

PNEUMATOLOGY (30)

(Way #3) - He worked with certain individuals.

What needs to be realized from the O.T. is that not every O.T. believer received the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. As Dr. Chafer said, "Especially to be observed is the fact that there was no provision for, and no promise of, an abiding presence of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Old Testament saint. In this truth is to be seen one of the most differentiating features of the Spirit's relationship in the Mosaic age, as compared to this present age" (*Ibid.*, p. 71).

There were various O.T. ways the Spirit worked with certain individuals:

1. He worked in certain individuals.

When the preposition "in" is used in regard to the Holy Spirit's work in the O.T., it is not referring to a permanent indwelling as in the N.T. age, but rather to a special enabling for key O.T. service.

This particular preposition was used in connection to Joseph (Gen. 41:38). This text is most amazing, for it is an Egyptian idolater, Pharaoh, who unlocks a truth of which he would have known nothing about.

This particular preposition was also used in connection with Joshua (Numbers 27:18).

It was also used in connection with Daniel (Dan. 4:8; 5:11-14; 6:3). Again it will be observed that this fact is recognized by those who are heathenistic.

It may also be observed that in each instance a great leader of God is being identified. It was the Spirit of God who enabled the individual to become God's leader and it was God's Spirit who caused others to recognize this. There is a N.T. application to all of this (i.e. Acts 20:28); however, this O.T. work is not exactly the same as N.T. indwelling.

2. He came upon certain individuals.

What we may observe from both this point and the preceding one is that the Holy Spirit worked with certain O.T. believers, not all. This, as we shall see in future studies, is a critical difference between the Holy Spirit's work in the O.T. and the N.T.

In the O.T., there were many people upon whom the Spirit of God came: 1) He came upon Othniel (Judges 3:9-10); 2) He came upon Gideon (Judges 6:34); 3) He came upon Jephthah (Judges 11:29); 4) He came upon Samson (Judges 13:25; 14:5-6, 19; 16:20); 5) He came upon Saul (I Sam. 10:6, 10); 6) He came upon David (I Sam. 16:13-14); 7) He came upon Azariah (II Chron. 15:1).

It is very clear that this coming upon an individual was for a very special service. It is also clear that the coming upon an individual did not mean He would not leave (I Sam. 16:14).

As Dr. Ryrie said, "...there was not guarantee of permanent presence of the Spirit in Old Testament times" (*Basic Theology*, p. 349).

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3. He filled certain individuals.

This filling seemed to be a special O.T. enablement that would guide the craftsmen and give them ability to work on the Tabernacle. This was a special enablement to build something very special for and to God (Ex. 31:2-3; 35:31).

It may be observed that each of these O.T. ministries of the Spirit of God was directly connected to Israel. The Spirit would work in an individual so the individual could carry out a ministry to the nation (i.e. Neh. 9:20; Is. 63:10-11, 14). We may accurately conclude that in the O.T., the Spirit of God moved in and upon certain individuals in order that God might accomplish His program specifically as it pertained to His nation Israel. Just as there are many distinctions in the way God does things in the O.T. as compared to the N.T., so it is in regard to the Holy Spirit. He worked with people in the O.T., and even though there are wonderful applications to be drawn, when carefully studied the workings are not the same.

When God's program is aimed at His nation, God's Spirit will obviously work differently than when God's program is aimed at the individual. The majority of the O.T. is national and the majority of the N.T. is individual. Dr. Ryrie observed from the O.T.: "...we do not have clear revelation of the Spirit's ministry outside of Israel. ... Certainly there was no indication that the Spirit convicted the world of sin in Old Testament times (as He does now, John 16:8), and no other nations enjoyed His general presence among them as Israel did. As far as the record is concerned His ministry was to Israel and individuals in Israel" (*Ibid.*, pp. 348-349).

When it comes to the Spirit's work with Israel, we must realize that it is very distinct. There is no question that God's Spirit was present with Israel, guiding her and instructing her (Neh. 9:20). By virtue of the fact that we have already demonstrated the Spirit was involved in inspiration and revelation, we immediately recognize that the Spirit had a profound ministry of instruction. We may also observe that the Spirit was involved in punishing Israel and leading Israel (Is. 63:10-14). In fact, we may assume from this context in Isaiah, that the Holy Spirit was also involved in granting the mercies of God to Israel (Is. 63:7). These are some of the general ways the Spirit ministered to the nation Israel.

In perhaps a more specific way, as we have already observed, the Spirit singled out certain key individuals and empowered them for service. This enabled an individual to minister for God in connection with Israel (Num. 11:17, 25, 26-29). To some the Spirit gave special wisdom (Ex. 31:1-16). To some the Spirit gave special leadership and administrative ability (Deut. 34:9). To some the Spirit gave physical strength (Judges 14:19). To some the Spirit gave the ability to do special miracles and become great prophets (II Kings 2:9-15). There is no doubt that the Holy Spirit was actively involved with certain individuals in the O.T., as God was using them in conjunction with His nation, Israel.

One major difference between the Holy Spirit's work in the O.T. and the N.T. is that of eternality. Jesus Christ, Himself, said these words: "And I will ask *the Father*, and He will give you another helper, that He may be with you forever" (John 14:16). It is quite clear from Christ's statement that even though the Holy Spirit had an important and impacting ministry in the O.T., He did not have a forever indwelling ministry in the O.T. In other words, in the O.T. a person could have God's Spirit "upon" or "in" him at one time and not have Him another time.

There was no eternal indwelling ministry of the Spirit of God in O.T. times, and this is a ministry very unique to our present age.

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Much pneumatological confusion, ignorance and heresy could be resolved by simply understanding this important biblical truth. This major theological point is fully supported by the testimony of Jesus, which is really all the testimony we need, but also from the life of Samson (Judges 13:25; 16:20); from the life of Saul (I Sam. 10:10; 16:14); and from the life and prayer of David (I Sam. 16:13-14; Psalm 51:11).

Many misguided and doctrinally confused individuals use Psalm 51:11 as a proof-text for claiming one may lose his salvation and as a proof-text for claiming one needs to receive the Spirit as an experience subsequent to salvation. Those who interpret it this way fail to “rightly divide” sound doctrine when it comes to Pneumatology. In Psalm 51:11, David is asking God not to take His Spirit from him, nor cast him away from service. Saul’s sin cost Saul his kingdom and David knew that his sin could potentially do the same thing. The issue in David’s case, Samson’s case or Saul’s case is not an issue of salvation but of service in being a leader for Israel. To lose God’s Spirit meant you lost your ability to lead Israel. It did not mean you lost your salvation (N.T. salvation, as we know it, was still 1000 years away when David wrote Psalm 51). To neglect this critical pneumatological distinction between O.T. and N.T. is to fail to grasp what is “sound doctrine.”

As a footnote to the Spirit’s work in the O.T., it is clearly revealed in Ezekial 36:25-27 that eventually every Israelite will have God’s Spirit in him. This will be a unique feature when Israel is finally in her land during the Millennium (Ezekiel 36:28-38).

QUESTION #8 – How did the Holy Spirit work in the life of Jesus Christ?

When Jesus Christ came into this world, it was an unprecedented, never to be reduplicated event. Unquestionably, it was the most significant moment in world history. God’s own Son, making a personal visit to planet earth, is the greatest historical episode to ever occur. From God’s perspective, when Jesus Christ was personally here on earth, although the Father and Spirit were still carrying on their divine responsibilities universally, their primary focus was on Him. Since this is a study of the Holy Spirit, the primary intent of this section is to gain a basic, systematic understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit as He related to Jesus Christ, while Christ was on earth.

There are at least five ways in which the Holy Spirit uniquely worked in connection to Jesus Christ:

Way #1 - The Spirit was involved in Christ’s conception. Matt. 1:20; Luke. 1:35

In order for the Son of God to be born of a woman, He must first be conceived by a woman. In order for God’s Son to be born holy, He cannot be conceived by a sinful man for that would immediately give Him a sin nature. Therefore, the conception of Jesus Christ required a very unique, miraculous act, which we learn was carried out by the Holy Spirit. He was responsible for conceiving and overseeing the entire pregnancy so that the baby who was born could be classified as the sinless, holy, Son of God.

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Floyd Barackman writes: “The conception of Jesus’ human nature came about by the creative act of the Holy Spirit rather than by the agency of a man. He created of Mary’s substance a complete, sinless, human nature, which was assumed by God the Son at the time of this unique conception” (Floyd H. Barackman, *Practical Christian Theology*, p. 149).

Way #2 - The Spirit was involved in Christ’s development .

Although this specific point is nowhere stated, it is very safe and accurate to assume that the Holy Spirit was intimately involved in the development of the life of Jesus Christ. This may be assumed from the following observations: 1) The Spirit’s involvement was clearly from pregnancy to birth (Luke 1:35), therefore the Spirit’s work continued in the time development; 2) Christ’s knowledge and understanding level at age twelve indicates a unique work of the Spirit, for the Spirit is involved in giving knowledge and understanding (Lk. 2:41-42, 46-47; Eph. 1:17); 3) His continual ability to grow in favor with God, lends itself to the Spirit’s presence and work.

Again we cite Mr. Barackman, who states: “Although it is nowhere stated what Jesus’ relationship to the Holy Spirit was throughout His private life in Nazareth, we suppose that He lived by the same means as He did during His public ministry” (*Ibid.*, p. 149). As we shall demonstrate, Christ’s public ministry was definitely associated with the Holy Spirit.

Our assumption is this—We can biblically establish that the Holy Spirit was intimately connected to Jesus Christ from conception to birth. We can also biblically establish that the Holy Spirit was intimately connected to Jesus Christ during His public ministry. We can also biblically establish that Jesus Christ was very unique in His knowledge, purity and development by age twelve. We may safely assume that this development was definitely connected to the Holy Spirit.

Way #3 - The Spirit was involved in Christ’s messianic ministry .

It was the Spirit who identified and anointed Jesus Christ for this ministry (Luke 3:21-22; John 1:32). It was the Spirit, in all fullness, who protected and directed Christ (Luke 4:1, 14; John 3:34).

It was the Spirit who anointed His preaching and healing ministry (Luke 4:18-19; Acts 10:38). It was the Spirit who sanctioned Christ’s ministry to the Gentiles (Matt. 12:18-21). It was the Spirit who demonstrated Christ’s power over demons (Matt. 12:28).

There is structure in the Godhead and there are various responsibilities for each member. When Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Messiah was here on earth, the Spirit of God was critically involved with every part of His life and ministry. The entire Godhead was focused on Him.

Way #4 - The Spirit was involved in Christ’s death .

It was clearly predicted in the O.T. that the Spirit of God would be closely involved in the judicial death of the Messiah (Is. 42:1; 52:15 - 53:12). When we examine a passage like Heb. 9:14, we can certainly see that God’s Spirit was closely associated with Christ’s death.