

2. The Holy Spirit in The Old Testament

Opening question

Following last week's discussion, how would you describe the Holy Spirit to someone?

Reminder: the Spirit is God

Read out these verses which show the Spirit's divine nature and power in the Old Testament:

- He creates, Genesis 1:2, Psalm 33:6
 - He gives life, Psalm 104:30
 - He is holy, Psalm 51:11
 - He is the presence of God and He is everywhere, Psalm 139:7
 - He inspired the writing of the Old Testament, 2 Peter 1:20-21, Acts 1:16
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Fact check and discussion: what the Spirit does in the Old Testament

Arrange people in groups and give them each group some of the references below to find and read. Ask them to report to the rest of the group what the Spirit is said to do, and what that could look like for us today:

- Genesis 41:38-40
- Exodus 31:2-5
- Numbers 11:24-30
- Numbers 24:2-4
- Deuteronomy 34:9
- Judges 14:5-6
- 1 Samuel 16:1,13
- 1 Chronicles 12:18
- 2 Chronicles 24:20
- Psalm 143:10
- Ezekiel 8:3
- Zechariah 4:6

Prophecy (speaking on God's behalf) is the most commonly-mentioned result of the Spirit's work in the Old Testament. All the instances above describe the Spirit empowering men but there are records of female prophets who would have received the Spirit too (Exodus 15:20, Judges 4:4, 2 Kings 22:14, Isaiah 8:3).

Discussion

How should the words used in the Old Testament for experiencing the Spirit impact our expectation of meeting with Him?

- Filled (Exodus 31:3)
- Rested upon (Numbers 11:25-26)
- Clothed (Judges 6:34)
- Poured out (Joel 2:28)

Prophetic hope: the Anointed One, and the Spirit for all

Ask: does anyone know what “Christ” means?

There are two great hopes related to the Spirit in the Old Testament:

1. The coming of the anointed one.
 2. The giving of the Spirit to all God’s people.
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1. Anointing with oil, which is symbolically linked to the Spirit, was done to people who had the key roles of priests, prophets, and kings (Exodus 30:30, 40:15, 1 Kings 1:39, 19:16). The prophet Isaiah spoke of a future anointed one in whom all God’s purposes would ultimately be achieved (Isaiah 11:1-9, 42:1-4, 61:1-3). The Hebrew word for “anointed one” is “Messiah”, which in Greek is “Christ”. Jesus declared that He is the fulfilment of this great promise (Luke 4:16-21, Mark 8:29). BibleProject’s video, [“The Messiah”](#) explores this.
 2. In almost every instance of the Spirit’s work in the Old Testament (see above), it’s a particular person, at a particular time, for a particular task. Part of the Messiah’s role was to inaugurate the promised age when the Spirit would be given freely to all. Read the promises in Isaiah 44:3, Ezekiel 36:26-27, 39:29, Joel 2:28-29.

Pray together

Thank God for His faithfulness in fulfilling His promises and ask Him to meet with each person in the group. The Old Testament tells us of people receiving the Spirit through people laying their hands on, so do this for each other. Ask for a greater understanding of who He is, and for more encounters with Him.

To reflect on during the week

How might you be encouraged, or discouraged, by the long wait for the Spirit to be given to all. Are you confident that God wants to give you the Spirit?