

THEOLOGY  
*for the PEOPLE of GOD*

# THE HOLY SPIRIT

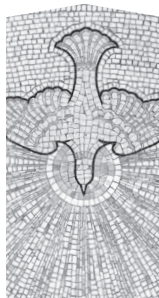
**Gregg R. Allison & Andreas J. Köstenberger**

EDITORS

*David S. Dockery | Nathan A. Finn | Christopher W. Morgan*

**BH**

ACADEMIC  
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*The Holy Spirit*

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To the administration and faculty, past and present,  
at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School  
Thank you for launching us on a path of faithful, creative,  
and relevant scholarship for the church

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## SERIES INTRODUCTION

In Ephesians 4:11-16, the Apostle Paul identifies the goals of the teaching ministry of the church: to build up the church, to lead it to maturity in faith, and to lead it to unity. The goals continue to be the focus of ecclesial theologians, those Christian thinkers who understand their calling and work is to be carried out in service to the church, the people of God. Among other things, ecclesial theology must be grounded in the Scriptures; it must be Trinitarian, Christ-centered, Spirit-enabled, and doxological; it must be informed by the thinking of God's people throughout church history; and it must be ministry- and mission-focused.

Theology at its best understands the importance of influencing and speaking to the mind, the heart, as well as the hands. Ecclesial theologians in the twenty-first century must help people develop: a theologically informed way of seeing the world (the mind); a Christian response to life (the heart); and Christian motivations for ministry (the hands). We believe that this full-orbed understanding can only be addressed when we understand that theology finds its focus in the church. This is not to say that there is no place for academic theology that seeks to address the academy or for a public theology that attempts to engage culture and society. It is to say that the purpose of this series has a particular emphasis, which is grounded in a calling to serve the church. For this reason, we have titled the series *Theology for the People of God*.

Like other similar series, *Theology for the People of God* is a multi-volume effort that addresses the classical *loci* of systematic theology. What sets this series apart is its perspective, its emphasis, and its scope. In terms of its perspective, each volume in the series is co-authored by two scholars who are deeply committed to a theological outlook that is convictionally Baptist and

warmly evangelical. Careful theology is an integrative task, and to that end the volumes in *Theology for the People of God* emphasize integration of biblical and systematic theology in dialog with historical theology and with application to church and life. Finally, the scope of this series extends beyond the classical *loci* to include other topics that are relevant to the church: spirituality, pastoral ministry, cultural engagement, and global mission.

Our audience is not first and foremost other “professional” theologians, but rather university students, seminarians, pastors, and other church and ministry leaders. However, we also believe that any thoughtful Christian will benefit from the volumes in this series. At its root, all faithful theology is simply thinking rightly about God and his world for the sake of living rightly before God in his world. To that end, all theology is for the people of God, and every believer is called to be a theologian.

It is our prayer that this series may somehow in God’s good providence serve as a source of renewal for the people of God in the days to come. We hope that this will take place as people better understand what they believe and why they believe it, for it is the responsibility of theology to expound the whole counsel of God (Acts 20:7). While no single author or volume will be able to do so, together, we trust that the series in a symphonic manner will serve the church in this way. We believe that the sound, reliable theology found in this series will serve as a source of strength and hope for God’s people for decades to come.

This series has been many years in the making. We pray that each volume will serve as an instrument of grace for readers and those who will be influenced by the faithful efforts of the authors who have collaborated with us in this project. We are grateful for each author and the skills and gifts that each person brings to this work. We are grateful for our friends at B&H Academic and LifeWay who have supported the idea for this series. We ultimately thank our great God for the privilege to work together with these many colleagues and co-workers.

Finally, we truly believe that healthy theology that matures the head, heart, and hands will not only enable believers to move toward maturity but will result in the praise and exaltation of God, for it is our understanding that all good and edifying theology leads to doxology. With the Apostle Paul, we, too wish to exclaim, “Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and



knowledge of God! How unsearchable his judgments and his paths beyond tracing out! . . . For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be glory forever! Amen” (Rom 11:33, 36).

*Soli Deo Gloria*

David S. Dockery, Nathan A. Finn, and Christopher W. Morgan, editors

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The Holy Spirit,  
through whom the prophets prophesied,  
and the fathers learned the things of God,  
and the righteous were led forth into the way of righteousness;  
and who in the end of the times was poured out in a new way  
upon mankind in all the earth,  
renewing man unto God.

(Irenaeus, *Epideixis*, 6)

# ABBREVIATIONS

AB	Anchor Bible
<i>ABD</i>	<i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>
<i>Adv. Haer.</i>	<i>Against Heresies</i> (Irenaeus)
<i>ANF</i>	<i>Ante-Nicene Fathers</i>
ANTC	Abingdon New Testament Commentaries
art.	article
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research</i>
<i>Bib</i>	<i>Biblica</i>
bk.	book
<i>BSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
BTCP	Biblical Theology for Christian Proclamation
BTNT	Biblical Theology of the New Testament
BZNW	Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft
chap.	chapter
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>DBSJ</i>	<i>Detroit Baptist Seminary Journal</i>
DSS	Dead Sea Scrolls
ed.	edition; editor; edited by
enl.	enlarged
EGGNT	Exegetical Guide to the Greek New Testament
ESV	English Standard Version
<i>EoQ</i>	<i>Evangelical Quarterly</i>
<i>1 Clem</i>	<i>1 Clement</i>

FRLANT	Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments
<i>HALOT</i>	<i>Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>
Heb.	Hebrew
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JETS</i>	<i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i>
<i>JPT</i>	<i>Journal of Pentecostal Theology</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
<i>JSNTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSOTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement</i>
KJV	King James Version
LCC	Library of Christian Classics
LHBOTS	Library of Hebrew Bible/Old Testament Studies
LNTS	Library of New Testament Studies
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NASB	New American Standard Version
<i>Neot</i>	<i>Neotestamentica</i>
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
<i>NIDNTTE</i>	<i>New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology and Exegesis</i>
NIGTC	New International Greek Testament Commentary
NIV	New International Version
NKJV	New King James Version
<i>NPNF</i> <sup>1</sup>	<i>Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, series 1</i>
<i>NPNF</i> <sup>2</sup>	<i>Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, series 2</i>
NRSV	New Revised Standard Version
NSBT	New Studies in Biblical Theology
NT	New Testament
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
1QS	Community Rule (Qumran)
<i>Op.</i>	Philo, <i>De Opificio Mundi</i>
OT	Old Testament
PNTC	Pillar New Testament Commentary
pt.	part

q.	question
<i>ResQ</i>	<i>Restoration Quarterly</i>
rev.	revision
rev. ed.	revised edition
<i>RTR</i>	<i>Reformed Theological Review</i>
Sir	Sirach
SNTSMS	Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series
<i>T. Jud.</i>	<i>Testament of Judah</i>
<i>T. Levi</i>	<i>Testament of Levi</i>
<i>TrinJ</i>	<i>Trinity Journal</i>
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
WBC	Word Biblical Commentary
Wis	Wisdom of Solomon
<i>WTJ</i>	<i>Westminster Theological Journal</i>
WUNT	Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament
<i>ZNW</i>	<i>Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</i>

# INTRODUCTION

I (Andreas) still vividly remember the time when, as a new convert, I decided I should get baptized. I went to see my pastor, who said he wanted to talk to me just to make sure I was ready to take this important step of Christian obedience. Things seemed to be going well until, at one point in the conversation, the pastor posed the following question to me: “So, what do you think about the Holy Spirit? Is he a person or a force?” I paused and pondered the question for a moment and then, somewhat hesitantly, responded, “A force.” I immediately realized I had given the wrong answer, as the pastor visibly squirmed in his seat and emitted an audible sigh. Not that my “wrong answer” had disqualified me from baptism, but it had become clear that my understanding of the Spirit’s person and work displayed some serious deficiencies, which, I am grateful to report, were remedied in the weeks and months that followed by some patient, biblical instruction.

Broadly speaking, two basic yet important questions Christians ask about the Holy Spirit are these: Who is the Holy Spirit? And what does the Spirit do? Church members reciting a creedal or catechetical portion about the Trinity—“God eternally exists as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit”—may wonder about the identity and activity of the last-named person on the list. A new convert, being baptized “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit,” may be led to ponder the character and work of the Third Person of the Godhead. Through sermons and teachings, believers know something of the importance of the Holy Spirit for their Christian growth. Still, they may be perplexed and their faith rendered anemic by their lack of experience of his presence and power. Having heard people claim guidance and even prophetic words from the Holy Spirit, wary and worried pastors may question what is real with respect to his person and work in the



lives of certain church members. Others may simply suspect there is more of the Spirit's presence and power than what they currently experience and desire to grow in their understanding of his person and work.

Until about a century ago, biblical scholars and theologians rarely discussed the often-neglected and self-effacing Third Person of the Holy Trinity. Thankfully, we live in an age in which interest in and a craving for a fuller experience of the Holy Spirit are pushing these two questions to the forefront. The Holy Spirit, who inspired the biblical writers, progressively revealed himself and his activity in such a way that we can rightly wonder: *Who is the Holy Spirit? And what does the Holy Spirit do?* In an attempt to address this set of vital questions, the first half of this book on pneumatology—the doctrine of the Holy Spirit—develops a biblical theology of the Holy Spirit. It considers all that Scripture in the Old Testament and New Testament discloses about his person and work. We are convinced that a thorough study of the biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit will not merely be informative but also prove transformative in your lives as it has proven to be illuminating and life-changing in our lives.

Moreover, throughout its existence, the church has wrestled to some degree with these two questions. In fact, it continues to do so today with almost unabated enthusiasm and occasional controversy. Accordingly, the second half of this book offers a systematic theology (with some attention to a historical theology) of the Holy Spirit. It considers topics such as the Spirit's relations with the Father and the Son, the Spirit's role—along with the Father and the Son—in creating and sustaining heaven and earth, his mission of anointing and empowering the incarnate Son's life and ministry, the many facets of his work from beginning to end in applying the benefits of Christ to fallen human beings, and his future activity in actualizing the new heavens and the new earth.

Who is the Holy Spirit? And what does the Holy Spirit do? This book invites you to consider these two questions and subsequently act upon the answers provided in this volume as it travels from Genesis to Revelation and from original to new creation.

*Veni, Spiritus Sanctus! Come, Holy Spirit!*



PART I

BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

# Introduction to Biblical Theology of the Holy Spirit

The study of references to the Holy Spirit in Scripture is a fascinating enterprise. This is true especially if such study is approached via a biblical-theological method, tracking the references to God's Spirit book by book in both the OT and the NT, with a view toward connecting the dots between these references. In this way, each biblical author's contribution to a biblical theology of the Holy Spirit is considered and respected while at the same time attention is paid to the gradual unfolding of scriptural revelation regarding the Holy Spirit across the canon of Scripture.

While numerous studies are available on the Holy Spirit in both testaments and in individual biblical authors, and several biblical-theological treatments exist (although most are multi-author collections), it is not often that one finds studies that investigate with a consistent and coherent biblical-theological methodology all biblical references to the Holy Spirit. A case in point is the helpful volume *A Biblical Theology of the Holy Spirit*, in which contributors use different methodologies and, in some cases, adopt a topical approach.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Trevor J. Burke and Keith Warrington, eds., *A Biblical Theology of the Holy Spirit* (Eugene: Cascade, 2014). See also M. Turner, "Holy Spirit," in *New Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, ed. T. Desmond Alexander and Brian S. Rosner (Leicester, UK: Inter-Varsity, 2000), 551–58. For broader studies, see G. K. Beale, *A New Testament Biblical Theology: The Unfolding of the Old Testament in the New* (Grand Rapids:

By contrast, in the first half of this volume, we take essentially a narrative-oriented tack; that is, we read a given book (such as Acts) in consecutive order as it was written. In so doing, we focus particularly on references to the person and work of the Holy Spirit, both within that book and within the framework of prior canonical references.<sup>2</sup> In this way, an organic treatment emerges that can (hopefully) serve as a faithful representation of the Bible's own teaching on the Holy Spirit (though there are, of course, passages in which judgment calls have to be made as to whether the referent is the Holy Spirit).

In what follows, then, we will first look at references to God's Spirit in the OT: the Pentateuch, the Historical Books, the Wisdom Books, and key prophetic books, such as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and certain books from the Twelve (the Minor Prophets), particularly Joel and Zechariah. While it may be interesting to treat OT references in (presumed) chronological order of writing, this would raise many complex questions as to the dating of various books, which is beyond the scope of this study; in any case, the composite picture is not materially affected.

After this, we will turn our attention to the NT, treating, in canonical order, the four Gospels and the book of Acts.<sup>3</sup> Paul's epistles will be discussed in chronological order of writing,<sup>4</sup> as there is a general timeline agreed upon by many scholars, and such an approach will nicely surface developments and respective emphases in Pauline pneumatology. The study will conclude with

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Baker, 2011), 559–650; E. Kamlah, J. D. G. Dunn, and C. Brown, "Spirit," in *New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. C. Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978); 3:689–709, and Charles H. H. Scobie, *The Ways of Our God: An Approach to Biblical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), 269–97.

<sup>2</sup> The question of various orders in the OT canon cannot be addressed here. We will discuss references to the Spirit within the framework of the order used in most English Bibles. On this question, see esp. Greg Goswell, "The Order of the Books in the Hebrew Bible," *JETS* 51 (2008): 673–88; Goswell, "The Order of the Books in the Greek Old Testament," *JETS* 52 (2009): 449–66. See further my comments in the next paragraph.

<sup>3</sup> Again, we will not be unduly deterred by technical questions regarding the NT canon that exceed the scope of this investigation. See Greg Goswell, "The Order of the Books of the New Testament," *JETS* 53 (2010): 225–41.

<sup>4</sup> Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon do not warrant full, separate treatment due to the paucity of references to the Spirit in these books. The letters to Timothy and Titus will be treated as part of the Pauline corpus.

discussions of references to the Spirit in Hebrews, Peter's and John's letters, Jude and Revelation.<sup>5</sup>

The Holy Spirit is often neglected in the church or, alternately, given disproportionate attention in certain circles. Our purpose here is to provide a nuanced and theologically sensitive and balanced presentation of the biblical teaching on the Holy Spirit that can serve as a reliable foundation for the historical-theological and systematic-theological treatment that makes up the second part of this volume. In this collaborative effort involving biblical, historical, and systematic theology, we hope to make a helpful methodological contribution as well.

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<sup>5</sup> No separate treatment is required for the book of James.

# The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament and in the Pentateuch

## Old Testament

While the term *Holy Spirit* is exceedingly rare in the OT,<sup>1</sup> there are approximately 100 references to the Spirit of God in the OT, out of close to 400 instances of the Hebrew term *ruach*, which in addition to “S/spirit” can also mean “wind” or “breath.”<sup>2</sup> It is challenging at times to distinguish between

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<sup>1</sup> As noted by, e.g., Walter C. Kaiser Jr., “The Pentateuch,” in Trevor J. Burke and Keith Warrington, eds., *Biblical Theology of the Holy Spirit*, 1, the expression “Holy Spirit” is found in the OT in only two passages: Ps 51:11 (where David, after committing adultery with Bathsheba, pleads with God not to take away his Holy Spirit from him) and Isa 63:10–11 (where the Holy Spirit is said to have been active through Moses during the exodus; cf. v. 14: “the Spirit of the LORD”). Contrary to most English versions, the reference in Ps 51:11 may actually be to the human rather than the divine spirit; see Daniel J. Estes, “Spirit and the Psalmist in Psalm 51,” in *Presence, Power and Promise: The Role of the Spirit of God in the Old Testament*, ed. David G. Firth and Paul D. Wegner (Nottingham, UK: Apollos, 2011), 122–34, who glosses the phrase “a desire for your [God’s] holiness”; and John R. Levison, *Filled with the Spirit* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 30–31. Victor H. Matthews, “Holy Spirit,” *Anchor Bible Dictionary* 3:261, questionably places both passages in the postexilic period.

<sup>2</sup> See Richard E. Averbeck, “The Holy Spirit in the Hebrew Bible and Its Contribution to the New Testament,” in Daniel B. Wallace and M. James Sawyer, eds., *Who’s Afraid of the Holy Spirit?* (Dallas: Biblical Studies Press, 2005), 16–18; Wilf Hildebrandt, *An Old Testament Theology of the Spirit of God* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1995), chap. 1; and Robert Koch, *Der Geist Gottes im Alten Testament*

(God's) "Spirit" and (human) "spirit" in some texts, especially since there is often a connection between God as Creator and the human spirit. This connection notwithstanding, passages in which the referent is the human spirit rather than God's Spirit will not be discussed in the text that follows. Also, as noted in the following discussion, OT references to God's *Ruach* are usually better rendered "God's Spirit" rather than "Spirit of God" in order to convey the unity between Yahweh and his *Ruach*. In addition, interpreters discuss a variety of theological questions related to the Spirit's presence and work in the lives of OT believers.<sup>3</sup>

## Pentateuch

### Overview

The first reference in Scripture to the Spirit is found in Gen 1:2, where the Spirit is shown to be active in creation. At Gen 6:3, God announces before the flood in the days of Noah that the Spirit will not remain or contend with depraved humanity forever. At Gen 41:38, then, surprisingly, it is none other

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(Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang, 1991), 13–34. For studies of the Holy Spirit in the OT, see Firth and Wegner, eds., *Presence, Power and Promise*; Hildebrandt, *Old Testament Theology of the Spirit of God*; Koch, *Der Geist*, 9–12; Lloyd R. Neve, *The Spirit of God in the Old Testament* (Cleveland: CPT, 2011); Leon J. Wood, *The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1976); and Christopher J. H. Wright, *Knowing the Holy Spirit Through the Old Testament* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006), who discusses the creating, empowering, prophetic, anointing, and coming Spirit.

<sup>3</sup> James M. Hamilton Jr, *God's Indwelling Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Old and New Testaments*, NAC Studies in Bible & Theology (Nashville: B&H, 2006), argues that the Holy Spirit regenerated OT believers but did not indwell them (cf., e.g., 126, 141, 160). Similarly, Larry D. Pettigrew, *The New Covenant Ministry of the Holy Spirit*, 2nd ed. (Woodlands: Kress Biblical Resources, 2013), 24–28. Contra Walter C. Kaiser Jr., "The Indwelling Presence of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament," *EvQ* 82 (2010): 308–15. The biblical material does not address the issue directly, so the answer can at best be inferred through inductive reasoning. On the limits of biblical theology, see Mark L. Strauss, "Jesus and the Spirit in Biblical and Theological Perspective: Messianic Empowering, Saving Wisdom, and the Limits of Biblical Theology," in *Spirit and Christ in the New Testament and Christian Theology: Essays in Honor of Max Turner*, ed. I. Howard Marshall, Volker Rabens, and Cornelis Bennema (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 266–84, esp. 283–84.

than the Egyptian pharaoh who recognizes that the S/spirit of God dwells in Joseph.

The book of Exodus narrates how those building the tabernacle are endowed with skill and the Spirit of God. In the book of Numbers, God is said to take the S/spirit that is in Moses and put it on the seventy elders (Num 11:17), and when the S/spirit has come to rest on them, they prophesy (Num 11:25). Later in the book, the Spirit of God is said to come on Balaam the prophet (Num 24:2) as well as on Joshua, Moses's successor (Num 27:18; cf. Deut 34:9).

### *Discussion*

At the outset of creation, the book of Genesis describes the universe as "formless and empty" (*tohu wa vohu*; Gen 1:2; cf. Jer 4:23). There is darkness, and the Spirit of God (*ruach elohim*) is hovering over the waters.<sup>4</sup> While the meaning of *ruach* in Gen 1:2 is debated, the term is used in conjunction with *Elohim*, who is featured as the personal God throughout the creation narrative.<sup>5</sup> Thus *ruach* is shown to subsist in close relation to this personal

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<sup>4</sup> See Craig G. Bartholomew, "The Wisdom Literature," in Burke and Warrington, *Biblical Theology of the Holy Spirit*, 25, citing Basil and Luther, who understands מְרַחֵף ("was hovering") as conveying a sense of "a vibrant presence awaiting the fitting time to actively begin the creation process." The closest OT parallel is Deut 32:11, referring to an eagle hovering over her young to train them how to fly (Kaiser, "Pentateuch," 4). See also Isa 31:5: "Like *hovering* birds, so the LORD of Armies will protect Jerusalem—by protecting it, he will rescue it, by sparing it, he will deliver it." Averbeck, "Holy Spirit in the Hebrew Bible," 22–25, prefers to translate "a mighty wind from the Lord" rather than "the Spirit hovered." See also the discussion in Hildebrandt, *Old Testament Theology of the Spirit of God*, 36–37, "Hovering or Blowing?"

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Paul K. Jewett, "God Is Personal Being," in *Church, Word, and Spirit: Historical and Theological Essays in Honor of Geoffrey W. Bromiley*, ed. J. E. Bradley and R. A. Muller (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987), 274: "In the context of the Old Testament as a whole it is evident that this animating Power, this creative Breath, is not understood as an impersonal force but rather as a living Subject." For a helpful discussion of Gen 1:2 and the Spirit's role in creation, see Robert L. Hubbard Jr., "The Spirit and Creation," in Firth and Wegner, eds., *Presence, Power and Promise*, 71–91 (see also the chart listing the uses of "Spirit of God/the LORD," 80–81).



God and Creator and serve as his agent in creation (cf. Ps 33:6; Isa 40:13).<sup>6</sup> Into this formlessness and emptiness, God, through the Spirit, brings “order, design and functionality.”<sup>7</sup>

Toward the climax of creation, God is shown to infuse the first human, Adam, with the breath of life (Gen 2:7; cf. Job 34:14; 26:4; Isa 2:22), though this is most likely to be distinguished from an impartation of the Holy Spirit. This infusion of the breath of life constitutes the impartation of the energizing principle, or spark of life, that actualizes the material reality of Adam (of the dust of the ground) so that he becomes a living being. Later, every living creature is said to be similarly infused with the breath of life (Gen 6:17; 7:15, 22), though only humanity is created in God’s image (Gen 1:26–28; cf. Job 26:4; 27:3; Isa 42:5). Thus God’s breathing of life into humanity most likely refers to the impartation not only of physical life but of spiritual life as well. When humans die, therefore, their bodies return to dust, but their spirits return to God (Eccl 12:7).

Next, at the outset of God’s universal judgment on sinful, fallen humanity through the flood, the Genesis narrative asserts that God’s Spirit will not always remain, or contend, with humanity (Gen 6:3). The word *din* (“contend”) casts the Spirit in the role of judge or one who brings a case against someone. In this judicial role, the Spirit apparently had been contending with humanity before the flood to encourage them to repent, but to no avail. While the Spirit’s original role, therefore, was to give life, the corollary of his life-giving function is one as an agent of divine judgment.

After a considerable hiatus in the book of Genesis, the first human after the flood to be mentioned in conjunction with the work of the Spirit is Joseph the patriarch. In the wake of Joseph’s interpretation of Pharaoh’s dreams, which Joseph attributes to divine revelation, the Egyptian king attests that Joseph is a man of unmatched wisdom and discernment, a man “who has

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<sup>6</sup> Cf. Hildebrandt, *Old Testament Theology of the Spirit of God*, 39–42, who proceeds to discuss other passages in the book of Proverbs, Job, et al.

<sup>7</sup> Kaiser, “Pentateuch,” 5. Similarly, Bartholomew, “Wisdom Literature,” 25, writes that “the emphasis on the emerging *order of creation* produced by the Spirit and the word resonates with the OT wisdom tradition,” providing the foundational premise for the OT wisdom literature that “the creation is ordered and that, to an extent, this order can and should be known.”

God's spirit in him" (Gen 41:38). While one may legitimately debate the extent to which Pharaoh understands the full meaning of his words (cf., e.g., similar statements made about Daniel by pagan rulers in Dan 4:8, 9, 18; 5:11, 14), he recognizes that God's Spirit is ultimately what sets Joseph apart from other men in his kingdom.<sup>8</sup>

In the book of Exodus, in conjunction with the construction of the tabernacle, God tells Moses regarding Bezalel, "I have filled him with God's Spirit, with wisdom, understanding, and ability in every craft" (Exod 31:3; cf. 35:31).<sup>9</sup> Similarly, God fills Oholiab with various skills as a craftsman (Exod 35:34–35).<sup>10</sup> The description of these craftsmen's works echoes the creation narrative (cf., e.g., Gen 2:2–3) and is paralleled by creation language used in the book of Proverbs (esp. Prov 3:19–20).<sup>11</sup>

At a later stage in Israel's history, during the exodus from Egypt, people rebel against the daily diet of manna in the wilderness, leading Moses to express to God his displeasure over the heavy burden of responsibility laid upon him. In response, God takes some of the Spirit who has empowered Moses to lead the people and puts him on the seventy elders, who promptly prophesy for a time (Num 11:17, 25).<sup>12</sup> This impartation of the Spirit is

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<sup>8</sup> See the discussion in Hildebrandt, *Old Testament Theology of the Spirit of God*, 105–6.

<sup>9</sup> Contra Levison, who thinks that the "spirit" that fills Bezalel is not the divine Spirit but rather an increase of the wisdom and skill Bezalel already possesses as an artisan (*Filled with the Spirit*, 62).

<sup>10</sup> See the discussion of the references to the Spirit in conjunction with Bezalel and Oholiab in Hildebrandt, *Old Testament Theology of the Spirit of God*, 106–7. See also Richard S. Hess, "Bezalel and Oholiab: Spirit and Creativity," in Firth and Wegner, eds., *Presence, Power and Promise*, 161–72.

<sup>11</sup> Note the references to "wisdom" and "understanding" in both Exod 31:2–5 (also, "ability") and Prov 3:19–20 (also, "knowledge"). See further the discussion that follows.

<sup>12</sup> See also Isa 63:7–14, esp. vv. 11–12, indicating that God led OT Israel through Moses by the Holy Spirit; and see the reference in Ps 78:40 to Israel grieving the Holy Spirit (though the Spirit himself is not named in this verse) by rebelling against God in the wilderness (Hildebrandt, *Old Testament Theology of the Spirit of God*, 107–8). Regarding "empowering" nomenclature, see Anthony C. Thiselton, *The Holy Spirit in Biblical Teaching, through the Centuries, and Today* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), who prefers to describe the work of the Spirit of God in terms of "enabling" rather than "empowering" because he fears "power" is frequently misconstrued "as

emblematic of the shared leadership and delegation that enable Moses to deal with the mounting pressure of leading a rebellious people. As well, the Spirit's presence with Moses, and subsequently with the seventy elders, highlights God's special empowerment of the leadership of his people by his Spirit, a theme that will continue in both Old and New Testaments. Remarkably, when Joshua tells Moses to stop two men, Eldad and Medad, from prophesying, Moses expresses his desire that all people would be prophets and have God's Spirit in them (Num 11:26, 29).<sup>13</sup>

Later during the exodus, the Israelites are encamped close to Balak, king of Moab, who hires Balaam, a Gentile prophet, to curse the Israelites.<sup>14</sup> However, "when Balaam looked up and saw Israel encamped tribe by tribe, the Spirit of God came on him and he proclaimed his poem" (Num 24:2–3). In a subsequent series of poetic oracles, Balaam proceeds to reveal God's plans for Israel's future. What is more, it is through Balaam, an unlikely source, that the messianic prophecy is uttered that "a star will come from Jacob" and "a scepter will arise from Israel" (Num 24:17). Finally, Joshua, Moses's successor, is said to be "a man who has the Spirit [*ruach*] in him" (Num 27:18) and is identified as one who was "filled with the spirit [or Spirit; *ruach*] of wisdom" (Deut 34:9).

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an analogy from the industrial age" (11). Thiselton cites Karl Barth and others who "rightly see this enabling in terms of *effectiveness* or *efficaciousness*" (11).

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Thiselton, *Holy Spirit*, who refers to the "striking characteristic of the work of the Spirit of God," namely, "the *Spirit's capacity for being 'shared out' from one figure to others*. The classic example is that of Moses and the seventy elders (Num. 11:25; Deut. 34:9; 2 Kings 2:15; cf. 2:9, 13–14). . . . This principle will have considerable consequences in the New Testament for the sharing of the Messianic Spirit by all Christians" (5). See also Hildebrandt, *Old Testament Theology of the Spirit of God*, 109–11, under the heading "Leadership by the Spirit Democratized" (cf. Hildebrandt, 157–59).

<sup>14</sup> On the controversial figure of Balaam, see Walter C. Kaiser Jr., "Balaam Son of Beor in Light of Deir 'Allā and Scripture: Saint or Soothsayer?" in *Go to the Land I Will Show You* (FS Dwight Young), ed. J. Coleson and V. Matthews (Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 1996), 95–106; John N. Oswalt, "Is Balaam's Donkey the Real Prophet (Numbers 24:1–4)?" in Firth and Wegner, eds., *Presence, Power and Promise*, 208–19; and Hildebrandt, *Old Testament Theology of the Spirit of God*, 162–66.

**Figure 1: References to God's Spirit in the Pentateuch**

Scripture Passage	Content
Gen 1:2	The Spirit hovers over the waters at creation
Gen 2:7	God breathes life into Adam
Gen 6:3	God's Spirit will not remain with humanity forever
Gen 41:38	Pharaoh recognizes the presence of God's Spirit on Joseph
Exod 31:3	Bezalel is filled with God's Spirit
Exod 35:31	Bezalel is filled with God's Spirit (cf. Oholiab: Exod 35:34–35)
Num 11:17	God puts the Spirit in Moses into the seventy elders
Num 11:25, 26, 29	The Spirit rests on the seventy elders, and they prophesy, as do Eldad and Medad
Num 24:2	The Spirit of God comes upon Balaam the prophet
Num 27:18	The successor of Moses, Joshua, is a man who has the Spirit in him
Deut 34:9	Joshua is full of the spirit (or Spirit) of wisdom

### *Summary*

The Pentateuch shows the Spirit in three primary roles: (1) as agent in *creation*, preparing the as-yet empty and unformed material world for its future construction, infusing God's human creatures with life-giving breath; (2) as agent in *judgment*, specifically God's universal judgment of depraved humanity in and through the flood; and (3) as agent of *revelation* for (a) Israel's *leaders*, such as Joseph the patriarch, Moses the lawgiver, the seventy elders and tribal leaders, and even (b) Gentile *prophets*, such as Balaam. Thus we see that the Spirit of God is spoken of in connection with Adam and humanity at large, as well as with the heads of the nation of Israel. The Spirit is shown to act in various capacities: infusing with life, judging, and guiding.