



THE THIRD GOD

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The Holy Spirit Before Pentecost?

YES, NO, & MAYBE

1. The people of the Old Testament did not have access to the Holy Spirit like those in the book of Acts and beyond.
2. Jesus was the first person to promise the Holy Spirit to the disciples.
3. The Holy Spirit helped to create the planet Earth.
4. The Holy Spirit did not interact with humanity until Pentecost.
5. In my lifetime, I've had accomplishments that most people don't know about, and would be surprised by if they were told.

DIG DEEPER

YOU DID WHAT?

- **READ Genesis 1:2.**

“² Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”

» The story of creation begins with the Spirit of God hovering over a dead and dark world. What parallels do you see with the work of God's Spirit at Pentecost?

- The name given to the Spirit is *ruach* (Hebrew) & *pneuma* (Greek), which both translate as, “breath, wind or spirit.” Why do you think God chose that name from the beginning?

- **READ Genesis 2:7.**

“⁷ Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.”

» It is quite interesting that, in the account of the creation of man, that God once again hovers (this time over the clay of man) and uses the term “breath” again to describe how He brought life to lifelessness. (see also: Num. 27:16; Job 27:3; Job 33:4)

- If the Holy Spirit was not involved with this activity, why do you think God would inspire that kind of verbal imagery?

NOTES

DIG DEEPER...continued:

THE HOLY SPIRIT IN ACTION:

» From the beginning of Genesis, the Spirit is moving. The Spirit's activity is inseparable from the work of God. It is an extension of God Himself. The Spirit communicates God's will and Word through the prophets. The Spirit equips craftsmen and artisans (such as Bezalel in Exodus 31:3; 35:30-35 and the skillful women who make priestly garments in 38:3). The Spirit brings wisdom for leadership (Numbers 11), equips for service (1 Samuel 16:13,14; Numbers 11:24-30), and brings good insight (Isaiah 11:1-5; 42:1-4). The Spirit even protects God's people through feats of strength and daring that can hardly be imagined.

The Spirit cannot be controlled or predicted. See how the wind dries the land and divides the sea (Genesis 8:1; Exodus 14:21). It comes with force and power. In Judges (3:10 and 11:29) the Spirit [literally] "clothed itself with Gideon" or "took possession" (RSV) of him. The Spirit grants Samson extraordinary strength (Judges 14:6) and overwhelms Saul (1 Samuel 10:5-11; 19:18-24). The Spirit is sovereign. Look at Balaam — the reluctant prophet who blesses God's people because the Spirit forbids him to curse them. See how the Spirit controls the last words of David in 2 Samuel 23:1,2.

FROM A FEW TO ALL PEOPLE?

• READ Joel 2:28,29.

²⁸ "And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. ²⁹ Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days."

» Why do you think God only made the Holy Spirit available to select people before the Pentecost of His arrival?

THE HOLY SPIRIT AT JESUS' BAPTISM:

• READ Matthew 3:16-4:1.

¹⁶ As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. ¹⁷ And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."

¹ Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

» What insights about His character and responsibilities did the Holy Spirit communicate by these activities?

- Holy Spirit descends.
- Assumes the form of a dove.
- Alights on Jesus.
- Leads Jesus into the wilderness to be tempted.

MY PRAYERS:

1. In what ways am I allowing the Holy Spirit to "breathe life" into the spiritually dead areas of my life?
2. How can I let the Holy Spirit lead me to where I need to go next?
3. What new thing does God need me to know about His character this week?