

Life in the Spirit

Water from Rock, February 21, 2017 Tim Smith

“Live by the Spirit.”

Galatians 5:16a

Numbers 11:4-17, 24-28

⁴ *The rabble among them had a strong craving; and the Israelites also wept again, and said, ‘If only we had meat to eat!’⁵ We remember the fish we used to eat in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic;⁶ but now our strength is dried up, and there is nothing at all but this manna to look at.’*

⁷ *Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its colour was like the colour of gum resin.*

⁸ *The people went around and gathered it, ground it in mills or beat it in mortars, then boiled it in pots and made cakes of it; and the taste of it was like the taste of cakes baked with oil.*

⁹ *When the dew fell on the camp in the night, the manna would fall with it.*

¹⁰ *Moses heard the people weeping throughout their families, all at the entrances of their tents. Then the LORD became very angry, and Moses was displeased.¹¹ So Moses said to the LORD, ‘Why have you treated your servant so badly? Why have I not found favour in your sight, that you lay the burden of all this people on me?’¹² Did I conceive all this people? Did I give birth to them, that you should say to me, ‘Carry them in your bosom, as a nurse carries a sucking child’, to the land that you promised on oath to their ancestors?’¹³ Where am I to get meat to give to all this people? For they come weeping to me and say, ‘Give us meat to eat!’¹⁴ I am not able to carry all this people alone, for they are too heavy for me.¹⁵ If this is the way you are going to treat me, put me to death at once—if I have found favour in your sight—and do not let me see my misery.’*

¹⁶ *So the LORD said to Moses, ‘Gather for me seventy of the elders of Israel, whom you know to be the elders of the people and officers over them; bring them to the tent of meeting, and have them take their place there with you.¹⁷ I will come down and talk with you there; and I will take some of the spirit that is on you and put it on them; and they shall bear the burden of the people along with you so that you will not bear it all by yourself.*

²⁴ *So Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD; and he gathered seventy elders of the people, and placed them all around the tent.²⁵ Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders; and when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do so again.*

²⁶ *Two men remained in the camp, one named Eldad, and the other named Medad, and the spirit rested on them; they were among those registered, but they had not gone out to the tent, and so they prophesied in the camp.²⁷ And a young man ran and told Moses, ‘Eldad and*

Medad are prophesying in the camp.’²⁸ And Joshua son of Nun, the assistant of Moses, one of his chosen men, said, ‘My LORD Moses, stop them!’²⁹ But Moses said to him, ‘Are you jealous for my sake? Would that all the LORD’s people were prophets, and that the LORD would put his spirit on them!’³⁰ And Moses and the elders of Israel returned to the camp.

EXAMPLES OF THE SPIRIT’S WORKING IN PEOPLE’S LIVES IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

1. The Holy Spirit came upon “judges” to lead in the rescue of His people: Othniel (Judges 3:10); Gideon (Judges 6:34); Jephthah (Judges 11:29); Samson (Judges 13:25, 14:19, 15:14).
2. The Holy Spirit came upon both king and prophet: Saul (1 Samuel 10:10; 1 Samuel 16:14); David (1 Samuel 16:13); and Ezekiel (Ezekiel 11:5).
3. See earlier notes on Job 27:3 and the Holy Spirit being in everyone’s “nostrils”.

THE OLD TESTAMENT FORETELLS THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Isaiah 44:3

*³For I will pour water on the thirsty land,
and streams on the dry ground;
I will pour my spirit upon your descendants,
and my blessing on your offspring.*

Ezekiel 36:25-27

²⁵I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. ²⁶A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you; and I will remove from your body the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷I will put my spirit within you, and make you follow my statutes and be careful to observe my ordinances.

Joel 2:28-29

*²⁸ Then afterwards
I will pour out my spirit on all flesh;
your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
your old men shall dream dreams,*

and your young men shall see visions.
²⁹ *Even on the male and female slaves,
in those days, I will pour out my spirit.*

“Joel’s dream gushes like a volcano. His visions tear the wineskins of conservatism – as we would expect the Spirit to do. The inclusion of slaves devastates the rule of order. The inclusion of women, of daughters and female slaves, obliterates the rule of men. The auspicious circle of authorized men around Moses, even maverick ones, explodes in Joel’s dream, in which the spirit is poured out upon all flesh, and no less richly upon female slaves than upon male elders.” (Jack Levinson, *Fresh Air: The Holy Spirit for an Inspired Life*)

THE GOSPELS FORETELL THE OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT

1. John the Baptist foretells the outpouring of God’s Spirit --- Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33 --- “He [Jesus] *on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.*”
2. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would be given as “*living water*” to all who thirst and come to Him in faith, and drink (John 7:37-39).
3. Jesus promised the coming of the Holy Spirit as the Paraclete, “*Helper,*” “*Advocate*”, “*Counselor*” (John 14:16-17).
4. Jesus promised the Holy Spirit would be “*in*” the believer (John 14:17).

THE BOOK OF ACTS NARRATES THE OUTPOURING OF THE SPIRIT

Acts 2:14-18

¹⁴ *But Peter, standing with the eleven, raised his voice and addressed them: ‘Men of Judea and all who live in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and listen to what I say. ¹⁵Indeed, these are not drunk, as you suppose, for it is only nine o’clock in the morning. ¹⁶No, this is what was spoken through the prophet Joel:*

¹⁷ *“In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.*

¹⁸ *Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit;
and they shall prophesy.*

“It is the unanimous conviction of the New Testament authors that Jesus inaugurated the last days or the Messianic age, and the final proof of this was the outpouring of the Spirit since this was the Old Testament promise of promises for the end-time...The whole messianic era, which stretches from the two comings of Christ, is the age of the Spirit in which his ministry is one of abundance. Is this not the significance of the verb ‘pour out’? The picture is probably of a heavy tropical rainstorm, and seems to illustrate the generosity of God’s gift of the Spirit (neither a drizzle or even a shower but a downpour), its finality (for what has been poured out cannot be gathered again) and its universality (widely distributed among the different groupings of humankind). Peter goes on to stress the universality. *All people* (pasa sarx, ‘all flesh’, v. 17a), means not everybody irrespective of their inward readiness to receive the gift, but everybody regardless of their outward status. There are still spiritual conditions for receiving the Spirit, but there are no social distinctions whether of sex (*Your sons and daughters*, 17b), or of age (*your young men...your old men*, 17c), or of rank (*even my servants, both men and women*, 18 --- who are not just servants, as in the Hebrew, but whom God dignifies as belonging to him). (John Stott, *The Message of Acts*)

1. Pentecost marks the beginning of the final chapter of world history before Christ’s return to rescue humanity and the world. Pentecost also marks the outpouring the Holy Spirit and the great enlarging of the Spirit’s ministry and the experience of being alive to God.
2. Through the Holy Spirit all believers are made not only priests and kings (1 Peter 2:9-10; Revelation 1:5-6), but also prophets.
3. “Prophesying” in the Bible is applied to all speaking under the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit, and not merely to foretelling events. See *Strong’s Concordance*: [prophecy] “involves divinely-empowered *forthtelling* (asserting the mind of God) or *foretelling* (prediction).”
4. The apostle Paul says of prophesying: “*those who prophesy speak to other people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation*” (1 Corinthians 14:3).