

Series: The Gift of the Holy Spirit

The Spirit of God in the Old Testament Part Two

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Dr. Mary Craig

Mary Craig Ministries, Inc.



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We continue our study of the Spirit of God in the Old Testament, looking at the time from Moses to David.

The Spirit of God is not mentioned in all of the Book of Joshua, though Joshua himself was full of the spirit of wisdom (Deut. 34:9). When Joshua died, certain elders outlived him and with that we find indications of a great change.

In the Book of Judges, we find a period of decline. The Spirit of God came upon men supernaturally gifted and raised up for the deliverance of Israel. From time to time the people did evil in the sight of the Lord; they were delivered into the hand of some of the neighboring nations. Then they repented and cried out unto the LORD; and then a bold leader was raised up by the Spirit of God to deliver them.

This is the pattern of REBELLION – REPENTANCE – DELIVERANCE – RENEWAL, that God uses to make His point. Repentance and deliverance continue as processes throughout our lives. It is God's grace of repentance and His faithfulness to turn our hearts back to Him that brings renewal. 2 Timothy 2:25, 26; 2 Timothy 3:16, 17.

Always remember that repentance is a gift. It is not enough just to sin and ask forgiveness for sin; we must also seek God for repentance, as a lifestyle. 1 John 1:9. And remember, the indictment of God and judgment precede deliverance.

Back to the time of the Judges...The Spirit of the LORD came upon Othniel, and he judged Israel (Judges 3:10). He came upon Gideon (Judges 6:3, 4), upon Jephtha (Judges 11:29), upon Samson (Judges 14:19). When the Spirit of the LORD came upon these deliverers, war was waged successfully on the oppressing nations. The Holy Spirit authored all those gifts which these deliverers received. These gifts were intellectual as well as spiritual, and kindled in them valor and courage. What they did redounded to God's glory to break the yoke of the oppressor, when the purposes of God's discipline were served. (2 Corinthians 10: 3-6) One after another was raised up by the Spirit of God to deliver Israel, but the sad note of the time of the Judges was that everyone did what was right in his own eyes.

The natural man with his perverted mindset and paradigms of his own making, spins like a gyroscope and leans away from God's true north like the leaning Tower of Pisa. Spiritual things are discerned spiritually by the mind of Christ, by our seeking the mind of the Spirit, and pursuing a walk led by the Holy Spirit on the straight path. (1 Corinthians 2:9-16)

During Samuel's time, revival appears. Samuel marks the transition from the time of the Judges to the time of the Kings. Samuel walked with reformatory zeal and power. The nation had forgotten the Law, lost true conceptions of God, sensualized the worship of God, and became enfeebled by false religion and vice. Samuel delivered the nation, bringing it to a period of flourishing.

From a young boy, Samuel heard the Voice of the Almighty. He was born as a response to his mother's prayers. He typifies Christ in growing in favor both with the LORD and with men. (1 Samuel 2:26). Yet he was raised by Eli. 1 Samuel chapter 2 tells us of the LORD's intent to replace the unfaithful priest with one who would be faithful. (1 Samuel 2:34-36)

Samuel ministered unto the LORD before Eli. God wasn't speaking much during this time; "the word of the LORD was precious in those days; no open vision." (1 Samuel 3:1)

Samuel responded to the clear call of the LORD, and ironically, it was Eli who told Samuel how to respond to the Voice of God. Samuel obeyed, even when the prophetic word turned against Eli and Eli's house. Of Samuel, we read, "And Samuel grew, and the LORD was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground." Everyone knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the LORD.

Samuel encountered one theophany after another. The spirit of prophecy filled Samuel in an unusual way. An order or school of prophets arose. A whole line of prophets arose, not in a succession like the priesthood, but in a succession of a higher order.

The prophet required the inspiration, guidance, and, in the writing of Scripture, the superintending influence of the Holy Spirit. He personally represented the cause of God and viewed historical events of every type relative to the Covenant Lord and His Law. Whatever the Voice of the Almighty spoke, whether proclamation of warnings and woes or the burden of the LORD, the prophet spoke to whomever he was ordered by the Holy Spirit to speak. The impulse of the Spirit of God animated and enlightened him. The prophet speaks for God.

George Smeaton in his book on the Holy Spirit says this:

"The Lord Jesus by the Spirit, dispensed by anticipation for the purposes of His kingdom, on the ground of the future atonement, revealed Himself to their spirit, moving them to speak and act, and also to write...It was not according to their will that they either spoke or continued silent...they simply obeyed as the Spirit acted on each prophetic mind at His pleasure, using all those peculiar gifts or aptitudes with which He had endowed the different individuals for the end He had in view." (2 Peter 1:21; 2 Kings 9:7). The prophet is a man of the Spirit. He felt himself apprehended by the Spirit (Hosea 9:7), and a discretionary commission was never entrusted to him."

These prophets to whom the word of the LORD came were watchmen and shepherds. They represented the spiritual elements of the kingdom of God. They emphasized the fear of God (1 Samuel 15:22). The kings often leaned on an arm of flesh, but the prophets counseled trust in the God of Israel. They did not guess the divine will and did not foretell future events at their own discretion. (Jeremiah 11:18, e.g.; Daniel 2:19, 30). They spoke not out of their own wisdom but by the Holy Spirit, the spirit of wisdom and revelation. (Isaiah 42:9). The power of prophecy was not a constant or uninterrupted gift. The Spirit of God was the personal agent of prophecy, the spirit of prophecy. The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of God, the Spirit of the Father, is God.

The Spirit of God, the Holy Spirit is consubstantial, or co-existing, with God Himself. He possesses divine intelligence, omnipotence, and omnipresence. All the prophecies are uniformly spoken of as the immediate act of God Himself. He is a Person distinct from

the persons of the prophets. The Spirit of God is not a virtue or excellency of the human spirit which is to be sought and obtained from God. The Spirit of God is the Personal Creative Spirit of the One, True, and Living God.



Now let's speak some about the Voice of the Almighty.

God brought Samuel on the scene at a time when **“There was no open vision.”** God was calling Samuel, but he did not yet know the LORD [Covenant Lord], neither was the word of the LORD yet revealed unto him. Then Eli, the priest, instructed Samuel on how to respond. It may seem

odd that God had Eli to be the one to instruct Samuel, inasmuch as Eli and his sons had corrupted the priesthood and would fall under the judgment of God. But in this way, God restored Eli. We learn from Eli's instruction that to hear the Voice of God one must be quiet and listen.

Perhaps we imagine that we would personally like to hear the Voice of the Almighty, but let's consider. It is the Holy Spirit who gives breath to the Word (Jesus Christ) of God (the Father as Source). The “three-in-one” speaks. Job 40:9; Psalm 29:3; Revelation 14:2. Here's a small sampling of what the Voice of the Almighty sounds like:

Exodus 19:16, 19 – **¹⁶On the morning of the third day there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud on the mountain and a very loud trumpet blast, so that all the people in the camp trembled. ¹⁷Then Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet God, and they took their stand at the foot of the mountain. ¹⁸Now Mount Sinai was wrapped in smoke because the Lord had descended on it in fire. The smoke of it went up like the smoke of a kiln, and the whole mountain trembled greatly. ¹⁹And as the sound of the trumpet grew louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him in thunder. ESV**

Psalm 29:3-9 – **³The voice of the Lord is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the Lord, over many waters. ⁴The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty. ⁵The voice of the Lord breaks the cedars; the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon. ⁶He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox. ⁷The voice of the Lord flashes forth flames of fire. ⁸The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness; the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh. ⁹The voice of the Lord makes the deer give birth and strips the forests bare, and in his temple all cry, “Glory!” ESV**

Isaiah 30:30-32 -- **³⁰And the Lord will cause his majestic voice to be heard and the descending blow of his arm to be seen, in furious anger and a flame of devouring fire, with a cloudburst and storm and hailstones. ³¹The Assyrians will be terror-stricken at the voice of the Lord, when he strikes with his rod. ³²And every stroke of the appointed staff that the Lord lays on them will be to the sound of tambourines and lyres. Battling with brandished arm, he will fight with them. ESV**

Revelation 1:10; 4:1; 14:2 -- Revelation 1:10 and 4:1 describe the Voice of the Lord as being like a loud trumpet. Revelation 14:2, 3a: **²And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps, ³and they were singing a new song before the throne...ESV**

Many times we read of people to whom the Word of the LORD came in the Old Testament. What does it mean, “to whom the Word of the LORD came”? God the Father sends the Word to which the breath of God, the Holy Spirit, gives Voice.

The Voice of God has the definite article. The Voice of God is in the creation, speaking of His existence. The Voice of God is in His Word, expounds what we need. The Voice of God is in His prophets and apostles. The Voice of God is in His ministry—if His prophets and apostles speak in agreement with the Voice of His Word. Jesus says in John 6:63: It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. It is of high importance that we not reject the Word of God. The written Word of God informs our experience. The written Word of God is the measure of what any person believes he/she has heard from the Godhead. It is the Standard, the foundational structure. The Spirit of Prophecy is the testimony of Jesus.

There is a connection between “voice,” “words,” and “power.” (Deut. 4:32-36). In Psalm 29, the powerful, reverberating sound of thunder is used as a metaphor for the power of God’s spoken Word. When we look at Jeremiah 7:23, 24 and Zephaniah 3:2, we find that God commanded Israel to obey His Voice. The prophet functions as a vehicle to sound the Voice of God and His words. There are consequences for failing to obey the Voice of God (John 5:25).

Jesus is the Good Shepherd. His sheep hear His voice and follow Him. Those who believe, belong. Those who belong, believe. Sheep can distinguish the voice of their shepherd. Are we listening?

Finally, we mention 1 John 4:1-6. We must test and discern the voices we hear. If we hear a voice, how can we identify that voice as the Voice of the Almighty? Personally, I say out loud, “Voice, identify yourself, your source.” One time I heard cackling and then, “Had you going there for a while.” It was a counterfeit voice. Another time, I heard, “I am your soul; you are killing me.” I said, “Good. For the soul that sins will surely die.” Ezekiel 18:20. (The soul that lives is a born-out-of-God one, born again (John 3; 1 John 2:29; 1 John 3:9, 10.) Discern the Voice! God’s Voice will always agree with God’s Word.

Hebrews 12:18-24 -- For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest ¹⁹and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. ²⁰For they could not endure the order that was given, “If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.” ²¹Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.” ²²But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, ²³and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, ²⁴and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. ESV

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Mary Craig, D. Min.



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