

Men Moved by the Holy Spirit of God

“No prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.”

—II Peter 1:21, New American Standard Bible

THE WONDERFUL WORD OF

God has been very carefully and beautifully recorded by men who had been especially chosen for the task many centuries ago. The earliest chapters of the Bible include accounts that were written

during the very dawning of human creation. Men of faith wrote as they were being moved by the Holy Spirit of God. They often wrote about the plans and purposes of God that were meant to be hidden from the worldly-wise. Types and symbols were thus used to conceal what would otherwise be the more apparent features, as well as future events that were prophesied concerning the long-term plans and purposes of our loving Heavenly Father.

The Bible records certain events that spanned long centuries of time, yet they were often concentrated into a few brief verses or chapters. If this practice had not been followed the Bible would be

so voluminous and unwieldy that because of its sheer size and weight, interested Christian men and women might be reluctant to delve into its accounts and prophecies in an effort to obtain meaning and understanding of its teachings.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD

The Bible, in itself, is a difficult book for the casual reader to understand, and it was meant to be written in this manner as revealed by the Apostle Paul in his epistle to the brethren at Rome. In his letter, he referred to the inspired words of the prophet which had been written many years before, saying, “(According as it is written [Isa. 6:9], God hath given them the spirit of slumber [remorse, *Marginal Translation*], eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day.” (Rom. 11:8) Among the household of faith, and particularly with those who will be faithful members of the body of Christ, however, God’s Word has not been kept secret. These consecrated Christians have partaken of the same Holy Spirit that was used to enlighten those who long ago wrote as they were also being moved by the marvelous Spirit of God.

Our minds may thus become in harmony and in tune with theirs, and our thoughts may also run along the same lines of Truth. Our eyes see, our ears hear spiritual things, and we are thereby given the blessing to catch a glimpse of the Divine plans and purposes of God. When the Lord’s people read and meditate upon the Scriptures, they become enlightened by the same Truth and the same thought process that has been set in motion and in which marvelous truths are revealed. Our mentalities respond

and are likewise quickened and illuminated by the same Holy Spirit which inspired those who recorded the original written Word of God.

With the Holy Spirit of God, the scriptural record that may be under consideration has taken on new beauty, detail, and dimension. The account becomes more clear, alive, and meaningful to us, and the gaps of understanding are often filled in. The procedure may be likened to a small and compact flower bud, although exquisite in its original beauty, may before our very eyes open and expand into a more magnificent and fragrant blossom with outstanding dimensions of perfection and beauty.

It is therefore possible that a single verse of scripture that is already eloquent in its own simplicity may, when it is meditated upon with the Holy Spirit of Truth, assume new and inspiring dimensions and proportions of marvelous understanding. This becomes a never-ending process as we devote our lives to the study and meditation of the wonderful Word of God. There appears to be no limit to the treasures and gems of the Scriptures with their many and various levels of understanding and depth of meaning. Long ago someone wrote the familiar words of a hymn that well express this inspiring thought, "Tis a mine aye deeper too, than can mortal ever go. Search we may for many years, still some new, rich gem appears."

BAPTISM OF THE SPIRIT

The Holy Spirit of God was manifest in a wonderful way when our dear Lord Jesus was baptized with the Holy Spirit at the Jordan River. John the Baptist was used of God to perform the physical

lowering of Jesus into the water, and then raising him up again. The Holy Spirit of the Heavenly Father then came upon him when he was lifted up out of the waters. In his Gospel record, Matthew records the inspiring scene. "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. 3:13-17) This account is also recorded in Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-23, and John also bore record in John 1:32-34. John the Baptist was a witness to this powerful event, but Jesus had received the Holy Spirit of baptism and Truth from his Heavenly Father.

CHURCH RECEIVES THE SPIRIT

We learn that Jesus' followers would also be baptized with the Spirit of God. "John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." (Acts 1:5, *New American Standard Bible*) He promised this blessing shortly before he ascended to the Father after his resurrection, and it was fulfilled at Pentecost. "Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you

both see and hear.” (chap. 2:33, *NASB*) The disciples merely saw and heard an outward indication of that which had occurred inwardly.

GENTILES RECEIVE THE SPIRIT

Cornelius became the first Gentile believer to receive the Holy Spirit. This took place later when Peter was preaching the Word of God and speaking about Jesus’ baptism. “While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who were listening to the message. All the circumcised believers who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.”—chap. 10:44,45, *NASB*

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit that came upon the little group of Gentile believers gave assurance to all who were not Jewish that they, too, had received the special blessing which was promised to be given to all who follow our Lord Jesus. This is an important factor associated with the bringing forth of the New Creation in Christ Jesus. As further evidence to this fact, the Apostle Paul said, “By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many.”—I Cor. 12:13,14

INCLINING UNTO WISDOM

Solomon, who was the author of the Bible’s marvelous collection of proverbs, has addressed the reality of this most enlightening and blessed position before God. He writes, “My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and

apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice [givest thy voice, *Marginal Translation*] for understanding; If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the LORD, and find the knowledge of God.”—Prov. 2:1-5

In these wonderful verses of scripture are found the meaningful purpose for meditation, understanding, and spiritual direction that can be found nowhere else in recorded history. For this assurance, we praise our loving and eternal Heavenly Father who has promised to give his children the Holy Spirit of understanding and peace concerning his everlasting plans and purposes for his human creation.

SERVANTS OF GOD

The Apostle Paul has also provided us with valuable information concerning those of the fallen race of mankind whom the Lord has raised up for the very purpose of strengthening and uplifting the body of Christ. He explains that this is given for their meditation and understanding in the Word of the most high God.

Those who are responding to this very special High Calling in Christ Jesus during this present Gospel Age have been given much help in the way of wisdom and understanding. In this connection the apostle wrote, “He gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge (Continued on page 35)

(Continued from page 31) of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature [age, *Marginal Translation*] of the fulness of Christ.”—Eph. 4:11-13

SPIRITUAL GROWTH

It is evident that Paul was writing about God’s design for the encouragement and spiritual development of his people. There is also a further and most important purpose as Paul indicates. “That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ.” (vss. 14, 15) The importance of pure doctrines that have been given especially to the household of faith is clearly stressed.

The child of God is strengthened and enlightened by the Holy Spirit that comes from on high. They will thereby experience Christian growth and development by the wonderful workings of the Spirit of God. We read further, “From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.”—vs. 16

A CALLED-OUT CLASS

During this present Gospel Age our loving Heavenly Father has been calling out from the world of mankind a very special class of Christian people, and for a very specific purpose. Jesus explained to

his followers, "If you were of the world, the world would love its own; but because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, because of this the world hates you." (John 15:19, *NASB*) All of Jesus' true disciples are of this chosen class. These constitute the true church of Christ.

Mankind in general possess a different heart attitude than do those who are presently being drawn and separated from the world by God into his church class. In God's great wisdom and purpose, the High Calling in Christ Jesus is therefore limited to those who hunger and thirst for truth and righteousness. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets [Isa. 54:13], And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."—John 6:44,45

CALLED TO BE SAINTS

The Apostle Paul addressed the brethren at Corinth in a very special way. He wrote, "To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints [holy ones, *Marginal Translation*] by calling, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours."—I Cor. 1:2, *NASB*

The apostle here wrote that these brethren were called 'saints.' This is indeed a very special calling, and it continues to go out to the Lord's people during this entire Gospel Age. The word saint, as it is used in this scripture, means that which is sacred, pure, or blameless. The margin thus translates saints

as the ‘holy ones.’ The consecrated New Creature in Christ is walking in a new way of holiness. (Rom. 6:4) Also, the word holy has the significance of being whole, entire, and lacking nothing. We thus appreciate the deeper meaning and beauty of the Apostle Peter’s words. “As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written [Lev. 11:44], Be ye holy; for I am holy.”—I Pet. 1:15,16

BEING MADE RIGHT

As members of the fallen human race, we are not holy and we need to be cleansed of sin. However, God has arranged that special provisions be made for the Lord’s people to be made right during this Gospel Age. It is accomplished through their faith in the merit of Jesus’ sacrifice that was given on their behalf. During Christ’s future kingdom of righteousness and peace, Jesus’ sacrificial blood will also be applied on behalf of the whole world of mankind.

Only those who have been called out from the present world of sin and death may be justified because of their faith. The apostle explains, “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.”—Rom. 5:1,2

God has been very loving and sympathetic toward his people. He has provided us with a Redeemer, and has covered our many blemishes with the robe of Christ’s righteousness. We are continually surrounded by the spirit of the world and we must keep very close to the Lord to counteract its degrading spirit.

THE SPIRIT'S WITNESS

The Holy Spirit of God is a witness that we are his children, and in his letter to the brethren at Rome, Paul said, "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."—Rom. 8:16,17

Nothing could be more important to the Lord's people during this Gospel Age calling in Christ than to be assured of their sonship. Furthermore, that God has truly begotten us through the Holy Spirit of his Word of Truth to be of his house of sons. It is not unusual for the Lord's people to desire his approval. If doubts do arise, it is likely due to some misunderstanding of the manner in which the Holy Spirit witnesses to us concerning our relationship as sons.

The witness of the Holy Spirit comes to us through God's Holy Word, and it is the Spirit-inspired Word of Truth. This reveals to Jesus' followers what their true course should be during their Christian walk. It is essential that we examine ourselves to see that we have taken the proper steps of consecration in order to have the Lord accept and bless us. If we have done this, by presenting ourselves to him, then we have this very important evidence and witness of the Spirit in our lives.

SEALED BY THE SPIRIT

The Apostle Paul, when writing to the brethren at Ephesus about the followers of our Lord being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, said, "In whom

ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.”—Eph. 1:13,14

The sealing has thus guaranteed the fulfillment of what has been agreed upon until the full inheritance is realized. Those who have been called out from the world and have come under the baptism of the Holy Spirit constitute the purchased possession.

In addressing this inheritance of the faithful followers of Christ, the Apostle Peter further described this wonderful inheritance—“An inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you [for us, *Marginal Translation*], Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (I Pet. 1:4,5) This promise has been secured by the Holy Spirit and power of God.

GRIEVE NOT THE SPIRIT

Therefore, the child of God is admonished, “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.” (Acts 20:28, *NASB*) The Lord’s people must be alert and continue to keep their fallen human nature under control.

Paul says, “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." (Eph. 4:29-32) We praise our loving Heavenly Father for his wonderful grace, and that he has forgiven our inherited sins, weaknesses, and imperfections.

THE SPIRIT NOT BY MEASURE

Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit of God, and it completely controlled his every thought, word, and deed throughout the course of his earthly ministry. Everything that he said and every act of his consecrated, spirit-filled life expressed the mind and disposition of his Heavenly Father whose perfect will he had been sent to accomplish. As the Apostle John expressed, "He whom God has sent speaks the words of God; for He gives the Spirit without measure."—John 3:34, *NASB*

Those who are of the called-out class during this Gospel Age are also admonished to be filled with the wonderful Spirit of God. "Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."—Eph. 5:17-20

ALL THINGS WORK TOGETHER

God's spirit-inspired Word is a mighty power in the lives of those who consider its wonderful

teachings and working. He alone through the instructions of his Word, and in whatever other ways his wisdom may direct, is able to cause all things to work together for the highest spiritual interests and growth in his people. As Paul wrote, “We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”—Rom. 8:28

God’s ability and mercy is limitless, and it will carry us to greater heights of faithfulness and trust in his everlasting purpose. He has given us the Spirit of a sound mind. With this blessing, we witness the power of the Holy Spirit of God guiding our thoughts, which are in reality the very thoughts of his own mind. As we gradually learn to give up our own will and actions, we will be directed by the holy thoughts of God as he has miraculously caused them to be recorded in his precious Word of Truth for our everlasting blessing. Let us strive more diligently to be faithful to our High Calling in Christ Jesus, that we may share with him in the wonderful work of his kingdom which we believe is near at hand. ■