

THE HOLY SPIRIT OR A SILLY SPIRIT?

Opening Questions:

- Does Joshua of Nazareth provide clear teachings about the role and function of the Holy Spirit?
- Why is there so much strange behavior attributed to the “holy spirit”?
- Does the turning away from reason to emotionalism play into the popularity of “holy spirit” religious movements?
- Without some objective standard to understand the Holy Spirit, would that not leave the door wide open to all kinds of claims about the Holy Spirit?
- Does the Holy Spirit somehow communicate new or unique God knowledge to individuals?

The Holy Spirit is referred to by the vast majority of Christian/Biblian people claiming to have revelations from God. From famous Christian leaders who have millions of people listening to them to the individual who has few people listening to her, to say “the Holy Spirit revealed this to me” is one of the most popular validation claims used to get people to believe that they are getting special communications from God. But is the claim, “the Holy Spirit showed me” a true claim? How can we know? Fortunately, Joshua of Nazareth does give us some guidelines to judge people's claims regarding things they supposedly received from God or the Holy Spirit. Let us take a look at the Son's Words in this respect.

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that ***I said to you.*** (John 14:26)

This teaching says that the role of the Holy Spirit will be to be the enabling teacher of the disciple, enabling them to receive the *teachings of* Joshua, "all that I said to you." This would have a vital function for the first disciples as they remembered Joshua's Words and wrote them down. It would also have application to later disciples as we hear Joshua's Words (that which was written down in the four gospels) and need to remember them. In the context of this chapter, please note that the Holy Spirit will bring Joshua's words and teachings to the followers of Joshua, and *no other* person's words.

I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. (John 14:16-17)

Here Joshua calls the Spirit, the "Spirit of truth." Thus, anything attributed to the Spirit would be true, and thus would not contradict what Joshua says in the four gospels (nor would it contradict itself). Therefore, if any person says, "well, the spirit revealed this to me" and it runs contrary to what Joshua teaches, or the message contains contradictory statements, or the message can be validated as false by observation; then it is false and not from God.

I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me. (John 14:6)

When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify *about me*. (John 15:26)

Joshua again calls the Spirit, "the Spirit of truth" and says that the Spirit will "testify about ME" - which makes perfect sense since Joshua called himself "the Truth." *Please note that the Spirit will not testify about any other person other than Joshua.* So, for all those people looking for some "testimony from the Spirit" about some person, they will be waiting a long time since the Spirit will only "testify about (Joshua)."

But I tell you the truth, it is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I go, I will send Him to you. And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment; concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; and concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see me; and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify me, for He will take of mine and will disclose it to you. All things that the Father has are mine; therefore I said that He takes of mine and will disclose it to you. (John 16:7-15)

Joshua provides more of the role of the Holy Spirit here in this passage. He says the Spirit will do one primary thing regarding people who do not believe the real Joshua (the world). He will "convict the world," meaning he will use

men's conscience to show men that they are guilty regarding:

"Sin, because they do not believe in me" - the one sin that people condemn themselves with is of hearing of Joshua of Nazareth and his truths, and not submitting to him for who he says he is, or stated another way, of rejecting him;

"Righteousness, because I go to the Father and you no longer see me." While Joshua was on the earth, he was the perfect example of righteousness - the perfect Man without sin - in truth, the Light of the world; but since he left to go back to the Father, the Father now chooses to use His Spirit (perhaps through disciples of Joshua) to show men their unrighteousness, and thus what true righteousness really is;

"Judgment, because the ruler of the world has been judged" - the one who rules the world has been judged as wanting, guilty, self-doomed. Joshua teaches that men have two choices concerning whom they will listen to for ordering their lives -either himself or the prince of the world. The King says that he defeated the ruler of the world, and so now each person must decide who they will submit to, either the King (of the Kingdom of Heaven) or the prince (of the world). Sadly, the people (the world) submit to the prince for the truth is that as long as a person submits to anyone but the King, they are in some measure submitting to the prince.

This role of the Holy Spirit is very clear and yet most "Holy Spirit" oriented Christian sect members (like the Pentecostals) are ignorant of those teachings or just pass them over.

The latter part of the passage quoted above starting with, "I have many more things to say to you", is a more difficult saying which does appear to open the door to new communications from God. Let us look carefully at what he says.

As always, context is the most critical factor in understanding the Master's teachings. Please pay particular attention to the first sentence in that latter paragraph, which says, "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now." Joshua knew that his first followers at that time could not bear some of the truths he would like to have told them, and so he graciously decided to reveal those things to them later. In this author's opinion, that "later" was after his resurrection during the forty days he came to them after his resurrection and before his ascension.
Joshua says in the previous chapter:

No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you. (John 15:15)

First, the "all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you" statement would contradict the contention that John 16:12-15 says that we now need additional or new information (perhaps his sent ones (apostles) words as well) because Joshua failed to make all things known to them. Second, the context of this statement is Joshua teachings and commandments and how they need to keep his commandments and teachings. Thus, it would mean that the "all things" that Joshua heard from his Father was all the important teachings of the kingdom of God as given by the King - all the commands and teachings that his followers need to keep in order to fulfill the "if you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love" teaching in verse 10. There is no temporal context in John 15 about the future - instead, the setting is pure relationship with the King and the King's Father.

Even about end time events, Joshua says, "Behold, I have told you in advance." (Matthew 24:25); and so Joshua's Words in Matt. 24-25 contains all this author needs to know about end time events.

Then, in John 16, Joshua turns to specific future events they will personally experience. And in verses 5-6, Joshua says something that fills their hearts with sorrow - he tells them he is going to leave them. They can't understand that, and it leaves them sorrowing.

But because I have said these things to you, sorrow has filled your heart.
(John 16:6)

Then in verses 7-11, Joshua tells them why it is to their advantage that he goes, and he explains the role of the Spirit's work.

Then, he returns to the same train of thought he left off at in verse 6, when he says, "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now." Remember, their hearts were sorrowing at that point, so what more could they receive about what was about to happen? They already were not accepting that Messiah had to physically die and go back to the Father somehow, so how could they understand anything else about that event or the teachings of the kingdom of God? All they could do at that point was to sorrow and reject the concept of the Messiah dying, leaving them alone on the earth and not restoring the kingdom to Israel.

Even after his resurrection, they were asking, "Lord, is it at this time you are restoring the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6) Even after his resurrection, they were not receiving Joshua's teachings (which he had given them entirely as he said in John 15:15) on how the kingdom of God was going to manifest itself on the earth for a time before his second return. Their religious baggage was in the way, just as for billions today, our religious baggage can interfere or prevent our receiving the truths of the Truth.

However, the Spirit was about to come and start his role of "guiding them into all the truth" that *Joshua had already spoken to them*.

Yes, the Spirit can tell us what is to come for our individual lives if we are willing to hear him. Joshua already gave them the picture of what was going to

happen in John 16:2, and the Spirit can help us know what lies ahead of the fork in our road as we walk after the Master. But the Spirit's primary role from their perspective would be to bring to their remembrance all that the King had already spoken to them, for they had not received much of what he said - it bounced off their hearts!

But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come. He will glorify me, for He will take *of mine* and will disclose it to you. (John 16:12-14)

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that *I said to you*. (John 14:26)

If you say that "He will disclose to you what is to come" means some important end-time truths that Joshua wanted us to know, then you again have a contradiction when Joshua says, "Behold, I have told you in advance." (Matthew 24:25) Thus, it appears the best understanding of the "He will disclose to you what is to come" saying is that it addressed the personal realm of each disciple's experiences. In other words, the Spirit can show us what is to come regarding an experience we are going to go through.

For example, Joshua elsewhere says, "*When they bring you before the synagogues and the rulers and the authorities, do not worry about how or what you are to speak in your defense, or what you are to say; for the Holy Spirit will teach you in that very hour what you ought to say.*" (Luke 12:11-12) Here Joshua says that the Holy Spirit will lead the disciples in what they ought to speak at the moment they need it most. Thus, the Holy Spirit will assist them in the future when they are in a situation of duress and possible persecution. Similarly, the Spirit can work to disclose to the disciple what lies ahead on their journey following the Light.

Please note dear reader (especially if you are a person exposed to Pentecostal Bible religion) that Joshua nowhere says that the Spirit will cause people to do most of the things that Paul attributes to "the Spirit" in his letters, especially his letters to the Corinthians. Joshua tells us much about the Holy Spirit and his role in the disciples' life, and yet the Master never even comes close to attributing to the Holy Spirit all the "manifestations" that Paul says the Spirit will cause. Please seriously ponder this dear reader. One of the most fundamental mistakes people make is listening to Paul rather than to Joshua. See *Appendix 11, The Stranger Paul*.

Besides, the Master never says that his Father will communicate to people through dreams. If that were going to be a mode of communication that God would use with His children, then surely His Son would have mentioned it in his many dozens of teachings regarding God's communications with His children. The Father does give explicit instruction on how to hear from Him, but few are listening:

While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen *to him!* (Matthew 17:5)

For those not wanting to "listen to him," telling people about their dreams and revelations from "God" is a way to draw attention to you and make yourself seem more important to God than those not getting dreams and revelations.

Next, we will conclude the theme of finding God's will with the most important fact to take away from the whole "finding God's will" thing.

Chapter Summary:

- Joshua of Nazareth gives plain teachings about the role and function of the Holy Spirit, which lessons are almost universally ignored;
- The Holy Spirit does not override our will or directly cause behavior like many Christians claim based on Paul's teachings or some other religious leader's emotional manipulation;
- The Holy Spirit – who is the Father's Spirit – has two primary roles:
 - For those with no faith, to work with their conscience to bring conviction of sin/wrongness, righteousness, and judgment;
 - For those with faith, as our comforter and enabling teacher, bringing to our remembrance Joshua's Life-giving truths recorded in the four gospel books.
- The Creator, our Father, does not reveal himself or new information about Himself to "special individuals," rather, he revealed Himself to us through His Son – through Joshua's life, words and deeds recorded in the four gospel books. I suggest if you want to look to anyone else to know God, that whom you look to first defeat(ed) death to validate their claims;
- Holy Spirit religion will grow as it appeals to one's emotions instead of to truth. It also is an easy way to get people listening to *you* since all it takes is a clever manipulator who can play to people's emotional sentiments.