

- I. Session 5: Old Testament prediction of the Spirit's future work
- a. Note: This is new for the first time in this series.
  - b. Purpose: In this session we shall see what the Old Testament has to say about the Spirit's work that is beyond the Old Testament era.
  - c. The Spirit's work in the Old Testament makes us yearn for more ministry of the Spirit
    - i. The Spirit empowered people but some of these people were not godly
      1. Think of Sampson.
      2. Think of King Saul.
    - ii. The Spirit can depart from His people
      1. Again think of King Saul: *"Now the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD terrorized him."* (1 Samuel 16:14).
      2. In light of the Spirit's departure David's had legitimate fear that He will lose the Spirit because of His sin: *"Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me."* (Psalm 51:11).
    - iii. The Spirit reveals His Word but people were hardened to the Word.
      1. Recall the sins of the people in regards to listening to the Word of God: *"They made their hearts like flint so that they could not hear the law and the words which the Lord of hosts had sent by His Spirit through the former prophets; therefore great wrath came from the Lord of hosts."* (Zechariah 7:12)
      2. Much of Old Testament history is filled with the people's heart being hardened to obey God's Word.
    - iv. Examples such as these make us yearn to see God's Spirit to do a deeper work.
  - d. The Holy Spirit ushering a New Work
    - i. God makes future promise of His Spirit for Israel after the exile
      1. *"For I will pour out 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;"* (Isaiah 44:3)
      2. *"I will not hide My face from them any longer, for I will have poured out My Spirit on the house of Israel," declares the Lord God.* (Ezekiel 39:29) → This is in the context of the Lord restoring the fortunes of Israel (v.25)
      3. These passages show that God has not departed from Israel forever in the future!
    - ii. Righteousness and outward blessing in Isaiah 32:15-18
      1. The passage: *"Until the Spirit is poured out upon us from on high, And the wilderness becomes a fertile field, And the fertile field is considered as a forest. 16 Then justice will dwell in the wilderness And righteousness will abide in the fertile field. 17 And the work of righteousness will be peace, And the service of righteousness, quietness and confidence forever. 18 Then my people will live in a peaceful habitation, And in secure dwellings and in undisturbed resting places;"* (Isaiah 35:15-18)
      2. Note the Spirit is being poured out in verse 15.
      3. According to verse 15 the Spirit's presence will renew and restore God's creation to full fertility and growth.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher Wright, *Knowing The Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 123.

4. According to **verse 16** the Spirit's presence set right the moral order with justice.<sup>2</sup>
5. With service of righteousness as a foundation according to **verse 17-18** the Spirit's presence will set right the social order with peace.<sup>3</sup>
6. According to **verse 17** the effects of the Spirit's work will be forever.

### iii. Regeneration in **Ezekiel 36:25-27**

1. **Ezekiel 36:25-27** is going to be even more detailed than **Isaiah 35:15-18**.
2. The passage: "*Then I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols. 26 Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. 27 I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.*" (**Ezekiel 36:25-27**)
3. Note how God said "*I will put My Spirit within you*" in **verse 27**.
4. In the context Israel is described as returning from the nations in **verse 24**.
5. "But it moves quickly beyond anything that ever perfectly characterized the returned exiled in their postexilic history."<sup>4</sup>
6. In **verse 25** the "I" that is speaking is God. God Himself is telling readers that He Himself will spiritually cleanse His people twice:
  - a. "*I will sprinkle clean water on you*"
  - b. "*I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols*"
7. **Verse 25** makes it clear God's cleansing will be effective: "*you will be clean*"
8. According to **verse 26** God also gives a radical change of a person from within.
  - a. The Hebrew word for heart refers primarily about thoughts rather than emotions.<sup>5</sup>
  - b. The Hebrew word for spirit refers a person's attitude, disposition and motivation.<sup>6</sup>
  - c. Before God's people had a "*heart of stone.*"
  - d. Now this verse tells us that "*I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh*"
  - e. Instead God will give "*a heart of flesh*"
  - f. Not just any "*heart of flesh;*" it is both "*a new heart and ...a new spirit!*"
9. God doesn't just stop with a new heart for sinners but according to **verse 27** He places the Holy Spirit within them and the Spirit "*cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances.*" → Incredible!

### iv. Physical Resurrection and Spiritual Regeneration in **Ezekiel 37:1-14**

1. Turn to the passage and read the text.
2. This passage focuses on showing the deadness of human nature both spiritually and physically.

<sup>2</sup> Christopher Wright, *Knowing The Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 124.

<sup>3</sup> Christopher Wright, *Knowing The Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 125.

<sup>4</sup> Christopher Wright, *Knowing The Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 128.

<sup>5</sup> Christopher Wright, *Knowing The Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 128.

<sup>6</sup> Christopher Wright, *Knowing The Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 128-129.

- a. There is a repetition of the word “bones:” Eight times in **verses 1, 3, 4** (twice), **5, 7, and 11** (twice).
- b. In **verse 3a** God even asked Ezekiel: “*Son of man, can these bones live?*”
3. Even more than the word bones there is more instance of the Hebrew word *ruach* appearing in this passage. The Hebrew word appears 10 times.<sup>7</sup>
4. This section has human, natural and divine use of *Ruach*: that is, breath, wind and the Holy Spirit.<sup>8</sup>
  - a. The Holy Spirit is found in the first (**v.1**) and last reference (**v.14**)
  - b. *Ruach* is used for breath in **verses 5-6, verse 8 and 10**.
  - c. *Ruach* appears intentionally vague in **verses 9** and it can refer to the Holy Spirit or breath.
5. God commanded Ezekiel to prophesy (preach) according to **verse 4** with the explanation in **verses 5-6** that these bones will miraculously come alive.
6. As a result of Ezekiel’s preaching we see these bones coming together and flesh even forming miraculously in **verses 7-10**.
7. But there was still a problem that God made evident to Ezekiel: “*Then He said to me, ‘Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say, ‘Our bones are dried up and our hope has perished. We are completely cut off.’*” (**v.11**)→ They were still not alive in a deeper sense.
8. So God tells Ezekiel to continue to prophesy (**v.12**) about a future resurrection (**v.12-13**).
9. But God doesn’t stop there. He also promise the Spirit of God for them: “*I will put My Spirit within you and you will come to life*” (**v.14**). This is what will give them a life that is complete.
10. **Ezekiel 37:1-14** mimics **Genesis 2:7**, as if to tell us there is a New Creation after death!<sup>9</sup>
11. Jesus also echo **Ezekiel 37:1-14** in **John 20:22** by breathing on His disciples the Holy Spirit<sup>10</sup>: “*And when He had said this, He breathed on them and \*said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’*”→While this is not yet fully accomplished it is the beginning of something new.

#### v. Spirit outpouring in **Joel 2:28-32**

1. The passage: “*“It will come about after this That I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind; And your sons and daughters will prophesy, Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions. 29 “Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days. 30 “I will display wonders in the sky and on the earth, Blood, fire and columns of smoke. 31 “The sun will be turned into darkness And the moon into blood Before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. 32 “And it will come about that whoever calls on the name of the Lord Will be delivered; For on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem There will be those who escape, As the Lord has said, Even among the survivors whom the Lord calls.”* (**Joel 2:28-32**)

<sup>7</sup> Christopher Wright, *Knowing The Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 132.

<sup>8</sup> Christopher Wright, *Knowing The Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 132.

<sup>9</sup> Christopher Wright, *Knowing The Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 133.

<sup>10</sup> Christopher Wright, *Knowing The Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 134.

2. Context
  - a. In the first part of **Joel 2**, we see **Joel 2:1-11** describing God's judgment. But **verse 12** onwards gives us hope based upon when the people genuinely repent.<sup>11</sup>
  - b. **Verse 28 onwards** answer the question of how will one know that God will be "*in the midst of Israel*" mentioned in **verse 27**.
3. The sign that God will be in the midst of Israel is the outpouring of the Holy Spirit mentioned in **verses 28-32**.
4. This is incredibly Good News according to the context
  - a. Don't forget these people have just face God's punishment!
  - b. Earlier in **verse 23** God said He will pour out rain but now He pours out His Spirit!<sup>12</sup>
5. #1: The impact of the Spirit's outpouring is universal (**v.28-29**)<sup>13</sup>
  - a. In verse 28 when it says "*I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind*" literally "*all mankind*" is "*all flesh*." But the additional lines will clarify what that means.
  - b. The Spirit's outpouring will be upon men and women: "*And your sons and daughters will prophesy*" (**v.28b**)
  - c. The Spirit's outpouring will be upon old and young: "*Your old men will dream dreams, Your young men will see visions*" (**v.28c**)
  - d. The Spirit's outpouring will be upon servants both male and female: "*Even on the male and female servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days*" (**v.29**)
  - e. Whereas Moses wished all people had the Spirit in them in **Numbers 11:29** now this passage predicts that the Spirit will be for all people.<sup>14</sup>
6. #2: The impact of the Spirit's outpouring is cosmic (**v.30-31**)
  - a. God says "*I will display wonders*" (**v.30a**) that will take place all over God's creation:
    - i. "*in the sky*" (**v.30a**)
    - ii. "*on the earth*" (**v.30a**)
    - iii. "*The sun*" (**v.31a**)
    - iv. "*the moon*" (**v.31b**)
  - b. With the following phenomenon:
    - i. "*Blood, fire and columns of smoke*" (**v.30b**)
    - ii. Unusual "*darkness*" (**v.31a**)
    - iii. Turning "*into blood*" (**v.31b**)
7. #3: The impact of the Spirit's outpouring is for salvation (**v.32**)
  - a. Note it says: "*whoever calls on the name of the Lord Will be delivered;*"

e. Spirit's future work: Already or Not Yet?

<sup>11</sup> Christopher Wright, *Knowing The Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 139.

<sup>12</sup> Christopher Wright, *Knowing The Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 149.

<sup>13</sup> What follows below for this section is from Christopher Wright, *Knowing The Holy Spirit through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006), 150.

<sup>14</sup> R.C. Sproul, *The Mystery of the Holy Spirit* (Ross-shire, United Kingdom: Christian Focus Publications, 2009), 123.

- i. As we will see certain predictions about the Spirit's work beyond the Old Testament can be seen already:
  - 1. Reality of regeneration
  - 2. Cleansing of sinners
  - 3. Spirit poured out for salvation
  - 4. After Christ the pouring of the Spirit in Pentecost
- ii. Yet some things are future
  - 1. Creation being transformed
  - 2. Resurrection
- iii. A clear example of future work of the Spirit that will take place after Christ's Second Coming is the following: "*I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.*" (**Zechariah 12:10**)→What a marvel!