

## WITH THEM NOT IN THEM (2)

### How the Old Testament Believer Remained Faithful

#### A. Introduction

1. In the New Testament we are told about three distinct ministries of the Holy Spirit that all believers in the Lord Jesus experience.

These are regeneration, indwelling, and empowering.

Regeneration refers to the Holy Spirit's work of enabling humans to hear, understand, believe, and obey God's Word (Belief).

Indwelling refers to the Holy Spirit's presence in the believer which enables them to remain as Christians and live holy lives (Faithfulness).

Empowering refers to the power that the Holy Spirit gives for service (Witness).

Are these three distinct ministries of the Holy Spirit that all believers today experience, experienced by Old Testament believers?

2. The Holy Spirit regenerates all Old Testament believers.

If any people in the Old Testament were saved, they needed to be regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

The phrase that is used to describe this is 'circumcision of the heart'.

"The LORD your God will circumcise your hearts and the hearts of your descendants, so that you may love him with all your heart and with all your soul, and live." (Deuteronomy 30:6)

This means that Old Testament believers are saved the same way we are – through faith in the Messiah. But the only way they (like us) could have faith in the Messiah is if their hearts have been regenerated.

3. The Holy Spirit empowers some Old Testament believers.

Certain Old Testament believers were filled with the Spirit in order to serve in a specific way.

A time was coming when all believers would be empowered by the Spirit.

"And afterwards, 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. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days." (Joel 2:28-29)

This new age began on the Day of Pentecost, and now believers are filled (repeatedly) by the Holy Spirit for ministry.

4. The Holy Spirit indwells no Old Testament believers.

The New Testament teaches that indwelling by the Holy Spirit did not begin to take place until after Jesus had completed His saving work.

"On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified." (John 7:37-39)

God was present 'with' Old Testament believers but not 'in' Old Testament believers.

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever – 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)

5. If the Holy Spirit indwells no Old Testament believers, this raises a couple of questions.

How did believers before the Spirit was given, live holy lives?

What does 'with' mean in John 14:17 and how did this enable them to remain faithful?

When did believers start being indwelt by the Holy Spirit?

6. The Old Testament teaches that believers could remain faithful because God was present with His people.

## **B. God was with His people as He dwelt among them in the tabernacle/temple**

1. Throughout the Old Testament we are told that God was with His people.

He was with certain people.

"Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden." (Genesis 3:8)

"Enoch walked with God; then he was no more, because God took him away." (Genesis 5:24)

"Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time, and he walked with God." (Genesis 6:9)

"At that time Abimelech and Phicol the commander of his forces said to Abraham, "God is with you in everything you do." (Genesis 21:22)

"Stay in this land for a while, and I will be with you and will bless you. For to you and your descendants I will give all these lands and will confirm the oath I swore to your father Abraham." (Genesis 26:3)

"Then the LORD said to Jacob, "Go back to the land of your fathers and to your relatives, and I will be with you." (Genesis 31:3)

"The LORD was with Joseph and he prospered, and he lived in the house of his Egyptian master." (Genesis 39:2)

"And God said, "I will be with you. And this will be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: When you have brought the people out of Egypt, you will worship God on this mountain." (Exodus 3:12)

"No-one will be able to stand up against you all the days of your life. As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you." (Joshua 1:5)

"Whenever the LORD raised up a judge for them, he was with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived; for the LORD had compassion on them as they groaned under those who oppressed and afflicted them." (Judges 2:18)

"The LORD was with Samuel as he grew up, and he let none of his words fall to the ground." (1 Samuel 3:19)

"As the LORD was with my lord the king, so may he be with Solomon to make his throne even greater than the throne of my lord King David." (1 Kings 1:37)

He was with the nation of Israel first in the pillar of cloud and fire, then the tabernacle, and finally in the temple.

"By day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel by day or night. Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people." (Exodus 13:21-22)

"Then have them make a sanctuary for me, and I will dwell among them." (Exodus 25:8)

"Then the cloud covered the Tent of Meeting, and the glory of the LORD filled the tabernacle." (Exodus 40:34)

"Do not defile the land where you live and where I dwell, for I, the LORD, dwell among the Israelites." (Numbers 35:34)

"When the priests withdrew from the Holy Place, the cloud filled the temple of the LORD. And the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled his temple." (1 Kings 8:10-11)

## 2. God's presence with His people resulted in their physical well-being.

"When his master saw that the LORD was with him and that the LORD gave him success in everything he did." (Genesis 39:3)

"But while Joseph was there in the prison, the LORD was with him; he showed him kindness and granted him favour in the eyes of the prison warder." (Genesis 39:20-21)

"The warder paid no attention to anything under Joseph's care, because the LORD was with Joseph and gave him success in whatever he did." (Genesis 39:23)

"The LORD replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?" (Exodus 33:14-16)

"No misfortune is seen in Jacob, no misery observed in Israel. The LORD their God is with them; the shout of the King is among them." (Numbers 23:21)

"The LORD your God has blessed you in all the work of your hands. He has watched over your journey through this vast desert. These forty years the LORD your God has been with you, and you have not lacked anything." (Deuteronomy 2:7)

"For the LORD your God is the one who goes with you to fight for you against your enemies to give you victory." (Deuteronomy 20:4)

"So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand." (Isaiah 41:10)

"Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned; the flames will not set you ablaze." (Isaiah 43:2)

When God was not present with His people it led to their downfall.

"Because you have turned away from the LORD, he will not be with you and you will fall by the sword." (Numbers 14:43)

"But the LORD said to me, "Tell them, 'Do not go up and fight, because I will not be with you. You will be defeated by your enemies.'" (Deuteronomy 1:42)

"On that day I will become angry with them and forsake them; I will hide my face from them, and they will be destroyed. Many disasters and difficulties will come upon them, and on that day they will ask, 'Have not these disasters come upon us because our God is not with us?'" (Deuteronomy 31:17)

### 3. God's presence with His people enabled them to remain faithful.

God's presence made His people holy.

"Say to the Israelites, 'You must observe my Sabbaths. This will be a sign between me and you for the generations to come, so that you may know that I am the LORD, who makes you holy.'" (Exodus 31:13)

"Consecrate yourselves and be holy, because I am the LORD your God. Keep my decrees and follow them. I am the LORD, who makes you holy." (Leviticus 20:7-8)

"The priests are to keep my requirements so that they do not become guilty and die for treating them with contempt. I am the LORD, who makes them holy." (Leviticus 22:9)

"Do not profane my holy name. I must be acknowledged as holy by the Israelites. I am the LORD, who makes you holy." (Leviticus 22:32)

God's presence inclined His people towards obedience.

"Abraham obeyed me and kept my requirements, my commands, my decrees and my laws." (Genesis 26:5)

"Whenever the LORD raised up a judge for them, he was with the judge and saved them out of the hands of their enemies as long as the judge lived; for the LORD had compassion on them as they groaned under those who oppressed and afflicted them. But when the judge died, the people returned to ways even more corrupt than those of their fathers, following other gods and serving and worshipping them. They refused to give up their evil practices and stubborn ways." (Judges 2:18-19)

"May the LORD our God be with us as he was with our fathers; may he never leave us nor forsake us. May he turn our hearts to him, to walk in all his ways and to keep the commands, decrees and regulations he gave our fathers." (1 Kings 8:57-58)

"Yet I reserve seven thousand in Israel – all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him." (1 Kings 19:18)

### 4. God promised that He would be with His people in the future, but He would not dwell in the temple.

He would be with His people in a Son called 'Immanuel'.

"Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel." (Isaiah 7:14)

He would be with His people by being in His people.

"This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after that time," declares the LORD. "I will put my law in their minds and write it on their hearts. I will be their God and they will be my people." (Jeremiah 31:33)

"And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws." (Ezekiel 36:27)

## **C. God was with His people as He dwelt among them in the person of Jesus**

### 1. As God came and dwelt among His people in the temple, so He came dwelt among His people in the person of Jesus.

"The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

Jesus replaced the temple as the location where God's presence was found.

"Jesus answered them, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it again in three days." The Jews replied, "It has taken forty-six years to build the temple, and you are going to raise it in three

days." But the temple he had spoken of was his body. After he was raised from the dead, his disciples recalled what he had said. Then they believed the Scripture and the words that Jesus had spoken." (John 2:19-20)

"Sir," the woman said, "I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem." Jesus declared, "Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem." (John 4:19-21)

Jesus' presence with His disciples enabled them to live faithfully.

## 2. Jesus promised that those who believe in Him, in the future, would receive the Holy Spirit.

"On the last and greatest day of the Feast, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him." By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive. Up to that time the Spirit had not been given, since Jesus had not yet been glorified." (John 7:37-39)

"And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counsellor to be with you for ever – 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)

"But I tell you the truth: It is for your good that I am going away. Unless I go away, the Counsellor will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you." (John 16:7)

After Jesus died and rose from the dead (when He was glorified), the time had come when He would no longer be with His disciples.

He kept His promise and gave His people the Spirit.

"Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven." (John 20:21-23)

God was present 'with' Old Testament believers but not 'in' them. Now He would be!

## **D. God is with His people as He dwells in them by His Spirit**

### 1. As God came and dwelt among His people in the temple and in the person of Jesus, so now He comes dwells in them by His Spirit.

Believers in Jesus are the new temple.

"Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit lives in you?" (1 Corinthians 3:16)

"What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said, "I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people." (2 Corinthians 6:16)

### 2. God's presence within us enables us to live faithfully as followers of Jesus.

"And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you... For if you live according to the sinful nature, you will die; but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body, you will live." (Romans 8:11, 13)

"And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Corinthians 6:11)

“And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord’s glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit.” (2 Corinthians 3:18)

“Are you so foolish? After beginning with the Spirit, are you now trying to attain your goal by human effort?” (Galatians 3:3)

## **E. Conclusion**

1. The Holy Spirit regenerates all Old Testament believers.

If this were not true, there would be no Old Testament saints in heaven, and the disciples of Jesus were not saved until after His resurrection.

2. The Holy Spirit indwells no Old Testament believers.

God was present with His people as He dwelt among them first in the tabernacle/temple, and then in the person of Jesus, and this enabled them to remain faithful to Him.

After Jesus completed His saving work, He gave His people the Spirit, so that now God is present with His people by dwelling in them.

The presence of the Holy Spirit within us enables us to live holy lives and remain faithful to Jesus.

3. The Holy Spirit empowers some Old Testament believers.

Certain Old Testament believers were filled with the Spirit in order to serve in a specific way.

The Day of Pentecost began a new age when all believers are now filled (repeatedly) by the Holy Spirit for ministry.

4. God’s people have always needed the Spirit.

To believe in the Messiah.

To remain faithful to the Messiah.

To serve the Messiah.