children.

Our children are in bondage. That's another thing. A lot of children are in bondage to Satan.

Have you got children who are in bondage? Have you got a wife who is in bondage? Are you concerned about it? Are you interested in delivering her, delivering your children? Have you got a husband who is in bondage? Are you concerned about it? She was concerned and she went to this man of God. There were so many other Bible school students there called sons of the prophets. She knew that those fellows couldn't do anything but she knew Elisha had the spirit.

She went to Elisha and said, what can I do? Elisha said, what do you have with you? She said, I don't have anything. Oh yeah, a jar of oil. It's like believers saying, I don't have any ability.

I only have the Holy Spirit. Absolutely crazy. Elisha said, you've got a jar of oil? That's the only thing you need sister.

That's the answer to all your problems. All your debt can be cleared. Your sons can be liberated.

Go and get many vessels. Pour it, pour it. Learn to give out, learn to give out, give out.

Don't just store it all for yourself. Give out, give out. And there is enough in that jar of oil to fill the vessels of every single neighbor who's got a vessel around you.

And it says, she got all the vessels from all her neighbors. Now don't get a few, Elisha told him, told her in verse three, get as many as possible. She went from house to house, collected all the vessels and she poured and poured and poured and then told her son, verse six, go and get another vessel.

Go to that other neighbor one mile away and go to another vessel. And he said, there's not a house where anybody's got a vessel left. Boy, what a ministry.

In you shall all the families of the earth be blessed. How is that going to happen? Through this jar of oil, which you call nothing. That's what she said.

Verse two, I've got nothing. You know, we have not valued the Holy Spirit whom God has given us. It's the answer to all our problems.

And then I'm sure when she sent, she came and said, well, I've got so much oil. The man of God said, now go and sell the oil, pay your debt completely. Your sons can live on the rest of the money that you get.

Not only they'll be liberated, they're going to get so much more that they're going to be able to live. There's abundance in the Holy Spirit to bless others, to liberate our children, to bring blessing all around us. It's all in that jar of oil.

Okay. Now we want to go to the Psalms. There are other examples in second Chronicles, et cetera, where we read of, you know, the Spirit of God came upon different prophets and it was all there, just like in the book of Judges.

Psalms 51. In Psalm 51 we read, David, who had the Holy Spirit come upon him, as we saw in 1 Samuel 16, saying, you know, when he sinned, what was he afraid of? He was not afraid. My testimony is gone.

What will people say about me? Isn't that what happens to you if you fell into adultery and everybody knew about it? Oh God, people have known my testimony is gone. I've fallen into adultery and everybody's known about it. That's not what David was concerned about.

His concern, Psalm 51 verse 11 was, will I lose the Holy Spirit now? Forget it, that other people know about it. I couldn't care less if the whole world knows about it. But God, please don't take your Holy Spirit from me.

I want to say to you, my brothers and sisters, when you have a greater concern that you don't lose the power of the Spirit than you're concerned about your testimony before other people, you'll probably live a Spirit-filled life. But so many Christians are more concerned about their testimony before others than about losing the Spirit. It doesn't matter if they lose the Spirit.

Oh, but let me not lose my testimony before other people. Why are you so bothered about your testimony before other people? Is that what you want? God says, okay, you can have that. Why was David a man after God's own heart? He couldn't care less that his testimony was lost.

What he didn't want to lose was the Holy Spirit. Take not your Holy Spirit from me. And I say, Lord, make me like that, that I'm willing to lose my testimony, but I don't want to lose the Holy Spirit's power in my life.

You know, every one of us can be like that. God tests us in different situations. What's it bothering you now? What is it bothering you now? Is it that you have lost your testimony? Somebody saw you losing your temper? Somebody saw the elder brother publicly rebuke you? You lost your testimony? I know elder brothers whom we have had to ask elder brothers to step down from their responsibility in different places.

They are so bothered. Oh, what do people think of me? I'm not an elder brother now. They couldn't care less whether they are filled with the Holy Spirit or not.

That proves that such people are totally unfit to be elder brothers. They are more concerned about their position. What will people think of me now that I'm removed from my eldership? Forget it, brother.

Go and fall before God and say, God, don't take your Holy Spirit from me. I don't care if I lose any position in the world. I don't care if God takes away my voice and I can't speak anymore.

I'd say, God, don't take your Holy Spirit from me. You know, when you value the Holy Spirit like that, you'll be a man after God's own heart. You'll have the power of the Spirit upon your life every day.

You'll never lose it. So many situations God arranges in our life to test us. What are you really interested in? The testimony of men or the testimony of God? Another beautiful verse in the Psalms concerning the Holy Spirit is Psalm 143 and verse 10.

Psalm 143 and verse 10. Beautiful verse. Teach me to do thy will, for thou art my God.

Let your good spirit lead me on level ground. I like that. I don't want to walk on a road full of potholes and up and down like the sine wave, up one day and down another day and up another day and down another day.

No, Lord, let your Holy Spirit lead me on level ground. You know, that's what the Holy Spirit does. He takes away the potholes from our life.

He takes away this up and down experience and we are on level ground. That's a beautiful verse. And that happens to the man who prays the first part of that verse.

Teach me to do thy will, O God. Because in God's will, you're always on level ground. There are no potholes and up and down experiences.

There are trials, there are sufferings, but it's not potholes and up and down. It's level ground by the power of the Holy Spirit. Beautiful verse.

And now we come to the book of Isaiah. In Isaiah chapter 11, in a number of places in Isaiah, we read about the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus. Isaiah speaks more about the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus than any other Old Testament prophet.

A number of his prophecies about the Holy Spirit are looking forward to the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. And this is one of the first of them. You know, in Revelation you read about the sevenfold Holy Spirit.

The sevenfold Holy Spirit is described here in verse 2. You can count it. First of all, the Spirit of Jehovah, the Spirit of Wisdom, number 2, Spirit of Understanding, number 3, Spirit of Counsel, Spirit of Strength, Spirit of Knowledge, and the Spirit of the Fear of the Lord. That's the sevenfold Holy Spirit that rested upon Jesus in his earthly days.

And a particular mention is mentioned about the Spirit of one part of the seven in verse 3, the Spirit of the Fear of the Lord. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of all these things mentioned here, but especially the Holy Spirit says here, He is the Spirit of the Fear of the Lord. Reverence.

Not being afraid. Fear means reverence. Reverence.

Tremendous reverence and respect for God. The Spirit of Worship. And this will make anyone upon whom the Spirit comes delight in reverencing God.

Jesus delighted in reverencing God and because he revered God so much, one of the marks of fearing God is, verse 3, he would not judge by what his eyes saw. He would not make a decision by what his ears heard. See, when the Spirit of God fills a person, he says, well, yeah, I saw that, but I don't know.

I could be wrong there. And I said, I heard that, but I don't know whether it's true. I mean, a lot of people say so many things and I don't know whether all that I hear is true.

Some of it could be falsely reported. Some of it could be that I misunderstood what I heard. So a man filled with the Holy Spirit, in whom the Spirit of God rests like it was on Jesus, is very careful to come to a final conclusion on the basis of what he has seen and what he has heard.

He's very careful. That's how Jesus was. He saw many things and he heard many things, but he said, I don't know.

I have to listen to what the Holy Spirit impresses upon me. With righteousness and with fairness. See, with right, verse 4, righteousness and fairness would come into his life with the Holy Spirit.

This is especially necessary for those who have got responsibility in a church. So often, somebody comes and tells you something. Some brother comes and tells you something in a church and you listen to it.

Say, ah, that's right. Oh, it was like that, was it? Oh, I better go and take some action on that. Jesus never did that.

Because somebody else may come to you tomorrow and say something else. And if you are the type of brother who just listens to every Tom, Dick and Harry coming and telling you stories about what's happening in the church and you accept it, you're totally unfit to be a servant of God. Jesus didn't do that.

He would not judge by what his ears heard. He would wait. He would not judge by what his eyes saw.

Now, all of us have made mistakes in this area. I've made lots of mistakes by being hasty and I've learned through the years not to believe everything I hear and not even to believe everything I see. I could be wrong.

We can be deceived. I remember in a conference here some time ago, in the middle of the night, some young people were sitting together and somebody saw smoke coming up from there and they started a rumor that these young people in CFC are smoking. And there were some foolish sisters who passed that word around before checking up what it was.

And when we checked up, we found they had put a tortoise mosquito coil and were sitting there to drive away the mosquitoes. It wasn't cigarettes. It was just a mosquito coil.

Don't judge by what your eyes see. You could be wrong in the middle of the night, even though you see smoke ascending there. I'm just giving you an example.

And don't be like those foolish women who go around talking about it before you check anything. And if you're a servant of God, you've got to be doubly careful. Jesus was very careful when the Spirit of God was upon him.

Okay, Isaiah chapter 30, it says here in verse 21, your ears will hear a word behind you. This is the way. Walk in it when you turn to the right or to the left.

That's the Holy Spirit. One of the wonderful ministries of the Holy Spirit. There are two meanings to this verse.

One is as you're going along, the Spirit of God will say, turn left now. As you're looking at some picture or some page in a magazine, the Holy Spirit will say, turn your eyes away from that. Don't look at that.

Jesus wouldn't look at that. Or when you're sitting somewhere watching something and there's something polluting there, the Holy Spirit will say, no, turn left now. Or the other meaning is, when you go astray, you've actually taken a wrong turning, the Holy Spirit will say, turn to the other side now.

You've taken a wrong turning there. You've taken a wrong turning. Please take this turning now.

Okay. So that's something which we really need the Holy Spirit to lead us in, you know, to guide us when we have taken a wrong turning. And as soon as you see that wrong turn, you hear that voice, obey immediately.

And say, Lord, I want to go in the right direction. Okay. Now we go to Isaiah chapter 42.

Isaiah 42 and verse 1. Behold my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one, in whom my soul delights. I have put my spirit upon him. This is again a reference to Jesus.

And it's referring to him in this way that the Holy Spirit is put upon someone who is willing to be helplessly supported by God, upheld by the Father. And the Holy Spirit, I will uphold him and I have put my spirit upon him. You know, it's the one who's like a child who says, God, I can't live without you.

I want to be upheld by you, on whom God puts his Holy Spirit. One who is willing to be upheld by the Father. Okay.

Now we go to Isaiah chapter 61 and verse 1. Isaiah 61 and verse 1. The Spirit of the Lord, God, is upon me because the Lord has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted. This is again a reference to Jesus.

Jesus quotes it in Luke chapter 4. The Spirit of God, upon anointing, enabling him to preach the gospel, enabling him to set people free. The anointing of the Holy Spirit that gave Jesus power to liberate captives, to set prisoners free, to preach, verse 2, the favorable year of the Lord. So we see there that one of the ministries of the Holy Spirit is to equip us to preach the gospel.

To actually deliver people from the power of Satan. Captives to be set free. Prisoners to be set free.

That's the ministry of the Holy Spirit. That's the reason why the Spirit of God has to come upon us. Okay.

So Jesus quoted that. Let's turn further to Isaiah chapter 63 and verse 10 and 11. Isaiah 63 and verses 10 and 11.

Here it speaks about what happened in the wilderness where the Israelites rebelled and grieved God's Holy Spirit. And God's Holy Spirit turned against them and became their enemy. Now these are sad words.

Does the Holy Spirit ever turn and become somebody's enemy? We read here that happened because they resisted and resisted and resisted and rebelled against Him. The Holy Spirit turned and became the enemy of God's people. There's something which is a warning for all of us to take seriously.

Then we move to another prophet who had a tremendous experience in the realm of the Spirit and that's Ezekiel. In the book of Ezekiel you read more references to the Holy Spirit working in Ezekiel than perhaps in any other prophet in the Old Testament. For example you read in Ezekiel chapter 2 and verse 2 that when God spoke to Ezekiel it says the Spirit entered him and set him on his feet.

Now it's good to go through this Old Testament examples of the ministry of the Holy Spirit because a lot of things we can learn in that. How did God equip people in the Old Testament to serve Him? Now I mentioned this before that the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit did not change anybody's character. He only

equipped them for a certain ministry.

So we need not only change in character but we need to serve God and in our service for God we can look at a lot of these Old Testament examples and see how they serve God. How can you for example speak for God? Well study Ezekiel. Study all the references.

It's very easy. Take a concordance and look for the word Spirit in the book of Ezekiel and study it. It's very interesting.

When God spoke to him the Spirit entered into him and when God speaks to me through His word or in a meeting I don't want it to be just the word. I want the Spirit to enter me and make that word burning fire within my bones and set me on my feet. The Spirit of God did that.

And then we read further in chapter 3 and verse 12. The Spirit lifted me up. We need that too.

Lifting up in our spirits. And further in verse 14. The Spirit lifted me up and took me away and I went embittered in the rage of my spirit and the hand of the Lord was strong on me.

Now the way I understand that is in verse 14. I went in anger. That means I didn't really want to go there but the Spirit of God made me go.

You know that can also be there. Sometimes the Lord told Peter when you're old somebody will stretch out your hand and take you where you don't want to go. Don't think that the Holy Spirit will always lead us to paths of ease and comfort and sometimes the Spirit of God drives us and we got to go.

It's inconvenient. It's difficult. You may not get much sleep but you know that the Spirit of God wants you to go there and do something and you go.

Whether it's inconvenient or you don't feel like it. In other words here's a picture of a man who didn't feel like going but he still went. That's the picture I get.

His own feelings were I don't want to go. The Spirit of God took him and he went. And if you want to be a prophet of God, if you want to be a servant of God, brother or sister, be willing to be led to places where you don't feel like going.

Then we go to Ezekiel chapter 11. Here he speaks about the Spirit of the Lord falling upon him in verse 5. And again later on in verse 24 the Spirit lifting him up. In all these pictures I get the picture of a man who is willing to let the Holy Spirit lead him anywhere.

It's beautiful to see in Ezekiel's life. Place after place, sometimes this way, sometimes that way. Whatever the Holy Spirit wants to do in him.

And then finally you come to chapter 36 where he makes a prophecy concerning the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the new covenant. Now the only man, now what I learned from all this, why did I show you all these verses before? The only man who can speak about the ministry of the Holy Spirit to other people is the man who has experienced these type of experiences with the Holy Spirit in his own life. Where he's been lifted up and he's been put down and he's been made to go where he doesn't want to go and he's just yielded, yielded, yielded.

Such a man can get up and talk about the Holy Spirit. And he talks about the Holy Spirit in chapter 36. He says, thus says the Lord, Ezekiel chapter 36, this is how it's going to be in the new covenant.

I will first of all cleanse you. Verse 25, Ezekiel 36, 25. I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and I will give you a new heart and a new spirit and I will, verse 27, put my Holy Spirit inside you.

And when the Holy Spirit is put in, this is a new covenant prophecy, from within the Holy Spirit, listen to this wonderful promise, the Holy Spirit will make you walk in God's commandments. Now this is different from the Old Testament. The Old Testament was, thus said the Lord, thou shalt do this, thou shalt do this.

And people tried for 1500 years and they couldn't do it. Now Ezekiel says, in a few hundred years, I mean it is still another 500, 500, 600 years from that time, but he says in a few 500 or more years, something's going to happen. Here's the promise, God will cleanse his people from all their filthiness.

He will take away that hard heart, that's the new birth experience, put a soft heart inside and then he's going to put his spirit into that soft heart, after the born again experience, he's going to put his spirit inside and from within, these people who have this Holy Spirit within will be as it were forced, lovingly, to obey God, to keep his commandments, to love his enemies, to love their enemies, to bless them that curse them, to speak the truth, even if they lose their job. Who can do that? The Holy Spirit from within, forcing us, causing us to walk in God's statutes. Many Christians are trying to live according to the commandments, that's Old Testament, that's the law.

But listen to this verse, the spirit from within will cause you, he will cause you, that's the same as writing his laws in your heart and mind, cause you to walk and my brothers and sisters, don't be satisfied till you come to this life in the Holy Spirit. To obey God on the outside with a good sincere desire, I always want to speak the truth, I want to love, I want to do this, it's good. But let the law be your schoolmaster to lead you to this life in the Holy Spirit where, like one brother said, when my unconverted days, I could only hate people.

Then I came to a life after I was born again where I struggled and I could love people. Then I came to a life in the spirit where I cannot hate people even if I want to. What a life! I can only love.

And he says in the old days, in my unconverted days, I could only tell lies. Then I came to that born again life where with a great struggle I could speak the truth. And then I finally come to this life in the spirit where I can't tell lies even if I want to.

It's all truth. This has caused you to walk in my statutes. What I want to say to you my brothers and sisters is, don't rest until you have reached this life.

Some of you have stopped at the level of the law. That's only a schoolmaster to lead you to college. There is a degree you can get.

Don't be finished with twelfth standard. Okay. And then further in a picture of that life, first Ezekiel describes it and then he says, now the Lord gave me a picture of this life in the spirit.

Chapter 37. The Lord took him to a valley full of dry bones. In verse 37.

They were very dry. Verse 2. And he said to me, son of man, do you think these bones can live? Do you think these dead fellows can live? Do you think any life can come into these fellows who are so dead, the

flesh is gone? And he said, I don't know. And God said, okay, the first thing that they need is the word of God.

Preach God's word to them and say to them, hear the word of the Lord. And then secondly, I'll cause breath to come upon them. So I prophesied.

Verse 7. And when he prophesied, verse 7, there was a rattling and a noise. And the bones came together, bone to bone. And the flesh began to grow on it.

And the skin. And they looked nice. God's word had done a tremendous work.

But the Holy Spirit was not yet there. You know, people who submit to the word of God alone, they come to a beautiful life. From dry bones to beautiful, good looking people.

Except that there's no life in them. I've seen Christians like that. Paul came to Ephesus and attended one of the meetings there in Acts 19.

And he said, hey, did you fellows receive the Holy Spirit, by the way? You guys got a lot of knowledge of the Bible, but I don't see any power in life here. If Paul were to come into one of our meetings, would he feel like that? Good, nice people. There's no breath in them.

It says there was no breath in them. Verse 8. Then God said to Ezekiel, these fellows need one more thing. Let the breath, the Holy Spirit come upon them.

And then he says, the breath came into them, verse 10. And then these people got up and they became soldiers. They were not just good looking people.

It says they became soldiers in verse 10. And that's what God wants to make us. Not just good looking people who get a good testimony before others, but soldiers who are ready to fight the battle against Satan.

Because we are filled with the Holy Spirit. And then we go on to chapter 43, verse 5, where he says about the Holy Spirit lifting him up and bringing him to the inner court. And chapter 47, that beautiful passage where we read about rivers of living water.

You remember that Jesus said in John 7, he who believes in me out of his innermost being will flow rivers of living water, as the scripture has said. Do you know where the scripture said that? Ezekiel 47. Jesus was quoting from Ezekiel 47 when he referred to the Holy Spirit in John 7. As the scripture has said, from his innermost being.

And that's what we see here in Ezekiel 47. That right from the center of the temple, the house of God, the water was flowing out from under the threshold of the door. He saw the temple and from the temple, the door, the water started coming out like a little trickle and finally it became a big river.

And it says here, all types of trees were going, verse 12, on the bank of that river. Fruitfulness everywhere. And Ezekiel was given a picture there of life in the spirit.

He first went in up to his anchor, and then he went a little further. God is leading this person in the life in the spirit. It reached his knees.

Then the water came up to his loins. And then it came up to his neck. And then, at last, it came above the level of his head.

Then that was the time when his feet came off the ground. You know, in our walk with the spirit from the time we are born again, this is the progression. We want to be filled with the Holy Spirit, but we want to keep our feet on the ground.

You know, something, some security on this earth, and more and more and more. We experience more and more and more. But real life in the spirit is when your connection with the earth is gone, and then the river carries you, wherever it wants to take you.

As long as your feet are on the ground, there is not much difference between the man who has got his water up to the ankles and the man who has got the water up to the neck. They still determine where they are going to walk. But once your feet are off the ground, you don't decide where you go.

The Holy Spirit takes you. So the Lord was saying, Ezekiel, this is how it's going to be. I am going to lead my people forward, forward, forward, forward, till the time comes in their life, well, they will not decide anymore in their life.

Very often, my brothers and sisters, maybe you have got more of the Holy Spirit than somebody else. You got it up to the neck. The other fellows got it up to the ankles.

But both of you, you are still attached to the earth. You still decide where you want to walk. You are strong-willed.

And you decide where you want to go. You got a good life, no doubt. But you haven't come to that real life, full of the Spirit, where your feet are off the earth, and the current takes you, not where you want to go, but where the Spirit wants to take you.

Then we come to Joel, in chapter 2, the book of Joel, that's after Hosea. Joel chapter 2, verse 28, is the promise quoted on the day of Pentecost by the Apostle Peter. Joel 2, verse 28, in the last days, just like Ezekiel prophesied about Ezekiel prophesied about the change in the inner life.

Joel prophesied about the ministry. Ezekiel prophesied that from within, you will walk in God's commandments. Joel said, not only you will walk in God's commandments, you are going to serve God.

You are going to prophesy. You are going to be a witness for God. See Joel 2, verse 28, I will pour out my Spirit on all mankind, on all flesh.

Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams. Your young men will see visions.

Even on male and female servants, I will pour out my Spirit on those days. This is the promise that Peter quoted on the day of Pentecost. And notice this, sons and daughters, male servants and female servants, we will come to that later when we come to Acts chapter 2, but this is the new covenant promise that in the future day, it won't be a Joel and an Isaiah.

Everybody can speak God's word. Come to that when we come to Acts chapter 2. Then we come to the book of Micah. You go past Joel and Amos and Jonah and you come to Micah chapter 2 and verse 7. Just a little question here, which I want you to look at.

Is it being said, O house of Jacob, is the Spirit of the Lord impatient? Are these His doings? Don't my words do good to the one who is walking uprightly? Why did I quote this verse to you concerning the Holy Spirit? There are many things happening today in Christendom around us, many things. You see that on Christian television and you see it everywhere. And the question that comes to me is the question in this verse.

Are these the doings of the Holy Spirit? Don't God's words do good to those who walk uprightly? I have a big question mark when I see a lot of things that claim to be the ministry of the Holy Spirit today. This question, are these the doings of the Holy Spirit? I doubt it very much. Chapter 3 verse 8, Micah says, I am filled with power and with the Spirit of the Lord to make known to Jacob his sins.

This is the basis on which they had their ministry in the Old Testament. We are coming to the end of the Old Testament now, Zechariah chapter 4 and verse 6. Here, the first six verses, Zechariah sees a vision of a candlestick, a picture of the church, two olive trees standing beside it, pouring oil. In the Old Testament, the priest had to come and replenish the oil every time it finished to keep the fire burning.

Now God has found a better way. No need of a priest to come and pour the oil in every now and then. No need to go to a conference where some prophet comes and replenishes you.

The tree, the olive tree is just beside the candlestick and there is a tube from which the oil flows straight in and you know there is always olive oil being produced in the tree and always it is flowing in, continuous fullness wherever you are. This is God's will for you. There is no need of being pumped up in a meeting or a conference.

And on the left side, on the right side, and when Zechariah asks the angel, what does this mean? It means, you are going to serve me not by your human might, verse 6, or by human power, but by my Holy Spirit, says the Lord. Chapter 12 and verse 10, a prophecy of the day of Pentecost, on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, verse 10, I will pour out my Spirit, the Spirit of grace and supplication. And when the Spirit of grace and prayer is called the Spirit of grace, which is a new covenant expression, what happened on the day of Pentecost, what will happen? Their eyes will be opened and they will see the crucified Jesus.

The Holy Spirit always opens our eyes to see the crucified Jesus, so that we can follow in His footsteps. One last verse, Malachi chapter 2 and verse 14 and 15, the Spirit of God in our family life. He says, Malachi says, many of you are being unfaithful to your wives.

You know why? Because you don't have the Holy Spirit. If you are a married person, and you go to your office and you lust after another pretty girl over there, you are unfaithful to your wife. You joke and laugh there in a way you would not do if your wife were sitting next to you.

You are unfaithful to your wife because you don't have the Holy Spirit. He says in the next verse, Malachi 2 verse 15, no one who has the Holy Spirit will do that. That is the Old Testament.

And you see how much right from Genesis to Malachi, you see the importance of the ministry of the Holy Spirit going right through the Old Testament. Tomorrow, God willing, we will look at the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the life of Jesus. But since the Old Testament comprises three quarters of the Bible, it is good for us to see how even there, there were these prophecies of how the Holy Spirit would work in the New Covenant.

The ministry of all the people, right from the first chapter of Genesis on to Malachi, you see the ministry of the Holy Spirit going right through in picture language, in actuality, but yet their inner lives were not changed. For that, we have to come to the New Covenant, and that is where we are living. But I hope what we have heard has produced in us a little understanding and a hunger for the power of the Holy Spirit in our life, the reality of it as we bow our heads before God in prayer.

Now while our heads are bowed in prayer, I want you to seek God and say, Lord, I want the Holy Spirit's power in my life. I want to be filled with the Holy Spirit. I want to overcome.

I want the power of the Holy Spirit at any cost in my life. I am willing to be led by the Holy Spirit, even in parts that may not be convenient for me. I want to be lifted up from the earth and led by the river.

Lord, lead me in these days to a life that I have not even dreamt of, but which prophesied throughout the Old Testament as my birthright, my inheritance in Christ. Lord, I want this life at any cost. Please help me.

Thank you, Father, it is your good pleasure to give us your Spirit. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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