

# **Dr. David L. Mathewson, New Testament Theology, Session 25, Holy Spirit, Part 2**

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This is Dr. Dave Mathewson in his lecture series on New Testament Theology. This is session 25 on the Holy Spirit, Part 2.

We've been discussing the theological theme of the New Testament or of the Holy Spirit in the New Testament and two things to highlight by way of recapping what we said.

Number one, we saw that the Holy Spirit is not a New Testament theme exclusively. It is not a church theme. It is not something that only emerges or pops up in the New Testament with New Testament authors, but we've seen that the Holy Spirit plays an integral role in the Old Testament so that it plays an integral role in the biblical theological development of God's historical redemptive activity with his people.

And second then, in relationship to that, we've seen that the Holy Spirit throughout the New Testament is always, although the New Testament authors sometimes conceive of it, especially as we'll see today, conceive of it with different imagery and language that you might not find in the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit is always to be seen as the fulfillment of God's promises to give his spirit in relationship to the new covenant and pour out his spirit on his people. The Holy Spirit is always a sign that the new age of salvation has dawned and that God has now poured out his spirit in fulfillment of his Old Testament promises.

And we've seen that even in the Gospels and Acts, the Holy Spirit empowers people for serving him. It identifies and it indicates that who are the true people of God. We also have seen the Holy Spirit playing a key role in speech and prophecy, that is in inspiring speech and prophetic language.

But what I want to do now is move on to the rest of the New Testament and notice how the different corpora of literature develop the theme of the Holy Spirit. We'll move canonically. We'll look at Paul's letters.

In Paul, the Holy Spirit is ubiquitous. You find it all over the place, references of the Spirit. But we'll look at a couple of texts in the so-called general letters or epistles, and then we'll end by considering the function of the Holy Spirit and the role of the Holy Spirit in the book of Revelation.

But once more, the key feature to understand is the Holy Spirit in the Pauline literature and elsewhere is a sign that the new age of salvation has dawned, the new age of salvation prophesied by the Old Testament prophets, promised in the Old

Testament. Now that the new age has dawned, God's new creation, his kingdom, the new covenant salvation, and the Holy Spirit are signs or indications that that has taken place. And so what I want to do is look at Paul's letters.

And once again, we don't have time to examine all of the text and all of the details and explore every way that the Holy Spirit functions. But once again, I want to explore some of the dominant focuses or the dominant themes in relationship to the Holy Spirit, especially in light of Old Testament fulfillment and in light of some of the things we've seen in the Gospels and Acts. Now, with Paul's letters, the first thing to recognize is that the Holy Spirit functions to indicate the presence of God in the temple with his people.

So, in several places in Paul's letters, we'll look at just a couple of those, but in several places, we find the Holy Spirit functioning as the means by which God dwells with his people. This is done in conjunction with the biblical theological theme of the temple, where if you go back to our discussion of the temple, you recall that the temple imagery and temple language are transferred to and find their fulfillment in the people themselves. But then God's presence with his people, God's tabernacle temple dwelling with his people, is seen through the Holy Spirit.

It's through God's spirit that he dwells with his people. So, for example, second, we won't examine the Old Testament text again in relation to temple dwelling, but in 2 Corinthians chapters 6 and 16, we've already seen that in 1 Corinthians, Paul begins to develop the temple motif. He addresses the Corinthians using the plural.

Do you not know that you yourselves are God's temple? Or you yourselves are a temple, 1 Corinthians chapter 3. But what I want to do is look at 2 Corinthians chapter 6, and we've considered that text already. But in chapter 6, verse 16, what agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. And then, as God has said, I will live with them and walk among them.

I will be their God, and they will be my people. We looked at that in terms of the author, not only addressing the Corinthians as the temple of God but also quoting an Old Testament text, a combination of two texts actually from Ezekiel chapter 37 and Leviticus chapter 26. Leviticus 26, anticipating God dwelling in his tabernacle.

Ezekiel chapter 37 anticipates the dwelling of God in his eschatological temple that Ezekiel goes on and describes. Now, the author applies that to the Corinthian believers. And we're probably to understand that, although it doesn't say exactly how they are God's temple. How is it that God lives with them and walks among them? If you go back to 1 Corinthians chapter 3 and verse 16, this is the text where Paul says, don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's spirit dwells in your midst? So, in 1 Corinthians chapter 3 and verse 16 and coupled with 2 Corinthians 6.16, the church is God's temple where he dwells through his Holy Spirit.

You find a similar theme in the book of Ephesians and chapter 2, a lengthy section starting at verse 11 where Paul describes the relationship between Jew and Gentile as being restored based on Old Testament prophetic text from Isaiah. Isaiah's promise of restoration has now taken place by God uniting Jews and Gentiles. This account climaxes with a reference to God's people in terms of the temple.

And so, verse 19, consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, which could be taken as general household imagery. But then it goes on, build on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone in him. The whole building is joined together and rises to become a Holy temple in the Lord.

So, the application of temple language to the church, but then it goes on verse 22 ends by saying, and in him, you two are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his spirit. So, the spirit is the means by which God's presence is his tabernacle, temple presence, and temple dwelling, and now he is in the midst of his people. I also suggested that we should probably read Ephesians chapter 5 and verse 18 in the same way.

Although the author does not use the word temple in chapter 5, verse 18, Paul says, do not get drunk with wine, which leads to debauchery, but instead be filled with the spirit. We should probably understand that also in terms of God's presence in Ezekiel and other Old Testament texts, God's presence filling the temple, the temple being full of God's glory so that the spirit now, especially in light of what Paul just said in Ephesians 2 and 20 and 21 and 22, is now the spirit fills the church. And we probably should not read chapter 5, verse 18 of Ephesians exclusively individualistically, but should read it corporately.

The entire church is a temple that God fills with his glorious presence through or by means of his Holy Spirit. So, the first main function of the Holy Spirit that we find in Paul's letters is that it's through the spirit that God's temple presence now resides with his people. The temple presence is mediated by God's Holy Spirit.

God dwells with his people or in his temple people by means of his spirit. Consistent with other old New Testament texts, and again, this could be seen as sort of the overarching function of the spirit, the Holy Spirit is a sign that the new age of salvation has been inaugurated. The coming new age of salvation prophesied in the Old Testament prophets, the new covenant that the prophets anticipated, Ezekiel chapter 36, for example, and all those texts referring to God pouring out his spirit in Isaiah chapter 44, in Joel chapter 2 and elsewhere, now finds its fulfillment in the presence of the Holy Spirit with his people, the church, the church consisting of Jew and Gentile.

Now, as I said, we often find Paul using different metaphors to refer to the spirit. We'll see him using the language of sealing or baptizing or again filling, although even the language of filling in Ephesians 5 is not a New Testament concept. It probably goes back to God's filling the temple with his glorious presence.

But some of the language might be different from what we find in the Old Testament, yet at the same time, it's clear that Paul understands the Holy Spirit as a sign that the new age of salvation, the new covenant, the new creation anticipated in prophetic literature has now been inaugurated. So, for example, to demonstrate the different ways that Paul sees the Holy Spirit functioning, in chapter 1 and verse 14, I need to read 13 as well, and you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation when you believed you were marked in him, in Christ, with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit. That's interesting, as he describes it as the promised Holy Spirit.

He was promised by whom and promised where? Probably again, a reference to the Old Testament, the Holy Spirit that God promised to pour out in his people. The promised blessing of the Holy Spirit that one finds again in Isaiah and Ezekiel that we read about in Acts, the Holy Spirit that Christ promises to pour out in his people in fulfillment of Joel chapter 2 in Acts chapter 2. So, this is the promised Holy Spirit. Again, Paul uses the language of a seal, which suggests security and protection and keeping, but it's in the context of this that it is not something brand new that happens, but it's nothing less than the promised Holy Spirit.

Verse 14, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance, more Old Testament language, our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession to the praise of his glory. So, the Holy Spirit then functioned; the poured-out Holy Spirit functions as a guarantee of our future inheritance and functions as a guarantee of the inheritance of more to come. But the Holy Spirit is nothing less than what God promised his people.

Romans chapter 8 and verse 23, to just look at a selection of texts, not only so, verse 22, in sort of in the same context where the Holy Spirit as we saw in Ephesians is poured out on us, the promised Holy Spirit, as a guarantee of our future inheritance. Verse 22 of Romans 8, we know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time. Not only so, but we ourselves who have the first fruits of the Spirit grown inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption to sonship, the redemption of our bodies.

So once more, the Holy Spirit is poured out as promised in the Old Testament as a guarantee, and here, Paul uses more Old Testament language of first fruits. The Holy Spirit is poured out on us as the first fruit of more fruit to come, which is our future inheritance, the physical redemption of our bodies in a new creation. So the Holy Spirit functions as an indication, a guarantee, that the new age of salvation is already

present and has already been inaugurated, even in advance of its future manifestation.

Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 30, I just want to mention this one because the author says, do not let any this is verse 29 of Ephesians 4, do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Now, a couple of things are interesting about this text.

First of all, notice the similarity between chapter 1 and verse 13 of Ephesians, that the Holy Spirit functions as a seal guaranteeing our future inheritance. Notice the balance between the already and not yet. Already, the Spirit has been poured out as a guarantee of our future inheritance.

Second, note the connection with the Old Testament. Back in Isaiah chapter 66, when we surveyed the Old Testament teaching on the Holy Spirit, in Isaiah chapter 66, we found a reference to the Holy Spirit that was poured out in God's people in the Old Testament, that is, the wilderness generation of God's people, and the fact that they grieve the Holy Spirit. In other words, Paul is here appealing to, I think he's directly alluding to Isaiah chapter 66, and demonstrating that now the true people of God are being warned not to commit the same mistake their ancestors did, by through their speech now grieving the Holy Spirit that has been poured out on them in fulfillment of the Old Testament promises, as a guarantee of their future redemption.

Romans chapter 8 and verse 16. To look at one more one other example of a New Testament text that describes the pouring out of the Holy Spirit as a sign that the new age of salvation has already dawned. Chapter 8 and verse 16.

I'll read verse 15 as well. The spirit you received does not make you slaves so that you live in fear again; rather, the spirit that you received, the implication is received at the time of salvation and in fulfillment of the Old Testament promise of the dawning of the new age. The spirit you received brought about your adoption to sonship, and by him we cry Abba Father.

The spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. So now the Holy Spirit is the sign of who the true children of God are. The Holy Spirit is a sign that we are truly God's people and have participated in the new age of salvation that has now dawned.

So, the Holy Spirit functions as a guarantee that the new age has now arrived and is a sign or indicator of who the true people of God are. Related to that, we could look at

a host of other texts that talk about the spirit's work in relationship to salvation. This isn't really a separate category but belongs to the first one.

The spirit is a sign that the new age of salvation has arrived in fulfillment of the Old Testament promises that God would pour out his spirit on his people. However, the text that we just ended with in Romans, Chapter 8 and Verse 16, indicates a crucial role of the Holy Spirit, and that is, the spirit is an identity marker of who the true people of God are. We just read Romans chapter 8, verse 16, and verse 8. You, however, are not in the realm of the flesh but are in the realm of the spirit if, indeed, the spirit of God lives in you.

And then, if anyone does not have the spirit of Christ, they do not belong to Christ. Interestingly, Paul also equates the spirit of God with the spirit of Christ. But the Holy Spirit is an indication of the fact that we are God's true people.

An indication of the fact that now we are in the realm of the spirit and that, once more, we associate with the people of God. We are to be identified with the people of God and those who now are in the realm of God's new age of salvation that has dawned. Even more clear than that is Galatians chapter 3, in which we find further references to the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is crucial for the argument of Galatians. Part of what Paul is doing in Galatians is arguing against the so-called Judaizers who have come in. Remember we said one of the key questions Galatians is dealing with is who are the true people of God.

The Judaizers are answering that by saying that the true people of God are the physical descendants of Abraham. Those who are truly Jews take upon themselves the identity marker of keeping the law. For males, that meant circumcised.

For everyone else, it means keeping the Sabbath and keeping the food laws, what it means to be God's people, and what it means to be justified by faith.

We will look at that term later. But what it means to be justified, to experience God's salvation, to participate in the blessings of Abraham. One must be a physical descendant of Abraham, or one must identify with the physical descendants of Abraham by taking upon themselves the identity markers of the law.

Now, in response to that, Paul begins to ask his Gentile Galatian Christians who are tempted to side with that and buy into that and to go along with the Judaizers. He begins in verse 2 by saying I would like to learn just one thing from you. Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by believing what you heard? Are you so foolish after beginning by means of the spirit are you now trying to finish by the

flesh? Have you experienced so much in vain? That is what they've experienced in the Holy Spirit and by receiving the spirit if it really was in vain.

So, verse 5 then, so again, I ask you, does God give you his spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law or by believing what you heard? In other words, Paul sees the pouring out of the Holy Spirit and the receiving of the Holy Spirit as a guarantee that they are the true people of God. As the identity marker that they belong to God's people. And so I think once more Paul is going back to the Old Testament promises of God pouring out his spirit on his people.

Promises are usually in the context of God's restoration of God's people, Israel, in the Old Testament. Now, Paul is simply asking them if they have received the Holy Spirit simply by faith in Jesus Christ, or did they receive it in association with keeping the Old Testament law? The conclusion is that we should receive the Holy Spirit when we believe in Christ. That is the promised Holy Spirit of the Old Testament that God said he would pour out in his people if the Galatians received that.

That is proof of their identity of God's people. They do not keep the Mosaic law, but they simply receive the Holy Spirit as the promised Holy Spirit that God would pour out on his people in the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit guarantees or indicates the inauguration of the new age of salvation. If the Galatians have experienced that simply by believing in the gospel and believing in Christ, then they don't need to take upon themselves the yoke of the law as an identity marker of being God's people.

So, the spirit functions as an identity marker of who the true people of God are. The Holy Spirit is associated with sonship and is related to the theme of identity markers for God's people. By receiving the Holy Spirit, the Holy Spirit guarantees that they are God's sons.

That the Gentile Christians in Galatians, for example, and all of God's people, Jew and Gentile, are now true sons or true children of God. So, in the same book, Galatians chapter 4 and verse 6, Paul again argues the same thing. How do we know that we are truly God's sons? This language of sonship, as we'll see in our next lecture when we talk about salvation, is the biblical-theological New Testament theme of salvation.

Sonship is to be understood once more in the context of God's promises to Israel and in the context of God's dealing with Israel. Israel was God's true son. Israel was the adopted son of God, and his people.

Now the question is, on what basis are we God's children? What is the demonstration or guarantee that we are truly God's children, God's sons, in fulfillment of his Old Testament promises to Israel? Chapter 4 and verse 6, because you are his sons, God sent the spirit of his son into our hearts, the spirit who calls out Abba Father. The NIV that I'm looking at capitalizes spirit, making it clear this is a

reference to the Holy Spirit. Again, this is a reference to the Old Testament promises of God pouring out his spirit on his people. So now the fact that the Galatians are able to confess God as Father to cry out Abba Father Paul says is because and only because they have and possess the promised Holy Spirit from the Old Testament that God would pour out on his people.

Another very interesting one is that according to Paul's argument in Galatians, the Holy Spirit for Paul seems to be equated with the promise that was made to Abraham. That is, when you go back and look at the Old Testament promises made to Abraham, Paul sees that ultimately as the blessing of the Holy Spirit. The fact that God promised to bless Abraham and all the nations of the earth would be blessed that blessing is the Holy Spirit pouring out of God's spirit.

Galatians chapter 3 and verse 14. Let's see, I'll go back up and read verse 13. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us.

For it is written, cursed is everyone who is hung in the tree. He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might now come to the Gentiles. Through Christ Jesus, we might receive the promise of the Holy Spirit by faith.

Again, the promise of the Holy Spirit is not just the Holy Spirit that God now promises to Christians in the New Testament. But the promised Holy Spirit that God promises from the Old Testament to pour out on his people. And now Paul associates that with the promise made to Abraham.

So, in Genesis chapter 12 and subsequent chapters of Genesis, when God makes promises to Abraham and promises to bless him and all the nations of the earth, that promise is now finally able to be poured out. Now that Christ has redeemed Israel from under the law, the blessings of Abraham can now be poured out on Jew and Gentile alike, which is the promised Holy Spirit. In fact, if you go back to Isaiah chapter 44, I think you see a similar identification.

Isaiah chapter 44 and verse 3, For I will pour water on the thirsty land, we read this text already in connection with the Old Testament promise of the Holy Spirit and noted the connection between pouring out water and pouring out the Spirit, that you sometimes find in the New Testament as well. For I will pour water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground. I will pour out my Spirit on your offspring and my blessing on your descendants.

So now, interestingly, that language of... And if you go back, he addresses the people, Do not be afraid, Jacob, my servant, in verse 2. So, note the language of my offspring and my descendants, and bless them. That recalls Abrahamic covenant language from Genesis 12 and elsewhere in Genesis and the Old Testament. So, even Isaiah

chapter 44 seems to equate the promise to Abraham's offspring with the blessing that would go to his descendants as the pouring out of the Holy Spirit.

And so now we find Paul saying something similar in Galatians chapter 3 and verse 14, that the blessing given to Abraham now is to go out to the Gentiles in fulfillment of the Old Testament, and so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Holy Spirit. We are perhaps recalling texts like Isaiah 44. So, the Holy Spirit is also to be identified as the promise made to Abraham.

We also find the Holy Spirit once more, I think, in fulfillment of what we find going on in Ezekiel 36 and the new covenant salvation that is to be inaugurated based on the promise made in Ezekiel 36. We also find Paul associating the Holy Spirit with renewal and regeneration or rebirth, much like you find in, for example, John chapter 3. So, Titus chapter 3 and verse 5. We haven't looked at many of the references to the pastoral letters, so here's one. He saved us not because of the righteous things we have done but because of his mercy.

He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Again, notice that language of pouring out the Spirit, which seems to reflect, again, Old Testament text. Notice the connection with washing and the language of rebirth or regeneration and renewal.

All of that, I think, recalls Old Testament language, so that once more the Holy Spirit is a sign that the promised renewal, the promised pouring out of the Holy Spirit that brings regeneration and renewal, Ezekiel 36 and elsewhere, has now been fulfilled in the person of Jesus Christ. And so, you also find, even in Titus 3:5, the connection between now that Jesus, because of his death and his resurrection, is exalted Lord, he is now able to, now that he's redeemed his people, he is now able to pour out the promised Holy Spirit upon his people. We also see that the Holy Spirit, in his work in association with salvation, inaugurates a new creation.

It's the Holy Spirit that brings about the new creation, and he does so by bringing about the resurrection life of the new creation. 1 Corinthians chapter 15 and verse 45. There are a number of texts in 1 Corinthians 15 that we could read, but in verse 45, it is written: The first man Adam became a living being, the last Adam a life-giving spirit.

Verse 46, A spiritual did not come first, but the natural, and after that, the spiritual. So, the resurrection life of the new creation is now being poured out by Jesus Christ. So, the Holy Spirit inaugurates a new creation by communicating to us the spiritual or the resurrection life of the new creation in advance of the physical resurrection of God's people that will take place at the coming of Christ in the future.

So, the Holy Spirit inaugurates the new creation, inaugurates the promised new creation of the Old Testament by already giving us the spiritual resurrection life of the new creation, which Paul makes clear we share in by virtue of belonging to Christ, who was raised. Another important theme that anticipates something we'll talk about towards the end of this course, and that is the Holy Spirit. Throughout the New Testament, we find the Holy Spirit in relationship to Christian ethics.

We've already noted that the Holy Spirit inaugurates a new covenant, but part of the new covenant, if you go back to both Jeremiah and Ezekiel, is that God would write His law on our hearts. God would pour out His Spirit, enabling His people to keep His law and respond in obedience. He'd remove their heart of stone and give them a heart of flesh through the Holy Spirit.

So the Holy Spirit not only inaugurates the new covenant, but it's through the Holy Spirit that we are now enabled to keep God's commandments and live the kind of life that God desires of His people. In fact, I think if you read Paul's letters carefully and closely, you find that all of Paul's commands that he gives through his letters in the form of the vice and virtue lists and other imperatives and commands are never to be construed as things that somehow under our own power we can perform and produce. But Paul, I think, always assumes that although we are responsible for our actions and activity, ultimately, it's the Holy Spirit that produces the kind of life that God desires of us.

Galatians chapter 5 is one of the clearest examples of this in the well-known section on the fruit of the Spirit. Paul says, starting with verse 13 of Galatians 5, You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free, but do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh. Rather, serve one another humbly in love, for the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: love your neighbor as yourself.

And then verse 16, So I say to you, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh. For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They're in conflict with each other.

Verse 18: But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law. The acts of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, etc. Verse 22: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.

Against such things, there is no law. Those who have belonged to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. Since we live by the Spirit, let us keep in step with the Spirit.

In other words, what I think Paul is saying in this section, and we'll return to it towards the end of this course when we talk about obedience, the theological theme

of obedience, and the law, but what I think Paul is saying in this section is that ultimately the Old Testament law under the Old Covenant by itself could not overcome the flesh and could not ultimately overcome the deeds of the flesh. But now it's only by living in the Holy Spirit, and it's only by life in the Spirit, the New Covenant Spirit that writes the law of God in our hearts, that brings about a new heart and the enablement to keep the law, it's only by the New Covenant Spirit that we are able to produce the life that the Old Testament law was only pointing to and anticipating. Now that life can be lived, that fruit can be produced by living life in obedience to and in step with, as Paul says, the Holy Spirit.

So once more, I think we do this text on injustice if we don't read it in light of the Old Testament promises of a coming Spirit, especially the New Covenant promises of writing God's law in our hearts, giving us the Spirit, Ezekiel 36, to enable us to keep God's commandments. Now, the Holy Spirit enables us to produce the kind of life God desires rather than submit to the Old Testament law. And again, Galatians 6 or 5 is not trying to absolve us of responsibility as if we have nothing to do or as if we have no responsibility to respond in obedience.

In fact, in chapter 6, Paul will go on and give his readers specific commands, implying that they could or could not obey them. But ultimately, Paul is convinced it's only by the power of God's Spirit, the New Covenant Spirit, that we are enabled to produce the fruit, that is, the kind of life that God desires of his people that the law only pointed to and anticipated. Moving on to other texts in the New Testament, we will stop with just a couple of references to the so-called general epistles, that is, sort of everything between Paul's letters and Revelation is often called the general epistles.

In the book of Hebrews, for example, we find that the Holy Spirit does not play a crucial role. We don't find a lot of references to the Holy Spirit. One of the ways the Holy Spirit functions, interestingly in Hebrews, is the author often sees the Holy Spirit speaking through Scripture.

So, when the author of Hebrews quotes Old Testament texts, he often attributes that to the speaking of the Holy Spirit. So, this theme of the Holy Spirit revealing, the Holy Spirit speaking, chapter 9 and verse 8, the Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way into the most holy place had not been disclosed as long as the first tabernacle was still standing. This comes at the end of a discussion where the author talks about the arrangement of the earthly tabernacle and how the priest could only enter the inner sanctuary once a year, where he offered a sacrifice for himself and the sins of the people.

And then the author says the Holy Spirit was showing by this that the way to the most holy place had not yet been disclosed. So, even in certain events transpiring under the Old Covenant, the author sees the Holy Spirit pointing to something greater. One of the clearest references of the Holy Spirit in the context of what we've

been discussing is that the Holy Spirit is a sign that the new age of salvation has dawned, that the new creation has now been fulfilled and become a reality is found in chapter 6 and verse 4. It is impossible for those who have once been enlightened, tasted the heavenly gift, shared in the Holy Spirit, and tasted the goodness of God's word.

Interestingly, I have argued elsewhere that in chapter 6, verses 4 through 6, all of those things, being enlightened, tasting the heavenly gift, sharing in the Holy Spirit, tasting the goodness of God's word, the powers of the age to come, all of those recall Old Testament texts or Old Testament themes. And so, once more, the Holy Spirit, even in chapter 6, the author is convinced that the pouring out of the Holy Spirit or the experience and sharing in God's Spirit is nothing less than a participation in the promised Holy Spirit from the Old Testament that God would pour out on his people. I could point to a number of references in 1 Peter.

I won't dwell on those at any length, but 1 Peter chapter 1. 1 Peter chapter 1 is a text that has a number of sticky exegetical problems, and there's been debate as to exactly how to handle some of the examples, but I simply want to look more broadly at it in relationship to the theme of the Holy Spirit. But verses 11 and 12. I'll back up and read 10.

Concerning this salvation that the authors described in the first part of chapter 1, the prophets, that is, the Old Testament prophets, who spoke of the grace that was to come to you, searched intently with great care, trying to find out the time and circumstances to which the Spirit of Christ in them was pointing when he predicted the sufferings of the Messiah and the glories that would follow. It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves but you when they spoke of the things that have now been told you by those who preach the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven. Even angels long to look into these things.

So, notice two things. Number one, the association of the Holy Spirit once more with prophesying, with prophetic utterances and speech, but also the reference of the Holy Spirit sent from heaven, which I think once more recalls the promises of the pouring out of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament, such as Joel chapter 2 and other texts that we looked at. One problematic text, again, that we don't have time to explore, but this interesting text where Christ goes and preaches of the spirits in prison, and we don't have time to get into all that, but verse 18.

Verse 18 of 1 Peter 3, For Christ, also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. So now, consistent with what we've seen the Spirit doing elsewhere in the New Testament, this is probably a reference to Christ's resurrection.

Verse 19 goes on and says, After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits. That's probably a good translation. So, the reference to being made alive in the Spirit is a reference to Jesus' own resurrection.

So, the Holy Spirit, again, inaugurates the life of the new creation, the life of the age to come, by physically raising Jesus Christ from the dead. So, again, even in some of the general epistles, we could look at some other ones, references of the Holy Spirit are consistent with what we find elsewhere as part of God's redemptive storyline, where he now fulfills his promises of the Old Testament of pouring out his Spirit as a sign that the new age of salvation and its blessings have already been inaugurated in the person of Jesus Christ. The last place that I want to... last place, and that is the very end of the New Testament that I want to stop at, is the Book of Revelation.

And we often don't think of the Book of Revelation as a book containing anything about the Holy Spirit. And I would guess that a lot of people don't think it really has a theology of the Holy Spirit. Once more, because we're often infatuated with its eschatology and what it might teach about the end of the world and end-time stuff.

But Revelation is far more than just end times. We already have seen that it has one of the richest Christologies in the Bible, in the New Testament. But we also find numerous references to the Holy Spirit throughout Revelation.

That is, the Holy Spirit plays a key role. And once more, I think that we find the Holy Spirit plays a role in terms of how it brings to fulfillment, how it is consistent with God's redemptive-historical plan, where the Holy Spirit now is an indication that the new age of salvation has arrived. The starting point is to notice that the Book of Revelation is punctuated by a number of references to John, the author, being in the Spirit.

So, you can write down and look up later chapter 1 and Verse 10, chapter 4 and Verse 2, chapter 17 and Verse 3, and chapter 21 and Verse 10. All of these have a reference of John being in the Spirit in the context of having a vision. I'll simply read the first one in chapter 1 and verse 10.

But John says, On the Lord's Day, I was in the Spirit, and then I heard behind me a loud voice, and then he turns in verse 12 to see who it was that was speaking. And if you look at all those other references, chapter 4 and verse 2, 17 and verses 3, 21, and verse 10, they're all in the context of John having a vision. John going on to record what it was he saw.

In other words, the significance here is through the Holy Spirit that these visions are communicated to John. So, John's visions come to him or are communicated to him by the Spirit or while he is in God's Spirit. In my opinion, this language probably comes right out of Ezekiel's book.

In fact, there have been a number of works and books and articles that have demonstrated that John is, throughout the whole book of Revelation, is heavily dependent on Ezekiel and other Old Testament books as well, such as Isaiah and Daniel and others, but particularly Ezekiel. We saw in chapters 21 and 22 John is heavily dependent on Ezekiel 40 through 48. But throughout the book of Ezekiel, to give you a couple of examples, we find the Holy Spirit carrying Ezekiel away to see different things or in the context of different visions.

So, for example, in Ezekiel, chapter 2 and verse 2 would be one of them. Ezekiel chapter 2 and verse 2, we find this. Ezekiel 2:2, as he spoke, he saw the appearance of a man, and the man said to him, chapter 2 verse 1, Son of man, stand up on your feet and I will speak to you.

As he spoke, the Spirit came into me and raised me up on my feet, and I heard him speaking to me. Chapter 37 and verse 1 of Ezekiel, in the context of Ezekiel having a vision of the valley of dry bones that we've talked about, the hand of the Lord was on me, and he brought me out by the Spirit of the Lord and set me in the middle of a valley full of bones. So, in Ezekiel, the Holy Spirit is the means by which Ezekiel has visions.

So now John also punctuates his visions with references to the Holy Spirit. I think that, by demonstrating his connection with the prophetic text, his vision is to be seen in the same line, in the same vein, as the Old Testament prophetic visions. In a sense, John takes upon himself the mantle of Ezekiel.

He sees a vision like his. The same Spirit that inspired Ezekiel's vision now inspires John's as well. So, the Holy Spirit plays a key role in the visions communicated to John.

The Holy Spirit functions to speak to the churches in a manner consistent with the language of speaking and the speech of God. We find the Holy Spirit speaking to the churches. Chapters 2 and 3, which are actually not technically letters but prophetic messages or prophetic proclamations of the churches, are modeled after prophetic speeches, the language of the risen Christ to the churches that John is to communicate to them.

At the end of each of those seven, we find a reference to the Spirit speaking to the churches. I just wanted to give you one example that is repeated after each of the seven messages. Verse 11 of chapter 2. Verse 11 of chapter 2. Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.

So, interestingly, then the words of Christ, of the risen Christ to the churches in the form of these seven messages, ends up being the words of the Spirit. The church is

called to listen to and to hear what the Spirit is speaking through these messages to the churches. So, again, that end-time Spirit that is poured out now speaks to the churches and calls forth a response of obedience on the part of the people.

Another intriguing reference in that vein is Revelation chapter 22 and verse 17. Revelation 22, verse 17. The Spirit and the bride say.

So, notice the Spirit speaking again. Let the one who hears say come. Let the one who is thirsty come and the one who wishes take the free gift of the water of life.

So, again, the Spirit speaks. The Spirit is the one who speaks to the church and calls forth a response. Perhaps in conjunction with that, you also find references in Revelation to the spirit of prophecy.

Again, prophecy is inspired by the Holy Spirit. But there are two other references I want to focus attention on in addition to the Spirit speaking to the churches, the Spirit inspiring John's prophetic revelation and his apocalyptic vision, and the Spirit that inspires the prophets. I want to look at two other references.

One of them is very clear. The other is more by way of allusion. But in Revelation, starting with chapter 1 and verse 4, we find this very interesting reference.

Chapter 1 and verse 4 of Revelation. John, to the seven churches in the province of Asia, grace and peace to you from him who was, who is, who was, and who is to come and from the seven spirits before the throne. We find that same reference in John's opening vision of the throne room in chapters 4 and 5. In chapter 4, from the throne came flashes of lightning, rumblings and peals of thunder.

In front of the throne, seven lamps were blazing, which are the seven spirits of God. We see the same thing in chapter 5 in verse 6. In John's vision of the lamb, he sees a lamb standing as slain, standing at the center of the throne. And then it says, the lamb had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God that go out into the earth.

So, you find this strange reference to seven spirits. And the question is, what in the world are these, or who are these seven spirits? Some have suggested these are merely angelic beings. But I would argue that these are probably not angelic beings.

The reason is that, in the very first reference in chapter 1 and verse 4, the reference to the seven spirits takes place within, to use the words of systematic theology, a Trinitarian formula. The one who was and is and is to come, the seven spirits. And then the next one is the Son, Jesus Christ, the lamb.

So, the reference to the seven spirits is probably in chapter 1 and in chapters 4 and 5, a reference to the Holy Spirit. By referring to the seven spirits, I don't think the author is saying there are actually seven literal separate spirits, but seven in Revelation carry the symbolic connotation of completeness and perfection. So here we find the seven spirits emblematic of the completeness, the perfection, and the power of God's Spirit that will now accomplish God's purpose in the world.

We should probably understand a reference to the Holy Spirit in the two witnesses in Revelation chapter 11. In Revelation chapter 11, John sees a vision of two witnesses and I'm not going to go into a lot, I don't want to go into detail with this text, and I can't defend why, but I take it that the two witnesses in Revelation symbolize the church, the entire people of God, and you can, a number of commentaries argue for that, but the two witnesses symbolize the church. Two interesting references to the Spirit.

Number one is, in chapter 11 and verse 11, after the two witnesses are martyred and put to death, the Spirit or the breath of God enters them and raises them, which is actually an allusion to Ezekiel chapter 37. The valley of the dry bones where they stand up and take on flesh, and the breath of the Spirit of God enters them and gives them life. So, the two witnesses are vindicated because of their suffering or in the face of their suffering in fulfillment of Ezekiel chapter 37.

So, we find the Holy Spirit giving resurrection life to the martyred people of God, to the suffering people of God in vindicating them. But the second reference to the Spirit, in addition to the allusion to Ezekiel 37, which refers to the Spirit raising and giving life, is, interestingly, the two witnesses are identified as a lampstand. This language of chapter 11, which identifies these witnesses as a lampstand, goes back to Zechariah chapter 4. One interesting text in Zechariah chapter 4 is verse 6, where Zechariah says it's not by might, not by power, but quoting God's words, but by my Spirit, says the Lord.

So, I take it that by allusion to Zechariah 4, the author is suggesting that it is the Holy Spirit that enables and empowers the witness of God's people, these two witnesses symbolizing the Church. But they do it not through force and power, but interestingly, they do it through their suffering. But even through their suffering faithful witness, it's God's Spirit from Zechariah 4, it's God's Spirit that enables them to do that.

Not by might, not by power, but it's by my Spirit, says the Lord, that now His two witnesses carry out His purposes in the world. So, the book of Revelation is not just a book about end times, but also the Holy Spirit plays a crucial role in Revelation from beginning to end in inspiring the vision that John has, in calling the Church to obedience, and even in empowering the suffering, faithful suffering witness of the Church. The Holy Spirit accomplishes the sevenfold, powerful, perfect, complete

Spirit of God, accomplishing God's purpose on the earth in bringing about His kingdom.

This is Dr. Dave Mathewson in his lecture series on New Testament Theology. This is session 25 on the Holy Spirit, Part 2.