

## More on the Holy Spirit (John 14:25-26a)

Expository Lessons from the Gospel of John

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### I. Background for the Farewell Discourse

- a. As we resume in the text, it is the Thursday night, the night before Jesus is to be crucified.
  - i. Jesus has had his Last Supper with the disciples, at which (we know from **Matthew**, **Mark** and **Luke**) He instituted the Lord's Supper with the bread and the cup.
- b. After dinner has ended and Judas has departed, but before Jesus and his disciples cross over to the Garden of Gethsemane (where Jesus will be taken prisoner), Jesus gives a lengthy and very significant talk to the apostles.
  - i. The passages we will cover in this lesson are part of that "Farewell Discourse", which we find in **John 13:31-17:26**.
- c. In our last lesson we discussed some things Jesus taught regarding Holy Spirit.
  - i. Jesus said He would send another Helper, the Spirit of truth.
  - ii. Jesus said the Holy Spirit was dwelling with them *and would be in them*. This is a profound mystery!
- d. In this lesson Jesus continues to speak about the mission of the Holy Spirit.

### II. The Nature of the Holy Spirit (Continuation from the Prior Lesson)

- a. We discussed that the Holy Spirit is:
  - i. Divine (God), begotten of the Father (or perhaps of the Father and the Son).
  - ii. The Holy Spirit is the third person of the trinity (the Father, Son and Holy Spirit all being God, all being divine).
  - iii. He is person (in other words, has a personality and a will), the Holy Spirit is not some kind of impersonal force.
    1. Jesus refers to the Spirit as "He" in **John 14:26** and **John 16:13-14**

2. The Holy Spirit speaks to and through people.
  3. Ananias *lied to* the Holy Spirit in **Acts 5:1-4**.
- iv. We also looked at two Old Testament pictures that help us understand the Holy Spirit:
1. **Isaiah 11:1-5** speaks of the Spirit of God resting upon the root of Jesse, a prophecy of the Spirit of God descending upon Jesus at His baptism. We learn here that the Spirit of God is the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, and Spirit of Knowledge, godliness and fear of God. (characteristics as enumerated in the LXX)
  2. The second image we looked at is found in the story of the exodus from Egypt and of Israel's wandering in the Wilderness. The Israelites were led by the pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night. That pillar represented the Holy Spirit leading God's people out of slavery and to the Promised Land (which foreshadowed heaven for us).
    - a. In the current lesson we will take a closer look at that story. There is much more for us to learn about the Spirit of God.
- b. Paul makes the connection between the cloud and the Holy Spirit
- i. "Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea," (**1 Corinthians 10:1-2**, NKJV)
  - ii. Paul equates the Israelites crossing of the Red Sea (departing Egypt, the land of bondage) in **Exodus 14** with Christian baptism.
    1. The sea represented the water in baptism.
    2. The cloud represented the Holy Spirit.
    3. "Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." (**John 3:5**, NKJV)
      - a. Early Christian writers understood this statement by Jesus as referring to water baptism, where we are spiritually reborn through water and the Holy Spirit (also see **Acts 2:38**).
- c. Passages that describe the pillar of cloud and fire:

- i. It first appears in **Exodus 13**, right after the Passover event.
  1. In **Exodus 12** we saw:
    - a. the Passover lamb slain;
    - b. a special meal consisting of that lamb eaten by God's people, yet none of bones of that lamb were to be broken (foreshadowing **John 19:30-37**);
    - c. the blood of the lamb placed on the doorposts of the houses;
    - d. the Jews protected by blood of the lamb while death comes upon firstborn in all the households of the Egyptians (foreshadowing Jesus, our Passover Lamb, as noted in **1 Corinthians 5:7**); and then
    - e. Jews start to depart Egypt in haste at night, with unleavened bread.
  2. Read **Exodus 13:17-22**
    - a. God leads them on the way out of Egypt, toward the Red Sea with the pillar of cloud (by day) and fire (by night).
- ii. Read **Exodus 14:19-25**
  1. Pillar of cloud and Angel of the Lord both moved from leading the people to following behind them.
  2. The pillar cast dreadful and thick darkness upon the Egyptians, but light upon God's people. It separated and protected God's people from their enemies; and it led God's people out of slavery and to the Promised Land.
  3. It says in **Exodus 14:24** that the Lord "looked down upon the army of the Egyptians *through* the pillar of fire and cloud".
- iii. After the tabernacle is completed and set up, the cloud descends upon it. Read **Exodus 40:28-32**.
  1. The pillar of cloud (by day) and fire (by night) remained over the tabernacle (around which the 12 tribes were camped, see **Numbers 2**) throughout the time that God's people were in the Wilderness.

2. If it ascended, the people packed up and prepared to depart, following wherever it led. If it did not, they remained where they were.

iv. Read **Numbers 9:15-23**

1. God's people did exactly what God told them to do: they packed up left when the cloud rose up, stayed encamped in a location for as long the cloud remained there.
2. God Himself was the 'GPS' of the nation of Israel, while they were in the Wilderness.
3. He told them not only what route to take, but when to remain in one place (whether for just one day, or many months).
4. This provides a beautiful picture of the intended role of the Holy Spirit in leading Christians and the church today.

v. At the end of Moses' life, he encourages the people to remain strong against their enemies after they enter Canaan. He reminds them of how God has led them for 40 years through the Wilderness. Read **Deuteronomy 1:29-33**.

1. The Lord led them all the way, showing them the road (= *the way*) on which to travel, and carried them through their challenges, "as a man carries his son."

vi. Read **Wisdom of Solomon 10:15-19**, where the author is speaking of how the wisdom of God worked in the past; here in the life of Moses.

1. (Note: **Wisdom of Solomon** was in the original 1611 King James Version of the Bible and continued to be included the KJV until well into the 1800's. There is much in this book about Israel's journey through the Wilderness. Whether you consider this book a part of the inspired canon or not, this book was highly respected by early Christian writers, and can be instructive to us.)
2. Recall that in **Isaiah 11:1-2** the first characteristic of the Holy Spirit mentioned is, "the spirit of wisdom".
3. "She (wisdom) entered the soul of a servant of the Lord."
  - a. In **Numbers 11:25** it says that the Spirit of the Lord had been upon Moses. In **Numbers 27:18** it says that the Spirit was in Joshua.

4. “She (wisdom) guided them in a marvelous way and became for them a shelter by day and a flame of stars by night.”
    - a. In a hot desert, a cloud is a welcome shelter from the burning heat.
    - b. This pillar “guided them in a marvelous way”.
- vii. Read **Wisdom of Solomon 17:19-18:4**
1. The Lord provided light for His people; yet their enemies were kept in darkness. This is another beautiful picture of the Holy Spirit, contrasting the light God’s people would experience, versus the darkness reserved for their enemies.
  2. He guided His people on their unknown journey with “a harmless sun” to give them light at all times.
- d. What we learn about the Holy Spirit from these passages.
- i. The Spirit was always there; but was made manifest in a guiding role shortly after the Passover Lamb (foreshadowing Jesus) was slain.
  - ii. The Spirit showed them the way to the water, the way to get out of the land of bondage.
    1. The Holy Spirit coming down at Pentecost in tongues of fire was a sign to the people of a new direction. The Passover Lamb (Christ) had been slain, and the Spirit pointed the way out, to baptism (**Acts 2:38**), to the Jews.
    2. Later, the Holy Spirit points the same way to the Gentiles, in the conversion of Cornelius’ household in **Acts 10**.
      - a. “While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, ‘Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit *just as we have?*’ And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.” (**Acts 10:44–48**, NKJV)

- b. Peter later recounts how the Spirit had shown him that uncircumcised Gentiles could become Christians. (**Acts 11:12-18** and **Acts 15:6-11**)
  - c. Here we see how the Holy Spirit played an active role in leading both Jews and Gentiles to baptism.
- 3. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would *convict the world* of sin, righteousness and judgment (**John 16:8**). I believe the Holy Spirit today is involved in converting unbelievers and leading them out of spiritual slavery.
- iii. The Holy Spirit can overshadow and protect us like a cloud, if we stay under its cover.
- iv. The Holy Spirit is the wonderful guide to lead us all the way to the Promised Land. He leads day and night, 24/7, 365 days per year, all the way to the end. He will tell us when and where to stop, and when to pick up and start moving.
- v. We must follow the lead of the Holy Spirit. He knows the best way.
- vi. The cloud over the tabernacle which was at the center of the community in the Wilderness. **Numbers 2** explains how 3 tribes camped on each of the four sides of the tabernacle: north, south, east and west. Similarly, the Holy Spirit should be *at the center* of the church, as the presence of God with us, who is both leading and unifying us.

### III. More on the Mission of the Holy Spirit

- a. Read **John 14:25-31**.
  - i. Jesus said that He (the Spirit) would:
    - 1. teach them (the apostles) *all things*, and
    - 2. bring to their remembrance *everything Jesus said to them*.
  - ii. In this lesson we will look at the *second part* of this statement: that the Spirit will remind the apostles of everything Jesus said.
    - 1. In the *next* lesson we plan to look at the *first part* of this promise by Jesus.
- b. Promise of Jesus: "He (the Holy Spirit) will bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you." (**John 14:26**)
  - i. **Question:** Why is this promise important, to us?

1. How do we know that we have an accurate account of what Jesus said and did?
  2. Many Christians believe the New Testament Scriptures were written one to five decades after Jesus died and was resurrected. What if the apostles forgot something, or misremembered?
- ii. **Answer:** Jesus promised that the Holy Spirit *would enable them to accurately remember everything he taught.*
1. I often have skeptics ask me, “How do you know that what it says in the gospels is an accurate account?”
  2. My answer: *I point to this passage, and to the words of Jesus.* Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would enable the apostles to accurately recall, even years later, everything He said to them.
  3. If Jesus is the Son of God, confirmed by him fulfilling all the prophecies and being crucified and rising from the dead on the third day, then I can have confidence in everything He says. And He promised that the Holy Spirit would guide His apostles to recall everything He told them.
  4. *If Jesus is the Son of God and was raised from the dead, it is not difficult to believe He is able to help His apostles recall what He said, through the help of the Holy Spirit!*
- c. **Question:** Is this idea that the Holy Spirit inspired the writers of Scripture limited to the New Testament only? Is this something completely new that Jesus taught, or was it understood of the Old Testament writings as well?
- i. Read **Acts 28:23-27**, where Paul is speaking.
    1. Paul is arguing with his fellow Jews, using the Old Testament (**Isaiah 6**) to make his point.
    2. Paul says to the Jews, “*the Holy Spirit spoke...through Isaiah the prophet*”
    3. Note that the Jews *did not* respond by saying, “What Holy Spirit?” nor by protesting, “Who said the Holy Spirit was speaking through the prophets?”
  - ii. Read **2 Peter 1:16-21**, where Peter is writing to Christians.
    1. Peter said they were not making this up!
    2. Peter stated that he was there *as an eyewitness.*

3. Peter considered it foundational to understand that all writings of the prophets were written by men who spoke *as they were moved by the Holy Spirit*.
  4. We learn here that not only would the Holy Spirit remind the apostles of everything Jesus had taught them, but the Holy Spirit had been at work throughout the centuries, moving the Old Testament prophets to speak and write what they did. Therefore, what they wrote must be considered *the words of God*.
- iii. Read **2 Timothy 3:12-17**, where Paul is admonishing Timothy
1. In **Acts 16:1** we are introduced to Timothy as a young disciple whose father was a Greek, but whose mother was Jewish.
  2. Paul reminds Timothy of the Scriptures that Timothy had been taught from childhood (*literally, from infancy*). Since the New Testament had not been written at the time Timothy was a baby, it seems clear Paul is speaking here *about the Old Testament*, the Hebrew Scriptures.
  3. Paul says, “all Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (also translated literally, “God-breathed”).
  4. ***The inspiration of the Scriptures by the Holy Spirit is a foundational conviction that we can never yield on! This is what Jesus taught, what Paul taught, what Peter taught, and is confirmed throughout the Bible.***
    - a. Because the Holy Spirit inspired men to write the Scriptures, we should be devoted to reading the Scriptures every day. May we be devoted to reading and understanding the Word of God!
- iv. Read **Numbers 11:23-30**. When the people were complaining against Moses. God put His Spirit on many other men, and they prophesied.
- v. Read **Nehemiah 9:9-12** and **9:28-31**. The prophet Ezra is recounting to the Jews the history of their disastrous spiritual rebellion against God and calling them to repent.
1. He recalls the story of them being led by the pillar through the Wilderness, to show them the way to go.
  2. The Lord testified against the people *by the Holy Spirit, through the prophets*.



3. We see that Peter and Paul are teaching nothing new; *it was clear from the Old Testament* that the Holy Spirit was speaking through the prophets.
- vi. Read **Zechariah 7:7-12**.
    1. The people refused to hear the words of God *sent by His Spirit by the hand of the former prophets*.
    2. Again, this was exactly what Peter and Paul later explained in their writings. The writings of the prophets come from the Holy Spirit.
    3. The Spirit is writing through the hands of the prophets; the personalities of the prophets may come through, but the message is inspired by the Holy Spirit.
  - d. We have absolute confidence in the Scriptures (gospels, New Testament writings, Old Testament) because they are inspired by the Holy Spirit.
    - i. This is something we can never, ever compromise on.
    - ii. It is not because we are “fundamentalist Christians”, but because we follow Jesus; He and His inspired apostles pointed to the Spirit inspiring the writers.
    - iii. It is a bedrock principle on which everything else rests.
    - iv. At many seminaries today, the first order of the day is to attack the inspiration of Scripture. Beware, and avoid places like that! This directly contradicts what the Scriptures teach and opens the door to twisting, ignoring or explaining away the Word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit.
    - v. These days, it seems that people I run into tend to struggle with Paul’s writings.
      1. Many believers attempt to make a sharp distinction between Jesus’ teachings (which they accept) versus the writings of Paul (parts of which they reject).
      2. They typically dismiss what Paul says because it is unpopular with their group or with our modern culture!
      3. Read **2 Peter 3:14-16**, and consider what Peter says about Paul’s writings.
        - a. Peter admits that some things in Paul’s writings are hard to understand.

- b. Unstable people twist the meaning of Paul's writings.
  - c. However, Paul is writing with the wisdom given to him; and Peter equates those writings to "the rest of the Scriptures".
4. Clearly Peter considered Paul's writings to be inspired, on the same level with the other Scriptures (which also were twisted by people).
- e. In our next lesson we will talk about the other part of this promise by Jesus to the apostles: that the Holy Spirit would *teach them all things*.