

# The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity. He is active throughout all of Biblical History. He is mentioned from Genesis chapter 1 through Revelation 22. Without the Holy Spirit there would be no creation, consequently there would be no physical life and no human race.

There are places throughout scripture where He is more prominent than in others, the book of Acts would be good example of this but nevertheless He is always a vital part of God's activity whether it be in creation, the leading of the Jewish patriarchs, the leading of Israel or the establishment of the church and its ongoing ministries. In short, He is a vital Person who works with and in conjunction with the Father and the Son in all of their activities in whom we ought to be extremely interested. The Hebrew word for Spirit is "ruach" which means wind or breath.



## The Spirit in Creation

We encounter the Holy Spirit right at the beginning of the Bible in the creation account recorded in Genesis 1.



[Gen 1:1](#) In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

[Gen 1:2](#) And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

Here we see the Spirit cooperating with the Father and the Son in creating the universe. (We know from John 1:3, Col. 1:6 and other verses that the Son was active in creation). All three Persons of the Godhead are active in creation, the psalmist says :

[Psa 104:30](#) Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.

[Psa 33:6](#) By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

The word for breath here in the KJV is the Hebrew word ruwach meaning Spirit. In order to say the word ruwach it is necessary to breath out as you say it. This makes it an onomatopoeic word in that the word sounds like what it is.

Another example is the word "boom," its meaning is what it sounds like.

So the Spirit of God is directly active in the creation account and in cooperation with the Father and the Son. In Gen 1:2 we read that the Spirit "moved" upon the face of the waters. This "moving" can be described as fluttering or shaking in this context. Morris describes this shaking as vibrating, "In modern scientific terminology, the best translation would be "vibrated" If the universe is to be energized, there must be a Prime Mover." (1976, 52) He goes on to say,

As the outflowing energy from God's omnipresent Spirit began to flow outward and to permeate the cosmos, gravitational forces were activated and water and earth particles came together to form a great sphere moving through space. Other such particles would soon come together also to form sun, moon and the stars throughout the universe. There was now a "compass" on the face of the deep, and the formless earth had assumed the beautiful form of a perfect sphere. It was now ready for light and heat and other forms of enlivening energy.

Later in scripture we will read of the Spirit "moving" on the prophets as they recorded the Word of God (2 Pet. 1:20-21). It is amazing that the Holy Spirit with His incomprehensible colossal power and Majesty can also gently prompt His prophets to utter the Word of God. ("Speak softly but carry a big stick"! Theodore Roosevelt).

## The Spirit in Israel

Although the Holy Spirit is not mentioned directly with the Abraham, Isaac and Jacob we can be sure that He was working in their lives as they began the process of building the nation of Israel. We know from Genesis 41:38 that Pharaoh recognized that the Spirit of God was in Joseph.

[Gen 41:38](#) And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?

When it came to the building of the Tabernacle in Israel, God told Moses that He had chosen Bezalel and Oholiab and He filled them with the Spirit of God. This was for the practical work necessary for the construction of the Tabernacle and for all the equipment and furnishing including the clothing for the priests to use in their ministry.

[Exo 31:3](#) And I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship.

It seems probable that supernatural help was required to make all the items for the Tabernacle. Horton says

"This filling of the Spirit would be the source of "skill, ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts" In other words, the Spirit would supply them with supernatural help in connection with the practical tasks of preparing materials for the tabernacle that would be both useful and beautiful. "Skill" in the First Testament usually includes practical wisdom that makes it possible to reach one's goals. "Ability," also translated "understanding," usually includes "know-how" that sees what needs to be done and how best to do it. All this came from the Spirit. Bezalel and Oholiab were not to depend on their natural abilities and skills alone. They would still need to work hard, but at the same time they would depend on the Spirit and receive help from Him (2005, 26).

These comments are important for us today. We still need to be working in partnership with the Holy Spirit to do all that our Lord has called us to do, not in our own strength but in Him as He gives us the ability.

[Zec 4:6](#) Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.

Moses was a man of the Spirit and God took the Spirit that was on him and put it on seventy elders to help Moses in leading Israel. (Num. 11:17). Joshua was also a man filled with the Spirit of God and wisdom, (Deut 34:9) he was able to lead the Israelites to great victories in the Promised Land. The book of Judges tells us several times that the Spirit came on various people in order to lead Israel. They include Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson. Later in scripture we read that when the Spirit came on Saul he would be changed into another man (1Sam 10:6) where upon he began to prophecy along with the other prophets of Israel. So there is the sense in the First Testament that whenever God would use a person for great leadership roles, the Spirit of God would come upon them. Also, the Spirit desired to lead them in the way of righteousness. David was very conscious of losing the presence of the Spirit after his sin of adultery with Bathsheba. Psalm 51 shows his anguish over this possibility.

[Psa 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.](#)

[Psa 51:11 Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.](#)

[Psa 51:12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.](#)

## The Spirit and the Prophets

Even though the Holy Spirit is not often mentioned in the prophetic books of the First Testament we can be sure that they were indeed very active in their various ministries as we read in 2 Peter :

[2 Pet 1:20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.](#)

[2 Pet 1:21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.](#)

Stamps explains, “The O.T. prophets were men and women of God who towered spiritually over their contemporaries. No category of people in all literature presents a more dramatic picture than do the O.T. prophets. Priests, judges, kings, wise counselors, and psalmists each had a distinctive place in Israel’s history, but none of these ever rose to the stature of the prophets or continued to exert as much influence on the subsequent history of redemption” (1992, 1002).

If we include Moses as a First Testament prophet, as we should, then two thirds of the First Testament was written by these mighty men of God empowered by the Spirit of God according to 2 Peter 1:20-21 stated above.

Clearly, the Spirit gave the prophets of Israel the very Word of God as they ministered to the nation. God used the prophet to urge and correct the nation to remain faithful to the covenant. The prophet was not just a religious person, he was one of whom the Spirit and the Word had influenced him to such an extent that they often lived a very distinctive lifestyle. They were often very unpopular with the priests of the day because of their unbending call to repentance and opposition to idolatry, immorality and corruption.

A prophet sometimes had a unique appearance. Elijah was known for wearing “a garment of hair and had a leather belt around his waist” (2 Kings 1:8). Elijah’s mantle that he left for Elisha was also seen as a symbol of the prophetic office (2 Kings 2:13–14). God told Ezekiel to shave his head and beard (Ezekiel 5:1). Other prophets were set apart in other ways: Jeremiah, for example, was told he could not marry (Jeremiah 16:2); Hosea was told to marry a prostitute (Hosea 1:2). All prophets were recognized as those through whom God spoke (even if their message was not welcome).

A prophet often led a hard life. Isaiah was sent to a people “ever hearing, but never understanding” (Isaiah 6:9), and (according to tradition) he was eventually murdered for his efforts. Ezekiel ministered to “a rebellious people” (Ezekiel 12:2). The queen of Israel sought to take Elijah’s life (1 Kings 19:2). Jeremiah was thrown into a cistern, where he “sank down into the mud” (Jeremiah 38:6). ([www.gotquestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org))

Also, the Spirit spoke through the prophet in terms of revealing the Will of God. The prophetic writings are full of God’s intentions regarding the coming of The Son of God and the Kingdom of God. Joel also predicted the dramatic and powerful increase of the Spirit’s work in the life of the believers from the Day of Shavuot onwards. They also gave predictions on the future of various nations in history and on future world events. Obadiah is a classic example, the entire book is a prophecy on the future of the Edomites and Jonah is concerned with the Ninevites. Daniel is regarded as crucial reading with respect to Revelation and eschatology in general.

Isaiah, more than all the other First Testament prophets gives us the clearest example of Messianic predictions. He is sometimes called the “evangelical prophet” because his prophecies in chapters 52 and 53 concerning the Messiah are the most vivid in all of the First Testament.

## The Holy Spirit and Messiah

As the Second Testament opens we see a dramatic increase in spiritual activity in the scriptures with the coming of the Jewish Messiah. Even His conception in the womb was by the power of the Holy Spirit. At His baptism by John the Immerser, the Spirit descended upon Him like a dove (Mat 3:16). John remarked that Yeshua would baptize people with the Holy Spirit and fire. The Gospels record the Spirit descending on Yeshua like a dove. He was led, full of the Spirit into the desert where He resisted the devil, (Luke 4:1). Afterwards, Yeshua returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, (Luke 4:16). He went to Nazareth and on the Sabbath He read from the scroll of Isaiah as follows :

[Isa 61:1 The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;](#)  
[Isa 61:2 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD.](#)

So we see that it was the Spirit that enabled Yeshua to carry out all of His ministry and Isaiah spoke of the sevenfold spirit that would rest on Messiah Yeshua :

Isa 11:2 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him-- the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD—

Indeed, because of His humanness throughout His life on earth He needed to be full of the Holy Spirit to fulfill the work of His ministry. Stamps comments on this, “ It was only as a Spirit anointed man that Jesus could live, serve and proclaim the gospel (Acts 10:38). In this He is a perfect example for the Christian ; each believer should receive the fullness of the Holy Spirit.” (1992. 1550)

## The Holy Spirit at Shavuot

After the completeness of Yeshua’s life and earthly ministry and His ascension back to the Father, His promise of the baptism in the Spirit came to pass on the day of Shavuot. This marks a wonderful and dramatic upsurge of the Spirit’s work and influence in the life of the believer. Generally speaking, in the First Testament we read of the Spirit coming on people for specific events or circumstances and only for limited periods of time. But after the astonishing baptism of the apostles in Jerusalem which fulfilled the prophecy of Joel 2:28-29, we see the Spirit of God coming to reside within the believer in such a way as to empower him for a life of service and as a deposit for greater things to come.

2 Cor 5:5 Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.



### The Gifts of the Spirit.

As the church began to grow and expand in all of the work of the ministry the Holy Spirit began to empower people for service in the Body of Christ. Paul’s letters to the Church’s in Rome, Corinth and at Ephesus give us invaluable insight into how these gifts are described and some of the ways they are intended to be used. The chart below shows the five places in scripture where we find the gifts of the Spirit and the various ministries for the building up of the Body of Believers and for it’s ongoing government.

Romans 12:6-8	1 Corinthians 12:8-10	1 Corinthians 12:28	1 Corinthians 12:29,30	Ephesians 4:11
Prophecy	Wisdom	Apostles	Apostles	Apostles
Serving	Knowledge	Prophets	Prophets	Evangelists
Teaching	Faith	Teachers	Teachers	Prophets
Encouraging	Healing	Miracles	Miracles	Pastors
Contributing	Miracles	Healing	Healing	Teachers
Leadership	Prophecy	Helps	Tongues	
Governing	Discernment	Administrators	Interpretation	
Mercy	Tongues	Tongues		
	Interpretation.			

These gifts and ministries are given by the Holy Spirit as He wills. A person may operate in more than one of these areas. Some may have a particular ministry in one area but also may operate in others as well. Some people may be described as having the “office” of a particular gift but may also minister in others at times. These gifts are in no particular order that we may place more importance on one over another but Paul encourages people to “follow the way of love and eagerly desire the spiritual gifts especially the gift of prophecy.”

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