

Coach House Church

BEACONS

HOLY SPIRIT

15TH JULY 2020

In Genesis chapter 1 verse 1 we are told that, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth". Then in verse two we are introduced to the Holy Spirit who is described as moving or hovering over the face of the waters. It is evident in the creation account that the Holy Spirit is the active agent, and that He is God.

The Holy Spirit is present throughout the Scriptures in all of God's dealings with the world and with people. In fact, the Bible tells us that we can't get away from or hide from God's spirit (Psalm 139:7). And I find this comforting. What I find absolutely amazing about the Holy Spirit is that He desires to dwell in men and women and children. We see this fully in the New Testament. Until Jesus had put away our sin by the offering of Himself on the cross, it wasn't possible for the Holy Spirit to live in people, because we were not holy; we were sinners. Once a person was cleansed from sin by Jesus' blood then the Holy Spirit was able to indwell them.

This brings us to the reason why God created humans in the first place. It wasn't merely to have fellowship with us, though He desired that, it was that we might become individually dwelling places for His Spirit. Just imagine that: the eternal, all powerful, all-knowing God indwelling us by His Spirit!

In Old Testament times, as I have indicated previously, it wasn't possible for God's Spirit to indwell us because of our sin. But God did the next best thing: He dwelt with His people, Israel, firstly in the tabernacle in the wilderness, where He was in the centre of the camp; then later He dwelt in the first Temple on mount Zion in Jerusalem. In both the tabernacle and Solomon's Temple the Holy Spirit dwelt in the most holy place of those structures, the Holy of Holies, above the mercy seat on the Ark of the Covenant. On entering the Holy of Holies each year on the Day of Atonement, the high priest would have seen the Shekinah Glory of God's Spirit hovering over the mercy seat. The manifestation of His presence with His people. I

don't know if you realise this, but that divine presence in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle and then later the Temple was a picture of God's desire to dwell in our hearts.

The Ark of the Covenant symbolises our hearts, our innermost being in our spirits. If you are a Christian, then God has raised your spirit from death and has become one with your spirit through your faith in Christ. The Ark of the Covenant contained the two tablets of the Law (Torah). God says He put His law in our hearts, see Jeremiah 31:33. (The Torah was not abolished by Jesus; He fulfilled it, and imputes His righteousness which He gained by keeping God's Law/Torah to us.) The Ark of the Covenant also contained a bowl of manna-the bread of heaven- which Jesus is to us. It also contained Aaron's rod which budded. This symbolises God's power in us. The Ark of the Covenant was splashed with the blood of a sacrificial animal by the high priest once a year on the Day of Atonement. This symbolises the cleansing of our hearts from sin by the blood of Jesus, who is our great High Priest, who cleanses us not with an animal's blood but with His own blood.

When you give your heart to Jesus, as I said above, you become one spirit with the Lord. Paul tells us this in 1 Corinthians 6:17. It was for this reason that Paul encourages his readers to live holy lives, which we can do by the Spirit's power. What an amazing thing that God makes our spirits one with His! We belong to Him in the most intimate of ways, which is symbolised by marriage! The Church is the Bride of Christ, just as Israel was the bride of Yahweh at Sinai. At Sinai, the marriage was based on keeping Torah, with Christ it is based on faith in Him alone. And as Israel were to walk with God by keeping Torah, so we walk with God by loving Jesus.

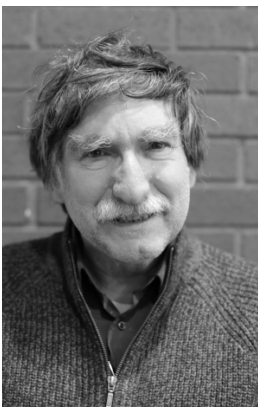
Paul tells us about the Spirit-filled life in Romans chapter 8, and I would encourage you to read the whole chapter. I would ask that you take particular note of verse 9 in this chapter. Paul says that if you don't have God's Spirit dwelling in you then you are not His.

In Ephesians 1:13 & 14 Paul tells us that those who trust in Christ are sealed by the Holy Spirit, and that possession of the Holy Spirit is the guarantee of our full redemption in the future. By that I mean the redemption of our bodies, which is yet future.

So, we were created to be a dwelling place for God's Spirit. The most intimate of relationships between the Creator and us His creatures. I do wonder if only humans are afforded this privilege but not angels etc.

This also means that in the here and now we need to cultivate this relationship with the Lord, and to walk in holiness with Him. The great thing is that the indwelling Spirit gives us the power to do this. We are not left to struggle futilely on our own. Of course, there will be times when we fail, but we can ask Jesus for forgiveness. But sin shouldn't become a habit that we just live with. Finally, just as Solomon's Temple was filled with the glory of God at its dedication, so shall our bodies be when they are finally redeemed.

Let's pray: Lord, thank You for the gift of salvation from sin and for the gift of your Holy Spirit. Please help us by your Spirit to always love You and to walk with You in the Spirit's power. Amen.



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