

Welcome to



A Space to Be

Images of the Holy Spirit

Find a quiet place to meditate, to pray & be.
Maybe in the garden or sitting in your favourite chair.
Maybe in church when it is open for private prayer
If you are inside you might like to light a candle.
You might like to take one image each day for a week.

As I come to prayer now, I pause to be still; to breathe slowly and
centre my mind on the presence of God.

Holy Spirit, speak to me and guide me into all truth.

Help me grow in the knowledge of God.

Teach me more about Yourself today.

The Dove

We are so accustomed to referring to the Spirit as the 'Holy Spirit' that we sometimes forget He is first and foremost just that - *holy*.

The purity of the Spirit is represented in the symbol of the dove.

The dove is one of the cleanest birds.

The Welsh words for Holy Spirit – Ysbryd

Glan- literally mean 'Clean Spirit' The Welsh Christian writer Selwyn Hughes writes:

'The more I have encountered the Holy Spirit the more I have felt that I wanted to throw something away.'

To come close to the Holy Spirit is to come close to holiness.

Loving Father, help me never to forget that the pre-eminent characteristic of Your Spirit is holiness. May His cleansing purity root out all my uncleanness. If today I have to get rid of something then please enable me to do so. Amen

Another characteristic of the dove is that it is gentle in manner. One of the fruits of the Spirit is '*gentleness*' (Gal.5:23). The Spirit produces gentleness in us because He is gentleness himself.

Yet another characteristic is that the dove is sociable in habit and love to be with other doves. Just as the dove is sociable bird, so the Holy Spirit takes pleasure in the society of God's people – those who have been forgiven. The Spirit delights to be with the people of God and give good things to them. The Spirit loves us and lives for us – and the more we know of Him the more we come to realise all the term 'fellowship of the Holy Spirit' conveys. He loves to relate to us. We should pause more and listen to the Spirit's voice if we are to participate in His life and purposes.

Do we love to relate to Him?

Has He moved from belief to experience?

Father, teach me to the importance of rest. Teach me to pause more and listen for the Spirit's voice. In Christ's name I pray. Amen.





Wind

The wind cannot be seen but it can be felt. Although the Spirit cannot be seen, He is nevertheless real. Jesus tells us that He *'will ask the Father, and He will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever— the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he*

lives with you and will be in you.' (John 14:16-17).

Knowing the Spirit is not just knowing about Him but is knowing Him in a deep way. He works within us prompting, guiding and motivating us.

Holy Spirit make yourself known to me today.

When the wind blows it often disperses the clouds from the sky and dries up the land. When the Spirit comes He sweeps away the clouds of darkness and impurity from our hearts so that we can see God more clearly. He comes to correct us not to condemn us.

Father, blow away every cloud of impurity that separates me from you. By your Holy Spirit please disperse whatever needs to be dealt with in my life. Amen.

The coming of the Spirit at the first Pentecost came after ten days of prayer. This happening introduced miraculous spiritual activity and empowering.

The wind of the Spirit at Pentecost was not a gentle breeze but a blast. The believers heard *'a sound like the blowing of a violent wind'* (Acts 2:2). It blew away their self-reliance and ushered them out across the frontiers of the known world. Everywhere they went they travelled 'light'. There was no excess baggage! When the wind of the Spirit blows in it will blow us out. It will get us moving!

We sometimes sing 'Come Holy Spirit' or 'Holy Spirit we welcome you'. Are we prepared for our prayer to be answered?

Father, forgive us that we sometimes do not pray or sing these words with expectant hearts. May we witness another great wind of your Spirit in our lives. Amen.

Water

Water from the Rock - Exodus 17

The whole Israelite community set out from the Desert of Sin, travelling from place to place as the LORD commanded. They camped at Rephidim, but there was no water for the people to drink. ² So they quarrelled with Moses and said, “Give us water to drink.”



Moses replied, “Why do you quarrel with me? Why do you put the LORD to the test?”

³ But the people were thirsty for water there, and they grumbled against Moses. They said, “Why did you bring us up out of Egypt to make us and our children and livestock die of thirst?”

⁴ Then Moses cried out to the LORD, “What am I to do with these people? They are almost ready to stone me.”

⁵ The LORD answered Moses, “Go out in front of the people. Take with you some of the elders of Israel and take in your hand the staff with which you struck the Nile, and go. ⁶ I will stand there before you by the rock at Horeb. Strike the rock, and water will come out of it for the people to drink.” So Moses did this in the sight of the elders of Israel.”

Moses was told to strike the rock so that the water would flow. This wasn't a trickle or a small stream. There would have been over 2 million people travelling with Moses. A mighty river was released, and it is still flowing today. Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:4 tells us that the rock was Christ. The stone Moses struck foreshadowed the death of Jesus. As Jesus was struck, so heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit became available to all who would believe.

If through the Saviour's sacrifice on Calvary, we have access to rivers of living water, do we fail to drink?

Are we simply not aware of our spiritual thirst?

Deep within us God has placed an ache for Him that can only be satisfied by a close relationship with Him. To become aware of our thirst we need to admit our dependence on Him. Do we pretend not to be thirsty and so keep our independence?

Jesus said *'Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink.'* Then he promised *'rivers of living water will flow from within them'*

Father, I confess my thirst for you. I confess my inability to satisfy it myself. Please fill me this day as I have never been filled before. Amen.



Oil

Another biblical symbol of the Spirit is oil. In the ancient tabernacle or Tent of Meeting all its contents including the altar and utensils were anointed with oil. Everything the oil touched was made holy. This illustrates that the Holy Spirit is involved in all aspects of God's work of redemption.

The apostle John said to the first century Christians *'you have an anointing from the Holy One'* (1John 2:20). When we encounter the Holy Spirit we are consecrated for the work of God. We, as God's people, have no inherent holiness. We are only holy as we are anointed by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's specific ministry is to reproduce in us the same kind of holiness that characterised Christ.

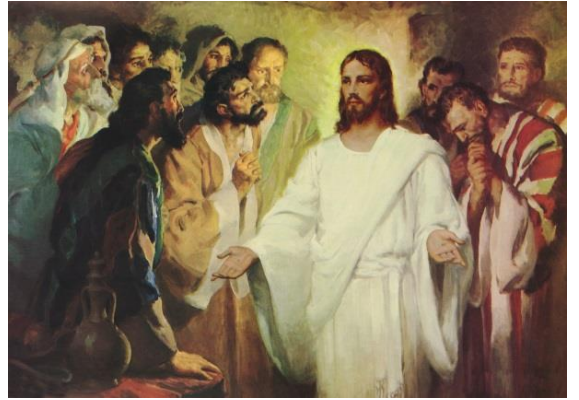
We are all called to 'minister in God's church. (Not just the full time priesthood.) We all have a role to play in God's plan of redemption. Paul tells us to 'offer ourselves as living sacrifices'. This can be challenging unless we are empowered and energised by the Holy Spirit. Because of the anointing of the Holy Spirit we are enabled and equipped to do anything to which we are called.

Father, I recognise that I am here on earth to be one of your ministers, and that I cannot accomplish that task unless I am anointed by your Spirit. However much I have of Your Spirit, Lord, I pray that you will give me more. Amen.

Breath of God

Jesus Appears to His Disciples - John 20

¹⁹ On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.



²¹ Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." ²² And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

Imagine the scene for a moment. Try to put yourself in the room with the disciples. They were scared and frightened. Wondering what would happen to them following Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Suddenly Jesus appears in the locked room and breathes on them! Jesus had exchanged the natural for the supernatural, He was alive in the power of an endless life. So when He breathed on them it was not a mere exhalation of air that they felt, that breath was the energy of eternity. In other words the breath of God!

This was the breath breathed into Adam and into the dry bones Ezekiel saw. Elihu in the book of Job says '*the breath of the Almighty gives me life*' (Job 33:4).

God is continually breathing on us. He is breathing out so we need to exercise our spiritual lungs and breathe in. We cannot live without physically breathing continually. We need to learn to breathe spiritually as easily as we breathe naturally.

Father, show me how to draw in deep breaths of the Spirit. Help me to continually breathe in the life-giving oxygen of the Spirit. May your energising breath revitalise me from the inside out.

Creator God, who formed us from dust, breathe on me again. Give me a new imagination to see new possibilities each day. Amen.



Fire

John the Baptist said:

11“I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. (Matt 3:11).

The Son of God would baptise in a different way. He would plunge His followers into flames of fire. To come into contact with Jesus and the Person of the Holy Spirit is to come into contact with fire.

Fire consumes. It is the very nature of fire to eat its way into things, to engulf, devour, consume. If we allow the Spirit into our lives we can expect Him to burn away impurities in our personalities making us clean.

Fire softens things. CH Spurgeon once said ‘You may write on wax and see a clear record of what you have written. But bring it close to the fire and soon what you have written is gone’. On the Damascus road Saul came close to Jesus and the fire of the Spirit. The bitterness and hatred in his heart melted away.

Fire gets things moving. A steam engine remains motionless until the fire is lit to create the steam to move the pistons. The fire needs to be nurtured and tended so as not to go out. The fire of the Holy Spirit keeps us moving and as long as we tend and nurture it we will grow the church.

Fire attracts attention. People go to see what is happening. The flame of God burning in one heart can quickly set another on fire.

Father, You are a consuming fire, Your Son came to baptise with fire, and Your Spirit is the Spirit of fire. Set me on fire also, that others might be attracted by Your burning cleansing flame. Amen

Once you light a fire its natural desire is to reach upwards towards the sky. The more God’s fire burns within us the more our hearts will be lifted in praise.

Father, I am so thankful for the ministry of the Holy Spirit – that He is available and ready to serve Your purposes and Your people. Help me now to experience all the blessings of the Spirit. How can I ever thank you enough? Amen.