

## *The Holy Spirit in the Scriptures*

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This theme is not only too high and tremendous for anyone to attempt successfully in a short article. It is also extremely difficult to organize, in view of the wide variety of viewpoints within the Bible. The most objective method might have been to make no attempt at a general account, but simply to display the various conceptions of the Spirit of God in each successive writing. But, since this might be dull and inconclusive, another method is here adopted, namely, to take certain specially significant aspects of the subject and attempt to illuminate them from the Scriptures, particularly those of the New Testament.

### *Spirit and Creation*

It may come as a surprise that the words for 'spirit' are, in the Bible, rarely connected (as they are in many other religious vocabularies) with creation generally. In the Bible, 'spirit' sometimes means that which animates - the life in a living thing; more often, it is some manifestation of divine power in a human being; but very seldom does it stand for the activity of actual creation or for the divine element in the non-human world. Naturally one thinks of Genesis 1.2, where the evocative phrase 'the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters' (AV) conjures up a tender, brooding image of the Creator Spirit, especially when one knows that the same verb is rendered by 'flutter' in its only other Old Testament occurrence (in Deut. 32.11, referring to a bird). But what if 'the Spirit of God' really means 'a mighty wind' (as perhaps it may, in Hebrew idiom), and what if it 'swept over the surface of the waters',<sup>1</sup> as it does in the NEB version?<sup>2</sup> The key verse for the notion of the Creator Spirit then becomes at least open

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to question. So it is, for one reason and another, with most of the other candidates for consideration,<sup>3</sup> though an exception may, perhaps, be found in Job 33.4; in the Apocrypha, Judith 16.14; and among the Pseudepigrapha, 2 Baruch (the Syriac Apocalypse of Baruch) 21.4.

In general, then, the Spirit of God is scarcely associated with the actual making of the material world. Instead, it is sometimes associated with the introduction of life into what is already made (though for this, another word for breath is also used besides the word usually translated 'spirit')

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g., Galling 1950, who interprets the phrase not as 'Spirit hovering', but as 'wind moving to and fro' and notes that 'wind' instead of 'Spirit' was the interpretation also of several ancient writers here.

<sup>2</sup> So text. Margin has: 'the spirit of God hovering'.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., Ps. 33.6.

or 'wind');<sup>4</sup> but, more often, God's 'spirit' is God's mighty action among human beings - and especially in and through the outstanding leaders of his own people, Israel - Judges, Kings, and others.<sup>5</sup> In Ezekiel, again, it is God's Spirit that gives to 'God's frozen people', dead and ossified, new life and a will to return to him (Ezek. 37.1-14). In the New Testament, the Spirit is never associated with creation, unless the stories of the virgin birth should be treated as an exception (Matt. 1.20; Luke 1.35); and it is invariably confined to the Christian communities, with the sole exception of Jesus himself and participants in the infancy-stories (the Baptist's and the Lord's family and circle). Of course it is fair to ask, but who else, in the scope of the New Testament, is a possible candidate? And, admittedly, there is not a great deal of scope for references beyond these confines. But there is some: the Holy Spirit might have been described as moving the hearts of those who listened to the preaching of the gospel (e.g., Lydia, Acts 16.14), or those who helped Paul from outside the Church (e.g., the 'Asiarchs' of Acts 19.31), or those who are prayed for beyond the limits of the Church (e.g., 1 Tim. 2.1, 2.). Yet, in none of these cases is his agency, in fact, mentioned. Whatever the reason for this limitation, perhaps it is not irrelevant to Christian belief in an intense concentration of God's self-expression in Jesus Christ.

### *Holy Spirit*

Another surprise is that the adjective 'holy' is by no means as a matter of course attached to 'spirit' in Jewish religious literature before the New Testament. In the whole Old Testament, whereas the word for spirit is common enough, the phrase

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with the adjective, 'Holy Spirit', occurs in precisely two passages, Psalm 51.11 (Heb. verse 13) and Isaiah 63.10, 11. In the Jewish apocryphal books there are a few examples (e.g., Wisdom 9.17); it becomes fairly common in the 'Manual' and Hymns of the Dead Sea Scrolls, in the (related) Damascus' Document, and in rabbinic writings, though in the last it is said to be confined mainly to the theme of the inspiration of prophets or of Scripture.<sup>6</sup> In the New Testament, by contrast, '[the] Holy Spirit' is a standard term, and is not confined to any one aspect of the experience - though the Spirit is, as we have seen, mentioned (with only the rarest exceptions) in connection exclusively with Christian experience. The reason for this may well be simply that current usage by that time favoured the adjective, while Christian experience had both widened and intensified the meaning of Spirit. But it is possible that another factor contributing to the frequency of the phrase 'the Holy Spirit' in the New Testament was the consciousness of the early Christians that they were called to be the very quintessence of the people of God. Perhaps it is significant that the adjective 'holy' used as a noun - 'the holy [ones]'

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<sup>4</sup> The word normally translated 'wind' or 'spirit' is *ruach*, while 'breath' is *neshamah*; but *ruach* can also mean 'breath'.

<sup>5</sup> See Judges 3.10, 6.34, 11.29, 13.25, 14.6, 19, 15.14.

<sup>6</sup> See a weighty note in Bowker 1969, p. 44, n. 3; and for some examples of its actual use, see *ibid.* pp. 151, 239, 240, 257, 260, 266.

- is used, in Hebrew and Jewish documents, to describe loyal Israelites, only in what may be sectarian writing. Generally, 'the holy ones' means angelic powers.<sup>7</sup> But the use of the term for human beings, God's loyal people, appears in certain parts of Daniel<sup>8</sup> once or twice in the Psalter, and perhaps in the so-called Damascus Document, related to the Dead Sea Scrolls.<sup>9</sup> But in the New Testament 'the holy ones', οἱ ἅγιοι, is the commonest of descriptions for Christians. Might it not be, then, that a group who thus described themselves should find it natural also to say 'Holy Spirit', when they thought of God's Spirit in connection with their own special dedication?

However that may be, the most remarkable thing about the Christian use of the adjective 'holy' - whether for Christians or for the Spirit - is that, through Jesus Christ, it has been revolutionized and turned inside out. Instead of connoting separation with a view to safety from contamination, it now meant consecration to take the light, healing, and cleansing of God's Spirit to the dark and dirty corners of the world: it meant having to soil the hands, not being anxiously concerned to keep them clean. 'The saints', οἱ ἅγιοι, are not to live

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segregated, like the Jewish Essenes; they certainly do not call themselves 'holy' because they imagine themselves 'holier than thou'. It is simply because they know themselves dedicated to be, in society at large, what Jesus and his disciples were during his ministry. That is what holiness means when it is communicated by the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ.<sup>10</sup>

### ***Human Beings and the Spirit of God***

Both in the Old and New Testaments, the word 'spirit' sometimes denotes some aspect of a human being; but seldom without some indication that it is really the Spirit of God, on loan, as it were, to humankind. This is not at all the same as the idea (commonly associated with Hellenistic and Stoic thought) that a human being necessarily contains an indestructable spirit, an unquenchable spark of the divine fire or a seed of the all-permeating principle of reason. It is much more theistic than that. It means that, if God pleases, he may bestow his Spirit on humankind; but, equally, God can withdraw the Spirit. It is no inalienable right of man as such. consequently, it is often difficult, in an English version, to know whether to make the initial 's' small or capital: 'spirit' or 'Spirit'.

Take Psalm 51.10, 11, NEB:

Create a pure heart in me, O God,

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<sup>7</sup> E.g. Ps. 89.5 (Heb. 6), 7 (Heb. 8); Job 5.1; Zech. 14.5.

<sup>8</sup> Although the 'angelic' use is also found there, e.g. 4.13 (Heb. 14); 8.13.

<sup>9</sup> See Dan. 7.21, 22, 8.24; Pss. 16.3, 34.9 (Heb. 10); CD 20.8. But Vermes 1962 and some others interpret this last in the 'angelic' sense.

<sup>10</sup> See Neill 1960.

and give me a new and steadfast spirit,  
do not drive me from thy presence  
or take thy holy spirit from me.<sup>11</sup>

In more ordinary usage, the first instance of the word has a small 's' and the second a large one. In the New Testament, the human spirit and the Spirit of God appear side by side, in much the same way, in 1 Corinthians 2.11, but are represented in the NEB by a small and a large 's' respectively:

Among men, who knows what a man is but the man's own spirit within him? In the same way, only the Spirit of God knows what God is.

This passage is instructive not only because of the collocation of two uses of the word, but, still more, for Paul's conception

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of the relation between human beings and God, and of how revelation takes place. He seems to be saying that, when the spirit of a man or woman is somehow in touch with the Spirit of God, then that person's self-knowledge or self-consciousness acquires (if one may dare to follow the apparent direction of Paul's thought) God's self-knowledge or self-consciousness: he or she, as it were, is enabled to share the mind of God - to 'think God's thoughts after him'. But it is probably only because of this daring parallel that Paul here uses 'spirit' at all, to describe an aspect of a human being; by verse 16, he has reverted to his more usual term νοῦς, or 'mind': 'we possess the mind of Christ'.<sup>12</sup>

This brings us to Paul's more usual language. Perhaps it may be said (though one can never reduce the torrential thinking of Paul to complete consistency) that Paul generally conceives of an individual as viewable in two aspects, or operating on two levels - on the one hand, that of νοῦς, 'mind', the level on which God's Holy Spirit may enter and be welcomed in: 'mind' in a much more than merely intellectual sense - the person's understanding, his faculty to apprehend; and, on the other hand, that of σάρξ, 'flesh' - his physical and instinctive level of existence. If you like, σῶμα, 'body' (to introduce a third term), often means the whole man or woman - a person; and this person operates both on the level of the understanding and responsible choosing (νοῦς), and on the physical level of instinctive feeling and appetite (σάρξ, 'flesh'). If, now, he or she lets in sin through 'flesh-gate', as it were, by yielding blindly to self-interest and mere appetite without consulting the will of God, he or she begins to become a sensual person, σῶμα σαρκικόν (or σάρκικον) - a 'fleshly body'. If, on the other hand, the Spirit of God is let in through 'mind-gate', νοῦς (sometimes, though rarely, called πνεῦμα, the 'spirit'), he or she becomes σῶμα πνευματικόν, a spiritual person. To let oneself become 'sarkik', merely sensual (or what Paul sometimes calls ψυχικός - possessed, that is, of no more than mere ψυχή or animal life), is to be heading for death. To become 'spiritual' (πνευματικός) is to be beginning

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<sup>11</sup> And cf. Ezek. 36.26, 37.14.

<sup>12</sup> See Scroggs 1967, p. 54 n. 1.

to be transformed by God's Spirit into the capacity for an eternal quality of life with God. These processes are hinted at in such passages as Romans 8.1 ff. (where, however, Paul uses not *νοῦς* but the

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language of attitude or outlook, *φρονεῖν* and *φρόνημα*) and 1 Corinthians 2.6-3.3, 15.44-9. In a famous passage in Galatians 5.16ff., 'the deeds of the flesh' (meaning, the upshot of surrender to self-concern) are contrasted with 'the crop yielded by the Spirit', which constitutes Christian character on the deepest level.

### ***The Spirit as Pledge of the Future***

And this explains why the presence of the Holy Spirit in a Christian individual or in a Christian community is often described by New Testament theologians as 'eschatological' in meaning: it is an anticipation and an assurance of what God will ultimately achieve in his people. The Pauline epistles use vivid images for this idea: the Spirit's presence is a pledge of God's good faith; it is God's seal or stamp on what belongs to him; it is like the ritual 'first fruits' representing something larger still (Rom. 8.23; 2 Cor. 1.22, 5.5; Eph. 1.13, 14, 4.30). Moreover, joint-participation in the Holy Spirit leads to close fellowship between believers, so that the presence of the Holy Spirit begins to create the ideal society of God.<sup>13</sup> We have already seen that, in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit of God is spoken of almost without exception in relation to Christians only. This is not to say that the New Testament does not think of God as active outside the Church: of course not - *μη γένοιτο!* as Paul would say. There is clear teaching in the New Testament about God as Creator (Mark 10.6; 2 Cor. 4.6, etc.) and about Christ as the agent of creation (Col. 1.15f; Heb. 1.2, etc.), and as God's *λόγος* or self-expression active in all the world (John 1.1ff.). But this 'extra- ecclesial' activity of God is simply not described in terms of Spirit. Of this, more later.

### ***The Gifts of the Spirit***

Returning to the subject of the Spirit of God as received by a man or woman in the processes of becoming Christian, we may now add this. If the acceptance of the Holy Spirit is a *sine qua non* of being Christian at all, this is not to deny that, in addition to this basic gift possessed by all Christians as such, there are special manifestations of the Spirit issuing in special

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<sup>13</sup> The Greek word *κοινωνία*, often rendered by 'fellowship', means, strictly, 'participation'. In 'the grace' (2 Cor. 13.14), the meaning, probably, is 'participation in the Holy Spirit' (not fellowship in the sense of 'companionship'). But joint-participation in the Spirit does create a community or fellowship.

capacities and gifts - χαρίσματα ('free gifts'), as they are often called. Much is said about these in 1 Corinthians 12-14, where Paul's intention seems to be both to exhort his friends to a mutual recognition of their various specialized capacities, and to warn them against indulging in the exercise of one particular, gift - the spectacular gift of 'tongues' - in Christian assemblies, regardless of whether or not it was valuable to the assembly as a whole.

Revivals of Pentecostalism in our own day have greatly intensified the study of this phenomenon. The modern Pentecostalist claims that a manifestation of 'tongue-speaking' is a sign that the believer has advanced beyond his or her baptism in water to baptism in Spirit, and further and richer relationship with God: it is the so-called 'second blessing'. J. D. G. Dunn (1970), in his stringent examination of the relevant New Testament passages, has put a strong query against the Pentecostal claim to find this doctrine in Scripture. If Dr Dunn is right, this is certainly not to deny that an outburst of tongue-speaking may indeed be a sign of a new release and freedom in the Christian life. It is only to protest against the claim to scriptural authority for the necessity of 'the second blessing' for full Christian existence. Such a doctrine may jeopardize the close association of the Spirit with water-baptism which the New Testament seems to indicate and can lead to a disastrous exclusiveness. It is true that, according to Paul, nobody is a Christian who has not the Spirit (Rom. 8.9); but the phenomenon of 'the second blessing' is not the only criterion of having the Spirit.

However, it is not only in Pentecostal circles that a wedge is driven between water-baptism and Spirit-baptism. The practice of baptism in infancy with confirmation at years of discretion has tended in the same direction. Confirmation is par excellence a rite of the Holy Spirit; and, in teaching about confirmation, appeal is often made to Acts 8.14-17, as scriptural authority for a special rite, distinct from water-baptism, for conferring the Holy Spirit; but it is precarious to build so much on this one incident. In Acts 10.44 the Holy Spirit comes to Cornelius and his company before baptism. Water and Spirit evidently must not be regimented in a rigid system, when the experience of becoming a Christian is so rich and complex.<sup>14</sup>

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Either way, by a Pentecostal emphasis on 'the second blessing', or by focusing the Holy Spirit on confirmation at the expense of baptism, something is lost of the New Testament recognition that entry into the Church is by baptism in water and-Spirit (cf. 1 Cor. 12.13).<sup>15</sup>

### ***The Spirit and Inspiration***

The inspiration of Scripture is another controversial matter. Strictly speaking, this doctrine is almost unknown to Scripture itself. Once only is the adjective 'inspired' (θεόπνευστος, 'God-breathed') applied to Scripture (2 Tim. 3.16), though there are passages in the Epistle to the

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<sup>14</sup> For an important discussion see Lampe 1951.

<sup>15</sup> See now Turner 1996<sup>a</sup>, 1996.

Hebrews where the written words seem to be identified with the Spirit's utterances (3.7, 9.8, 10.15-17). In the main, the Holy Spirit, God's 'breath', is conceived of as residing not in inanimate things but in human persons. The Spirit, essentially a personal manifestation of God, finds his sphere of action in personality. The prophets may be said to speak under the influence of God's Spirit.<sup>16</sup> But if their words, when written down, are called 'inspired', that is only by a kind of derived usage; more strictly, they are words once spoken by inspired people, and if the voice of the Spirit is to be heard again through them, it can only be by the re-creation of a personal situation; the readers will themselves need to be inspired (cf. below pp. 211ff.). In 1 Corinthians 14.26-33 Paul describes a Christian assembly in which God's will is made known through various sorts of human utterance, and it is interesting that the congregation's discrimination (verse 29) is part of the process by which the utterance of God is received from the voice of the Christian speaker. The Spirit is not actually mentioned in this passage; but God's message conveyed through human channels is the essence of inspiration; and in this description of Christians in assembly the process is seen to be a joint, congregational concern on a fully personal level. More explicitly, the Holy Spirit is the source of divine guidance according to the 'Paraclete' sayings in John 14-16. The 'Paraclete', the Spirit of truth, represents a continuation of Jesus' own teaching after Jesus' earthly ministry is over; and it is on the personal level, among the friends of Jesus, that the Spirit operates. The teaching, revealing - as we might say,

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inspiring - work of the Spirit is essentially through persons and in the context of the Christian community, even when the result (John 16.8-11) is that the world at large is convicted.<sup>17</sup>

### *The Spirit and Christ*

The 'farewell discourses' in John 14-16, mentioned at the end of the preceding section, are relevant also to the theme of the present section. In those chapters, the Holy Spirit is called, in the original Greek, the Paraclete. The force of this term is much debated: there is a full-length discussion of it in Johnston (1970). But, in brief, it is fair to say that if one dominant aspect is to be singled out from what is no doubt intended to be a term with a multiple meaning, that of 'advocacy' or 'championing' is a strong candidate. Παράκλητος, is, quite literally, the Greek for what in Latin is *Advocatus*; and the Holy Spirit is going to 'vindicate' or 'champion' the work of God in Jesus Christ, continuing and extending it, although no longer in the visible presence of Jesus. It is very much the same conception of the Spirit's work as one finds in the Acts. The Holy Spirit is doing for and in the Church what Christ was doing in his earthly ministry: witnessing to the truth, convicting of sin, vindicating loyal tenacity, helping his friends forward into new insights, providing the driving force for missionary expansion.

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<sup>16</sup> See Micah 3.8 (but the reading is uncertain); Isa. 61.1; 2 Pet. 1.21.

<sup>17</sup> In all likelihood, 'the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God', in Eph. 6.17 means utterance given to the Christian confessor when on trial (cf. Mark 13.11; Acts 6.10), or the Christian's obedience to God's command.

Thus, a relationship between the Spirit and Christ is indicated in terms of identity of function but at least some measure of distinguishability (though, notoriously, the Johannine farewell discourses oscillate between identity and distinction).<sup>18</sup>

Even deeper and more suggestive is the understanding of the relationship in Paul's use of 'Abba'. It is the Holy Spirit, he says (Rom. 8.15; Gal. 4.6), who utters, in believers, the cry of intimate trust and absolute obedience, 'Abba! Father!' which was exemplified in Jesus Christ himself (cf. Mark 14.36). The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God's Son, and it is this Spirit who compasses our adoption as sons: that is, the distinctively Christian experience of the Spirit of God is as the Spirit of Jesus the Son of God, reproducing in Christians the sonship which, in a unique sense, was his. They now know God 'through Jesus Christ' and find the Son-Father relationship

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which exists between Jesus and God beginning to become a reality to them. If, according to Paul, each Christian individually and Christian congregations collectively are 'in Christ' or 'in the Lord' - incorporated in him, as organs or limbs are incorporated in a body - then, conversely, the Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ (that is, God's Spirit received and experienced because of what Jesus Christ has done and is) is in believers. It is the merit of some recent studies of the 'in Christ' formula<sup>19</sup> that, with more precision than hitherto, they recognize this difference. Although there are exceptions, and Paul's usage is not wholly consistent, nevertheless there is a discernible tendency not to say indifferently 'we in Christ' and 'Christ in us', but to speak of Christians as in Christ and of the Holy Spirit as in Christians. To be a Christian is to be incorporated in Christ and to have the Spirit of Christ within oneself. It is true that Johannine usage is much more reciprocal: 'we in Christ and Christ in us' (e.g., John 15.4f). But even here, it is clearly not possible actually to sustain so complete a reciprocity, for the vine cannot be 'In' the branches in quite the same sense as the branches are in the vine. The Fourth Gospel, with more individualistic tendencies than Paul (see Moule 1962 and 1970<sup>c</sup>), allows such reciprocal phrases, but their very setting provides a qualification. Paul himself tends to avoid them, speaking less often of Christ than of the Holy Spirit as in Christians, but speaking of Christians as in Christ rather than as in the Spirit.

This is a pointer towards the conclusion that at least Paul, if not other writers, is feeling his way towards formulations that distinguish between Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. This is sometimes denied. It is alleged that, for Paul, there is virtually no difference between the risen Lord and the Spirit. But this is difficult to sustain, and it is certainly not legitimate to appeal to 2 Corinthians 3.17, 'now the Lord is the Spirit', for the more plausible interpretation of that much-quoted phrase is to refer 'the Lord' to the LORD (Yahweh) in the passage from Exodus 34 on which 2 Cor. 3 is a 'sermon' (cf. Dunn 1970). It seems possible, indeed, that the closing words of the chapter mean that the LORD of the Moses-story is now present (in the Christian era) as Spirit

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<sup>18</sup> E.g., John 14.18, 'I will not leave you bereft; I am coming back to you'; but 15.26. '...your Advocate .... whom I will send...'

<sup>19</sup> E.g., Neugebauer 1961; Bouttier 1962.

- that is, in the new experience of the constant presence of the Spirit, through Jesus Christ, in the Christian Church; and that the Christian, accordingly, is able

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to reflect God's glory with increasing intensity: that is what comes of the LORD (Yahweh) being present as Spirit (2 Cor. 3.18) (See Moule 1972.) 'Spirit', in this passage, describes a mode of the divine presence; and, although it is because of Christ, that does not make Spirit identical with him (see above, pp. 81ff.).

It is, of course, possible to draw up a considerable list of parallel passages from the New Testament in which, if one does not pay too much attention to the meaning, but merely counts the words, it might appear that the same or similar activities are ascribed to Christ and to the Spirit.<sup>20</sup> But even where identity of activity is established, and where the parallels are not merely verbal, identity of activity is still not necessarily absolute identity; over against such passages, there are also the converse passages where God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit are mentioned side by side and therefore distinguishably.<sup>21</sup>

### *The Spirit and the Church's Mission*

The fact would seem to be that Christians looked back, through their traditions, to a Jesus who was himself vividly conscious of God as his Father, with whom he held dialogue, and of the Spirit of God with him and within him, sustaining and strengthening him in his ministry of deeds of power;<sup>22</sup> and that they found themselves, broadly and generally, using a correspondingly 'triangular' mode of expression. The Jesus of the Gospels is endowed with Spirit in a special way: the coming of the Spirit upon him at baptism sealed an intense realization of his relation to God and his vocation in God's service, as a Son responding to a Father; but it was not until this filial relationship had been consummated by death that Christ was able to pass it on to others. It is unlikely that this is intended by the phrase (unusual though it seems to be) in John 19.30: 'he ... gave up his spirit' (NEB; literally, 'he handed down the spirit'); but that the transmission of the Spirit takes place only after the 'glorification' of Christ which is his death, is explicit in John 7.39; and the bestowal is described in John 20.22, and, in a different way, in the Pentecost story of Acts 2. In both cases, it is closely linked with mission. To receive the Spirit means to be 'sent' on Christ's mission. This is written into the

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<sup>20</sup> Christians are 'justified' in Christ (Gal. 2.17) and in the Spirit (1 Cor. 6.11); sanctified (1 Cor. 1.2, 6.11, Rom. 15.16), 'sealed' (Eph. 1.13, 4.30), and 'circumcised' in both (Col. 2.11; Rom. 2.29); and in both they have joy (Phil. 3.1; Rom. 14.17), faith (Gal. 3.26(?); 1 Cor. 12.9), love (Rom. 8.39; Col. 1.8), and 'communion' (1 Cor. 1.9; 2 Cor. 13, 14). See Kirk 1928.

<sup>21</sup> See Rom. 8.9-11; 1 Cor. 12.4-6; 2 Cor. 13.14; Gal. 4.4-7; Eph. 4.4-6; 2 Thess. 2.13, 14; cf. 1 Pet. 1.2.

<sup>22</sup> For the relation of the Spirit to the Kingdom of God in the life of Jesus and beyond, see Dunn 1970.

whole texture of the Acts, where every forward step is guided and powered by the Spirit; but, equally, passages in other writings such as 1 Cor. 2.4, 1 Thess. 1.5, and Heb. 2.4 reflect the consciousness that effective evangelism is always achieved by the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus Jesus, unique bearer of the Spirit himself, and uniquely fulfilling the implications of the relationship which the Spirit establishes, becomes thereby uniquely the bestower of the Spirit on others. In this, as in many other ways, the Gospel traditions about Jesus in his earthly ministry are linked with the life of the Church after Easter. Jesus himself is the only example of the perfect and complete reception of God's Spirit and of the perfect filial relation and the complete and absolute implementation of his being 'sent' by the Father; but, through his death and resurrection, it becomes possible for 'Abba! your will be done' (the Lord's own prayer) to be uttered by the Spirit of God within his friends, and for the Spirit in his friends to carry on the mission of God's Son to the end.

Thus, in sum, the whole biblical doctrine of the Spirit of God, from the mighty blast of mysterious divine potency up to the even more mighty and revolutionary power of the name of Jesus is summed up in one Aramaic word - and that the word - and that the word of a child: 'Abba'!

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