

Pneumatology
The Doctrine of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

I. The Holy Spirit in Relation to Creation

- A. Introduction: In the Old Testament, creation is generally seen as an act of the Father but upon careful examination it is found that creation is also an undertaking of the Spirit of God, the Third Person of the Trinity. The work of the Trinity in creation seems to be that the Father originates, the Son executes, and the Holy Spirit perfects.
- B. Proofs for the Spirit's Work in Creation
1. Scripture (Gen. 1:2; Psa. 33:6 104:30; Isa. 40:12-14; Job 26:13; 33:4).
 2. Use of Elohim: Genesis 1:1 says, "In the beginning God (*Elohim*) created . . ." The word *elohim* is a plural in the Hebrew and may lay in seed form a basis for the Trinity. If so, then the Holy Spirit had a part in the original creation.
- C. Nature of the Creative Work
1. Order of Creation: The Holy Spirit in creation brought order out of chaos (Gen. 1:2), and the heavens themselves indicate the Spirit's order (Psa. 33:6).
 2. Design of Creation: The design and adornment of creation is the work of the Spirit (Job 26:13; Psa. 33:6). The Holy Spirit is behind the touch of beauty in God's universe. NOTE: The First Person is commonly regarded as the Designer in the original sense, the Second Person as the one who furthers and assists the execution of the design, and the Third Person as the One who finishes and brings to final conclusion the work of God in point.
 3. Life of Creation: The Holy Spirit probably imparts life to all creation, particularly to man (Psa. 104:30; Job 32:8; 33:4 cf. Gen. 2:7).
 4. Glory of Creation: The heavens declare the glory of God (Psa. 19:1), and since it is the Spirit's duty to bring glory to the Father and Son (John 16:14), it is reasonable to think that creation reflects God's glory through the Spirit.
 5. Preservation of Creation: Preservation is a work of the Spirit (Psa. 104:29-30).

*Creation is ordered by God in such a way as to be self-sustaining to some extent, the design of animal and plant life being such that species are self-perpetuating. Behind the outward phenomena, however, is the work of the Holy Spirit, sustaining, directing, and renewing. (Walvoord, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 43).*

II. The Holy Spirit in Relation to Indwelling

- A. Introduction: The indwelling of the Spirit in the Old Testament is not identical to the New Testament but we must never think that the Holy Spirit was not actively at work in Old Testament saints.

*Pentecost marked the beginning of certain distinctive differences, although no one should get the impression that His ministry was rare or sparse in Old Testament times. When we speak of the Spirit “coming” at Pentecost we do not mean that He was absent from the earth before then. He took up His residence in believers at Pentecost although He was present always before. (Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 41).*

- B. New Testament Teaching: Peter said that the Old Testament prophets had the Spirit of Christ in them as they searched the Scriptures concerning the salvation that would come in the person of Jesus Christ (1 Pet. 1:11). NOTE: This verse does not say every saint in the Old Testament had the Holy Spirit but it does say the prophets did.
- C. Old Testament Indicates that the Spirit was “in” Some: (1) Joseph - Gen. 41:38; (2) Joshua - Num. 27:18; and (3) Daniel - Dan. 4:8; 5:11-14; 6:3.
- D. Old Testament Indicates that the Spirit Came “upon” Some: The “coming upon” saints would not differ too much from being “in” saints, except it may show the temporary and transitory character of the Spirit’s relationship to Old Testament saints (Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29; 13:25; 1 Sam. 10:9-10; 16:13).
- E. Old Testament Indicates that the Holy Spirit Could be Removed: God withdrew His Spirit from Samson (Judges 13:25 cf. 16:20), Saul (1 Sam. 10:10 cf. 16:14) and David pleaded for God not to remove His Spirit from him (Psa. 51:11).
- F. Christ’s Teaching: Christ said to His disciples, who were still under the Old Testament economy, that the Spirit “he lives with you and will be in you” (John 14:17). This indicates that the indwelling Spirit would take on new dimensions in the disciples after the death of Christ. In fact, Christ told the disciples that the Spirit would abide with them forever (John 14:16). NOTE: There would be a permanent indwelling after Christ’s death and the coming of the Day of Pentecost.
- G. CONCLUSION: The Holy Spirit was active in the lives of believers in Israel but the indwelling was not permanent and it apparently did not come to every Old Testament saint. Thus we may conclude that it was a selective indwelling in the Old Testament.

*The Holy Spirit did have a ministry to man in the Old Testament times. Indeed, it was a bountiful ministry in many cases. However, it was limited to certain Israelites; and although He did dwell in, come upon, and sometimes fill men, He did not do these things universally or permanently, even in Israel. Too, He did not perform certain other ministries until the day of Pentecost (Ryrie, *The Holy Spirit*, p. 44).*

III. The Holy Spirit in Relation to Service

- A. Gift of Wisdom (Gen. 41:38-40; Num. 27:18; Judges 3:10).
- B. Gift of Enablement (Judges 3:10; 6:34; 11:29).
- C. Gift of Special Skills (Ex. 28:3; 31:3; 35:30-35). The tailors for the priestly garments and the workmen of the Tabernacle were filled with the Spirit.
- D. Gift of Unusual Physical Strength (Judges 13:25; 14:6; 15:14).
- E. CONCLUSION: There was a filling of the Spirit in the Old Testament but apparently this wasn’t for all saints but for those to carry out a specific service.

IV. **The Holy Spirit in Relation to the Restraint of Sin:** One of the ministries of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament was that of restraining sin. This He did from the very beginning of time (Gen. 6:3).