
















Holy Spirit

Study 1	Old Testament	p 2	
Study 2	New Birth	p 11	
Study 3	Personal Experience	p 14	
Study 4	Trinity	p 17	
Study 5	Baptism	p 19	
Study 6	Gifts 1, 1 Cor 12 & 13	p 22	
Study 7	Gifts 2, Rom 12	p 25	
Study 8	Gifts 3, Speaking in Tongues, 1 Cor 14	p 28	
Study 9	Visions and Prophecy 1	p 30	
Study 10	Visions and Prophecy 2	p 32	
Study 11	Seal & Guarantee	p 34	
Study 12	Grieving & Fullness	p 36	
Study 13	Fruit	p 40	
Study 14	Bible	p 43	
Appendix	Prophecy	p 46	

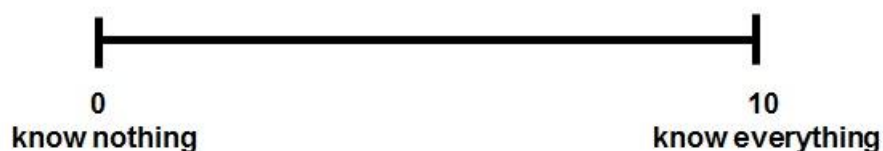
Notes

In preparing these studies I've used the following sources: The Wrong Messiah by Nick Page, The Lion Handbook to the Bible, Studies on the Holy Spirit notes by Mark Strom, The Holy Spirit a Bible study booklet by Stephen Gibson, Holy Spirit and 1 Corinthians 8-15 The Handbook for a Healthy Church Bible study booklets by Naremburn Cammeray Anglican Church, Holy Spirit a Bible study booklet by St Matthews, Manly, John for Everyone part 2 chapters 11-21 and Paul for Everyone Romans Part 1: Chapters 1-8 by Tom Wright, Mark Strom speaking on "Paul and the Open Heart" 24/10/2014, 1 and 2 Peter on Prophecy by Tony Payne *The Briefing* # 170/171 5/12/1995,

Study 1, Old Testament

Getting started

1. (a) On a scale of 0 to 10 how much do you feel you know about the Holy Spirit?
(0 = know nothing, 10 = know everything).



- (b) What questions, if any, do you have about the Holy Spirit?

2. Do you find the topic of the Holy Spirit
- confusing?
 - to be avoided?
 - unimportant?
 - encouraging?
 - only for charismatics?
 - controversial?

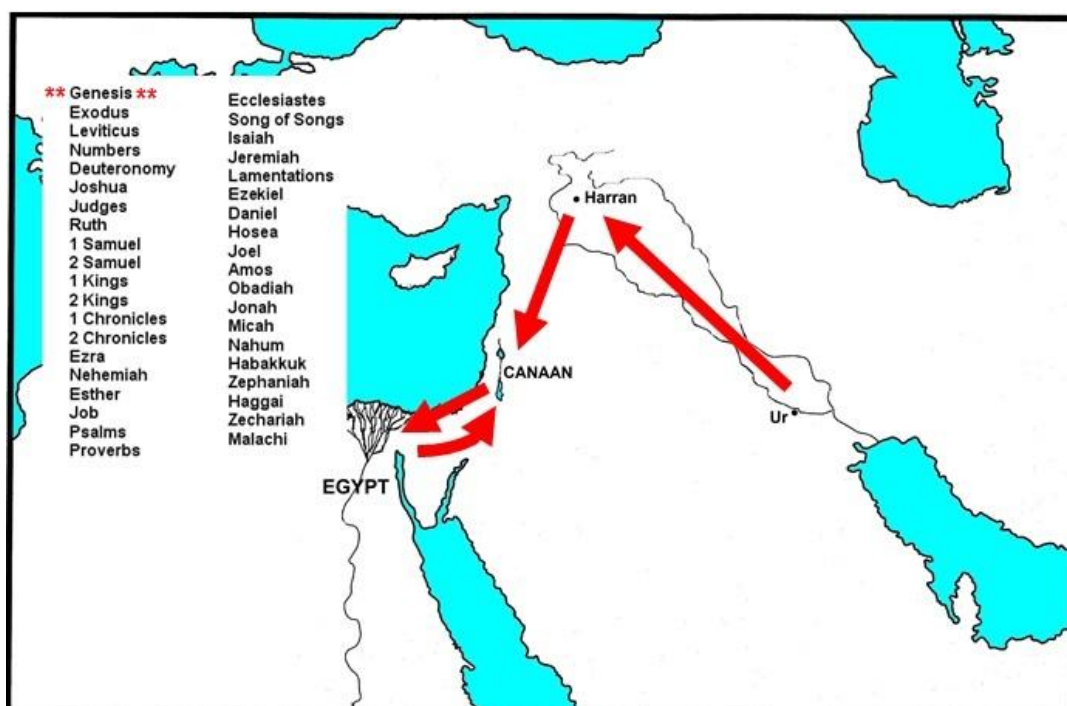
(tick as many or as few as you like)

Bible

3. There are many references to the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. We will look at some of them as we work our way through the Old Testament.

- (a) Read Genesis 1:1-2. What does this tell us about the Holy Spirit?

Beginning at roughly 1900 BC, God called Abraham to be a father of a great nation (Gen 12). Genesis relates the story of his travels and eventual settling in the Promised Land, Canaan.



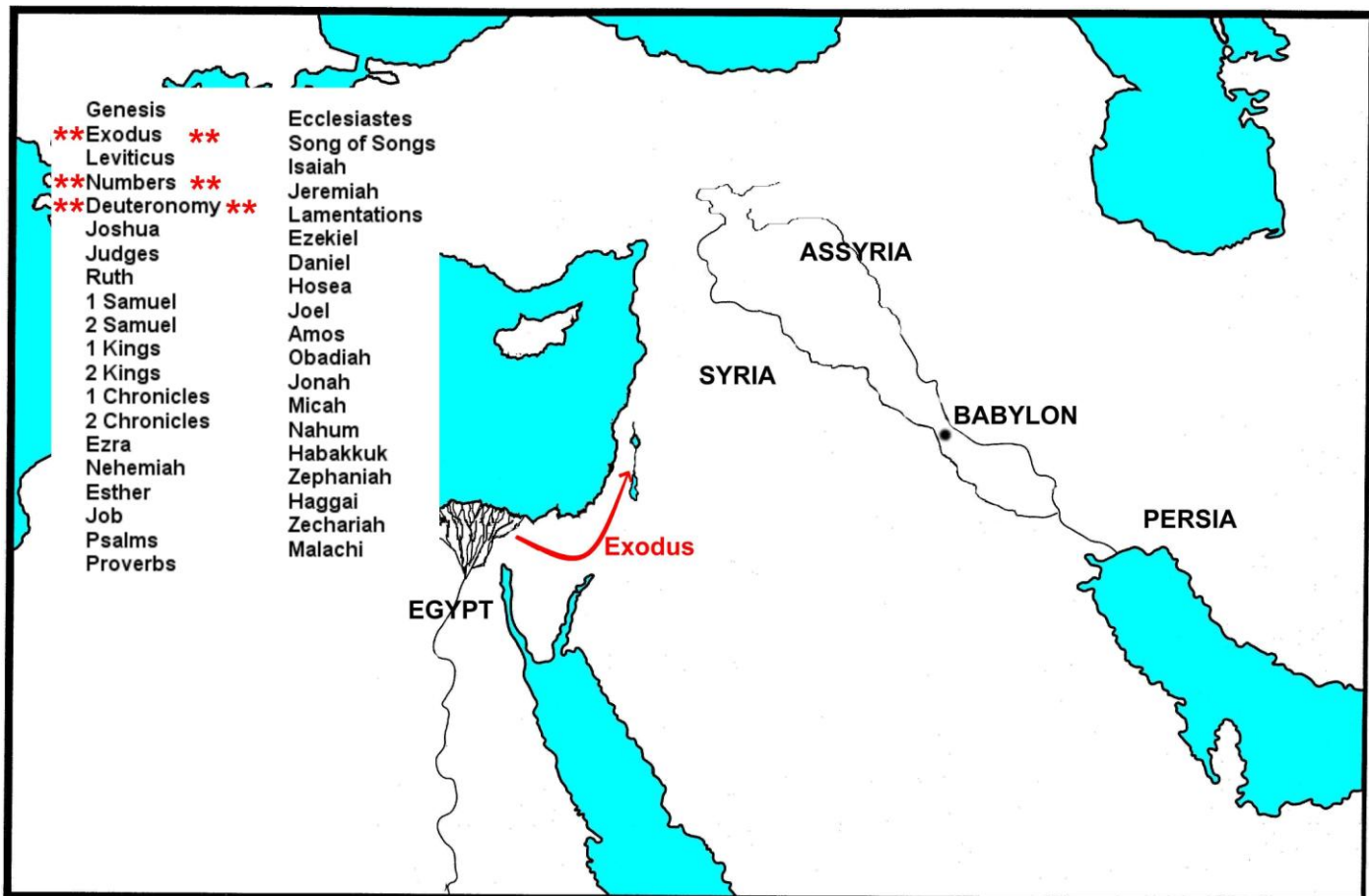
Famine forced God's people to Egypt and they spent more than 400 years in bondage to the Pharaohs. God worked to release them from slavery and, under Moses' leadership, they escaped (the Exodus, roughly 1300 BC) and travelled back to the land God had promised them.

The Egyptians were the major world power from 3000 BC to 1000 BC (these dates are very approximate). The Great Pyramid of Giza was completed in 2600 BC.

The escape from Egypt is described in the book of **Exodus**. This great event is often referred to in other parts of the Bible.

(b) Read Exodus 31:1-5, Psalm 104:24-30, Nehemiah 9:19-20, Haggai 2:5.
What do these passages say about the Holy Spirit?

The trip of 40 yrs. wandering in the dessert before getting to Israel is described in **Numbers**. On the verge of Palestine, Moses lectures his people to prepare them for their new life in a new land as related in the book of **Deuteronomy**.



(c) Read Numbers 11:24-29.
What does this tell us about the Holy Spirit?

In Israel, God fights for his people to conquer the indigenous peoples. These battles are described in **Joshua** and **Judges**.



(d) Read Judges 11:29.
What does this tell us about the Holy Spirit?

(e) Samson was one of the judges/saviours of God's people.
Read Judges 13:24-25, 14:6, 19, 15:14, 16:20.
What do these passages say about the Holy Spirit?

Samuel led God's people after the Judges. After Samuel came the kings with Saul as Israel's first king and David as Israel's second and greatest king until Jesus. David began his reign at about 1000 BC. The history of Samuel and Saul is written in **1 Samuel**.

(f) Read 1 Samuel 10:10. What does this tell us about the Holy Spirit?

David was a warrior king and expanded Israel's borders (represented by the green area below). David's story begins at 1 Samuel 16 and continues through **1 and 2 Samuel** and **1 Chronicles**, ending with his death in 1 Kings 2. David was also a singer and musician and he wrote many **psalms** describing his feelings, experiences and prayers.

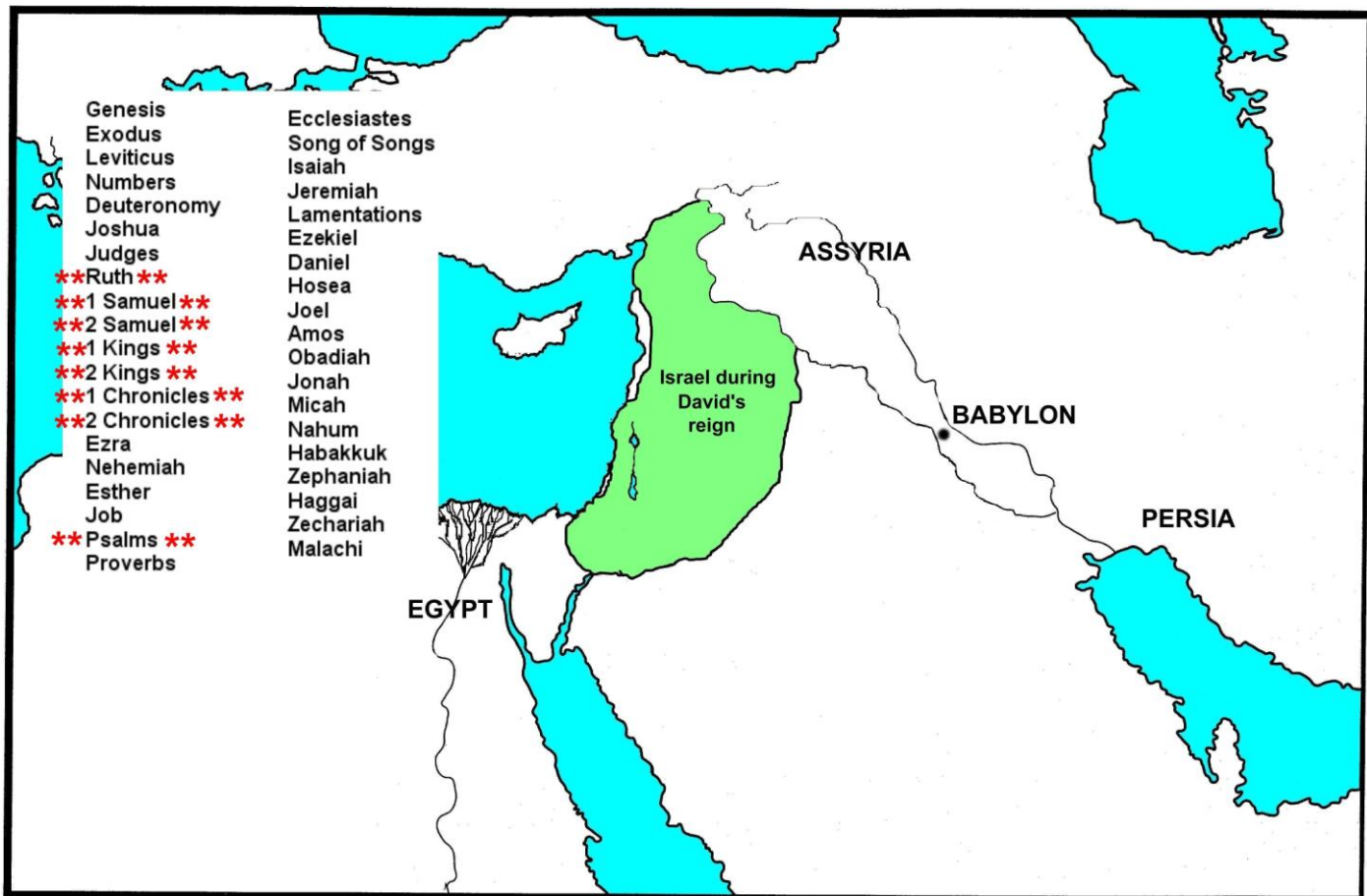
(g) Read 1 Sam 16:10-14 and Psalm 51:11. What do these passages say about the Holy Spirit?

Solomon, David and Bathsheba's son (2 Sam 12), became king in 961 BC. After Solomon Israel was split in two in 922 BC with the northern kingdom called Israel and the southern kingdom called Judah. This division into two kingdoms weakened them both and it wasn't long before other nations threatened them.

1 and 2 Kings account for four centuries of Israel's history with a succession of kings from both the northern and southern kingdoms, ending in exile. 1 and 2 Kings were written as one book from the viewpoint of an Israelite living in exile in Babylon.

1 and 2 Chronicles follow the kings from the line of David, ignoring the northern kings. The Chronicler wrote from the viewpoint of an Israelite who had returned from exile with Ezra and Nehemiah.

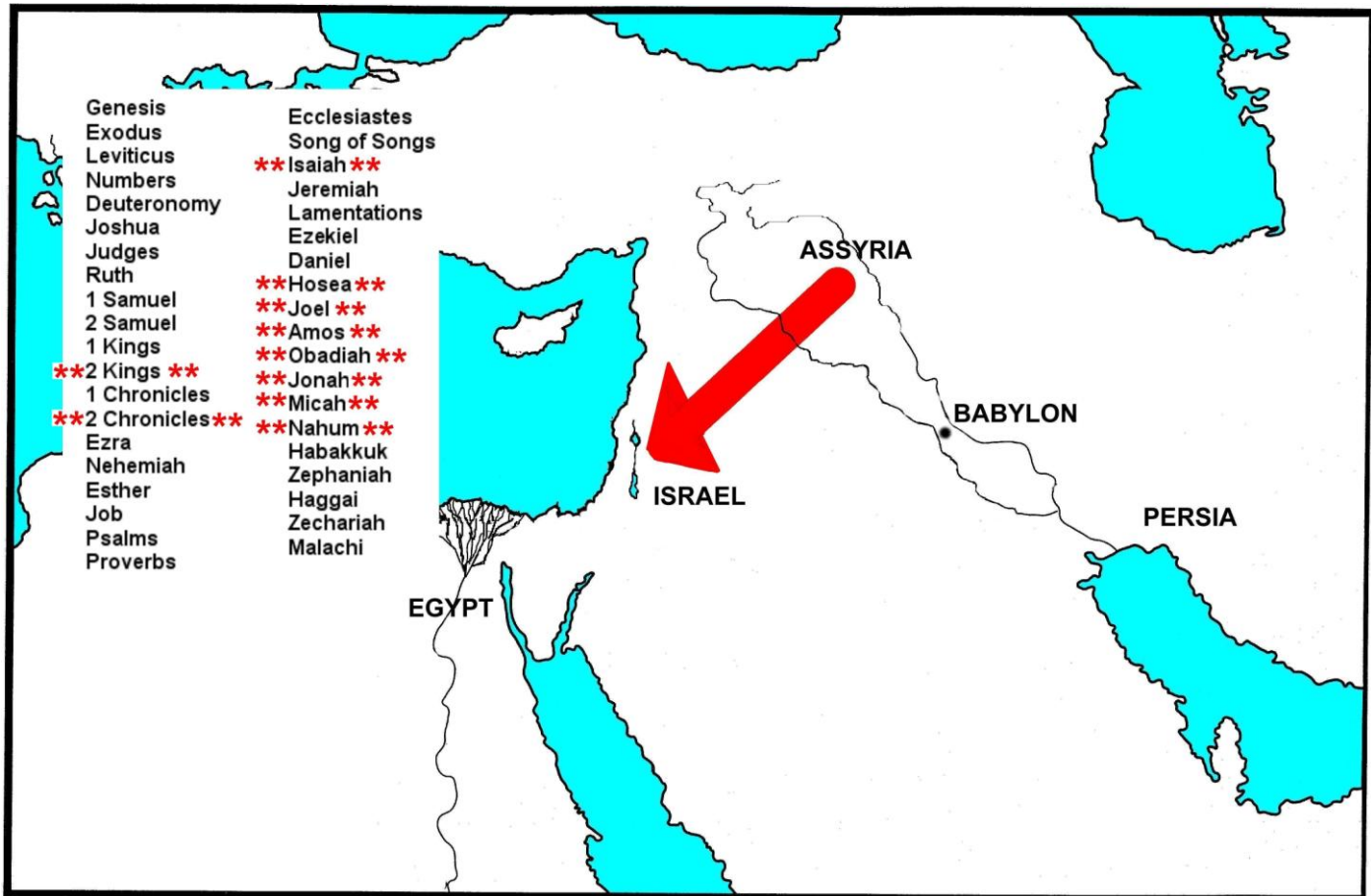
In contrast, **Ruth** is a quiet tale of ordinary life where a mother, Naomi, and her daughter-in-law, Ruth, move from Moab to Bethlehem and are treated kindly by Boaz. Boaz and Ruth get married and their great grandson is King David.



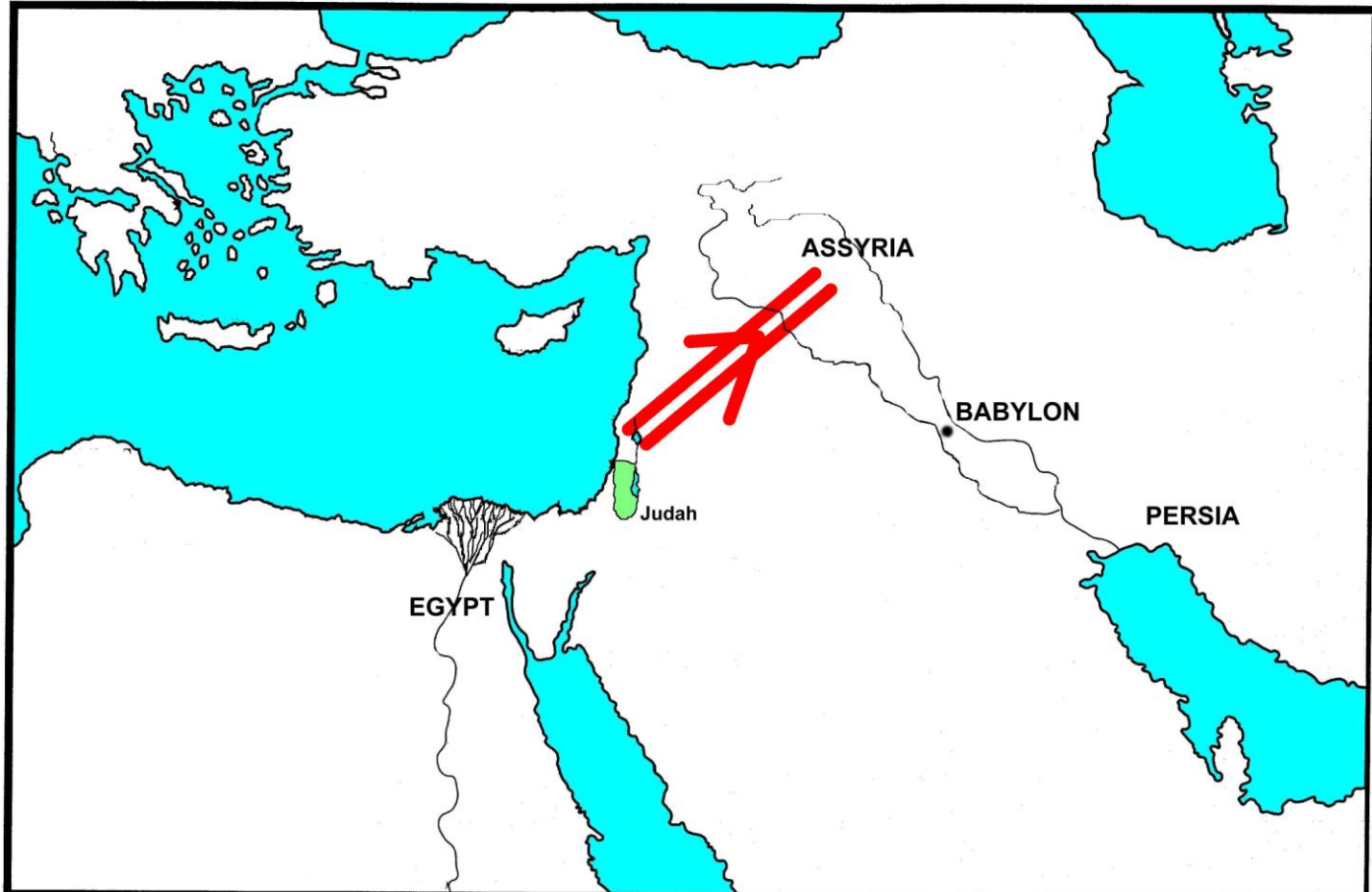
(h) Elijah and Elisha were prophets during the reign of Ahab, one of Israel's kings (869-850 BC). Read 2 Kings 2:15-16. What does this tell us about the Holy Spirit?

Assyria became the major world power from about 900 BC to 612 BC. **Jonah** preached God's message of repentance to Nineveh, Assyria's capital, at about 800 BC. They did repent and avoided God's judgement for a time only to re-commit their sins bringing on God's warning through **Nahum**. Israel also needed to repent and a number of prophets warned that God's instrument of judgement would be Assyria. **Isaiah**, **Joel** and **Obadiah** warned Judah (the southern kingdom), **Hosea** and **Amos** warned Israel (the northern kingdom) and **Micah** addressed both kingdoms.

(i) Read Joel 2:28-32. What does this tell us about the Holy Spirit?



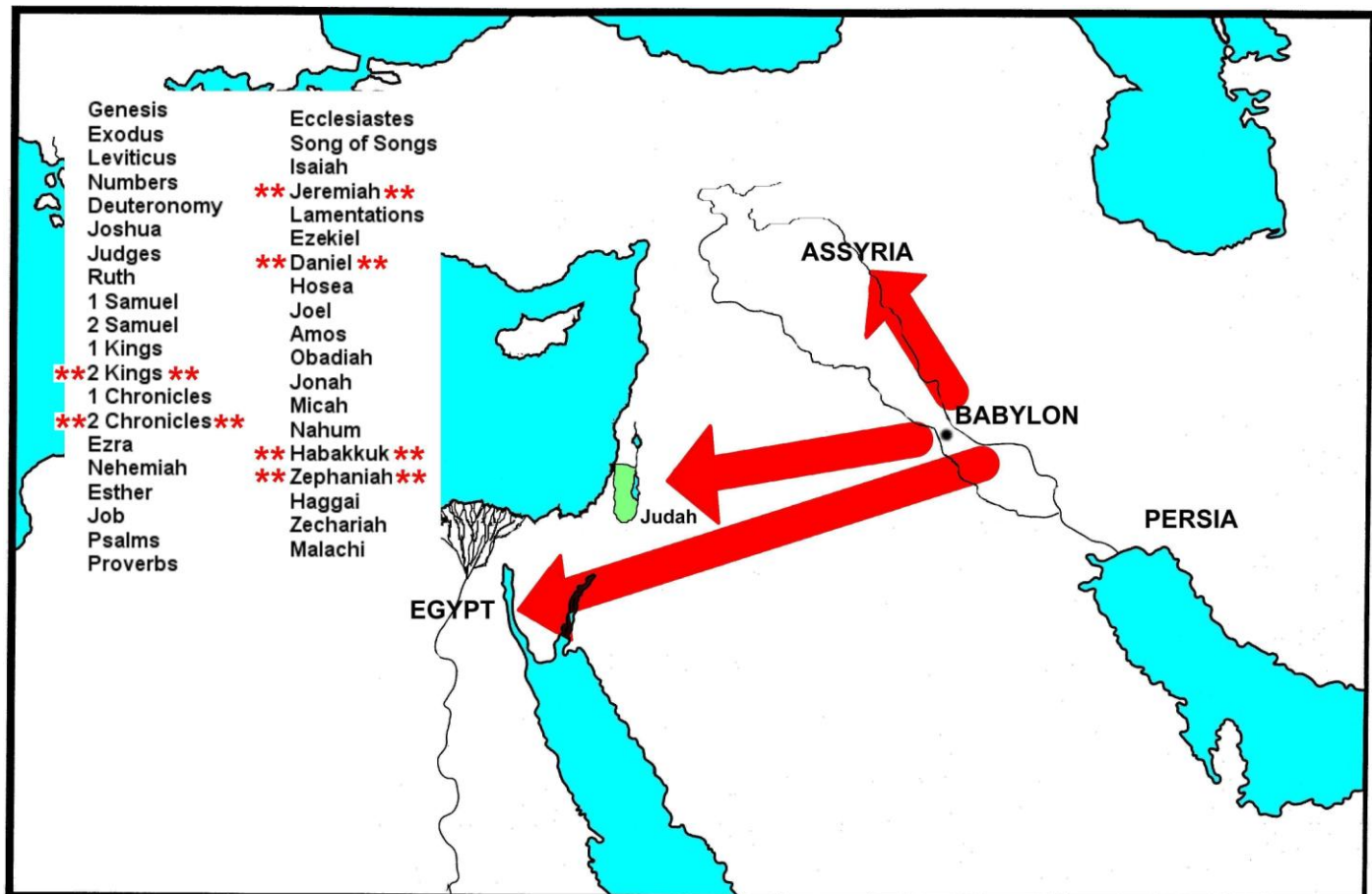
Tiglath-Pileser III became king of Assyria in 745 BC. In 721 BC he defeated Israel (the northern kingdom) and took the people into exile. In 612 BC Nineveh, the capital, was destroyed bringing about the fall of Assyria.



(j) Read 1 Peter 1:10-11. What does this tell us about the Holy Spirit?

Babylon was the next major world power from 612 BC to 539 BC. They attacked and defeated nearly everybody. **Jeremiah** and **Zephaniah** warned Judah and **Habakkuk** said that, even worse than Assyria, Babylon would be God's instrument of judgement.

Babylon battled with Judah and took people like **Daniel** into exile in 605 BC.



(k) Read Jeremiah 31:31-34. What does this tell us about the Holy Spirit?

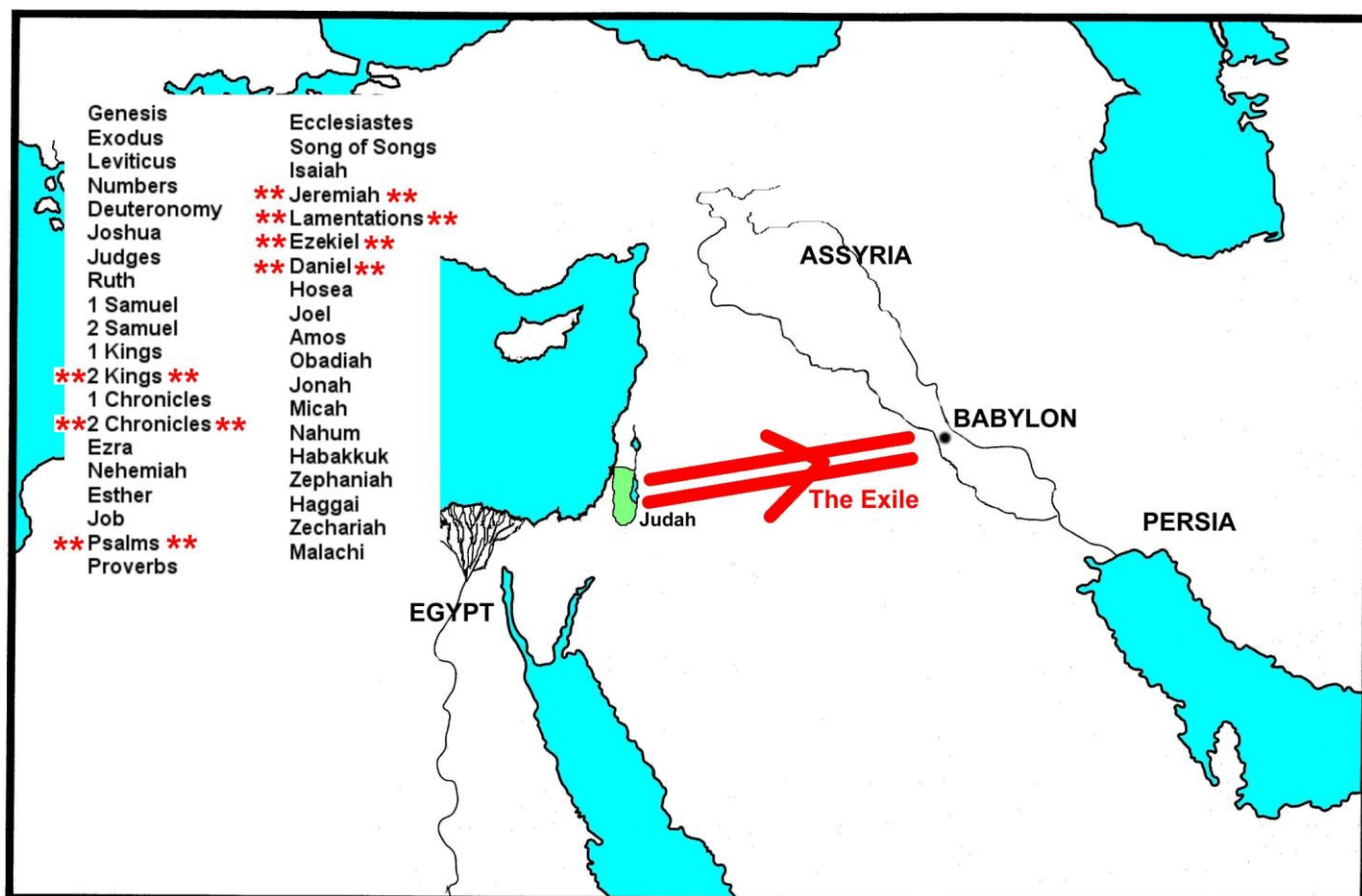
Eventually in 587 BC, Babylon took Jerusalem, destroyed the Temple and drove most of the people to Babylon leaving only the poorest behind. This was known as the Exile.

Some **psalms** were written during the exile.

Jeremiah was offered a comfortable life in Babylon but chose to remain in Judah.

Lamentations was written, probably by Jeremiah, about the suffering of the people in exile.

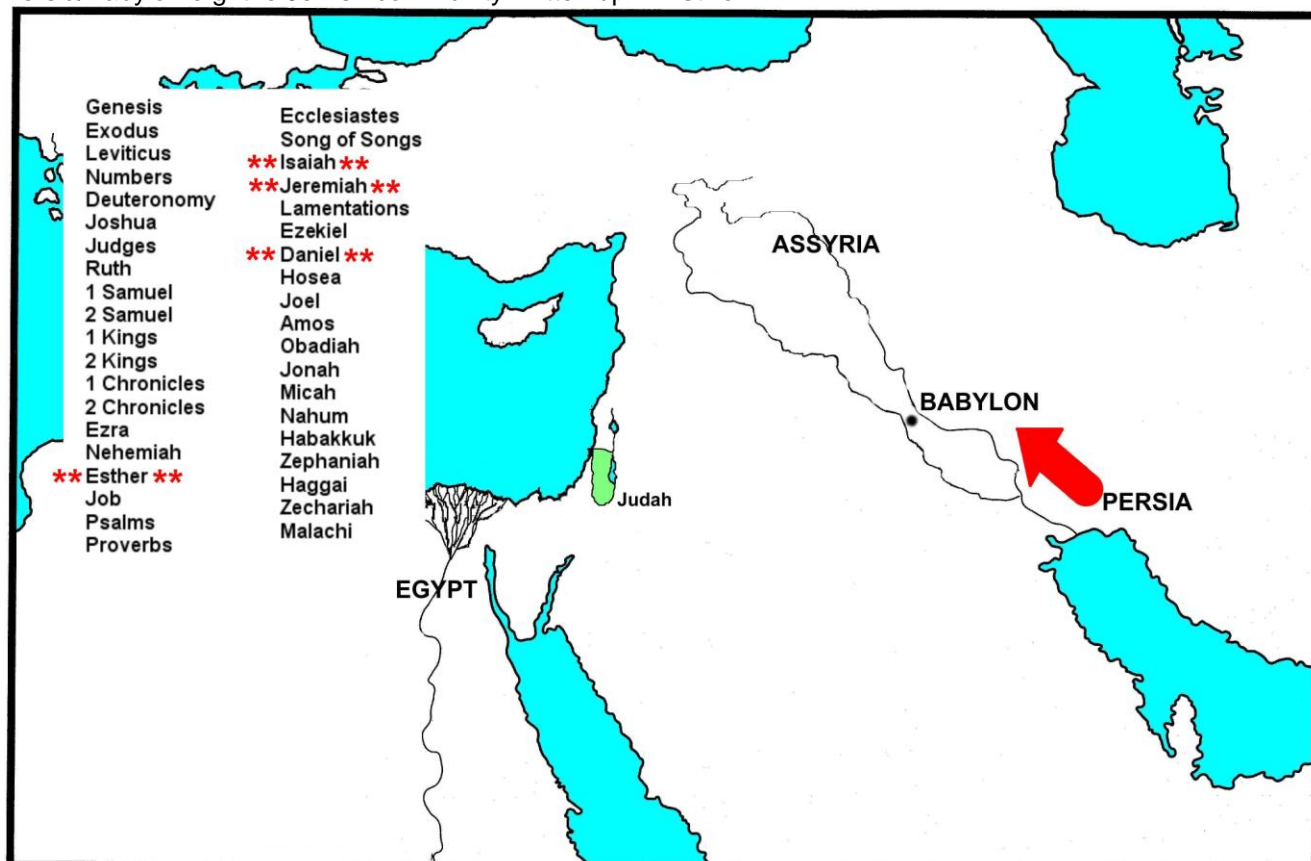
Ezekiel and **Daniel** had already been taken into exile.



Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel prophesied the defeat of the Babylonians and the return of the exiles.

These prophecies came true when Cyrus the Great defeated the Babylonians in 539 BC and Persia became the major world power.

The Persians allowed the Israelites (the remnant) to return to Judah although some preferred to stay in Persia/Babylon e.g. the Jewish community written up in **Esther**.



(I) What do these passages say about the Holy Spirit?

Isaiah 4:4

Isaiah 11:1-3

Isaiah 34:16

Isaiah 42:1

Isaiah 44:3

Isaiah 63:11-14

In 538/7 the main group of Israelites returned to Judah with Zerubbabel, their leader.

Haggai and **Zechariah** were written during the reign of Darius I of Persia (521-486 BC).

Haggai wrote to encourage the re-building of the walls of Jerusalem.

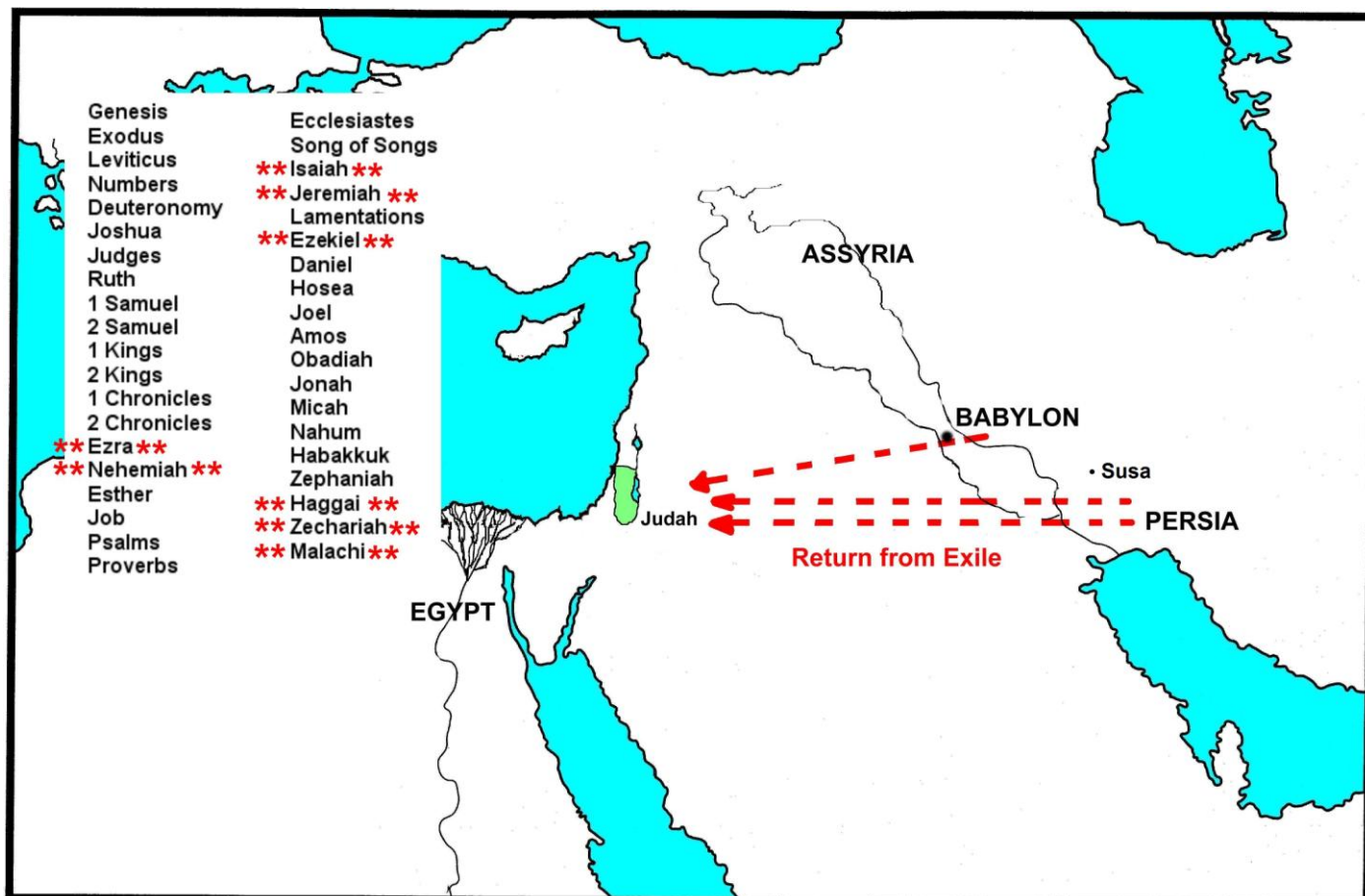
Zechariah looked to the restoration of the Temple and the future of God's people.

(Battle of Thermopylae 480 BC when the Greeks blocked the advance of the massive Persian army under Xerxes I (486-465 BC) depicted in the 2006 movie "300".)

Ezra and a group of Israelites returned to Jerusalem in 458 BC to organise the rebuilding of the Temple.

Nehemiah returned with his group in 445 BC to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem. (Artaxerxes I, son of Xerxes I, was king of the Persians from 465-423 BC, see Neh 2:1.)

Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Haggai, Zechariah and **Malachi** all looked ahead to a time beyond the exile, to a time of restoration and a time when God's king, Jesus, would come.



(m) What do these passages say about the Holy Spirit?

Ezekiel 36:25-27

Ezekiel 37:13-14

Ezekiel 39:29

In 331 BC the Greeks, under Alexander the Great, defeated the Persians, under Darius III (336-331 BC).

331-146 BC – Greek rule.

146 BC – 410 AD – Roman rule.

To finish

4. Briefly sum up what the Old Testament tells us about the Holy Spirit?

Study 2, New birth

Getting started

1. In layman's terms what does it mean to be born again?



2. The following film clip/sound bite is another way of expressing what "born again" means. In Tim Winton's short film The Turning Rae (Rose Byrne) is in an abusive relationship and she makes friends with Sherry (Miranda Otto) who is a Christian. Rae asks "What's it like this born again business?".



Play ConversionTheTurning.mp3 (1 min 30 secs)

Sherry answers "It was like a hot knife going into me like I was butter and this knife was opening me up and suddenly I could see all this possibility in the world and, something more than that, there was hope and beauty where all I felt before was hollow."

(a) How is this different from the usual way of expressing what "born again" means?

(b) Is it a better way of expressing it? Why/why not?

Bible

John 3. Context: John begins his gospel by describing the connection between Jesus and the Word. John writes about the baptism of Jesus, the calling of the first disciples, the wedding where Jesus turns water into wine and the anger of Jesus at how his Father's house is being used.

3. Read John 3:1-21.

The Pharisees have been frequently characterised as holier-than-thou people who spent their time loading rules and regulations onto other people. Call someone 'a Pharisee' and we cast them as a sanctimonious hypocrite: pompous, self-satisfied, smug. Of course, such a caricature owes its origins to Jesus' stinging criticism of the Pharisees as recorded in the Gospels. They were 'whitewashed tombs' (Matt. 23:27), looking pious but full of evil. No doubt there were some Pharisees like that — as there are in any religious movement — but what is interesting about the Pharisees is that they were, at heart, a kind of grass-roots holiness movement. They were popular in the rural areas and the poorer parts of the cities, precisely because they were attempting to redefine Judaism in a way which the ordinary Jew could follow. They did create a mass of rules and regulations which, judging by Jesus' criticisms, caused difficulty and confusion, but they did so because they wanted to help people observe the Jewish faith. Their rules and regulations, complex though they are, were an attempt to deal, with the complexities of Torah law in everyday life. Their rulings reflect life in the villages and hamlets of Palestine, with all its myriad conflicts and difficulties. If they were trying to help, though, to solve the problems of observing Torah law in everyday life, why did Jesus lay into them so much? The answer seems to lie in the nature of that solution. The Pharisees solved the problem of obeying the laws by weaving a web of even more intricate laws and decisions. Reading the Mishnah — the code which was developed from this tradition — one is struck by the sheer complexity of everything.

Jesus' solution was simpler: don't do it. Cut through the religious red tape. . . . Jesus had no time for the minutiae of religious observance if it got in the way of real repentance and real relationship. He ate with the wrong people, he did not wash properly (Mark 7:15), he did not see the need for fasting (Mark 2:19), his Sabbath observance was questionable (Matt. 12:1-8). He did not even acknowledge the priority of Moses' instructions (Mark 10:2-9).

Both the Pharisees and Jesus wanted to democratise holiness, but they went about it in different ways. Jesus' approach was to shatter the taboos.

From The Wrong Messiah by Nick Page pp 93-94.

(a) What do you think might be the significance of coming to see Jesus at night (v 2)?

(b) Jesus describes Nicodemus as Israel's teacher (v10) so he should have been familiar with Eze 36:25-27 and 37:1-14. What should have Nicodemus known about being born again?

(c) What does 'born of water and the spirit' mean (vv 5-8)?

(d) What does the wind analogy teach us about the Holy Spirit (v 8)?

(e) What is it about Jesus that Nicodemus doesn't accept (v 11)?

(f) What is the connection between Jesus and new birth (v 15)?

Ephesians 2, context: Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter to a group of churches (probably) the most important of which was at Ephesus. In chapter one Paul outlines God's great plan for the cosmos with Christ as its head and his people as partners with him.

4. Read Eph 2:1-5.
 (a) Why do we need to be born again?

 (b) What does it mean to be "made alive in Christ" (v5, see also Rom 6:3-11)?

5. Read Eph 2:6-10.
 What does it mean when it says we were "raised up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus" (v6)?

6. Read Eph 2:11-22.
 (a) How do we have access to the Father (v18).

 (b) What does it mean for the Spirit to live in us (v22)?

To finish

7. (a) Why do we need to be born again?

 (b) (i) What do we have to do to be born again?

 (ii) What does God do to re-birth us?

Study 3, Personal experience

Getting started

1. (Around the room.) (a) Tell us about a personal experience that you have had?



- (b) Tell us about a personal experience of the Holy Spirit (if any) that you have had?

- (c) Why do you think conversations about the Holy Spirit sometimes generate much emotion?

Bible

2. John 14, context: Jesus has told his disciples that he is going away but they didn't understand that he was talking about his death. Jesus tries to prepare them for this event by talking about a new spiritual connection with himself bridging the gap between heaven and earth. He uses three different titles for the Spirit.

Read John 14:15-27.

(a) "Another Counsellor" (v16). The word for "counsellor" can also mean advocate, comforter, strengthener, helper and friend.

- (i) If the Spirit is *another* counsellor, who was the first one (see 1 John 2:1-2)?

What was he like in a personal sense?

- (ii) What does a counsellor/advocate do for us?

(b) The disciples were worried about Jesus' exit (John 14:1).
How would a counsellor make a difference?

(c) "The Spirit of Truth" (vv 16-17). Jesus described himself as the truth (John 14:6).

- (i) What truth is the Spirit going to tell (v26 & John 16:12-15)?

- (ii) How does this truth relate to us in the 21st century?

(d) "The Holy Spirit" (vv 14-26). What is the connection between obedience, love and holiness?

3. In John chapter 15 Jesus talks about a vine.

Within Jewish tradition, the vine was a picture of Israel. God brought a vine out of Egypt, and planted it in the promised land (Ps 80:8-18). It had been ravaged by wild animals and needed protecting and re-establishing. The vineyard of Israel, said Isaiah in ch 5, has borne wild grapes instead of proper ones. Other prophets used the same picture.

Now Jesus is saying that *he* is the 'true vine'. This can only mean that he is, in himself, the true Israel. He is the one on whom God's purposes are now resting. And his followers are members of God's true people – if they belong to him and remain 'in' him. The picture of the vine isn't just a clever illustration from gardening. It is about who Jesus and his people really are, and what is now going to happen to them as a result.

From John for Everyone part 2 chapters 11-21 p 70 by Tom Wright.

Read John 15:26-16:15.

(a) What does Jesus say the Counsellor will do?

(b) How much of what Jesus promises his disciples also applies to us?

(c) Sin relates to not believing in Jesus (v 9), judgement relates to Satan ("the prince of this world") being condemned (v 11) but how does righteousness relate to Jesus going to the Father (v 10)?

(d) From this passage, what sort of personal experience will we get from the Holy Spirit?

4. Romans 8, context: Paul explains the gospel in the first 7 chapters. In chs 5-8 he writes about freedom from the wrath of God, freedom from the power of sin, freedom from the law and freedom from death. Paul begins to write about the Holy Spirit in chapter 8 and how he helps us live in between being saved and finally being glorified.

Read Rom 8:12-27.

(a) What external evidence does the Holy Spirit give us to assure us we are sons of God (vv 12-14)?

(b) What internal evidence does the Holy Spirit give us to assure us we are God's children (vv 15-16)?

The Spirit is personal and he gives us a personal word for father, "Abba", which means something like "dad" or "daddy" in our usage today.

The Christian discovers a new identity, picking up Israel's vocation in the Old Testament: **adoption**. When the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in a person's heart, the first sign is that they recognize God as father; this I think, is part of what Paul meant in [Romans] 5:5 when he spoke of a love for God being poured out in our

hearts by the holy spirit. The cry '**Abba, father**' uses the old Aramaic word which Jesus himself had used for God (Mark 14:36). Paul refers to the same cry in Galatians 4:5-6, where again there are powerful echoes of the Exodus story. This time he interprets what is going on in terms of the coming together of the holy spirit with our own spirit. . . .

The children of Israel were promised an **inheritance**, namely Canaan. This was already widened dramatically in God's promise to the coming Messiah in Psalm 2:8: 'I will give you the nations as your inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth as your possession.' This in turn is projected back on to the promise to Abraham, as we saw in [Romans] 4:13: the promise to Abraham and his family, declares Paul, is that they should inherit the *world*. Now, in the passage we are about to reach [Romans 8:18-25], we see what this means in fully Christian terms. It means that the whole world, the entire creation, is going to be made over to the Messiah and his people, and with their eventual vindication and resurrection that entire creation will itself be set free from corruption and decay.

From Paul for Everyone Romans Part 1: Chapters 1-8 by Tom Wright pp 146-147.

(c) Look up the following uses of "Abba" and note what is going on and why this personal word would be used.

(i) Mark 14:36

(ii) Galatians 4:4-7

(d) What does it mean to have the "first fruits of the Spirit" (see Rom 8:17-23)?

(e) Why is there all this groaning: creation (Rom 8:22), Christians (Rom 8:23) and the Spirit (v26)?

Can I act contrary to what it means to be like Jesus? Of course I can. So I know something of the wider **groaning of the creation** that I'm caught up in. . . . Groaning because I have some sense of what life is meant to be but I experience so often something else. I have some sense of what life is without binary terms – when it's not good or bad, right or wrong, good or evil, included or excluded, whatever. I have these moments when I'm with people and I experience pure joy, pure delight of being in each other's company and doing something, creating something, thinking something, singing something, whatever, together. These marvellous moments say that the world doesn't have to be a repetition of Genesis chapter 3 but I find myself groaning because I don't experience this all the time. What's fascinating is Paul says the wider creation is waiting to be brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God [Rom 8:21]. The text is effectively saying that somehow or other the renewal of creation is bound up with us entering into our full renewal and liberation. I don't know if that's agency – that somehow the liberation and freedom of creation is bound up with God's work through the Holy Spirit leading us into the fullness of glory of the children of God. I can't make the case tightly from the text but it fits well.

From Mark Strom speaking on "Paul and the Open Heart" 24/10/2014.

(f) What does it mean to pray in the Spirit (Rom 8:26-27 and Eph 6:18)?

To finish

5. How does prayer help us in times of suffering/groaning?

Study 4, Trinity

Getting started

1. (a) Can you remember the last good idea you had about something?

(b) What was this good idea?

(c) How long did you think about this idea?

(d) How did you feel about this idea?

(e) Did you put this idea into practise?



Bible

2. When we think about the Holy Spirit we often think about God and the Trinity – Father, Son and Spirit. This leads to questions about how can one bit be three bits. The Biblical emphasis is not on bits but on relationships.

People have relationships.

(a) How do people relate to each other?

(b) How do people relate to creation?

(c) How do people relate to God?

God has relationships.

(d) How does God relate to creation?

(e) How does God relate to people?

(f) How does God relate to himself?

3. John 17 gives us a good example of how God relates to himself.

Context: Jesus told the disciples he was going away in John 14. He started to talk about sending the Holy Spirit as another Counsellor for them. He says the Spirit will be in them (14:17) and gives them the example of a vine in chapter 15. In chapter 16 Jesus explains more about the Spirit and the grief they will experience when he goes away. Jesus prays in chapter 17 and, during those prayers, he talks about being in the Father and believers being in Christ.

Read John 17:20-26.

(a) Who is Jesus praying for?



(b) What does he want for them?

(c) How would you describe the relationship (i) between Jesus and the Father?

(ii) between Jesus, the Father and believers?

(d) Who is in whom (see John 14:16-17, 17:21-23)?

4. One way to understand the Trinity is to compare it to the good idea of question 1.

We begin with an idea. The idea itself is one aspect.

We can think about this idea in any of a number of ways, one of which might be imagining how we might put it into practise. This thinking about our original idea we will call "the idea of the idea". This is the second aspect.

We might have felt some emotion about the idea e.g. sad if it was a bad idea, frustrated if it was an idea that was good but impossible to implement, or we might have felt joy if it was a really good idea that would lead to something ground breaking. So now we have the emotion of the idea as the third aspect.

All three aspects are different yet closely related and personal.

This is something like the close relationship between Father, Son and Spirit. All three are different yet closely related and personal. The idea begins the process so we could line up the idea with the Father. Doing something with the idea – the idea of the idea - could be lined up with the Son. The emotion of the idea could be lined up with the Spirit.

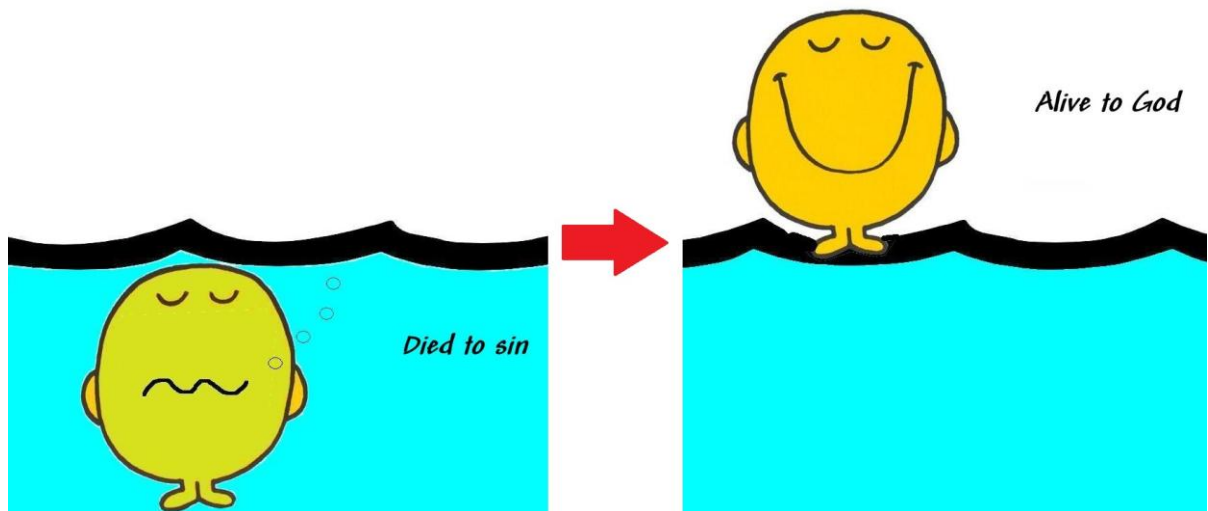
What does unity mean for God?



To finish

5. What does unity mean for us (see Eph 4:4-6)?

Study 5, Baptism



Getting started

1. Can you think of a day that meant huge changes for you?
 - (a) What was that day?
 - (b) What were the changes?

Bible

2. Read Luke 3:1-22, context: The first 2 chapters of Luke are about the miraculous births of Jesus and John the Baptist, and some events in Jesus' early life. In chapter 3 Jesus and John are now grown up and ready to begin their separate ministries.
 - (a) Why did John baptise people?
 - (b) Who gets the Holy Spirit?

"The old prophets had spoken of a time of renewal, through which God himself would come back to them. . . **Baptism**, plunging into the river Jordan, was a powerful sign of this renewal. When the children of Israel had come out of Egypt – a story they all know well because of their regular Passovers and other festivals – they were brought through the Red Sea, through the Sinai wilderness, then through the Jordan into the promised land. Now they were in slavery again – in their own land! . . . John was doing what the prophet Isaiah had said: preparing a pathway of the Lord himself to return to his people. This was the time. Rescue was at hand."

From Luke for Everyone by Tom Wright pp 32-33.

[B]aptism was the rite by which Gentiles would become 'Jews'; those who were already within the Israelite family did not need it. By preaching baptism to the latter (Luke 3:3), John places Jews in the category of Gentiles. Physical relation to Abraham is of no avail.

'All the people' who responded to John's preaching 'were baptized' (Luke 3:21), for all needed to acknowledge themselves to be in a wrong relation to God.

From The Message of Luke by Michael Wilcock p 55.

How did the Holy Spirit come upon the first Christians? Is there a pattern to the way things happened? Acts describes 4 events when the Holy Spirit came to Christ followers. We will examine what happened, answer the same 6 questions of each event and see if we can come to some conclusions. Here are the four passages and their contexts:

1. Acts 2:1-41 (Jerusalem)

Context: Jesus has risen from the dead and appeared to his disciples. Jesus asked the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit. While they are waiting they choose Matthias to replace Judas.

2. Acts 8:14-17 (Samaria)

Context: Persecution of the church in Jerusalem meant that all the disciples except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. Philip went to Samaria, preached about Jesus and many were converted.

3. Acts 10:34-48 (Gentiles in Caesarea)

Context: Peter has a vision about eating "unclean" foods. He is asked to come to see a Gentile, Cornelius, in Caesarea. Being a Jew, Peter is not supposed to visit Gentiles but he does because of the vision. Cornelius tells how an angel told him to send for Peter.

4. Acts 19:1-7 (Ephesus)

Context: Paul has been traveling around telling people about Jesus. He left Priscilla and Aquila at Ephesus where they met and helped Apollos who had been preaching about Jesus but didn't know about the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

1. Read Acts 2:1-41

(a) Why did the people get baptised (vv 37-41)?

Note: There are two groups here: the disciples sitting in the house together (v 1) and the people who were "cut to the heart" (v 37) after hearing Peter's speech. Answer the following questions for each group.

(b) Did they receive the Holy Spirit *when* they came to faith?

(c) Did they receive the Holy Spirit *after* they came to faith?

(d) Were they baptised in water?

(e) Was there a "laying on of hands"?

(f) Were any apostles present?

(g) Did they speak in tongues?

2. Read Acts 8:14-17

(a) Did they receive the Holy Spirit *when* they came to faith?

(b) Did they receive the Holy Spirit *after* they came to faith?

(c) Were they baptised in water?

(d) Was there a "laying on of hands"?

(e) Were any apostles present?

(f) Did they speak in tongues?

3. Read Acts 10:34-48 and when Peter explains this event in Acts 11:15-18

- (a) Did they receive the Holy Spirit *when* they came to faith?
- (b) Did they receive the Holy Spirit *after* they came to faith?
- (c) Were they baptised in water?
- (d) Was there a "laying on of hands"?
- (e) Were any apostles present?
- (f) Did they speak in tongues?

4. Read Acts 19:1-7]

- (a) Did they receive the Holy Spirit *when* they came to faith?
- (b) Did they receive the Holy Spirit *after* they came to faith?
- (c) Were they baptised in water?
- (d) Was there a "laying on of hands"?
- (e) Were any apostles present?
- (f) Did they speak in tongues?

To finish

5. (a) Is there a common pattern for receiving the Holy Spirit?

- (b) Is there a common factor for each event?

- (c) What conclusions can we come to after looking at these 4 events and Acts 1:8?

- (d) In our context why do people get baptised?

Study 6, Gifts 1, 1 Cor 12 & 13

Getting started

1. (a) Name one thing you are good at?

(b) Is it a gift or a “spiritual” gift? What’s the difference?



Bible

2. 1 Cor 12 context: The Corinthian church was a youngish church that was experiencing a burst of spiritual life. It was an exciting place to be but, at worst, this new life had made the church a place of rivalry, and a place to show off rather than a place to serve others. The kinds of ‘spiritual gifts’ that the Corinthians seemed to prize the most were the kinds of gifts that elevated the individual, and not the church body. They loved the more fantastic manifestations of the Spirit like speaking-in-tongues as opposed to the more ordinary gifts like gifts of administration. Tongues-speaking was a particular sign of spirituality for some in Corinth (see 1 Cor 14).

Paul is very careful in his reply to them here. He doesn’t want to allow excesses in their use of gifts to divide them but he doesn’t want to quench the work of the Spirit either. He *does* want them to be mature so he goes about instructing them on this issue.

From 1 Corinthians 8-15 The Handbook for a Healthy Church Bible study booklet by Naremburn Cammeray Anglican Church.

Read 1 Cor 12:1-11. (a) Who gives spiritual gifts (vv 4-6, see also Eph 4:7-13)?

(b) To whom are they given (vv 7 & 11)?

(c) Why are they given (v 7, 1 Cor 14:26 and 1 Pet 4:10-11)?

3. (a) List the gifts mentioned in these passages:

1 Cor 12:7-11, 28

Rom 12:3-8

Eph 4:7-12

1Pet 4:9-11

(b) What can we learn about gifts from these lists?

(c) Can we make the idea of gifts as wide open as Col 3:17? Why/why not?

4. Read 1 Cor 12:12-31.

(a) What does the body metaphor for church have to do with gifts?

(b) Are some people in the church more important than others?

(c) Do we *treat* some people in the church as more important than others?

(d) Are some gifts more important than others?

(e) Do we *treat* some gifts as more important than others?

(d) Are there any particular gifts that every Christian must have?

5. Read 1 Cor 12:31-13:13.

(a) What is Paul saying about the value of gifts without love?

(b) What is Paul saying about the character of love?

(c) Do you think there is a not-so-veiled rebuke in these verses for the Corinthians about the way they were using spiritual gifts and treating one another? Why/why not?
(You might have to read more of 1 Cor chs 1-14 to answer this.)

(d) Paul illustrates his point in verse 11, by likening our present experience of spiritual gifts (in this age) to that of children. He also likens our present knowledge & understanding of God, as like looking into a mirror, and seeing dimly. That doesn't mean that we have an inaccurate knowledge of God now. No, scripture is clear that what we know of God is a true knowledge. It's just that it's not exhaustive.

From 1 Corinthians 8-15 The Handbook for a Healthy Church Bible study booklet by Naremburn Cammeray Anglican Church.

What effect should this have on us, to know that we don't know as much about God as we think we know, and that our capacities now, as marvellous as they are, are like child's play?

To finish

6. (a) Could love be a gift as well as a fruit (Gal 5:22)? Why/why not?

(b) Could the greater gifts of 1 Cor 12:31 be faith, hope and love (1 Cor 13:13)? Why/why not?

Study 7, Gifts 2, Rom 12

Getting started

1. How conventional are you?



For each question (a) to (f) below, work out what would be the conventional answer then decide on your own answer. Compare the two answers to see if you agree with the conventional answer.

- (a) Do you care about what other people think about you?
- (b) Do you prefer traditional male/female roles?
- (c) How do you feel about religion?
- (d) What is most important when it comes to clothes – comfort, appropriateness or self-expression?
- (e) Are you worried about Global Warming?
- (f) Do you think success is important?
- (g) What do your answers to these questions say about how conventional you are?

Bible

2. Read Rom 12:1-8.

Context: When Paul says don't be conformed to this world (Rom 12:2) we usually think of that as don't do the same sinful things that you see happening around you. We usually think that having a transformed mind means living by a different set of rules i.e. your new way of thinking is governed by a new and godly set of rules - a new morality. But in context Paul was writing to Rome. "This world" in Rom 12:2 refers to Paul's world, the Greco-Roman world. Paul is saying don't be conformed to the Greco-Roman world. The quote below will help us get a grip on the world Paul is talking about.

"Ancient demarcations of rank defined social life. 'Free', 'freed' or 'slave' stamped a person for life. . . . Household slaves gave themselves ranks with special prominence for the literate. . . . As a freedman, you might rise to great prominence but there was always someone of inherited rank ready to rub your lowly origins in your face.

In the ancient worlds of Greece and Rome, leadership meant rank. Position, not role. Leadership was a right and responsibility attached to a man (overwhelmingly a man) by birth, marriage or adoption. Leadership did not depend on competence, gift, intellect or experience. The purpose of leadership was to maintain the order of a highly stratified society. Good order depended on people staying in the places allotted to them by birth, by Fate, by the gods or by personal accomplishment.

Status always complicated rank. One's rank was largely fixed by birth with some possibility of change through marriage or adoption. (We read of great men with sons many years their senior.) The marks of status are familiar to us: education, wealth, fame, achievements, friendships, personal appearance, memberships, lifestyle and, in Paul's day, oratory. A man might live many steps above or below his rank according to how well he fared in business and in securing the right friends.

Talent, piety, virtue and citizenship could each offer a platform for new status. Divorce, marriage and adoption might offer a rare opportunity to lift one's rank. It was in everyone's interest to keep the system going. The costly business of benefactions brought status to those of means. . . .

Enter Paul. What would an educated and urbane Greek man or woman make of a similarly educated and urbane Jewish man publicly declaiming or writing the following: 'there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one' [Gal 3:28]? Or 'do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but

in humility consider others better than yourselves' [Phil 2:3]? Or 'think not of yourself more highly than you ought but with sober judgement' [Rom 12:3], 'associate with people of low position' [Rom 12:16], and 'give greater honour to those without honour' [1 Cor 12:23]? . . .

Paul set himself on a collision course with Greco-Roman social expectation and convention. And for good reason. The social implications of his story were profound.

First, the story was anchored in a man who, in Paul's words, 'emptied himself, made himself nothing, and subjected himself to death' [Phil 2:6-8], even execution by the Romans. If Paul wanted to cast the central figure of his message as eminently embarrassing and dismissible, he couldn't have done a better job of it.

Second, Paul claimed that on the basis of this inexplicable act of self-sacrifice, grace was now available impartially to all. It was inconceivable to Greeks or Romans that a deity would subvert the social system. Yet this was Paul's claim and he insisted on modelling it in his own life. . . .

We should not intellectualise what Paul was advising. It involved inverting the normal conventions of honour. Paul expected his associates to break with the convention of allocating food and seating according to rank. He expected wives, children, even slaves, to be allowed, no, *invited* to recline at meal with those of rank and to participate fully in the conversation. This was entirely scandalous. . . .

Paul was building something entirely new and had set himself an ambitious program of nurturing co-workers for the task. He had to neutralise the grip of every social convention that tied their hearts and minds to the old world. His strategy included undermining virtually every assured premise and outcome of the social system."

From Lead with Wisdom by Mark Strom pp 246-248.

(a) Considering the quote above . . .

(i) what would *not conforming* (Rom 12:2) have meant to Paul's readers?

(ii) what would *not conforming* mean for us?

(b) In Rom 12:1-8 how does Paul suggest they should use their gifts?

3. (a) Is there a system of rank and status in church today?

(b) If so . . . (i) is it a good thing or a bad thing? Give reasons for your answer.

(ii) how does it impact on the use of your gifts?

Paul introduces an idea of **gifting** which was a complete novelty for his time. The ancient world thought of gifting as a case where the muse visited someone and drops on them some inspiration but he only drops it on people who are worthy: the gods in their hierarchy pick out someone in our hierarchy and give them a taste of inspiration. What Paul says is dramatically different: every Christian person is gifted. . . .

Paul says you have a ready-made way of explaining who you are: God made you and you are his image and every means you have to amplify the cosmos is God's gift to you. Now that you see how the Greco-Roman patterns have defrauded you and as your mind is re-newed realise this: everything in your life which you have seen blessing or flourishing or how your life has touched another person's life, or your actions have brought in something new – every one of those things now name them as gifts. Don't name them by reference to the law or your ego, name them by reference to the God who gives all these things and realise they were not given just for you, they were given to give. They are graces because they are received as gifts and they are graces because they are meant to grace others.

From Mark Strom's talk on "Paul and the Open Heart" 24/10/2014 at Gospel Conversations.

4. Read Rom 12:9-21.

(a) Notice that, like in 1 Corinthians 12 & 13 (see previous study), Paul writes a passage on gifts (Rom 12:1-8) and then follows it with a passage on love (Rom 12:9-21). What does this suggest to you?

(b) How does this passage (Rom 12:9-21) fit in with being transformed and using your gifts?

To finish

5. What is Paul saying to conventional people?

Study 8, Gifts 3, Speaking in Tongues, 1 Cor 14



Getting started

1. 1. Look at the following statements and discuss whether they are right or wrong:
 - *“A gift is not given to me for my good; it is given to the church.”*
 - *“I love church because it gives me the opportunity to express myself by using my gift.”*
 - *“The church has 15 good piano-players, but I want my turn, because piano-playing is my gift.”*
 - *“The church needs someone to tidy up after the service. I’m available and able to do this. But, is this my gift?”*
 - *“To discover what my gift is, I’m going to work out what I enjoy and what I’m good at and offer that to the church.”*
 - *“God used me in my previous church in a number of ways. In my new church I’m just offering my help wherever I can.”*

Bible

2. Read 1 Corinthians 14:1-5. (We looked at the context for 1 Corinthians in study 6.)
 - (a) Where are they i.e. the people who are speaking in tongues and prophesying?
 - (b) In this passage and this context . . .
 - (i) what is speaking in tongues (v 2)?
 - (ii) what is the purpose of the gift of tongues (v 4)?
3. In other contexts (see Acts 2:1-41 & 10:34-11:18) what is speaking in tongues and what is its purpose?
4. Read 1 Corinthians 14:6-19.
What is the key principle that Paul is laying out here for speech in the Christian meeting?

5. Read 1 Corinthians 14:20-25.
 (a) What does Paul say is the result when a visitor / outsider / unbeliever comes into a Church meeting and they can't understand what's being said because all are speaking in tongues (see v 23)?

 (b) Some use vv 23-25 to say that church is for believers *and* unbelievers. What do you think – give reason(s)?

6. Read 1 Corinthians 14:26-28.
 (a) What is church for?

 (b) Who participates in church?

 (c) What is the proper use of un-explained tongues in the meeting?

7. Read 1 Corinthians 14:29-33a.
 What does Paul say is the overriding principle that should govern such times?

To finish

8. It seems likely that Corinthian church-members were prizing some gifts over others.
 (a) What are the 'glamour ministries' in our church culture?

 (b) Has this study changed your attitudes to these 'glamour ministries'? How so?

9. How do you know what role you should play at church? Some people say the starting point is discovering your gifts. Others say you should determine the needs and ask for the gifts needed to exercise the ministry. What do you think?

Judges 11:29

Judges 15:14

1 Sam 16:10-14

1 Pet 1:10-11

(b) What has the pouring out of the Holy Spirit got to do with the Day of the Lord (Joel 2:31)?

6. Read Acts 2:1-41.
How does Peter relate the words of Joel 2:28-32 (= Acts 2:17-21) to what is happening in Acts chapter 2 (hint: Acts 2:32-33)?

God's choice of Pentecost as the time to pour out his Spirit through Jesus on the 120 disciples holds intriguing significance. That particular Jewish festival was to begin seven weeks from the time the sickle was put to the standing grain [Deut 16:9] – parallel to seven weeks since Jesus was crucified. It was the day of the firstfruits of the harvest, brought by the people to the temple, given to God but enjoyed by the priests. Under the new covenant in the blood of Jesus, the 'royal priesthood' [1 Pet 2:9] of all believers in Jesus enjoy God's gift of the spirit to his people as the firstfruits of their full inheritance [Jer 1:18, 1 Cor 15:20, 23, Rev 14:4].

From The Message of Joel, Micah & Habakkuk by David Prior p 77.

To finish

7. Joel says that all God's people will have the Holy Spirit poured out on them.
This happened at Pentecost (Acts ch. 2) and it still happening (1 Cor 12:13).

As a sign of the pouring out of the Spirit today should we expect Christians to prophesy, dream dreams and see visions (Joel 2:28)? Why/why not?

Study 10, Visions and Prophecy 2

Getting started

1. What is a "prophecy"?



2. Is prophecy only about the future or could it be preaching or sharing in church?

Bible

3. Read Joel 2:28-32 and Acts 2:1-41.

Evidence of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost is seen in the fire, wind and speaking in tongues. But what about the visions, dreams and prophecies that Joel predicted in Joel 2:28-32? Speaking in tongues may be considered prophesy but there is no sign of the disciples dreaming dreams or seeing visions in Acts ch 2.

4. For each of the references below write who had the vision and what it was:

	who had the vision?	what was the vision?
e.g. Acts 9:1-9	Saul/Paul	Jesus
Acts 9:10-19		
Acts ch 10		
Acts 16:6-10		
Acts 18:5-11		
Acts 21:7-16		
2 Cor 12:1-10		
Rev 1:9-11		

5. (a) Have you had a vision like the ones above?

(b) Some churches claim to have visions which usually have something to do with long term plans or building projects. Are these visions or "mission statements"? Is there a difference? Compare these with the visions in the New Testament above.

(c) If ministers can have visions can laypeople also have visions?
Do you know anyone who had a vision? How was it received by others?

(d) Does a vision have to have something to do with religion or can it be about work or home-life?

6. What about prophecy? What is prophecy?

For each of the references below write who gave the prophecy, what form it took and what it was:

	who gave the prophecy?	what form did it take?	what was the prophecy?
e.g. Acts 2:1-41	disciples	speaking in tongues	the wonders of God (v 11)

Acts 11:27-30

Acts 12:25-13:3

Acts 21:7-16

7. Prophecy is listed amongst the gifts of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:7-11, 28, Rom 12:3-8, Eph 4:7-12). Paul encourages us to desire the gifts of the Spirit especially the gift of prophecy (1 Cor 14:1) and then gives us some idea of what prophecy is.

Read 1 Cor 14:1-33. Context: Paul wrote 1 Corinthians to answer a number of problems and issues that the church was struggling with i.e. divisions within their group, wisdom and foolishness, sexual immorality, lawsuits among believers, marriage and singleness, food sacrificed to idols, Paul's apostleship, idolatry, headship, eating meals together, spiritual gifts and the resurrection. After writing about gifts and their use in the church Paul emphasises the importance of love. This continues to be important in ch 14 where he compares the use of the gifts of prophecy and tongues.

(a) What do you think prophecy is according to this section?

(b) How does the type of prophecy in 1 Cor 14 fit in with the different forms of prophecy given in answer to question 5?

To finish

8. How does prophecy fit in with church life today?

For more on prophecy see the appendix.

Study 11, Seal & Guarantee

Getting started

1. What do you understand by the term “in Christ”?

Bible

2. Read Eph 1.

Paul's letter to the Ephesians differs considerably from his other letters. There are none of the usual personal greetings, although Paul had spent some years in Ephesus and had many friends there (see on Acts 19). Nor does Ephesians deal with particular problems or news. Even the words 'at Ephesus' (1:1) are missing from some of the early manuscripts. So it seems likely that Ephesians began as a circular letter written to a group of churches in what is now western Turkey, of which Ephesus itself was the most important. John's 'seven churches' (Revelation 1:11) were in this general area, as was the church at Colossae.

The fact that Paul wrote from prison (probably in Rome in the early 60s) links this letter with Philippians, Colossians and Philemon, the other 'letters from prison'. Of the three, Ephesians is closest in thought to Colossians. Because of its general nature the letter provides few clues to the situation in the churches. But it is clear that the Gentile Christians predominated, and that they tended to look down on their Jewish fellow Christians. Paul had been specially commissioned to work among the Gentiles, but he held no brief for a divided church.

From the Lion Handbook to the Bible Second Revised Edition, p 604.

What do we find out about ourselves if we are “in Christ”?

Another way of expressing what it means to be “in Christ” is by using the term “identity”. Your identity, if you are a believer, is who you are in Christ. Your identity in Christ is a son of God blessed with every spiritual blessing.

3. Read again Eph 1:13-14 and 2 Cor 1:21-22.

In the ancient world an owner would announce his ownership by attaching his seal to his possessions. That is what God does with us when he gives us his Holy Spirit.

(a) When does this occur in the Christian life?



Seal of King Hezekiah

(b) What sort of a mark is this seal?

In the ancient world it was customary to make a deposit on the purchase of a possession, a down-payment, showing that there was more of the same to come.

(c) What is the deposit?

(d) What is to come?

(e) What are we guaranteed?

(f) What is the connection between a guarantee, being “in Christ” and being chosen by God (Eph 1:4-5, 11)?

To finish

4. Considering what we have learnt in this study about seals, deposits, guarantees and being “in Christ”

(a) can we lose our salvation? Why/why not?

(b) can you find any Bible verses that suggest we can lose our salvation?

(c) If so, what is your conclusion?

Study 12, Grieving & Fullness**Getting started**

1. (a) What does it mean to find yourself in Christ?



- (b) What did you find?

2. What do you think it means to be filled with the Spirit?

Bible

3. Read Eph 4:17-5:21. (For context see previous study.)
(a) Write down the broad ideas that Paul associates with the old self and the new self (4:22-24).

old self

new self

- (b) What has the old/new self have to do with identity?

- (c) What does grieving the Holy Spirit mean (4:30)?

(d) What has grieving the Holy Spirit got to do with identity (old self/new self)?

4. "Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph 5:18) is grammatically:
- present continuous tense i.e. not a one time action (like baptism in the Spirit) but ongoing in the Christian life.
 - passive voice i.e. not something we do but something we must let God do to us.
 - plural i.e. referring to the church not individuals alone.

From The Holy Spirit a Bible study booklet by Stephen Gibson.

- (a) How does this help you understand what it means to be filled with the Spirit
(see also Acts 6:1-10, Eph 3:19)?

(b) Why does Paul make the comparison with being drunk (Eph 5:18)?

- (c) In Eph 5:19-21 Paul gives examples of what it means to be filled with the Spirit.
Compare these examples with your answer to question 2.

5. To understand another aspect of what it means to be filled with the Spirit we are going to look at Romans chapter 8. First we must understand what is meant by the words "sinful nature" in the New International Version or "flesh" in a lot of other versions. The Greek word in the text, "sarx", means "flesh" but the editors of the NIV have decided to interpret the word as "sinful nature".

In past versions of the Bible you will find that the King James Version used the word "flesh", the Revised Version (RV) used the word "flesh", the Revised Standard Version used the word "flesh", then came the NIV and it used the words "sinful nature". Next came the English Standard Version (ESV) which was supposed to replace the NIV but it didn't. The ESV went back to using the word "flesh". The New American Standard Bible (NASB) also uses the word "flesh".

Why is this such a big deal? Because it radically changes the meaning of the passage. In this study we will use the word "flesh" by reading from and working with the ESV for Rom 8:1-17.

Romans ch 8, context: Paul explains the gospel in the first 7 chapters. In chs 5-8 he writes about freedom from the wrath of God, freedom from the power of sin, freedom from the law and freedom from death. Paul begins to write about the Holy Spirit in chapter 8 and how he helps us live in between being saved and finally being glorified.

Read Rom 8:1-17. (ESV below.)

1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For the mind that is set on the

flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, he who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit who dwells in you.

12 So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.

(a) The 2 ideas of flesh and Spirit are compared and contrasted in this passage. Under the 2 headings below write the things that are associated with the flesh and the things that are associated with the Spirit

Flesh

Spirit

(b) Compare these lists with what you wrote under "old self" and "new self" in question 2. What do you conclude about "old self" and "flesh", and "new self" and "Spirit"?

(c) In Rom 5:12-21 Paul compares what it means to be "in Adam" with what it means to be "in Christ".

in Adam

in Christ

sin, death, death reigns (vv 12-14, 17)
the trespass (v 15, 17, 18)

>

gift of righteousness (vv 15-17, 18)
God's grace (vv 15, 17)

judgement and condemnation (v 16, 18)

>

justification (v 16, 18)
life reigns (v 17)

disobedience/sinners (v 19)

>

obedience/righteousness (v 19)

law/sin increased (v 20)

>

grace increased (v 20)

sin reigns in death (v 21)

>

grace reigns, eternal life (v 21)

How do the "in Adam" and "in Christ" lists relate to the other lists?

The Christian discovers a new identity, picking up Israel's vocation in the Old Testament: **adoption**. When the Holy Spirit comes to dwell in a person's heart, the first sign is that they recognize God as father; this I think, is part of what Paul meant in [Romans] 5:5 when he spoke of a love for God being poured out in our hearts by the holy spirit. The cry '**Abba, father**' [Rom 8:15] uses the old Aramaic word which Jesus himself had used for God (Mark 14:36). Paul refers to the same cry in Galatians 4:5-6, where again there are powerful echoes of the Exodus story. This time he interprets what is going on in terms of the coming together of the holy spirit with our own spirit.

From Paul for Everyone Romans Part 1: Chapters 1-8 by Tom Wright p 146.

6. All the things under "new self", "Spirit" and "in Christ" are experienced in the ordinariness of living for Jesus. To have and follow the Spirit is not a "higher order" Christian life but of its essence. What then does being filled with the Spirit mean?

To finish

7. How would you answer the question, how is your relationship going with God?

Study 13, Gal 5, Fruit

Getting started

1. What do people usually mean when they say they have been 'led by the Spirit' or 'led by God' or that they 'felt led'?
2. What is the difference between a strong personal desire and God's leading?
3. How do you know you are being led by God when doing a particular activity?



Bible

4. As in the previous study we will use the ESV to avoid the NIV's interpretation of the word sarx/flesh.

Read Gal 5:13-26 (below). Context: Galatians gives details about the problem of some Jewish Christians (the circumcision group) saying that faith in Jesus is not enough. You've got to keep the Jewish law as well, they say. Paul strongly argues against this and says that the law was to *lead us* to Jesus (Gal 3:24) and now we are no longer under the supervision of the law (Gal 3:25). In fact, Paul says, if you go back to the law you are going back to the slavery to all its rules and regulations (Gal ch 4), none of which will get you saved. Instead of being burdened by the law we have freedom in Christ (Gal ch 5).

13 For you were called to freedom, brothers. Only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

14 For the whole law is fulfilled in one word: "You shall love your neighbour as yourself."

15 But if you bite and devour one another, watch out that you are not consumed by one another.

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh.

17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law.

19 Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, 21 envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

23 gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

24 And those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires.

25 If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit.

26 Let us not become conceited, provoking one another, envying one another.

Like in the previous study we will compare the 2 ideas of flesh and Spirit. Under the 2 headings below write the things in Gal 5:13-26 (above) that are associated with the flesh and the things that are associated with the Spirit.

Flesh

Spirit

5. (a) What does it mean to be “not under law” (v 18)?

(b) How is being led by the Spirit different from living under the law?

(c) What has all this got to do with freedom (v 24)?

6. (a) What does it mean when it says that there is no law against the fruits of the Spirit (v 23)?

(b) Why is fruit a good description of the Spirit’s work in us?



In Gal 5 Paul makes clear that a ‘life’ centred on flesh/sin/law perpetuates a hideous and horrendous distortion of relationship as the fruit of autonomy. It is a ‘living death’. He then shows how a ‘LIFE’ centred on Spirit/righteousness/grace yields the fruit of truth, beauty and goodness (read: wholeness, flourishing, not morality) in relationship: “against which there is no law”, i.e. a ‘LIFE’ that is beyond the categories and reach of law, performance and judgement.

From an essay “On Jesus as attuned to life, not good and evil” by Mark Strom, May 2010.

7. (a) Before love, joy and peace (Gal 5:22) can be exhibited they must be received. How are love, joy and peace given to us by the Spirit (read Rom 5:1-5)?

(b) Romans 5:8 speaks of God’s love *for* us.

(i) How is this different to the love described in Rom 5:5?

(ii) Why is it important to have both kinds of love?

8. If patience means to bear the rudeness and unkindness of others without retaliation; and kindness means to go beyond simple tolerance of others to desiring the best for them; and goodness means to put kindness into practice and take the initiative to serve others, it is not difficult to see patience – kindness – goodness as three ascending steps in our changing attitude to others.

From The Holy Spirit a Bible study booklet by Stephen Gibson.

How do Matt 5:43-48, 1 Pet 2:21-24, 4:19 encourage us in our use of the fruit of the Spirit?

9. God is faithful (see 1 Cor 10:13, 1 John 1:9).
(a) What does it mean for God?

(b) What does it mean for us?

10. Read Phil 2:1-11.
Context: Philippians was written while Paul was in prison. He wanted to encourage and advise the church, tell them his news, thank them for their gift and explain why he was sending Epaphroditus back. The first chapter is very personal as he greets them, prays for them and tells them about his situation and aspirations.

What is the connection in this passage between the fruit of the Spirit and Jesus?

To finish

11. Think of applications of the fruit of the Spirit to the areas of our Work

Relationships

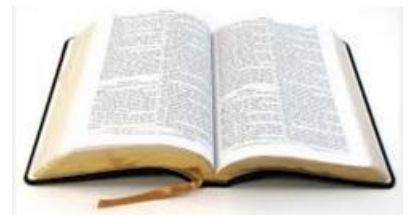
Family

Church

Study 14, Bible

Getting started

1. How important is the Bible to your life?
 - (a) Only relevant on Sundays.
 - (b) Relevant sometimes.
 - (c) Relevant all the time.
 - (d) Relevant all the time and I only do things that are permitted in the Bible.
 - (e) Relevant according to the context and my own wisdom.
 - (f) Dependent on how the Spirit guides me.
 - (g) Other, please specify. . . .



Bible

2. Read 1 Pet 1:10-12 and 2 Pet 1:19-21. Context: Written at about 63 AD Peter is facing death and writes letters of encouragement and assurance because the church is facing persecution.
 - (a) From these passages and otherwise what use is the Old Testament?
 - (b) What role did the Holy Spirit play in Old Testament prophecy?
 - (c) What about the prophet's own feelings, context and biases . . .
 - (i) how should we take them into account when we read the prophet's book?
 - (ii) do they make the message from God any less pure? Why/why not?
 - (d) When we read the Old Testament what things should we keep in mind?
3. Read 2 Tim 3:15-17. Context: Paul is facing death but he encourages Timothy to remain strong in Jesus, gives advice on his role in the church and warns him to beware of evil people and persecution. Paul tells Timothy to rely on what he has learnt from the Scriptures.
 - (a) In what ways does Scripture hit us?

(b) What role does the Spirit play?

(c) What does Scripture equip us for?

(d) How would someone get saved from reading the Old Testament (see v 15 and Luke 24:44-47)?

(e) What is the connection between the Spirit/God's breath (in 2 Tim 3:16 for example), God's Word and Jesus (John 1:1-14)?

4. Read 1 Cor 2:6-16. Context: Paul wrote 1 Corinthians to answer a number of problems and issues that the church was struggling with i.e. divisions within their group, wisdom and foolishness, sexual immorality, lawsuits among believers, marriage and singleness, food sacrificed to idols, Paul's apostleship, idolatry, headship, eating meals together, spiritual gifts and the resurrection. Before 2:6 Paul has been advising on the problem of divisions in the church and then compares the wisdom of man with the wisdom of God.

(a) What is it that God has revealed by his Spirit (v 10)?

(b) What are the spiritual truths mentioned in v 13?

(c) How do we learn these spiritual truths?

(d) In what sense do we have the mind of Christ (v 16)?

5. Read 1 Cor 4:6. Context: After ch 2 Paul talks about the importance of building well on God's foundation so that Christians will follow God and not a particular leader or make judgements on particular leaders. What matters is that leaders like Paul and Apollos have built on God's foundation and God's will be the judge.

(a) What are the warnings in this verse?

(b) What if someone says they have a word from God for you.
Is this wrong because it is going beyond what is written? Why/why not?

(c) When and why can we use other resources besides the Bible?

6. Read Col 3:15-16. Context: Paul writes about the importance of Jesus and warns against false teachers. Paul tells the Colossians to put away their old selves and put on their new lives/their new identity.

(a) How do we "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly" (v 16)?

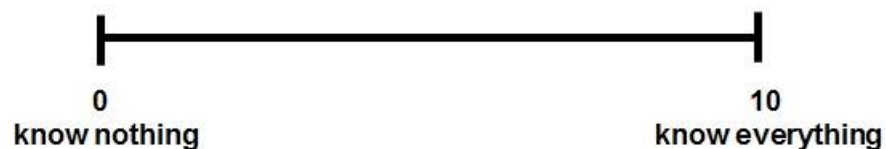
(b) What does the Spirit do to make this happen?

To finish

7. What do you say to someone if, in the course of a discussion, they tell you your faith is all head knowledge but "I know I am right because the Spirit has told me"?

8. These last 2 questions are the same as the first 2 questions in study 1. It might be interesting to compare your answers.

On a scale of 0 to 10 how much do you feel you know about the Holy Spirit?
(0 = know nothing, 10 = know everything).



9. Do you now find the topic of the Holy Spirit - confusing?

- to be avoided?
- unimportant?
- encouraging?
- only for charismatics?
- controversial?
- other comments?

(tick as many or as few as you like)

10. Have any of your questions (from question 1(b) of study 1) about the Holy Spirit been answered?

Appendix: Prophecy from “1 and 2 Peter on Prophecy” by Tony Payne *The Briefing* # 170/171 5/12/1995

For some years, the charismatic movement has been challenging evangelicals about the supposed absence of prophecy in our midst. More recently, attention has been focused on prophecy in 1 Corinthians 11-14 in the debate about women and preaching. Up till now, most evangelicals have tended either to identify prophecy very closely with ‘preaching’, or else have argued that prophecy has ceased since New Testament times (the ‘cessationist’ position). Neither of these positions seems completely convincing, yet what should we think about it? Should we be seeing more prophecy in our churches? Or do we in fact see plenty of prophecy but no longer call it that?

In trying to chart a course through these confusing waters, I could think of no two better people to chat to than Peter Jensen and Peter O’Brien. They share more than a first name. As Principal and Vice-Principal of the Moore College community, they live side by side on Carillon Ave in Newtown, labouring together in training a new generation of Christian leaders. They share an incisive mind, a gentle humour, and a deep love and understanding of the Scriptures, nurtured over many years. And they have both been doing some thinking about the nature and function of prophecy.

Tony: What is ‘prophecy’?

Peter O’B: We need to recognize at the outset that the terms for ‘prophecy’, both within and outside the New Testament, cover a wide range of speaking activities. At Pentecost (Acts 2), for example, the apostle Peter understands *speaking in tongues* to be the fulfilment of what Joel says regarding prophecy: “your sons and your daughters will prophesy” (v. 17). In other words, prophecy is an expression that can embrace tongue-speaking. Furthermore, while a large number of people are said to prophesy in Acts 2, the designation ‘prophets’ or ‘prophetesses’ is also applied to specific people; some, but not others, may be styled in this way. The prophecy language, then, is rather varied in its use and application.

Peter J: I think it’s good to start with the wider issue of ‘prophecy’ in general. In the ancient world, and indeed until quite recently, the phenomenon of prophecy was very widespread. You could refer to someone who appeared to be under the inspiration of the gods as a ‘prophet’. Poets, for example, were commonly deemed to be prophets. They were thought to be filled with some sort of spiritual power which enabled them to prophesy. My guess is that the connecting thought is *inspiration*. You need to be careful, then, lest you too readily count something out and say “Well, that’s not prophecy”. It’s a very inclusive term for all sorts of communications from the spirit world via human experience. We shouldn’t think that it has to come in a particular way or a particular style. I think it is a mistake to insist that prophecy must be related to ecstasy, for example, or the loss of control by the prophet - that there is some mechanism of prophecy that defines prophecy. What we *can* say is that prophecy is a message from the gods using human instruments - that’s a broad definition, but it’s probably as good as we can get.

Peter O’B: It is interesting that in 1 Corinthians 14, the key thing about prophecy is that it comes by revelation (v.30), which is similar to what you’ve said. The point here is not to stress the manner in which the revelation comes, but its source, namely, that it is from God.

Peter J: And hence, if you’re talking about Bible prophecy, I think you can see in the Old Testament things referred to as ‘prophecy’ that we would not tend to put in that category. The Books of Kings, for example, are called prophecy, even though they clearly use sources and are put together by artifice, with human, literary effort. In the writing prophets, you’ll see one of them using or quoting another prophet. It’s not the mechanism - as if prophecy must come by ecstasy or some other strange design - it’s the source, namely divine inspiration. And this may come through study, research and the putting together of sources.

Peter O’B: We’ve talked about the general nature of prophecy, and the broad semantic range of the terms, but when we come to the New Testament itself, we don’t find a definition of prophecy. Even 1 Corinthians 14:3, which speaks about prophecy leading to strengthening, encouragement and comfort, is not informing us as to what prophecy is, only what it does. Prophecy can have these benefits in common with the reading of Scripture, prayer and teaching. 1 Corinthians 14 gives us a functional view of prophecy in action, but it doesn’t actually define it for us.

Tony: What about Revelation 19:10 where “the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus”?

Peter O’B: The Book of Revelation, as a whole, is regarded as ‘prophecy’ (1:3). This is to be understood like the written prophecies of the Old Testament - Isaiah, Jeremiah and others - which are the authoritative word of God.

Tony: So what we're saying is that there is very little in the New Testament about the manner of prophecy, but that the broad picture is of an inspired utterance or writing, with a divine origin. The source is the main factor, rather than the manner.

Peter O'B: If the 'prophecy' terminology can cover a wide-range of speech activities, then the content of prophecy may be quite varied. A brief survey of some New Testament references bears this out. For example, Agabus can prophesy about a famine (Acts 11:28), or what will happen to Paul when he goes up to Jerusalem (Acts 21:10-11), while Acts 13:2 may refer to a prophetic utterance by which Barnabas and Saul are set apart for the work to which the Holy Spirit has called them. These are quite specific matters which lend considerable credence to the view that prophecy is 'the application of biblical truths, arising out of the gospel, to particular, often personal, situations'. In Acts 2, those who prophesy are declaring the wonderful works of God (v. 11), bound up with the death and resurrection of his Son. Although this has led some to equate prophecy with 'the proclamation of the gospel' or simply 'preaching', there are many other New Testament references that don't quite fit this definition. I am not suggesting that prophecy is unrelated to the gospel. But on a spectrum moving from the authoritative, written word of God (in other words, Scripture itself) right through to the application to a person's heart, whether believer or not, prophecy seems to be at the latter end. Interestingly, the references to prophecy in 1 Corinthians 14 give no hint or suggestion of prediction of future events. Prophecy is a gift that depends on revelation (v. 30) and has to do with speaking pointedly to people's needs, but it is not elevated to the level of Scripture, for Paul expects it to be checked out and tested. Prophecy stands under the authority of the apostolic word: "If anybody thinks he is a prophet or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord's command" (1 Cor. 14:37). So apart from the Book of Revelation, prophecy in Acts and 1 Corinthians 14, at least, does not seem to have the authority or clout of Old Testament canonical prophecy. In the New Testament the gift seems to be considerably tamed; it is much more low key. It is not an infallible gift (there is no record of prophets in the New Testament saying, 'Thus says the Lord'), nor does it threaten the canon, but stands under Scripture and is tested by it.

Peter J: All this is a reminder to us that 'prophecy' is a very big word, and even within the New Testament may be used in different ways in different places. Even though you can't define prophecy too precisely, you can ask how it differs from other speech, most notably teaching.

Peter O'B: In Paul's letters there is a distinction between prophecy and teaching. The apostle urges the Corinthians eagerly to desire spiritual gifts, especially that of prophecy (1 Cor. 14:1). This is doubtless because of its great value in edifying and encouraging people, by addressing the particular needs of the moment. We might say in relation to this gift, the more the merrier! Potentially, then, many believers might aspire to this spiritual charisma. But Paul recognizes, in actuality, that not all will be prophets (1 Cor. 12:29). Obviously in this context, the gift was not tied to any leadership role. For Paul to desire that all the Corinthians might have the gift of prophecy and thus be leaders would be ludicrous, given the problems at Corinth and the members' inability to submit to the leaders they already had!

Teaching, on the other hand, is the authoritative exposition and application of Scripture (cf. Acts 15:35; 18:11, 25; Rom. 2:20, 21; Col. 3:16; Heb. 5:12). This includes the gospel, and an explanation or reiteration of apostolic injunctions (1 Cor. 4:17; Rom. 16:17; 2 Thess. 2:15; 2 Tim 2:2; 3:10). In the Pastoral Epistles, teaching is an authoritative function which has to do with the faithful transmission of apostolic doctrine, committed to men specially chosen (e.g. 2 Tim. 1:13-14; 2:1-2; 1 Tim. 3:2; 5:17; Tit. 1:9).

Peter J: So teaching and prophecy are both on a spectrum of word gifts, but if you are going to distinguish between them you might say that prophecy has the two characteristics of:
1) relying on revelation in a way that teaching does not quite (there is a different relationship to revelation); and
2) having a different emphasis, falling on the situation in front of you, and the application of the word of God to that situation (whereas the emphasis in teaching falls on the structured deliverances of the Christian worldview). As we might say it today, prophecy is particularly concerned with the 'application' of God's word. I wonder if someone can decide to be a prophet?

Peter O'B: As we have already said, they are certainly encouraged to seek the gift of prophecy (1 Cor. 14:1). While certain believers were recognized as apostles, teachers, evangelists, or prophets, there does seem to be a subjective element to the gift of prophecy. Paul states, 'If anyone *thinks* he is a prophet . . .' (1 Cor. 14:37). It may not have *necessarily* been an ongoing or continuous gift.

Peter J: You can train a teacher, but you can't train a prophet. Prophecy is more spontaneous and irregular, I would think.

Tony: Where on that spectrum would the intriguing references in Ephesians 2 and 3 fit, which talk about the "apostles and prophets" as the foundation of God's household, and as the means by which the "mystery" is revealed? This seems more like an office or a set role.

Peter O'B: The references to 'prophets' in Ephesians 2:20, where 'God's household is built on the foundation of apostles and prophets', and 3:5, which speaks of the mystery having 'now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets', are unusual, and seem to be different from other instances where prophets and prophecy are mentioned in Paul's letters, especially 1 Corinthians 12-14. This group of prophets, along with the apostles, had a foundational role in the church. Because of the word order, 'apostles and prophets', it is unlikely that Old Testament prophets are in view. Wayne Grudem thinks that the expression refers to the one group of people, namely, 'apostles who are prophets', and who therefore prophesy (note the pastors-teachers of 4:11). While this is syntactically possible, it is unlikely, for later in this letter, namely, Ephesians 4:11, Paul clearly distinguishes apostles from prophets. Ephesians 2:20 and 3:5 apparently refers to a particular group of prophets who, together with the apostles, were the first authoritative recipients and proclaimers of God's mystery in Christ.

Cessationists, like B. B. Warfield and his successors, on the basis of these two references to prophecy in Ephesians, claim that since the foundation of the church has been laid, the gifts of authentic prophecy and apostleship have ceased. Nothing more is needed, it is argued, except the faithful transmission and teaching of apostolic doctrine through the Scriptures. But this does not satisfactorily account for 1 Corinthians 14, where the gift of prophecy has nothing to do with laying the church's foundation, or having an authority equal to that of an apostle or Scripture itself. Further, although 'apostleship' (in the narrow sense) is specifically tied to those who saw the risen Lord Jesus, and thus ceased with the deaths of those commissioned by him, no such limitation is found in the New Testament in relation to prophets.

Peter J: Part of the concern is that if something comes from a 'revelation of God', then this gives it immense authority - and hence the desire to say that prophecy has ceased. I'm sympathetic to that view. Just as there is a sense in which miracles have ceased, so prophecy at one level has ceased. But we should notice that in the NT there are 'revelations' and 'revelations'. There is a 'revelation' that is given once for all, but there is another sense in which the Lord 'reveals' things to individual Christians, as in Philippians 3:15 - "Let those of us who are mature be thus minded; and if in anything you are otherwise minded, God will reveal that also to you". In our normal Christian experience we may speak of the Lord revealing this or that to us, and as long as our 'prophetic' word is not taken to have any more authority than this, then I think we may speak of prophecy today. It must not be given authority in any way comparable with Scripture. And it must come under the Scripture and be able to be tested by all around. In fact, I would say that we have never lost it. It's always been a part of Christian experience, even if we have not labelled it 'prophecy'.

Peter O'B: You make an important point about 'revelation'. The language of revelation in the New Testament covers a wider semantic range than it does in classical theology. In the latter, revelation normally has to do with the salvation events and their inscripturation. 'Illumination' is the term which describes the understanding or further application of the 'revelation' to Christians.

However, the 'revelation' word-group (e.g. apokalypso, etc.) in the New Testament covers both areas. Paul, for example, can pray that the Spirit of wisdom and 'revelation' might be given to the Ephesians so that they will know God better, and this will involve their apprehending more fully his marvellous saving plan (Eph. 1:17-18), that purpose which has already been outlined in vv. 3-14. In other words, Paul is petitioning God for a greater 'illumination' for the Ephesian Christians (cf. Phil. 3:15). There is no suggestion that they will receive a 'fresh revelation' which adds to or goes beyond the apostolic word.

Peter J: Hence too, in my opinion, the 'fullness of the Spirit' language, which is connected with utterance. In Acts we find expressions like, "he was filled with the Spirit and spoke . . .". Now this doesn't mean that he spoke with the authority of Isaiah, but that his words had wings on them, that they were inspired at some lesser level. When the Apostle says in Ephesians 5 that we are to "be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another etc.", he doesn't mean that our words have the same authority and inspiration as Scripture. He means that we are speaking from within Christian experience, with the illuminating power of the Spirit, and our words will have wings on them.

This may throw light on what prophecy is. Since you can have a form of inspiration which is less than classic Scriptural 'inspiration', so you can have a form of prophecy which does not carry all the weight of the Old Testament 'Thus says the LORD'. You wouldn't apply the word 'infallible' to the product of congregational Christian speech.

Peter O'B: John's prophecy, which is the Book of the Revelation, is canonical Scripture and thus infallible. But the prophecies of the Corinthians (1 Cor. 14), though containing helpful guidance and application, did not have the same status. They needed to be tested by the apostolic word.

Tony: In the same way as we would all 'teach' one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, even though not all of us belong to the smaller more authoritative group of 'teachers'.

Peter J: You see where all this is heading, in terms of the debate about women's ministry. We're really saying that 1 Corinthians 11 doesn't bear the weight some people place upon it. To be specific, it does not refer to the teaching ministry. Because the activity referred to there is something that you may well expect all sorts of Christians to be doing, I have never hesitated to think that men *and* women will do it. But it's not the same thing as the 'teaching' referred to elsewhere. That has a function and an office which is much different.

Tony: Summarizing, then, you would say that there are some activities to which the word 'prophecy' is applied which *have* ceased since the 1st century - the 'prophecy' of the Apostle John being one example; the foundational work of the 'prophets' in Ephesians being another. And you would see prophecy today in the more informal, spontaneous, open-to-many edification of one another in the application of the Word.

Peter J: Where it's always been, in other words.

Peter O'B: Prophecy in the sense of insight and application, about which we have been speaking, has probably always been with us. It is rather like the 'apt word' of Proverbs, although now being more closely tied to gospel issues. Let me illustrate. A preacher is in full flight with his sermon, when an illustration or application comes to mind which he has not written in his notes. He mentions it in the sermon, since it naturally follows on from what he has been preaching. A week later a member of his congregation says to him, "What you said about such and such in your sermon last Sunday was so helpful. It spoke specifically and directly to me."

Likewise, two Christians are talking together, and one who has thought about the other's needs makes a spontaneous comment. Some days later, the friend says, "You really helped me unscramble those issues by that remark you made". I think these two edifying comments are prophecy. Neither is an isolated thing, as if one would say, "Now I will prophesy".

Tony: In terms of our gatherings, how would you respond to the suggestion that in our current church structures, much of what is 'prophecy' takes place over morning tea and in small prayer and Bible groups? It doesn't happen so much in our large public gatherings because of the nature of the gathering. Is that a good way for it to be?

Peter J: Yes and yes. Much does go on in small groups, and I am happy with that. The problem arises from a boundary view of church, in which what happens between 9:30am and 10:30am on Sunday morning *is* 'church'. But church doesn't stop there. It's relational and takes different forms. Now what we do between 9:30 and 10:30 is a perfectly valid expression of 'church' suitable for certain purposes - very useful indeed for making sure we hit certain high points and big subjects. But to view that as 'only church' has always been a terrible error, and to insist that everything to do with Christian relationships must occur in that time is likewise an error. I have no objection to all sorts of things being missed out on Sunday morning, because I don't think it is intended to have everything in it. And so if you say, "Why don't we have the gift of healing, or this gift or that gift exercised in 'church'" - by which you mean Sunday morning - I will reply, "For good reason, because our public meetings are very appropriately and tightly structured for gospel purposes".

Peter O'B: Would it be possible and helpful in a smaller congregation to encourage people to respond to the teaching of God's word during the actual meeting? One of our difficulties is that when we have coffee after church the thrust of the message is often lost, and we talk about everything *but* God's word to us. We can certainly encourage Christians to use our informal times better. But is there a place, following your earlier suggestion, Tony, for some more flexibility in our gatherings? We could encourage individuals to say something about how the word of God had spoken to them, or to mention an application that others might find useful. If this were carefully done, it could lead to 'strengthening, encouragement and comfort' (1 Cor. 14:3).

Peter J: Far better not to call it 'prophecy', in actual fact, because the name doesn't mean very much. It's not the name that matters but the function - to strengthen, encourage and comfort, as 1 Corinthians 14:3 puts it. That's what we need more of in our Christian relationships.