

## The Seven Spirits of God

In the book of the Revelation, in chapter 1, John mentions, in his vision, the “Seven Spirits” which are before the throne of God. In chapter 4, John sees “Seven lights which are the seven Spirits of God, which are before the throne of God”. The book of the Revelation is a book which signifies things, shows by signs (chapter 1.3) and yet each sign is accurate and relevant to our understanding of the truth of the revelation of Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the Church of Jesus Christ.

So John saw the Seven Spirits of God before the throne. They represent the Holy Spirit, seven being the number of perfection in the Bible. Christian truth declares God to be one, there can only be one God, the maker of Heaven and Earth, and yet three in one, Father Son and Holy Spirit. John in his first letter (chapter, 5 verse 7) tells us that “These three bear testimony in Heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost and these three are one”. They bear witness to each other as to their true nature and position. So all are God, all are equal in their divine nature and yet all have separate functions and work fully together in the works of God. The trinity, that is the technical word for God, three in one, is demonstrated in the creation. John’s gospel (Ch 1: 1-3) tells us that all things were made by Him, i.e. the Word of God, Jesus Christ (the Son of God), who was in the beginning with God the Father. The first chapter of Genesis says that “When the whole earth was without form and void, the Spirit of God moved on the waters”. God spoke and there was light, the Holy Spirit putting into operation the word of God, thus light was created. Also in 1 Corinthians, chapter 12, Paul the apostle mentions the gifts of the Spirit, which are available to the Church. In verses 4, 5 and 6 Paul tells us that there are “Diversities of gifts but the same Spirit, different administrations but the same Lord (i.e. the Lord Jesus) and there are different operations but it is the same God who works all in all”. So the whole trinity is involved in the provision, working and administration of the gifts of the Spirit.

Also in the life of the Lord Jesus, having been sent by the Father, Jesus says, “It is not I, but the Father who does the works”. It was also necessary that the Holy Spirit should descend on Jesus, like a dove, by the river Jordan, to anoint Him for His ministry. So again the whole trinity is working together in the life of the Lord Jesus on the earth. God is wonderfully one but also wonderfully three, all totally integrated together in work, purpose and nature. John saw seven lights which are the seven Spirits of God before the throne. Back in the Old Testament we read of the tabernacle and also the temple, the places where, at different times in the history of Israel, God dwelt among His people. The design of both, was basically to the same pattern but the temple was a fixed and more substantial structure than the tabernacle. The tabernacle was movable, as the children of Israel demonstrated, taking it with them as they journeyed in the wilderness. God’s presence was in the “Holiest Place”, in the very centre of the tabernacle. Entrance was forbidden to anyone but the High Priest and then only once a year. In the “Holy place”, the place just outside the “Holiest place”, before the presence of God were three things, a table with shewbread, a golden altar and a lampstand. There is a picture of the lampstand on the front of this little pamphlet. The lampstand had seven lights all coming from one basic stem, seven branches each with an identical lamp and each lamp was to have oil burning in it all the time. The tabernacle was made as a pattern of things in heaven, so Moses (read Hebrews chapter 8 verses 1-5), in the design God gave him for the

tabernacle, places this lampstand before the presence of God. What John saw in Heaven was seven lights, but representing the real Spirit of God before the throne of God. The lampstand shows that the seven lights are all separate but come from the same source and all burn the same oil. We shall see that the "Seven Spirits of God" are to be found in the Bible and yet are of one Spirit, but bring to each Christian differing aspects of the life of God, relevant to their needs.

Before, though, we need to look into the fifth chapter of the book of the Revelation and read verse 6. John sees a "Lamb having been slain with seven horns and seven eyes, which are the "Seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth". Jesus is the Lamb, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. He is the Lamb who died and yet is risen and alive and is seated on the throne of heaven. Peter, preaching on the day of Pentecost, (Acts chapter 2) tells us that the "Same Jesus you crucified, God has made Him Lord and Christ". Jesus is on the throne. In chapter 5 of the Revelation, verses 8-14, we read of the wonderful vision which John had of all the elders and living creatures in heaven, with the prayers of the saints (Christians), worshipping Jesus. They worshipped Jesus as the Lamb of God saying "Worthy is the Lamb". He is declared as the Lamb who has redeemed His people, "Out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation". Here we have the wonderful Lord Jesus in all His glory as the Saviour of the world. He is worthy of all worship.

But also Jesus has the seven horns and seven eyes which are the "seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth". Jesus now has the seven Spirits and He has sent them forth into all the earth.

Returning to Peter's sermon on that first Pentecost, when the Holy Spirit was first given to the Church, Peter tells us that the Lord Jesus had been raised up by God and in verse 33 that "Being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, He has shed forth this which you now see and hear". Jesus had received the Holy Spirit, the promise of the Father, having overcome sin and death, and had poured out the Holy Spirit on His people. That is why, when John sees his vision of Jesus, he sees the seven Spirits of God in the Lamb, as Jesus had received the Holy Spirit of the glory of God and, if we return to verse 18 of chapter 3, we are told that as we see in a mirror the glory of the Lord, looking at that glory, we are changed into the same likeness, from one degree of glory to another, "Even by the Spirit of the Lord". This is how Christians are changed and become like the earth". That is why John in his first letter (chapter 5, verse 8) states that the Spirit is also a witness on the earth. The Spirit is in Jesus Christ in heaven but also sent forth into all the earth and bears witness both in heaven and earth. That is why John in his first letter (chapter 5, verse 8) states that the Spirit is also a witness on the earth. The Spirit is in Jesus Christ in heaven but also sent forth into all the earth and bears witness both in heaven and earth. Jesus had promised "If I go away, I will send you another Comforter". This is exactly what John sees in his vision, God's promise fulfilled, the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, is sent from Heaven by the Lord Jesus.

The seven Spirits sent forth into the earth are seen as seven horns and seven eyes in the Lamb, the Lord Jesus. Horns represent authority, so we have all seven Spirits with the authority of Jesus Christ. Jesus said "All authority is given to me in heaven and earth: go and preach the gospel" and we are told Jesus has a "Name above every name". So Jesus' authority is without question and the Holy Spirit brings that authority to every Christian. The seven eyes are to provide the "seeing of the Lord Jesus" to His people. To see things the way Jesus did, to have His judgment and His discernment, by His Spirit. Paul tells us that "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, the things which God has prepared for them that love Him". No human eye, that is, but to see God's provision the way Jesus sees it will

inspire faith in every believing heart. So we have the seven Spirits sent into the earth, and when we look at the Bible we will find all 7, like the seven branches with the seven lights, each light of the same Spirit and all to outwork the life of God in every Christian.

The seven Spirits of God must have in their name an aspect of the Godhead to qualify for our list. The Bible talks of the “spirit of faith, the spirit of power, love and a sound mind, and even the spirit of life in Christ Jesus”, all declarations of the work of the Holy Spirit in Christian lives, but they don’t quite qualify as being of the Godhead. We therefore find our seven to be, 1. The Holy Spirit himself, 2. The Spirit of God, 3. The Spirit of the Father, 4. The Spirit of Christ, 5. The Spirit of Jesus Christ, 6. The Spirit of the Son, and finally, 7. The Spirit of the Lord. We will look at each in turn to understand the wholeness of the work of the Holy Spirit in Christian lives.

First, it is helpful to look at the “Spirit of Christ”. This phrase occurs only once in the New Testament related to Christians. (The reference in 1 Peter chapter 1 refers to the Spirit of Christ in Old Testament prophets). We read in Romans chapter 8, verse 9. “If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His”. The Spirit of Christ is all about belonging to Jesus. It says they were first called “Christians” at Antioch. Christian means a “Christ one”, belonging to Christ. To belong to Jesus Christ we must have received His Spirit, otherwise we are none of His. When the Holy Spirit comes into our lives He brings the Spirit of Christ, one of our seven lamps, burning brightly in our hearts, causing us to know that we belong to the Lord Jesus. What joy! He has taken us out of the world and we no longer belong to sin, to Satan, or to the world, but to Jesus himself. So the Spirit of Christ works to bring the blessed assurance of belonging, to our hearts. To quote the Song of Solomon “I am my Beloved’s and He is mine”, or the hymn “Loved with everlasting love” which in one line says “I am His and He is mine”.

Secondly, the Spirit of the Son, Galatians chapter 4 verse 6. “God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts crying “Abba Father”. Having, firstly, the Spirit of Christ, so that we know we belong to Jesus, we now have the Spirit of His Son crying “Father” to God as our Father. In Romans chapter 8 we read that the Spirit that cries “Father ... bears witness with our Spirit that we are the sons of God”. In one way it is more ‘belonging’, but it is much more, as Christians are brought to the position of sons and heirs of God, and therefore joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Jesus said “In that day you will ask the Father and He will give to you”. Here is the Christian’s authority, and the basis for his or her life, in relying on God our Father to meet every need, with the confidence of knowing the position we have with God as a son. John in his letter tells us that we can have confidence that if we ask anything according to God’s will He hears us. Hearing in such a way that the answer must come; “when you pray say “Our Father”.

Thirdly, the Spirit of God. Romans, chapter 8, verse 6 tells us “We are no longer in the flesh but in the spirit if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in us”. Here is our change of nature, the transformation of Christians from carnality, being in the flesh, to spirituality, being in the Spirit. When Nicodemus talked to Jesus, and asked Jesus how He did His works, Jesus said “You must be born again”. Nicodemus, it is all about what spirit you are of. “That which is flesh is flesh, that which is spirit is spirit; marvel not that I say unto you, you must be born again”. It is the receiving of the Spirit of God that regenerates us and admits us to the Kingdom of God and therefore allows us to see the things of that Kingdom. Here is our fellowship with God our Father and with the Lord Jesus in the Spirit. It is the basis of our fellowship with other Christians too; with “All who have been made to

drink into the one Spirit". Paul writing to the Romans, in chapter 15 verses 18 and 19, mentions "Mighty signs through the power of the Spirit of God". It is the Spirit of God who reveals to believers the power of God and enables them to see miracles in their lives and the lives of those for whom they pray.

Fourthly, the Spirit of the Lord, of which we read in 2 Corinthians, chapter 3 verses 17 and 18. In the context of the chapter, Paul is writing about the New Covenant of which he is a minister (preacher), He says that it is a "Ministry, not of the letter which kills, but of the Spirit which gives life". He equates the ministry of the Spirit to that of the ministry of righteousness. Righteousness which makes men and women right with God, through the righteousness of God by the faith of Jesus Christ. The New Covenant of God is ministered to us by the Holy Spirit, and Paul says, "When the veiled heart turns to the Lord the veil is taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty". Freedom to see Jesus Christ, as the veil is taken away. Freedom to look by the Spirit into Jesus' face, wherein, we are told in chapter 4, verse 6, is the light of the knowledge of the Glory of God. Here is our revelation of the glory of God and, if we return to verse 18 of chapter 3, we are told that as we see in a mirror the glory of the Lord, looking at that glory, we are changed into the same likeness, from one degree of glory to another, "Even by the Spirit of the Lord". This is how Christians are changed and become more Christ-like in their lives.

The wonderful Spirit of the Lord, by whom the veil is taken away, shines such a likeness of the glory of God into our hearts, in the face of Jesus Christ, that just looking at the reflection of that glory will change us to be more and more like Jesus. It all seems too amazing, but Paul had mentioned how Moses' face had shone when he had seen the back parts of God (Exodus chapter 34). Paul tells us, though, that the ministry of the Spirit is so much greater than the ministry of the law, that in fact there is no real comparison between the glory of God which Christians see and the glory that Moses saw. For the Christian, in the Spirit, it is the "Glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ" and that glory is so great it can change our lives to be more like Jesus, all by the Spirit of the Lord.

Fifthly, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, which we read of in Philippians, chapter 1 verse 19. Paul was in prison, and writing about the preaching of the gospel and the prayers of the Philippians for him at that difficult time. He expected that the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ would meet his every need. In verse 20 we read that Paul's expectation was that he would not be ashamed or embarrassed by any lack in his forthcoming trials but that "As always Christ would be magnified in his body whether in life or death. For him to live was Christ and to die was gain". Why then the Spirit of Jesus Christ? We looked earlier at Jesus being made Lord and Christ and being seated on the right hand of God in Heaven. It was Jesus, Jesus of Nazareth, who had become Christ through His death and resurrection. Jesus had triumphed completely in His life, through all the trials and suffering, even unto the resurrection from the dead. Jesus Christ is the Name that incorporates all this victory. Paul needed the same Spirit of the one, his Lord Jesus Christ, who had overcome all things, to work in Paul's own life at that time of crisis. So it is the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ which Paul looked for. It so worked for him and in him that Christ was magnified in his body. It can be the expectation of every Christian that in all the trials of their life, the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ will meet all their needs. Jesus always causes us to triumph.

Sixthly, the Spirit of the Father. We read about it in the gospel of Matthew, chapter 10, verse 20. Jesus tells us that, when Christians are persecuted and have to give account of themselves before

courts or tribunals, they should not think about what they will say, but that when the moment comes the “Spirit of your Father will speak in you”. What joy, that at such an awful and fearful time the Spirit of our Father in Heaven should be in us, and speaking in us. Jesus taught us to pray “Our Father”, as His Father becomes our Father when we receive the Lord Jesus. Jesus knew that His wonderful Father is so full of care and concern for our lives at times of crisis. We can pray “Abba Father” by the Spirit of the Son, and find that the Spirit of the Father, to whom we have prayed, provides the very words for us to say, when we most need them. Jesus, in verse 32 of the same chapter, says that “When we confess Him before men, He will confess us before His Father in heaven”. Jesus’ prayers as well as ours are answered and the Father responds by His Spirit to provide the words, so that we can “Witness a good profession”, as did our Lord Jesus.

Lastly, the Holy Ghost, who probably could be considered the central light in our seven-branched candlestick, as He is able to manifest all the attributes of Godhead in our lives. Jesus said “When the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, is come He will lead you into all truth”. We see then that the Holy Spirit is a person, not a thing, and is totally equal and fully integrated in the whole Godhead, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Jesus said “You will receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you”, power and ability to be a witness of Jesus Christ. It is the Holy Spirit who baptises us into the body of Christ, so we are members of His body, the Church. It is the Holy Spirit who baptises (immerses) us into the death of Jesus Christ so that we can be joined with Jesus in His death and also in His resurrection. We can then walk in “Newness of life”. The Holy Spirit pours out the love of God into our hearts and produces the fruit of the Spirit in Christian lives. The gifts of the Spirit are given too. Prophecy, words of wisdom and knowledge, gifts of healing and working of miracles, and also speaking in and interpreting of tongues, and so on. The Holy Spirit is the great teacher of Christians both individually and together in the Church. He takes the things of Jesus Christ and reveals them unto God’s people. He is the Comforter and also enables the God of all hope to give his people joy and peace in believing so that they can abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit constantly renews Christian lives after new birth and helps them to pray, when they don’t really know how to pray as they ought to pray. The Holy Spirit is the seal of God on Christian lives and is the guarantor of our glorious new bodies when Jesus comes again. The Holy Spirit also works in the Church and appoints those who are to minister the gospel, and sends out apostles. The blessed Holy Spirit works so much in the lives of God’s people and His church, it is no wonder Jesus told His disciples to wait until they had received the Holy Spirit. No Christian can possibly live a Christian life pleasing to God without being full of the Holy Spirit.

That is why John saw, in his vision, Jesus with the seven eyes and seven horns of the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. Jesus had received the gift from His Father, and then poured out the Holy Spirit on all flesh. This is all the fulfillment of John the Baptist’s prophecy that “He, i.e. the Lord Jesus, will baptise you with the Holy Ghost and fire”. In the third chapter of the letter to the Galatians, in verse 14 we read that “The blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through

All God’s eternal plan, from Abraham, through the children of Israel and the prophets unto the coming of Jesus Christ, His death and resurrection, was that the Holy Spirit should be available, through Jesus Christ, to every person in every kindred, tribe and nation on the earth. John saw in His

vision the fulfillment; the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth, and then from the "Redeemed" out of all those peoples and tribes and nations, the praise "Worthy is the Lamb". The power of the wonderful Holy Spirit is available to every Christian in order that the full power of God may be manifest in their lives. The fullness of Jesus can be all in all. The belonging of the Spirit of Christ, the witness of being a son of God, the power of the Spirit of God, the strength of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, the life changing work of the Spirit of the Lord and the words of the Spirit of the Father, are all for the Christian.

Paul, in his great prayer for the Church at Ephesus, asked that "God would grant to them that, according to the riches of His glory, they might be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in their hearts by faith, that being rooted and grounded in love, they might be able to understand with all the saints what is the breadth, length, depth and height and to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge, that they might be filled with all the fullness of God". It is the Holy Spirit that makes the fullness of God possible.

For a full revelation of Jesus Christ to be given to John, to pass on to the Church, John had to see the work and position of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit provides all that is of God for us, His Church, through Jesus Christ. Having seen a little of the fullness of such provision may we allow the Holy Spirit greater and fuller access to every part of our lives, for the Holy Spirit has come to glorify Jesus Christ. The seven Spirits of God are sent forth into all the earth. Amen.