

Ruach Hakkodesh: The Holy Spirit of God

Genesis 1:2, Psalm 51:11

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This past week we saw the baby birds hatch whose nest is in one of our transom windows. For the past month it seems there was a bird hovering over eggs. Then one morning as I came down the steps I could see these tiny necks with huge, wide open mouths. Something important had happened as a result of the birds hovering over the eggs.

We're discussing the names of God. Our God is so vast in His character that one name cannot describe Him fully. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are one God being to revealed us in ways we are not able to capture in one word or on one idea.

The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. Genesis 1:2 (ESV)

Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Psalm 51:11 (ESV)

The Spirit of God was present at creation and is present with us today. The Holy Spirit has always done the will of God. That's because the Holy Spirit is God. From the beginning the Holy Spirit was creating.

I have a problem thinking about how the Holy Spirit is working. This passage tells me that the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters of the earth. I don't want to reduce the Holy Spirit to fog, but that's one image. Another way of hovering is like a momma bird hovering over the eggs in the nest. Then third, is the sun hovering in the sky. Fourth, the Holy Spirit is like the wind.

The Hebrew word for Spirit is Rauch. That word is also used for the wind. The wind is moving and can't be controlled by anything. In each image the Rauch is always present. The Rauch is aware of everything happening. The Rauch is influencing all that is happening. From each vantage point something is about happen. From each situation we can't see clearly what is about to happen. Don't over think the Holy Spirit, see possibilities, understand what you can, and be ready to accept what hasn't been revealed.

The Holy Spirit was present calling Noah to build the Ark, Abraham to be the Father of a great nation, Moses to lead the people out of slavery, and David to defeat Goliath.

The Holy Spirit was present when Eve gave way to the serpent, the masses ignored Noah, the people grumbled about Pharaoh and Moses, and when David sinned with Bathsheba. I bring this up because had anyone of them called upon the Lord, the Holy Spirit would have intervened.

Before Pentecost the Holy Spirit would leave a person as a result of their sin. That's because the Holy Spirit was hovering. The Holy Spirit only dwelled within a person to accomplish a specific purpose. But when the person sinned, being disobedient, the Holy Spirit might choose to leave. Some sins make it clear to the Holy Spirit that the sinner refuses to obey. King Saul, the first king of the Israelites, disobeyed the Lord, and so the Holy Spirit departed.

As I read scripture I don't think the Holy Spirit ever left Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, or the prophets. But, David when confronted with his sin against Bathsheba, feared the Holy Spirit would leave Him. He cried out to be forgiven, admitting his sin, turning away from his sin, seeking to be made right with God again.

David's prayer included the word Rauch. He added the word Hakkodesh. It means the sacred, unique Spirit of God. It's translated as holy. The Spirit of God which is holy, unlike anything, is to be revered and honored. The hovering wind of God is different than anything we know or experience.

Rauch Hakkodesh hovers over us, dwells within believers, empowers us to act, tells us what to do.

Then the Lord came down in the cloud and spoke to Moses, and took some of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. And as soon as the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied. But they did not continue doing it. Numbers 11:25 (ESV)

Even though the Spirit is within us, we limit what the Spirit can speak. Moses was overwhelmed as the human leader of God's people. God had given Moses a significant task: lead the people out of Egypt, take them to the Promised Land. The people were whiners, complainers, hungry, bored, and disobedient.

God told Moses to select seventy men from among the twelve tribes. They were brought together in front of the people. They would assist Moses in leading the people. The prophecy of the elders was a sign of the Holy Spirit's presence. The same Holy Spirit that was dwelling in and hovering over Moses was hovering over and dwelling in the seventy elders. The same Holy Spirit present at creation entered into and hovered over the seventy. As Rauch Hakkodesh entered each man, they began to share God's plan of leadership for the Israel. They never prophesied like this again. They carried out the leadership work being influenced by the Holy Spirit.

The Spirit remained with them, but they weren't forced by the Spirit to say or do anything. They didn't have to do what Rauch Hakkodesh said. They still had the capacity and the ability to make their own choices. People choose to do whatever they want. Any of the seventy could have the Holy Spirit depart never to return.

Christians, even though we have been redeemed, still do whatever we want. Every time a Christian ignores the God's Spirit, we put up a barrier. Each barrier makes us feel and think that we are right and the Rauch Hakkodesh is wrong. But Rauch Hakkodesh is God, and is never wrong.

As we build these barriers by ignoring the Holy Spirit, we become less aware of His presence, His voice, His nudges. Soon we are simply chasing our own path. We might justify our path by finding a single scripture; or twisting the scriptures to fit our path; or we add human ideas that make our path a little smoother.

When Rauch Hakkodesh nudges, respond. When the Holy Spirit speaks, respond. When the Holy Spirit takes actions, respond. Make your response, "yes Lord, yes." Go where the Rauch Hakkodesh, the wind, blows. Say what the Holy Spirit whispers. Follow where the Holy Spirit leads.

Through faith in Jesus Christ you have been forgiven. Live every day as a person who is forgiven. Listen for the words of the Holy Spirit. Watch for the nudge of the Holy Spirit. Be ready for the Holy Spirit is not only hovering over you ready to act, the Holy Spirit is within you giving you the power to respond.

And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. Ezekiel 36:27 (ESV)

The Spirit is within us moving us to walk with God. We once walked with God, and we can walk with God again. When I say once I mean Adam and Eve walked with God in the Garden of Eden. Through Jesus our walk with God has been restored. When we were sinners, we weren't walking with God. Jesus brought us into a right relationship with God. Now we have Rauch Hakkodesh hovering over our lives and living in our lives.

God's Spirit moves us away from the barriers we have built. The Holy Spirit is providing our motivation. The Holy Spirit walks with us step by step. We need to get in step with the God's Spirit.

Walking with God is different than walking with the world. Walking with the world is living in fear. Walking with the world is escaping our regrets by seeking pleasure. Walking with the world is living only for oneself. Or as I see it, selfishness.

It's hard for me not to see selfishness in the world. Everywhere we look we're told to be selfish. We hear it all the time, take care of yourself. We hear people say they're following their heart. But, it's only selfishness. There is no thought about God. There is no consideration for others. There is only self.

We get caught up in that selfishness. Maybe I should say, that I get caught up in myself. I'm guessing though that I'm not alone. None of us have arrived, we are not all that the Holy Spirit wants us to be.

Walking with God is a result of allowing the Holy Spirit to release His power. Since the Holy Spirit is not only hovering over our lives, but is dwelling with us the power is available to stop being selfish. The power is available to remove the selfish barriers. The power is available to turn away from the barriers, the fear, the regrets, the selfishness. The power is available to turn only to Jesus.

Preachers are great for giving advice. I hear my own voice. Teaching Junior and Senior High men and women, I find that I give a lot of advice. So, here's how to release the power of the Holy Spirit in your life. It's simple, but hard. Number one, admit that you are still selfish. Number two, claim your place as a sinner forgiven of your sins. Number three, call out to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Number four, repeat step three. Then repeat it again and again and again.

Then the Lord said "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts." Zechariah 4:6 (ESV)

You will live in the power of the Holy Spirit as you claim His presence in your life. We face a life that requires power and might beyond our abilities. It's not just being selfish that we face. Everyday is filled with problems. I sometimes get the false idea that becoming a hermit would answer all my problems.

Everyday bad things happen to Christians. We are living in a world that has been and is corrupted by sin. That corrupting power of sin is working against everyone including Christians. I, for one, attempt to fight the fight with my own power and my own might. I try to do it by myself. I sink further into the problems and the mess. Then I admit that I need power beyond me. That's when I cry out to Jesus. His Holy Spirit, Rauch Hakkodesh releases His power. I am no longer fighting by myself. Many times I

am no longer worried about, concerned over the outcome. I am allowing the Spirit to carry me where I need to go.

One more time. Number one, admit that you are still selfish. Number two, claim your place as a sinner forgiven of your sins. Number three, call out to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Number four, repeat step three. Then repeat it again and again and again.

Had it not been for the Son, the Father, and the Holy Spirit hovering over me, dwelling within, guiding my words and thoughts, I would not be standing here today. It has been one of those weeks. Some might describe it as one step forward, two steps backwards. Others might call it, one thing after another. I called it, "Help me Holy Spirit."

The Holy Spirit is often giving me a nudge. Last December I was seeking God's guidance for a group of students. I could not see what to do. Then in the middle of the night the Holy Spirit made it clear.

This past January I went to the principal at the school with an idea. She said, "I was praying and the same idea came to me." That's the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit gives me power and wisdom that is beyond me. I've been teaching Junior and Senior High School English for the past two years. That's the Holy Spirit at work.

I had a conversation this past week. The person was very anxious. This person was carrying burdens from their past. I gave a quick answer, "God has forgiven your past." I got the look that said, "thanks, but I've heard that before." Then I heard myself saying things out loud that were true, beyond my experiences, and profoundly wise. That's the Holy Spirit at work.

I have never had incredible physical strength. I've never watched trees instantly bare fruit. I've never seen a broken bone miraculous come back into the right position. The Holy Spirit has given me emotional strength. The Holy Spirit has brought kindness, perseverance, and patience to life within me. The Holy Spirit has worked through a doctor, when I prayed for healing. It is not by my might or by my power. It is the power, the wisdom, the kindness of the Holy Spirit.

I want each one of us to continually be aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit. I'm talking about the day in and day out, moment by moment realization that the Holy Spirit is with you. Knowing the Holy Spirit is present makes the difference between fear and faith, action and apathy, silence and sharing.

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