

The Holy Spirit  
in the Tribulation  
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This paper investigates the biblical revelation concerning the role of God the Holy Spirit in the period known as Daniel's seventieth week or the Tribulation (Dan. 9:27; Rev. 4–19). It is imperative that we understand the similarities and discontinuities of His ministry through the dispensations and ages. The first part of the paper will investigate and define the ministries of the Holy Spirit in the prior dispensations. Only by comparison and contrast might we be able to understand His distinct role in the Tribulation. The second part of the paper develops what is revealed in Scripture about His role in that final period for Israel's history prior to the arrival of her King and the final realization of the promises of the ancient covenants

The presuppositions of this study are four. First, this author believes in the verbal, plenary inspiration of Scripture. He takes this to mean that each participle, particle, verb tense, number, person, noun, or pronoun case, number, gender, and every synonym change is significant until it is proven to be otherwise. Second, the Holy Spirit is fully God with all the attributes of God including omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, love, and truth. He is immutable, eternal, righteous, just, and sovereign. Third, the Holy Spirit is a person, with all the attributes of personhood and personality. And fourth, the Holy Spirit is not an impersonal force, or another manifestation or expression of God.

In the first part of the paper the ministries of the Holy Spirit through the Old Testament periods will be summarized including eschatological prophecies. Second, I will summarize the work of the Holy Spirit during the period covered in the Gospel accounts, including prophecies given therein. Then third, I will summarize the usage in the New Testament Epistles. The ministries of the Holy Spirit in this Church Age are clearly described and defined there. Once we

have defined these, they can then be used as a benchmark to compare and contrast with what is described in the preceding ages and dispensations and what can be expected in the future period of the Tribulation.<sup>1</sup>

The second part of the paper will evaluate the ministries of the Holy Spirit during the Tribulation, if there are ministries, and if so, what they might be.

### **In Prior Dispensations: From Genesis to Malachi**

The ministries of the Holy Spirit which will be examined are six: 1) His role in revelation and inspiration; 2) regeneration and salvation; 3) baptizing; 4) indwelling; 5) sealing; and 6) filling. It will be seen that though some of these words are used to describe aspects of the Spirit's ministry in other dispensations, the characteristics of, for example, indwelling, are not the same in each era. Some have even gone as far as to say that all Old Testament believers had the Holy Spirit.<sup>2</sup> Until the cross, the ministry of the Holy Spirit was limited, could be temporary, and was primarily task oriented rather than for salvation or the spiritual life of the believer.

The Hebrew Scriptures refer to the Holy Spirit (including Spirit of God, My Spirit, or other similar statements making it clear that the Third Person of the Trinity is intended) at least seventy-six times, but probably not more than eighty. Nine are found in the *Torah*; in the early

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<sup>1</sup> In this paper, the term dispensations will be used to describe the seven dispensations described by C. I. Scofield since they are the most commonly known. The are: Innocence (Creation of man to the sin of Adam), Conscience (from Adam's sin to the worldwide Flood), human government (Noahic Covenant to the call of Abraham), patriarchs (Abraham to Sinai), the Law (from Sinai to the cross), Church Age (Pentecost AD 33 to the Rapture), Tribulation (signing of the covenant with the "prince who is to come,"), Millennium (one thousand years). I use the term "ages" to describe some broader eras in the Old Testament period. This is a more useable term in that we have no differences in the first three dispensations during which there are only Gentiles. From Creation to the giving of the Law to Moses there are only two clear references to the Holy Spirit, and these are prior to the Flood of Noah!

<sup>2</sup> Gary Fredricks, "Rethinking the Role of the Holy Spirit in the Lives of Old Testament Believers," (*Trinity Journal* 9, no. 1 (1988): 81–104. Mostly it is reformed theologians who do not observe these distinctions, which is consistent with their presuppositions regarding the continuity between Israel and the Church.

*Nevi'im* books at least eighteen references, in the *Kethuvi'im* nine references, and in the latter *Nevi'im* approximately forty references. Some uses are debatable, e.g., should רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים [*ruach elohim*] be “breath of *YHWH*” or “Spirit of *YHWH*” in Job 27:3?<sup>3</sup>

#### *In the Pentateuch*

The Holy Spirit is mentioned only twice prior to the revelation of the Law in Exodus. These two references provide little information. First, Genesis 1:2 states the “the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters” (Gen. 1:2). From this we see the involvement of the Third Person of the Trinity in the activities of creation. A bit more detail is provided about the Spirit’s work in creation in Isa. 40:12–13, revealing that in His work of creation no one has informed or directed the Spirit. Elihu, one of Job’s friends, recognizes the Holy Spirit’s work in making him and breathing life into him, “The Spirit [רוּחַ *rûah*] of God has made me, And the breath [נְשָׁמָה *neshāmā*] of the Almighty gives me life.” (Job 33:4). Job 27:3 uses similar language in his vow, “As long as my breath [נְשָׁמָה *neshāmā*] is in me, And the breath [רוּחַ *rûah*] of God in my nostrils,” where [רוּחַ *rûah*] might be translated “breath of God” as many versions do. However, the parallel with [נְשָׁמָה *neshāmā*] in Job 33:4, 14; 32:8 and Gen. 2:7 suggest a distinction between the [נְשָׁמָה *neshāmā*] of God and the [רוּחַ *rûah*] of God. However, the NET translates the נְשָׁמָה [*neshāmā*] in the first line of Job 27:3 as “spirit” which seems more appropriate for translating *rûah*. Psalm 33:6 declares, “By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And all the host of them by the breath [רוּחַ *rûah*] of His mouth.” “Breath” translates רוּחַ as “the Spirit of His mouth,” might entail an anthropomorphism which alludes to the activity of the Holy Spirit in the work of creation (cf., Psa. 104:30; Isa. 32:15).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Several authors have estimated that around one hundred references to the Holy Spirit occur in the Hebrew Scriptures. Based on my count through every book of the Bible, I cannot find more than a possible eighty, my count is around 75, not including ambiguous passages.

<sup>4</sup> Robert Glenn Gromacki, *The Holy Spirit*. (Nashville: Word Publishing, 1999), 64.

Second, Gen. 6:3 states, “And the LORD said, ‘My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, for he *is* indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.’” The meaning of this verse is somewhat cryptic due to first, a lexical problem because the word translated “contend, strive” or “abide, remain” is a *hapax legomena*<sup>5</sup>. Cognates indicate the meaning is in the lexical range of “abide” or “remain.” Second, the significance of abiding or remaining forever, in light of the explanation that “he is flesh: his days will be 120” is uncertain. (Gen. 6:3 ESV).<sup>6</sup>

The remainder of the *Torah* mentions the Holy Spirit nine more times. Exodus 31:3 and 35:31 describe the Spirit of God filling Bezalel and Oholiab with wisdom. According to Exodus 31:1, *YHWH* is the speaker saying, “I have filled him with the Spirit of God” (Exod. 31:3). The details explain the limits of that filling, a Holy Spirit enablement or endowment<sup>7</sup> limited to the skills to artistically design and create the jewels, the furniture, the tents, and the metal objects used in the worship of God in the Tabernacle. The verb used to describe this is “filled” [מלא] *mala* ‘to fill’ (ἐμπίπλημι *empiplēmi* LXX) which in this case indicates a temporary

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<sup>5</sup> Carl Friedrich Keil and Franz Delitzsch, *Commentary on the Old Testament*, vol. 1 (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1996), 86.

<sup>6</sup> In this writer’s view one of the better explanations is: The Hebrew word for *strive* is *yadon*, which is a *hapax legomenon*, a word that appears only once in the entire Bible. If the meaning is “to strive,” from the Hebrew root *din*, then it means “striving” in the sense of restraining sin; the Spirit was striving in the sense of restraining sin through the preaching of Enoch and Noah. However, if the meaning is “to remain,” from the Hebrew root *danan*, then it means the spirit of life, which God breathed into man, will not remain in man forever. The use of the Hebrew word *olam* means that God will not allow the race to continue *forever* in such a sin as described in Genesis 6:2. There will be a limit. Then He adds: *for that he [man] also is flesh*, and that is the necessity for restraining. They are *flesh*; they have the sin nature. So, in contrast to the eternal spirit, man is flesh; and he is subject to death, as can be seen by connecting 6:13 with 7:21. Then the verse concludes with the allotted time: *Yet shall his days be a hundred and twenty years*. These are the years remaining before the Flood, a 120-year period of grace. As 1 Peter 3:20 puts it: *When the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing*. From the initial decree, God gave those 120 years for humanity to repent during the long time the ark was being built; this was a measure of His grace, Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *Ariel’s Bible Commentary: The Book of Genesis*, 1st ed. (San Antonio, TX: Ariel Ministries, 2008), 149.

<sup>7</sup> English words commonly used to express this limited infusion of task-oriented ministries are: enduement, imbue, empowerment, or enablement. This writer believes the best word is empowerment. The Holy Spirit gives a task-oriented ability to the individual: wisdom or skill in artistic and aesthetic tasks, wisdom and knowledge for engaging in military action, breathing out Scripture in revelatory acts, and physical abilities to overpower an enemy.

empowerment for the restricted purpose of providing specific skills.<sup>8</sup> George Bush explains the significance of the preposition with the verb.

*I have filled him with the Spirit of God, &c.* That is, with those *intellectual* gifts and endowments which are immediately specified, and which amounted to something like a *divine inspiration*, but at the same time not implying any thing of a *moral* character, the usual result of the operation of the Spirit of God. Both he and his associates in the work were to be the subjects of an influence which should improve their faculties and endow them with an ingenuity and skill far beyond the utmost stretch of their unassisted powers.<sup>9</sup>

Another view of this phrase, “filled with the Spirit of wisdom, etc” is that it is not a reference to any type of indwelling related to a personal indwelling by the Holy Spirit, but rather the artists were filled with the wisdom, knowledge and skills to perform their work.

The term *ruach* may also mean “breath” or “wind.” It is unlikely that the Holy Spirit, as understood in the New Testament, is intended here, so “spirit” in 31:3 RSV should not be capitalized. (This is the same term used in Gen 1:2.) Translators may choose between these two interpretations. If “spirit” is chosen, it should be translated “my [God’s] spirit.” Other ways of expressing **I have filled him with the Spirit of God** are “I have let my spirit (or, power) possess him completely” or “I have let my spirit (or, power) come into him completely.”<sup>10</sup>

On the other hand, Durham accepts this as a special endowment by the divine spirit:

Bezalel, appropriately enough from the tribe of Judah, is described as specially endowed for his assignment by an infilling of the divine spirit, which adds to his native ability three qualities that suit him ideally for the task at hand: wisdom (חכמה), the gift to understand what is needed to fulfill Yahweh’s instructions; discernment (תבונה), the talent for solving the inevitable problems involved in the creation of so complex a series of objects and materials; and skill (דעת), the experienced hand needed to guide and accomplish the labor itself.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> This “filling” should not be confused with the Eph. 5:18 command to “be filled by the Spirit,” or the descriptions in Acts of being filled with the Spirit. In the LXX *pimplemi* is used to translate the Hebrew in these passages (Exodus 35:31; 35:35; The New Testament expressions are contextually described with different meanings. See below.

<sup>9</sup> George Bush, *Notes, Critical and Practical, on the Book of Exodus*, vol. 2 (Boston: Henry A. Young & Co., 1841), 204. Also see Wood, *The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament*, 42, 55–56.

<sup>10</sup> Noel D. Osborn and Howard A. Hatton, *A Handbook on Exodus*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1999), 738–739.

<sup>11</sup> John I. Durham, *Exodus*, vol. 3, Word Biblical Commentary (Dallas: Word, Incorporated, 1987), 410.

Numbers 11 references the Holy Spirit four times as God takes of the “Spirit” which was “upon” Moses, and places it “upon” the seventy. The prepositions used here are significant. This is not describing “in” him or them, but [לָעַל *al- upon, over, above*] “upon,” which indicates an influence from *outside* of the body, not *inside*, but is nonetheless significant. The same preposition is used of the Spirit’s coming upon Eldad and Medad (Num. 11:26, 29) and Balaam (Num. 24:2) which is distinct from the description of the Spirit who is in [בְּ *be in, at, with*] Joshua (Num. 27:18–19). Even prior to Moses’s laying hands on Joshua, he was indwelt by the Holy Spirit. However, we must recognize that, although the word “indwelt” is often used to describe these, it is distinctively different from the indwelling of the Spirit in the New Testament. Later we will see the indwelling of the Church Age believer is not at all like any Old Testament indwellings. This is the last such reference to the Holy Spirit until the time of the Judges.

Further evidence of the role the Holy Spirit had with Moses derives from the New Testament. As a writing prophet, Moses was moved by the Holy Spirit who was *in* him, for the purpose of superintending Moses’ writing of Scripture, which would also apply to the other writing prophets. Both Moses and Joshua had the Holy Spirit *in* them in some way, enabling them for the task of writing Scripture.

1 Pet. 1:10–11 ¶ Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was **in them** [τὸ ἐν αὐτοῖς πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ] was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. [emphasis added]

2 Pet. 1:20–21 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of **God spoke as they were moved** by the Holy Spirit. [emphasis added]

### From the Judges to the Exile

Seven times the Holy Spirit is mentioned in Judges. Othniel (Judg. 3:10), Gideon (Judg. 6:34), Jephthah (Judg. 11:29), and Samuel (Judg. 13:25, 14:6, 19; 15:14) are each stated to have

been empowered in some special way to provide the knowledge and/or ability to defeat or overpower the enemies of Israel, or in a couple of cases with Samson, a lion, or breaking free from ropes that bound him. But in each case the preposition upon [לְעַלְיוֹנָהּ 'al- upon, over, above] is used, except for Gideon, where the unique expression “to clothe” is used, literally, “the Spirit of the Lord clothed Gideon” (ESV). Even in that idiom the Spirit strengthens or influences from an external vantage point.

The influence of the Holy Spirit on Saul reflects the same usage as the Judges (1 Sam. 10:6, 10; 11:6). The significance of the preposition “upon” is consistent. This is also consistent with the prophets in 1 Sam. 19:20; and with the Holy Spirit influences from an external vantage point. And when the Holy Spirit’s influence departed from Saul the same verb is used that describes the departure of the evil spirit (1 Sam 16:23),, whose external influence is also expressed through the same preposition.<sup>12</sup> None of the judges, nor Saul, are said to have the Spirit *in* them, as was said of Joshua and Moses.

With David we also see the same terminology. When Samuel anointed David to be king, the Holy Spirit “came upon him” [לְעַלְיוֹנָהּ 'al- upon, over, above].

1 Sam. 16:13 Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel arose and went to Ramah.

Notice the same terminology is used of an external influence as in the previous uses. However, since David was also a writer of Scripture, we know he was indwelt as well (1 Peter 1:10–11). He was so indwelt “from that day forward,” indicating a continuous presence of the Holy Spirit.

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<sup>12</sup> Robert Dean, Jr. and Thomas D. Ice., *What the Bible Teaches About Spiritual Warfare*, (Tacoma, WA: True Grace Books), 124.

Following David's adultery with Bathsheba and conspiracy leading to the murder by combat of Uriah, David confessed his sin.

Psa. 51:9–11 Hide Your face from my sins,  
 And blot out all my iniquities.  
 Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
 And renew a steadfast spirit within me.  
 Do not cast me away from Your presence,  
 And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

In this confession, David pleads with God to not take His Spirit away since God had taken the Spirit away from Saul due to Saul's disobedience to God's direct command through Samuel—a sin described as divination, iniquity, and idolatry. For which sins Samuel announced the kingdom would be taken from Saul and “the Spirit of the LORD departed [סִירָ (sîr)] from Saul” (1 Sam. 16:14). David was clearly conscious of the Holy Spirit's presence within Him. In his last words he wrote, “The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was on My tongue.” (2 Sam. 23:1–2)<sup>13</sup>

In the group of writings identified as the *Nevi'im* in the Tanakh, we find two types of prophets. The first, were the non-writing prophets such as Azariah (1 Chron. 15:1–5 “came upon” *al*), Jahaziel (2 Chron. 20:14 “came upon” *al*), Zechariah [לְרֵשׁ “the Spirit of God clothed Zechariah” (ESV) cf., Gideon, Judg. 6:34]. A fourth was Amasai who was not a prophet but a soldier. The Holy Spirit came upon him [“clothed him” again cf., Gideon, Judg. 6:34] in connection with a military action (1 Chron. 12:18). These prophets were temporarily used by the Holy Spirit in a singular incident.

In contrast, another group of prophets appear to have been continuously empowered by the Holy Spirit to carry out their mission as spokesmen for God. These included Elijah, Elisha, Micah, and Ezekiel who were all specifically said to have a relationship with God's Spirit.

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<sup>13</sup> See also: Psa. 139:7; 143:10; Matt. 22:43; Mark 12:36; Acts 1:16

However, nothing in the Old Testament is said of the empowerment of the larger group of writing prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. However, we do know from 1 Peter that as writing prophets, they were all moved by the Holy Spirit in their writing of Scripture.

Ezekiel has the most precise language to convey an internal base of operations for the Holy Spirit. In two passages he states that the Spirit “entered into me” which combines a verb for entry plus the preposition which could be translated as “in or through,” but in combination with the verb “to enter” this would compel us to think this is an internal rather than external influence.

Of the first group, specific statements are made. Obadiah, a trusted servant of the evil King Ahab, but was secretly one who “feared the Lord greatly.” (1 Kings 18:3). He hid a hundred of the prophets of *YHWH* in caves. When Elijah returned to confront Ahab, he sought out Obadiah and sent him to tell Ahab he had returned. Obadiah’s fear was such that he attempted to avoid going to Ahab by telling Elijah that he swore an oath that he believed the Spirit of God would whisk Elijah away to another hiding place. Later we learn this was also the belief of the sons of the prophets that the Holy Spirit could supernaturally move Elijah wherever He wished (2 Kings 2:16). These are the only references to the Third Person of the Trinity in 1 or 2 Kings.

Ezekiel also seems to be transported, but as in Paul’s language, “whether in the body I do not know, or whether out of the body I do not know, God knows—such a one was caught up to the third heaven.” (2 Cor. 12:12b). Four times Ezekiel states, “the Spirit lifted Me up” (Ezek. 3:12, 14; 11:1, 24) using language which indicates more of being transported in a vision, rather than physically being transported. However, the phrase “in a vision” or “visions” is only used in Ezek. 8:3; 11:24) but the other uses might also be in a vision.

The only mentions in the post-exilic period are found in Zechariah 7:12, and then in Nehemiah 9:20, 30. Zechariah around seventy-five years prior to Nehemiah is significant. Beginning in Zech. 7:8 the Lord began speaking to Zechariah a second time in this chapter. *YHWH*'s initial message in Zech. 7:4 was in response to the people's question regarding fasting and mourning. God rebuked them indicting them for observing these rituals without reality. *YHWH* spoke a second time in verse seven to positively articulate His requirements: "Execute true justice, Show mercy and compassion Everyone to his brother." (Zech. 7:9). *YHWH* then contrasted His standards with the disobedient actions of the earlier rebellious generations:

Zech. 7:11–12 ¶ But they refused to heed, shrugged their shoulders, and stopped their ears so that they could not hear. Yes, they made their hearts like flint, refusing to hear the law and the words which the LORD of hosts had sent **by His Spirit through** [א (b<sup>e</sup>) "*in or through*"] the former prophets. [emphasis added]

Here He clearly articulates the role of the Holy Spirit in inspiration and revelation through the former prophets. Seventy-five years later Nehemiah echoes this same truth. In his prayer, Nehemiah recounted God's grace to the rebellious wilderness generation, and affirmed that God "gave Your good Spirit to instruct them" (Nehemiah 9:19). Then he referred to the "many years" of God's patience and abundant grace toward frequently disobedient Israel and "testified against them by Your Spirit through [א (b<sup>e</sup>) "*in or through*"] your prophets" (Neh. 9:30 NASB95, ESV, HCSB, NET, NRSV). From this we recognize the Holy Spirit indwelt the prophets as He is the agent of inspiration and revelation. Again, His indwelling is task specific.

One final mention is Zech. 4:6, which suggests that more was understood about dependence on the Holy Spirit for our endeavors than is revealed in the Old Testament. Thomas

points out that this emphasizes the prominence of the Holy Spirit's activity in the ancient world prior to the Church Age.<sup>14</sup>

Zech. 4:6 ¶ So he answered and said to me: "This *is* the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts.

This should be the motto of every believer of all ages. Spiritual success in physical or spiritual endeavors is not accomplished in the power of human ability, resources, intelligence, or skill, but only through that which is supplied and energized by God the Holy Spirit.

### Conclusion

1. Old Testament references to the Holy Spirit are few at the beginning of the Old Testament but gradually increase. The greatest number of mentions of the Holy Spirit are in the major prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel, especially in predictions of the future time when all of God's promises will be fulfilled in Israel.
2. The ministries of God the Holy Spirit to individuals during the time of Israel and the dispensation of the Law were limited. To some of them it was limited to a one-time or short-term event. To some others, especially the writing prophets, but also includes some non-writing prophets such as Elijah and Elishah, the ministries were for the duration of their life.
3. The description of the Holy Spirit is most often said to be external to the individual rather than an internal dwelling. However, several passages, especially in Ezekiel, clearly state the Spirit "entered into" the Prophet. Other passages say that the Spirit was *in* those who were writing prophets when the preposition  $\text{ב}$  (*bē*) is used, which could be translated as "in," but in most instance means "through."

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<sup>14</sup> Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 1–7: An Exegetical Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1992), 68.

4. In all cases the ministry of God the Holy Spirit to individuals was task-centered and not related to the spiritual life. Hamilton summarizes:

We first survey passages that speak of the Spirit's extraordinary relationship to certain Old Testament saints. Some have suggested that these passages indicate a general indwelling of old covenant believers. On the contrary, each time the Old Testament describes someone as having the Spirit, it does so precisely to mark that person out from other old covenant believers. The special experience that these persons have with the Spirit empowers them to serve, and the service generally takes the form of national leadership or prophetic office. This extraordinary experience of the Spirit did not grace all who followed in the footsteps of Abraham's faith prior to the cross.<sup>15</sup>

### Summary

What we have learned in this brief survey of the roles of the Holy Spirit prior to the cross:

#### 1. Revelation/Inspiration

- a. The Holy Spirit was the agent of revelation "in" the prophets and through the process of inspiration breathed out or exhaled the Scripture through them; 2 Sam. 23:2; Psa.110 (stated by Jesus in Matt. 22:43-44 to be by "David in the Spirit"); Micah 3:8; Psa.41 (in Acts 1:16-17); Psa. 2 (Acts 4:25); Isa. 6:9-10 (Acts 28:25-27) among others.
- b. Both Nehemiah and Peter made it clear that the Holy Spirit was "in them" (1 Pet. 1:11-12) carrying them along the process of writing (2 Pet. 1:20-21). Though it well might be that both the Hebrew and Greek prepositions could indicate means: "through the prophets" (Zech. 7:11-12; Neh. 9:19-20).

#### 2. Indwelling

Craftsman, Leaders (Kings, Priests), Prophets, writers of Scripture, all had the Holy Spirit in them. This indwelling was limited and should not be confused with what is described as the relationship of the Holy Spirit to the Church Age believer. This internal

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<sup>15</sup> James M. Hamilton Jr., *God's Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old & New Testaments* (Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2006), 26.

indwelling was task-centered, and in some it was a one-time or short-term temporary event. And for David, Saul, and some other of the prophets it was a longer-term event, and in some circumstances might be taken away. This indwelling was not in relation to either their spiritual life, or to make them a “temple,” a dwelling place for God bodily.

Leon Wood makes an effort to present a theological argument for permanent indwelling of all Old Testament saints. His argument is that since man does not have the ability to keep Himself saved, that,

“they must have been kept by God, and this means, surely, the Spirit of God. One might argue that the Spirit could have kept them whether continually indwelling them or not. Since He keeps the New Testament saint by indwelling, however, it seems reasonable to believe that He kept the Old Testament saint in the same way.<sup>16</sup>

This is a nice stab but falls short! First, it is an argument from silence, but we know that absence of evidence is not necessarily evidence of absence. Second, he fails to show that the indwelling by the Holy Spirit in the Church Age, is identical with keeping the believer saved. His argument is based on “reasonable” assumptions, rather than sound exegesis.

### 3. Regeneration

- a. Definitions of regeneration abound due to differences in theological presuppositions. For the purposes of this paper a combination of Walvoord and Ryrie’s definitions fits our

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<sup>16</sup> Leon J. Wood, *The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament*, 70. Other attempts include: Clifford Rapp, Jr., “The Ministry of the Holy Spirit In Old Testament Believers.” *Chafer Theological Seminary Journal Volume 2*, 1996. The failure here is to accurately define the terms in light of not only similarities, but differences. Some Old Testament saints clearly had an indwelling, but it was not the same as that defined, described, and explained for the Church Age believer. Such vague attempts to identify “similar” things that are not identical undermines the distinctions between Church Age believers and believers of other dispensations.

purpose: “It is the work of God, ‘ascribed to the Holy Spirit’<sup>17</sup>, that gives new life to the one who believes.”<sup>18</sup>

- b. Theologically, the unbeliever is born spiritually dead, “alienated from the life of God” (Eph. 2:1, 4:18), and must be regenerated by the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5), made spiritually alive (Eph. 2:5) even in the Old Testament, as seen in Jesus’ expectation that Nicodemus should have understood this (John 3:1–5).
- c. Regeneration is seen in young Saul when he prophesied among the prophets and become “a new man” [1 Sam. 10:6; 28:19]. Samuel said they would be together that day.
- d. Regeneration must have taken place, but that which was experienced in previous dispensations was not accompanied by other aspects which are unique to the Church Age.

#### 4. Sealing

There does not appear to be any reference to the Spirit being the “seal” of a person’s salvation in the way this is described in the New Testament related to the Church Age believer. What we can say is that their salvation was secure, and their salvation certain. However, attempts by several writers to argue for a sealing by the Spirit based on the security of the Old Testament saint’s salvation fall short.<sup>19</sup>

#### 5. Baptizing ministry of the Holy Spirit.

There is nothing in the Old Testament about Israel or anyone being baptized by the Holy Spirit. That is a distinctive of only Church Age believers and is the unique sign of the Church Age.

#### *In the Gospels*

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<sup>17</sup> John F. Walvoord, *The Holy Spirit: A Comprehensive Study of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991), 130.

<sup>18</sup> Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth* (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1999), 376.

<sup>19</sup> Leon Wood, op. cit., 70; Rapp, op. cit.

The Gospels are included here because the events therein were during the dispensation of the Mosaic Law. In the Gospels there are approximately fifty-two references to the Holy Spirit; Matthew has 13; Mark has 7; Luke 17; and John 15. A few of these may be subject to various interpretations. All of these take place under the dispensation of the Law, but several are predictive of either the Church Age, or the Millennium.

Of these, the significant ones relate to the virgin conception and birth; the prediction of the baptism by means of the Holy Spirit and fire; the descent of the Spirit on Jesus at His baptism; the leading of Jesus by the Spirit into the wilderness for testing; the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, the revelatory function of the Holy Spirit through Old Testament writers.

In the New Testament writings related to the new dispensation of the Church Age, the ministries of the Holy Spirit have many similarities with His ministries in the Old Testament. However, it is not the similarities which are significant, but the differences. Ryrie clearly states:

The Spirit's ministry to people in Old Testament times **was not the same** as it has been since the Day of Pentecost. Whatever it was, the Lord made it quite clear it would be **different after Pentecost**. Notice how repeatedly the Lord spoke of the "coming" of the Spirit (who was already present) in His conversation with the disciples in the Upper Room (John 15:26; 16:7–8, 13). This indicates **both that the Spirit was at work then and that His work would take on a different character after Pentecost**. When the Lord summarized that contrast, **He said the Spirit "abides [present tense] with [para] you, and will be [future tense] in [en] you" (14:17)**. Although there is an alternative reading of the present tense in the second clause (i.e., is in you), most commentators prefer the future tense.

This, of course, delineates the contrast between the ministry of the Spirit at the time the Lord spoke these words and the future ministry after Pentecost.<sup>20</sup> [emphasis added]

Though there are similarities to some Old Testament descriptions, it is the differences that must be addressed. As our Lord prepared the disciples for His departure, He promised they would not be abandoned, but the Father "will give you another Helper, that He may abide with

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<sup>20</sup> Ryrie, *op cit* 400–401.

you forever, the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him, nor knows Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.” (John 14:16b–17)<sup>21</sup>

The questions for us are first, how are these ministries different? Second, do any of these ministries continue in the same way into the Tribulation period, or are they more similar to those ministries of the Spirit in the previous centuries prior to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost?

### Gospel References to Spirit Filling

As seen in the LXX translations of some of the terms used in the Old Testament, we find the ministries of the Holy Spirit using the terminology “filled,” continues to be like that of the Old Testament.

The Hebrew word מלא *ma'al*, “to be filled,” is translated in the LXX by the Greek πίμπλημι *pimplēmi* in only a few passages in the Pentateuch, elsewhere other Greek words are used to translate the Hebrew. In the Gospels (as well as in Acts) this term is translated as “being filled with the Holy Spirit,” three times, all in Luke. Further, in this construction the “Holy Spirit” is in the genitive case [πνεύματος ἁγίου]. In two of these, the verb is followed by the person so filled speaking. The first use is related to John the Baptist, that he would be filled with the Spirit “from birth.”<sup>22</sup>

Luke 1:41b–42a and Elizabeth was filled [πίμπλημι (*pimplēmi*)] with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said ...

Luke 1:67 ¶ Now his father Zacharias was filled [πίμπλημι (*pimplēmi*)] with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying: [emphasis added]

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<sup>21</sup> Rapp uses the phrase “expanded ministry of the Spirit in the church age” which indicates it is not the same as the kind of indwelling experienced in the Old Testament. Rapp, op. cit, 2:2, 14.

<sup>22</sup> The NIV captures this Hebrew idiom best by translating it “from birth.” There is a verb, but no noun for “birth” in biblical Hebrew, there is a noun for “conception” [הָרָגָה (*hērāyōn*)] used two times in the Old Testament (Hos. 9:11; Ruth 4:13), but is not used in these similar contexts. If conception were meant, then it could be so stated. In Hebrew the idiom to describe “from birth,” is “from the womb.”

As will be seen in Luke's use of this phrase in Acts, this refers to a specific, task-centered, temporary event, much as what occurred in the Old Testament period. In discussions of this term many have seen these statements as identical with the command in Eph. 5:18 to be filled by means of the Spirit. However, as will be discussed, these are distinctively different phrases, with different verbs for filling followed by genitive phrases rather than the instrumental found in Eph. 5:18. As such it will be seen that these are not to be confused and represent quite different ministries. One of which might possibly occur during the Tribulation, as it occurred in the Old Testament period during the history of Israel, but the other is distinctive to the Church Age.

In the accounts of the role of the Spirit in the life of the Messiah, we find that Jesus performed numerous miracles or gave instructions “through the Spirit” (διὰ [*dia*] with the genitive) or “by means of the Spirit” (ἐν [*en*] with the dative). Jesus returned from the Jordan “full of the Holy Spirit” (Luke 4:1 [πλήρης *plērēs*] with a genitive), was “led by the Spirit” (ἐν [*en*] with the dative) into the wilderness” (Luke 4:1). He returned to Galilee “in (or through) the power of the Spirit (*en* with the dative)” (Luke 4:14). On the one hand we have an adjectival description ([πλήρης *plērēs*] with a genitive) and on the other hand, phrases which emphasize that the Holy Spirit was the means by which Jesus was led or empowered.<sup>23</sup> In Luke's continuing narrative of Jesus' dependence on the Holy Spirit, we find one more statement in Acts 1:2, “until the day in which He was taken up, after He through the Holy Spirit ([διὰ πνεύματος ἁγίου] *dia* with a genitive indicating means) had given commandments to the apostles whom He had chosen.” As with the language of John announcing the future event of Jesus as the active agent performing the baptism “by means of the Spirit,” so here we also see that emphasis, Jesus living His life in close dependence “by the Holy Spirit.”

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<sup>23</sup> The phrase in Luke 10:21 has several textual variants, so it is not cited in this presentation.

### Acts of the Apostles

Luke's historical record of the early three decades of Christianity references the Holy Spirit over fifty times, more than any other New Testament writing. Of these, the most significant references to understand are statements about the events of the day of Pentecost: the promised fulfillment of baptism by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:5), the Spirit "coming upon" them (Acts 1:8), the descriptions of the disciples being "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:4), the pouring out of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:17, 33), different Greek phrases all translated with the same English terms, must be understood.

Just prior to His ascension Jesus instructed the disciples to stay in Jerusalem until they received the baptism by the Spirit announced by John.

Acts 1:4 While He was together with them, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for the Father's promise. "This," He said, "is what you heard from Me; [HCSB]

Acts 1:5 for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now." [HCSB]

The thing to note here is that the same phrasing is used that John the Baptist used in Matt. 3:11 (Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:32–33). Just as John himself performed the act of baptizing using water as the instrument or means, so also Jesus would come and He would perform the act of baptizing by means of the Holy Spirit and fire. In all of the Gospels and Acts 1 Jesus performs the act, through or by means of the Spirit. In 1 Cor. 12:13 the same grammar is used to describe the baptism by means of the Spirit, but the one who performs the action is not stated, but must still be Jesus. The Spirit is not the one who performs the action. An error in understanding the significance of the grammar in 1 Cor. 12:13 has perpetuated an error of thinking John announced

one baptism performed by Jesus and another performed by the Spirit.<sup>24</sup> All baptism references (Acts 1:5; 1 Cor. 10:2; John 1:32–33) use the preposition ἐν to express the means used by the one who performs the action of baptizing.

Though the baptism by means of the Holy Spirit is not mentioned in Acts 2 *per se*, it is clear that when Peter says Jesus was exalted to the Father He received “the promise of the Holy Spirit” which He poured out, which he said was “this which you now see and hear.” Later, when Peter described what transpired when the Gentiles believed at Cornelius’s house, Peter identified what happened in Acts 10 with what happened in Acts 2.

Acts 11:15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning.

Acts 11:16 Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, “John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

This was also identified as part of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in Acts 2.

### **The outpouring of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:17–18)**

Several important prophecies to Israel predict that God will pour out His Spirit upon not only Israel, but all mankind (Isa. 32:15; 44:3; 45:8; Ezek. 39:2; Joel 2:28–29; Zech. 12:10). An explanation of the details of these events will be given in the second part of this paper, for their literal fulfillment has not yet occurred, but will when the Lord Jesus Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation to defeat the false prophet, antichrist, and Satan, and to establish His Kingdom on the earth. For now, only the connection between the prophecy of Joel 2 and the statement by Peter of its fulfillment on the Day of Pentecost AD 33. Will be discussed.

Acts 2:16 But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel:

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<sup>24</sup> In English when an active voice verb is changed to passive, the agent who performs the action is indicated by the English preposition “by.” However, in Greek, the agent who performs the action of the passive voice verb is indicated using the preposition “ὕπο, *upo*.” Cf, Mark 1:13 “And He was there in the wilderness forty days, tempted by Satan.” Jesus was not tempted “by means of” Satan, the preposition is “ὕπο, *upo*” which indicates Satan performs the action of being tempted. (Daniel B. Wallace *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics - Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament*. Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software, 1996. 373).

Acts 2:17 *“And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will pour out of My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your young men shall see visions, Your old men shall dream dreams.*

Acts 2:18 *And on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days; And they shall prophesy.*

Joel 2:28 *“And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions.*

Joel 2:29 *And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.*

Ryrie observes this related to Pentecost AD 33

Pentecost marks the beginning of the church as a functioning body by the outpouring of the Spirit on that day. Before His ascension the Lord promised that the disciples would be baptized with the Holy Spirit soon (Acts 1:5). Though the word “baptism” does not appear in the account of Pentecost in chapter 2, it is quite clear from 11:15–16 that the baptism occurred for the first time on that day. Since, according to Paul (1 Cor. 12:13), Spirit baptism places people in the body of Christ, and since the body of Christ is the church (Eph. 1:22–23), the church, the body, began when those first individuals were baptized at Pentecost.<sup>25</sup>

The one aspect to focus on here, is the meaning of Peter’s phrase, “This is what was spoken of by the prophet Joel.” (Acts 2:16).

But in what sense is this what Joel spoke of? This may seem like an odd question to many. However, of the four statements by Joel (1. Sons and daughters shall prophecy, 2. Young men will see visions, 3. Old men will dream dreams, 4. The Spirit will be poured out on male and female servants and they will prophesy), none took place. And what did take place, men speaking in a language they had not previously learned or known, is not mentioned in Joel 2.

Here Luke does not use the expected phrase to introduce a prophetic fulfillment, “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by ... the prophet, saying” (Matt. 2:15). Instead, he simply said, “This is what was spoken by the prophet.” This writer’s preferred understanding of how the “fulfillment” statements are used by New Testament writers, is that which has been developed by

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<sup>25</sup> Ryrie, *op cit*, 466.

D. Cooper, Arnold Fruchtenbaum, and Michael Rydelnik.<sup>26</sup> Fruchtenbaum explains Acts 2:16 as literal prophecy applied to the circumstance of Acts 2.

This outpouring is the event which began the new dispensation of the Church, set apart by a distinct assemblage of different, unique ministries of the Holy Spirit—the baptism by the Holy Spirit, the indwelling by the Holy Spirit, the ability to walk by means of the Spirit, being filled by means of the Spirit, being sealed by means of the Holy Spirit, being led by the Holy Spirit. All of these are part of the bundling in the “outpouring” of the Spirit.

Paul also relates to a universal “outpouring” by means of or through [*dia* with a genitive for means] “the Holy Spirit who was given to us,” (Rom. 5:5). In that verse it is the love “from” God, which is poured out by the Spirit who was given to us. This indicates another aspect of the Spirit’s ministry to the Church Age believer.

Though various English terms such as indwelt or filling are frequently used to describe similar ministries of the Holy Spirit in other dispensations, these ministries are not the same as the ones mentioned in the New Testament. We must remember that similarity is not identity. Some writers have not been as careful as they should have been in examining, defining, and explaining these ministries. Too often it appears that differences are glossed over in the emphasis on similarities. The distinctive ministries of God the Holy Spirit in the Church Age which are relevant to this study are: regeneration, the baptism by the Spirit, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, the filling by means of the Spirit, and the sealing of the Spirit.

One which takes place in this Church Age is the restraining of the Spirit, which is removed near the beginning of the Tribulation, but after the Rapture. Since this implies that throughout the

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<sup>26</sup> Michael Rydelnik, *The Messianic Hope: Is the Hebrew Bible Really Messianic?* (Nashville, TN: B&H), 2010, 31, fn 84; 104–108; David L. Cooper, *Messiah: His Historical Appearance*, (Los Angeles: Biblical Research Society), 1958, 177. Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Book of Acts*. Edited by Christiane K. Jurik. First Edition. Ariel’s Bible Commentary. San Antonio, TX: Ariel Ministries, 2020,

Church Age, the Spirit has been restraining the advent of the antichrist through all the Church Age.

### **The restraining ministry of the Holy Spirit**

2 Thess. 2:6 And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time.

2 Thess. 2:7 For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way.

2 Thess. 2:8 And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming.

2 Thess. 2:9 The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,

In this context, a question of concern had developed in the spiritually young congregation in Thessalonica. Paul had been there barely a few months, when the persecution that broke out caused him to flee and go to Berea, then to Athens, and then Corinth. In Corinth he received a report from Timothy and Silas, including various questions and issues that had come up. Among them was a false teaching that the Day of the Lord had already arrived. Paul corrects them by informing them the Day of the Lord would not come until the man of sin was revealed, and the restrainer was still preventing that.

There are at least five different interpretations of the identity of the one who restrains. Following the Rapture of the Church, the restrainer, identified as the one who restrains lawlessness, is taken out of the way. Only after that removal is the lawless one revealed.

Some of the views identified the restrainer as the Roman Empire, human government, the Church, or even Satan. But the most likely is that the restrainer is the Holy Spirit.

The first view, which was more prominent in the early Church, is that the Roman Empire was the restrainer. But the Roman Empire promoted more lawlessness and violence rather than restraining it. Though Rome produced the *pax Romana*, it was based on their strong, violent

suppression of criminality or opposition. Further since the Roman Empire eventually collapsed with no appearance of the man of lawlessness, this one fails to satisfy.<sup>27</sup>

The second view is that of human government, which grew out of the first. Romans 13:1–7 is appealed to for support as human government. In Romans 13:3 we see that rulers are to restrain evil, and “to execute wrath on him who practices evil.” However, in light of the evils committed by numerous governments over the centuries, this seems unlikely. Further, 2 Thess. 2:7–8 indicates the Restrainer is to restrain the “mystery of lawlessness,” which is designed to bring to power the “Lawless one.” The restrainer does not simply restrain evil but is powerful enough to prevent the premature arrival of the lawless one, not merely evil itself. So, what human agency has the power to restrain the arrival of the antichrist?

A third view is that the restrainer is Satan himself. This seems unlikely as it would involve Satan working against himself, an example our Lord used to refute the charge that He was casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub (Matt. 12:25–26).

The fourth view is that the restrainer is the presence of the Church. The Church including the Holy Spirit might seem a better option, however, the original *Koine* Greek language, “church” (Gr. *ekklesia*) is a feminine noun, and the participle in 2 Thessalonians 2:7, “he who now restrains,” is masculine, and thus cannot refer to the Church.

The best option is the Holy Spirit, for only One who is omnipotent, omnipresent, and omniscient has the power to hold back the power of Satan in bringing the antichrist onto the scene. Whatever else is said, if the Holy Spirit is the restrainer, He is restraining the revealing of the antichrist, “the lawless one.” It is only this one ministry of the Holy Spirit which is removed.

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<sup>27</sup> Thomas Ice, *When the Trumpet Sounds* (Harvest House, Eugene, OR), 1995, 306

This does not preclude the Holy Spirit from other roles such as empowerment for specific tasks, or giving special revelation.

Varied indeed have been the identifications proposed: a Roman emperor or emperors; the Roman Empire or human government generally; the Jewish state; the preaching of the gospel; Paul himself; Satan; Elijah; Michael; the providences of God; the Holy Spirit.

Our identification of the Restrainer must ultimately be determined by the question, What person is able to hold back the efforts of Satan? To effectively counteract and restrain the personal activities of Satan demands a person, and one that is more than human. Only a supernatural person can truly frustrate the supernatural workings of Satan. This would at once rule out human agencies as well as all evil supernatural agents. Only a superhuman Restrainer can do the work.<sup>28</sup>

### Regeneration

Titus 3:5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

Titus 3:6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

As stated earlier, the definition of regeneration for the purposes of this paper is, “the work of God ‘ascribed to the Holy Spirit’ that gives new life to the one who believes the saving promise of God.” Because all humans since Adam, with the exception of Jesus, are born spiritually dead, alienated from the life of God (Eph. 4:18) and in need of new life. The act of being born again is just as necessary during the Tribulation as it was in the pre-cross times of the Old Testament and in the Church Age.<sup>29</sup> Jesus assumed that Nicodemus should have understood the concept of being born again when He spoke to him (John 3:1–5). Thus, regeneration is assumed to have taken place since Adam, as the only corrective to spiritual death.

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<sup>28</sup> D. Edmond Hiebert, *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, Revised Edition (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1996), 338–339.

<sup>29</sup> John F. Walvoord, *The Holy Spirit: A Comprehensive Study of the Person and Work of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1991), 130.

There is much evidence that unbelievers, whether they rejected the gospel during the Church Age or not, will believe on the name of Jesus following the Rapture (see below) (Rev 7:3-8, 14; 14:4).

### **The baptism by the Holy Spirit**

John the Baptist was the first to speak the phrase, “He will baptize you (in, with, or by) the Holy Spirit ...” Matt. 3:11 (cf., Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; Acts 1:5). The parallel passages in the synoptic Gospels and Acts all refer to this baptism by the Holy Spirit as a future act. Therefore, this was something distinct and unique from anything related to the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. This baptism did not occur during the Old Testament, nor during the life of Christ, it did not occur until after Christ ascended to the right hand of the throne of God. For one of the last things our Lord said before He ascended was to predict the soon coming of the Holy Spirit.

Though this term is not used in Acts 2, it is clear from the text that this is what occurred as part of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on that Day of Pentecost (AD 33).<sup>30</sup>

Acts 1:4-5 ¶ And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” *He said*, “you have heard from Me; for John truly baptized with water, **but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.**” [emphasis added]

Later, in Acts 11 Peter recounted to the other disciples the conversion of the Gentiles in Cornelius’s house saying, “And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning” (Acts 11:15) by which he meant the Church began on the Day of Pentecost with this act.

Acts 11:16 Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, “John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

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<sup>30</sup> Ryrie, *op cit*, 466.

In all six of the future references in the Gospels and Acts 1:5, the one who performed the baptism is said to be Jesus, and the means by which He baptized or identified the Church Age believer with His death, burial, and resurrection is said to be the Holy Spirit. This spiritual and non-experiential act occurs immediately when a person trusts Jesus Christ as Savior. The purpose of this act is to unite all Church Age believers with Christ and with one another to form the universal Church, the body of Christ.

In Acts 2 the Holy Spirit was poured out to those present, initiating and forming a new entity, the Body of Christ. This act never occurred before and will not occur during the Tribulation as it is the foundational event for forming the distinctive body of Christ which will be removed from the earth with the Rapture of the Church (1 Thess. 4:13–18).

The baptism by means of the Holy Spirit is the unique and distinguishing badge of the Church Age believer. As such, it not only was not present prior to the advent of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost but will no longer be a part of the Spirit's use in the Tribulation as the Church will have been completed and removed by the Rapture.

### **The indwelling by the Spirit**

This too is part of the outpouring of the Spirit for the Church Age. Every believer is indwelt by God the Holy Spirit. Numerous passages refer to the permanent indwelling of every Church Age believer by the Holy Spirit (John 7:37–39; Rom. 8:9, 11; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19–20; 12:13; 2 Cor. 5:5; Gal. 3:2; 4:6; 1 John 3:24; 4:13).<sup>31</sup> From these passages we learn that the Holy Spirit lives in each believer, setting us apart for the indwelling of the Father and the Son. The dwelling place of a deity is a temple. Our bodies are the temple of God in this age.

1 Cor. 3:16 ¶ Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?

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<sup>31</sup> Ryrie, *Ibid*, 409.

1 Cor. 3:17 If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are.

In the Old Testament *YHWH* dwelt in the midst of His people, in the tabernacle, and later the Temple until He left. In the Church Age He tabernacles (*skyne*, dwells) in our bodies.

This type of indwelling is permanent and can never be removed. Its purpose is to set us apart to God as we are positionally “in Christ” and part of His body. And this body, the universal Church, is built ...

Eph. 2:20 ... on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*,

Eph. 2:21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together, **grows into a holy temple in the Lord**,

Eph. 2:22 in whom **you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God** in the Spirit. [emphasis added]

It is being built together by the Holy Spirit, also for the corporate dwelling of God within the body of Christ.

### **The temporary filling [πίμπλημι (*pimplēmi*)] “of the Spirit”**

In the Gospels as well as the book of Acts there are numerous, temporary, task-oriented “fillings” of the Spirit expressed through πίμπλημι (*pimplēmi*). These are not to be confused with the command in Eph. 5:18 to be filled by the Spirit. First, because either different verbs or nouns are used in the various expressions. Second, the results of the filling by means of the Spirit in Eph. 5:18 is correlative to the command to “let the Word of Christ richly dwell within you.” The *pimplemi* fillings always precede something that is spoken.

Luke 1:41b–42a ... and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said,

Luke 1:67 ¶ Now his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Spirit, and prophesied, saying:

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 4:8 ¶ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them

Acts 4:31 ¶ ... and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Acts 9:17, 20 ¶ ... has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.” ... Immediately he preached the Christ in the synagogues,

Acts 13:9–10 Then Saul, filled with the Holy Spirit, looked intently at him and said, ....

Regarding the *pimplemi* passages in Acts, Wallace makes this clear observation:

“The command there [Eph. 5:18] to be filled by the Spirit has nothing to do with tongues-speaking. The Spirit-filling (with *πίμπλημι*) in Acts is never commanded, nor is it related particularly to sanctification. Rather, it is a special imbueing of the Spirit for a particular task (similar to the Spirit’s ministry in the OT). Furthermore, every time the case used to indicate the content of filling is the gen., never the dat. Cf. Acts 4:8, 31; 9:17; 13:9 (cf. also Luke 1:15, 41). Cf. also Luke 6:11; Acts 3:10; 5:17; 13:45; 19:29.<sup>32</sup>

### **The filling by means of the Holy Spirit (Eph. 5:18 with Col. 3:16)<sup>33</sup>**

Eph. 5:18 expresses the command using the present passive imperative of *πληρώω plēroō*.

This indicates something about a type of filling which is triggered by an act of the individual believer’s volition. There are three commands given related to the Holy Spirit. The first is to be filled by the Spirit (Eph 5:18), the second is to walk (*περιπατέω peripateō*) by the Spirit (Gal 5:16), and the third is to walk (*στοιχέω stoicheō*) by the Spirit. The two different words for walking emphasize two different aspects, the first emphasizes step by step walking, and the second emphasizes following in the footsteps, i.e., living a “closely regulated life, living according to definite rules.”<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Daniel B Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics – Exegetical Syntax of the New Testament* (Zondervan Publishing House and Galaxie Software, 1996) 92–94.

<sup>33</sup> Harold W. Hoehner, *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002) 702–719.

<sup>34</sup> C. Brown, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*. Accordance electronic ed., version 3.8. 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1986), 251.

The results are given in Eph. 5:19–21. The parallel passage in Col. 3:15 expresses the command to “let the Word of Christ richly dwell within you.” The results of both commands are the same. If A produces result Z; and B produces result Z, then A and B must be extremely close, two things working in tandem to produce the same result.

Eph. 5:18 does not inform us of the content of the filling. Col. 3:16 does not express the means used to fill us with the Word of Christ. But together we learn that when we are walking by the Holy Spirit, He fills us with His Word producing many results, but among them are the results listed in these parallel passages. One emphasizes the Holy Spirit, the other the Word of Christ.

Neither of these types of commands including Gal. 5:16 to “walk by the Spirit,” which are the core of the Holy Spirit ministry is teaching, training, equipping, and maturing the believer.

None of these will be operational in the Tribulation period as they are unique to the Church Age believer who has received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

### **The sealing by the Spirit**

The seal by the Spirit is the pledge that certifies God’s ownership and protection of the Church Age believer from the moment of faith when the Holy Spirit indwells until ultimate salvation in glorification is realized.

The Holy Spirit is the means by which Christians are sealed at the moment of salvation. The Holy Spirit is Himself the seal—especially in the sense of His presence in Christian experience. The Trinity is evident in Eph. 1:13–14. “God is the One who seals, Christ is the sphere in which the seal is done, and the Holy Spirit is the instrument of the seal.”<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Eldon Woodcock, “The Seal of the Holy Spirit,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 155 (1998): 149.

The sealing by the Holy Spirit is also spoken of as a down payment as it were of our salvation. “In early Greek this use of ἀρραβών as an earnest occurred more often than its use as a pledge.<sup>36</sup>

2 Cor. 1:22 who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

2 Cor. 5:5 Now He who has prepared us for this very thing *is* God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee.

Such a sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit is not mentioned in relation to the Old Testament believer.<sup>37</sup> Neither does it seem to be quite the same as the sealing which occurs during the Tribulation, first because in the New Testament Epistles it is related to our position in the body of Christ. Second, because its characteristics for the 144,000 are unique to those in the Tribulation.

### **The command to walk by the Spirit**

Gal. 5:16 ¶ I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Gal. 5:25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

These two verses express similar commands, with different verbs for walking. No such command is in the Old Testament, nor is it related to the Tribulation. The reason is that this is grounded on the Church Age believer’s distinctive relation to the Holy Spirit, which is not true of Old Testament or Tribulation believers.

### **Summary**

1. The Church Age believer has a unique relationship with the Holy Spirit. All believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, who makes each a dwelling place for the Father and the Son.
2. We are commanded to “walk by means of the Holy Spirit,” and when so doing the Holy Spirit fills us with the Word of Christ and matures us.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid, 151.

<sup>37</sup> Ryrie, op. cit, 414.

3. We are also sealed by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ, no such relationship has occurred before the Church Age, nor will occur in the Tribulation.

## **The Holy Spirit in the Tribulation Part 2**

### **1. What is the Tribulation?**

The term “tribulation” is commonly used to refer to the seventieth week in the prophecy of Daniel 9:24–27. The ninth chapter of Daniel records Daniel’s prayer of confession for his people Israel, and the petition for God to be merciful to His people and fulfill His promise to bring the exiles home to their land promised by the Abrahamic Covenant.

In answer, God sent the angel Gabriel to provide Daniel with a remarkable timeline for the future history of the Jewish people. Daniel 9:24 records a period of “seventy sevens” or four hundred ninety years. This timeline is broken into segments of “seven weeks and sixty-two weeks,” i.e., a total of 69 weeks. At which time a break occurs when the Messiah is cut off. A break clearly occurs between the end of the sixty-ninth week and the beginning of the seventieth week (Dan. 9:26, 27). The seventieth week, a period of seven years, begins with a covenant signed between the “prince who is to come” and Israel.

The Tribulation is also known as Daniel’s seventieth week. It is a seven-year period of unprecedented demonic assaults on the human race and especially Israel. This seven-year period begins after the rapture of the Church to heaven, and the countdown begins with the signing of a covenant with between the antichrist and Israel. Dan. 9:24–27

Dan. 9:27 Then he shall confirm a covenant with many for one week [7 years]; But in the middle of the week He shall bring an end to sacrifice and offering. And on the wing of abominations shall be one who makes desolate, Even until the consummation, which is determined, Is poured out on the desolate.” (NKJV)

### 2. The last 7 years of the time allotted to Israel.

The Tribulation saints will not have identical relationship with the HS as Church Age believers.

3. A unique time of violence, war, geo-physical, and astronomical upheavals which will destroy the lives of billions of people in a short time.

Jer. 30:7 Alas! For that day *is* great, So that none *is* like it; And it *is* the time of Jacob's trouble, But he shall be saved out of it.

Dan. 12:1 "At that time Michael shall stand up, The great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, Such as never was since there was a nation, *Even* to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered,

Matt. 24:21 For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

It is to this unprecedented time of human suffering that the title, "Tribulation" is given.

### **The Holy Spirit and salvation/regeneration in the Tribulation**

Because Christ has been crucified a once-for-all sacrifice for sin, those in the Tribulation must look back to the cross and to Jesus as the Messiah who paid the penalty for all sin "in His own body on the tree" (1 Pet. 2:24). This is confirmed by statements in Revelation.

Rev. 7:14 ¶ And I said to him, "Sir, you know." ¶ So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Rev. 14:4 These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from *among* men, *being* firstfruits to God and to the Lamb.

Pentecost points out that the meaning of the preposition is not washed "in" the blood, but by means of the blood, the preposition used is (*en*).<sup>38</sup>

Revelation chapter 7 shifts the focus from the seal judgments on the earth, to what is happening in heaven. First, we learn there will be a sealing of 144,000, 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The seal is described as "the seal of the Living God," rather than the seal

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<sup>38</sup> Dwight J. Pentecost, *Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1958), 270.

of the Spirit. Second, those sealed are identified as “servants of our God,” which indicates they have been saved, that is, regenerated (Eph. 2:5). When the angel ascends from the east, he commands the four angels who were given the task “to harm the earth and the sea” (Rev. 7:3) to wait until the servants of our God are sealed “on their foreheads.”

Rev. 7:3 saying, “Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.”

This is echoed in the seventh seal:

Rev. 9:4 They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads.

But this seal from God on their forehead is later described as We can infer from this that at the very least the sealing will protect these 144,000 from harm from the judgments of the Tribulation.

Then the 144,000 are sealed, “on their foreheads.” This sealing indicates these 144,000 Jewish believers will be protected from both the judgments as well as the persecutions from Satan and his minions as these believers are the property of the Lord God. Their mission apparently relates to the twelve tribes of Israel. Though some have suggested their standing on Mt. Zion with the Lamb (Rev. 14:1–3) indicates they had been martyred, this is never clearly stated. They literally number 144,000, but they also represent the believing Jewish remnant that survives the Tribulation.

Another group mentioned in Revelation 7 reveals a vast group of martyrs in heaven. These are said to be “without number.”

Rev. 7:9 ¶ After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,

Rev. 7:10 and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

The regeneration of believers in the Tribulation will not be accompanied by the other aspects of the Spirit's ministry to believers in the body of Christ. They will not be sealed in the same way, neither will they be indwelt to make their bodies a temple for the indwelling of the Father and the Son. The Holy Spirit will cleanse them from sin but not indwell or fill them.

The ministry of the two witnesses clearly indicates a movement of power similar to that experienced by the prophets of Israel in the Old Testament, especially the ministries of Moses and Elijah.

Rev. 11:3 And I will give *power* to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth."

Rev. 11:4 ¶ These are the two olive trees and the two lampstands standing before the God of the earth.

Rev. 11:5 And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner.

Rev. 11:6 These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

Zech. 4:11 ¶ Then I answered and said to him, "What *are* these two olive trees—at the right of the lampstand and at its left?"

Zech. 4:12 And I further answered and said to him, "What *are these* two olive branches that *drip* into the receptacles of the two gold pipes from which the golden *oil* drains?"

Zech. 4:13 ¶ Then he answered me and said, "Do you not know what these *are*?" ¶ And I said, "No, my lord."

Zech. 4:14 ¶ So he said, "These *are* the two anointed ones, who stand beside the Lord of the whole earth."

There will also be a national salvation of Israel at the end of the Tribulation.

Ezek. 20:37 ¶ "I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant;

Ezek. 20:38 I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the country where they dwell, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I *am* the LORD.

Zech. 13:1 "In that day a fountain shall be opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.

Zech. 13:8 "... And it shall come to pass in all the land," Says the LORD, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off *and* die, But *one*-third shall be left in it:

Zech. 13:9 I will bring the *one*-third through the fire, Will refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them. I will say, “This *is* My people’; And each one will say, ‘The LORD *is* my God.’ ”

Rom. 11:27 *For this is My covenant with them, When I take away their sins.* ”

### Reference to the Holy Spirit in Revelation 4–19

The Holy Spirit is mentioned in relation to the seven churches in Rev. 2–3, and in relation to moving John the Apostle around to different vantage points and speaking to John (Rev. 4:2; 14:13; 17:3). These are the only three references to the Holy Spirit in Revelation during the descriptions of the Tribulation.

Rev. 4:2 ¶ Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and *One* sat on the throne.

Rev. 14:13 ¶ Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write: ‘Blessed *are* the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’ ” ¶ “Yes,” says the Spirit, “that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them.”

Rev. 17:3 ¶ So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness. And I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast *which was* full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

### Conclusions

#### 1. His role in revelation and inspiration:

The Holy Spirit will provide direct revelation through the two witnesses during the Tribulation. They will prophecy for 1,260 days.

#### 2. Regeneration and salvation:

Innumerable Gentiles and Jews will be regenerated and saved during the Tribulation.

#### 3. Baptizing:

There is no baptism by means of the Holy Spirit.

**4. Indwelling:**

No indwelling to make the believers' bodies a temple for the dwelling of God.

**5. Sealing; and**

The sealing will only be for the 144,000.

**6. Filling:**

There is no specific emphasis on the role of the Holy Spirit in the spiritual life of the believers, as there is no baptism of the Holy Spirit, or filling of the Holy Spirit, or walking by the Holy Spirit type of command.

We have seen that in all ages, the omnipresent Holy Spirit is active, but his roles are varied. His work in the Tribulation is only referenced in regard to revelation through the two witnesses, and regeneration and salvation of the lost. There are no clear references to any other activity.