

The Holy Spirit
The Promise of the Holy Spirit

Lesson #4 for April 22, 2006

Scriptures: Exodus 31:3; Numbers 11:25; Isaiah 6:1-7; 48:10; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Malachi 3:2,3; Matthew 3:11; Romans 8:9; 2 Corinthians 3:3; 5:17; 7:1.

1. There seem to be four levels at which the Holy Spirit interacts with human beings:
 - 1) He sustains life.
 - 2) He woos every human being and encourages them to turn to God.
 - 3) He brings conviction to those who are making decisions for Christ.
 - 4) He gives gifts to members of His earthly family which make them capable of doing special things for the cause of God.
2. The Holy Spirit has been manifested throughout the history of our earth in various ways. In the very beginning He was there to assist in the creation. He was given as a special gift to **Bezalel** to enable him to build a beautiful temple in the wilderness (Exodus 31:13). He was given as a portion of the spirit taken from Moses and placed on the **70 elders** on their way to the land of Canaan (Numbers 11:25). He touched the lips of **Isaiah** in preparation for his ministry (Isaiah 6:1-7). He was promised to **God's people** if they would turn to Him (Ezekiel 36:25-27; 37:14; 39:29; Isaiah 44:3). **John the Baptist** assured his followers that when Jesus came as the Messiah He would baptize them with the Holy Spirit and with fire! (Matthew 3:11). Paul said that those who are **true Christians** will live by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9). **Paul** also said that we are to become new creatures through the power of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:17). Clearly the Holy Spirit has functioned in various roles throughout the history of Scripture. As far back as **Joel** in the eighth century B.C. the Holy Spirit was promised to be poured out in great measure upon his people. (Joel 2:28, 29).
3. But Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit was to come in a new and special way following His ascension to heaven. **This lesson is to explore the ways in which the Holy Spirit may interact with us in our lives as we wait for the latter rain.**
4. **How does the Holy Spirit assist in our sanctification? How does He cleanse as water? How does He cleanse as fire? Have you experienced the Holy Spirit as comforter, teacher, or guide?** Is it possible for us to experience the Holy Spirit in His fullness during this time of waiting? Why is the waiting taking so long? Are we prepared to experience the sometimes painful process of sanctification and cleansing?

"The Holy Spirit will not compel men to take a certain course of action. We are free moral agents; and when sufficient evidence has been given us as to our duty, it is left with us to decide our course." *Fundamentals of Christian Education* 124; *CE* 116; *Review and Herald* July 17, 1888

"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them' (Isaiah 8:20). **Even the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is to be tested by the Word of God. The Spirit which inspired the Scriptures, always leads to the Scriptures.**" *General Conference Daily Bulletin*, April 13, 1891; *Selected Messages*, Book 1, p. 43; *The EGWhite 1888 Materials*, p. 901

"Are you daily working to outgeneral the enemy and save your children from his devices? Are you opening to them the precious truths of the word of God, explaining to them the reasons of our faith, that their young feet may be planted on the platform of truth?"

"The Bible with its precious gems of truth was not written for the scholar alone.

On the contrary, it was designed for the common people; and the interpretation given by the common people, when aided by the Holy Spirit, accords best with the truth as it is in Jesus. The great truths necessary for salvation are made clear as the noonday, and none will mistake and lose their way except those who follow their own judgment instead of the plainly revealed will of God." *Testimonies*, vol. 5, p. 331 (1885); *LHU* 130; *SC* 89; *CE* 57; *RH* June 11, 1908; *ST* June 25, 1902; July 11, 1906

5. God has always made it clear that He is looking for a healthy, happy, holy people. This can only be accomplished through the work of the Holy Spirit on human lives.
6. **When Jesus was here on this earth walking, working and living with His disciples they felt a very close tie to Him. In what way does our relationship with the Holy Spirit in our day reflect that closeness? Or is our relationship not to be like that?**
7. Did the disciples ever feel that having the Holy Spirit with them was equivalent to having Jesus with them? In what sense could Jesus say "I am with you always"? (Matthew 28:20)
8. **What do you think John the Baptist had in mind when he suggested that the Messiah would baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire?** In what ways does water symbolize the Holy Spirit? In what ways does fire symbolize the Holy Spirit? Fire in ancient times meant three things: *light, warmth, and refining* by burning away the impure or waste.
9. Does it make you feel comfortable with God to know that He is "a consuming fire"? (Deuteronomy 4:24; Hebrews 12:29). Why do you think the Holy Spirit chose water as a symbol of Himself? Why do you think He chose fire as a symbol of Himself?

"All things may pass away; the world as we know it may be uprooted; life as we experience it may come to an end; but one thing stands eternally sure—the relationship of the Christian to God.

"If that be so there is a great obligation laid upon us. We must worship God with reverence and serve him with fear; for nothing must be allowed to disturb that relationship which will be our salvation when the world passes away. So the writer to the Hebrews finishes with one of those threatening quotations which he so often flings like a thunderbolt at his readers. It is a quotation from Deuteronomy 4:24. Moses is telling the people that they must never break their agreement with God and relapse into idolatry. For he is a jealous God. They must worship him alone or they will find him a consuming fire. It is as if the writer to the Hebrews was saying: "There is a choice before you. Remain steadfastly true to God, and in the day when the universe is shaken into destruction your relationship with him will stand safe and secure. Be false to him and that very God who might have been your salvation will be to you a consuming fire of destruction." **It is a grim thought; but in it there is the eternal truth that, if a man is true to God, he gains everything and, if he is untrue to God, he loses everything. In time and in eternity nothing really matters save loyalty to God.**" (*Daily Study Bible*, article on Heb. 12:29)
10. Are some sins like dirt that needs to be washed off? Are other sins so completely embedded in our being that they need to be refined out? Have you ever experienced a trial by fire? How has it affected you?
11. "One of the indispensable characteristics of God's true servants is purity of motive, life, and behavior. Nothing will more quickly disgrace Christianity than the morally polluted lives of its professed adherents." (*Adult Teachers Sabbath School Bible Study Guide*, p. 45) Is this possibly an explanation why the Holy Spirit has not been poured out in latter rain power?
12. Read John 7:39. What do you think this verse implies? Is John speaking only about

Pentecost?

13. Since taking upon Himself human nature Jesus has apparently decided to remain with our nature and thus to forfeit His omnipresence. Thus the Holy Spirit who continues to have His omnipresence can be with us wherever we are on planet Earth. So, geographically, having the Holy Spirit was a definite advantage over having Jesus here in a human body. Is this the only advantage we gain when we receive the Holy Spirit instead of Jesus?
14. Read John 7:37,38. Do you know anyone who exemplifies "life-giving water pouring out from his heart"? What do you think this expression actually means? Have you ever known anyone who exemplified this characteristic?
15. Sometimes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit has been in superabundance in miraculous ways that stunned everyone there. Pentecost would be an obvious example. Does the Holy Spirit commonly work in this way or does he have other ways of working more quietly behind the scenes? Which methodology do you think he prefers?
"Even the work of the Holy Spirit upon the heart is to be tested by the Word of God. The Spirit which inspired the Scriptures, always leads to the Scriptures." *GC Daily Bulletin*, Apr. 13, 1891 (1SM 43); *The Ellen G. White 1888 Materials*, p. 901
16. What manifestations of the Holy Spirit do you expect to see at the time of the end and the outpouring of the latter rain?
17. On His last journey from the upper room to Gethsemane Jesus spent a considerable amount of time talking about the Holy Spirit and what the Spirit would do for His disciples in the future. Why do you think He focused on the Holy Spirit at this time? Was it only that He was about to leave them?
18. Read John 14:16. Why do you think Jesus would need to ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit? After looking at Romans 8 shouldn't we understand that all three members of the Godhead are doing their utmost to help each one of us every day as far as we will allow them?
19. What do you think: is the Holy Spirit waiting for us? Or are we waiting for His special time? If He is waiting for us what is He waiting for? What is He looking for in us?
"The measure of the Holy Spirit we receive will be proportioned to the measure of our desire, and the faith exercised for it, and the use that we shall make of the light and knowledge that shall be given to us." *Last Day Events*, page 188.
20. Each one of us has been given special talents and gifts. Were these given us hereditarily or did the Holy Spirit have some special plan for our lives in giving us these gifts? Do you recognize ways in which you could use your own gifts for building up the body of Christ?

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Last modified: March 4, 2006
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