

# The Fire of the Lord

an introduction to the Person and work of the Holy Spirit

Sometimes spoken of as ‘the forgotten Person’ of the Godhead, the Holy Spirit exercises a hugely important ministry in the outworking of the purpose of God.

This series of 7 introductory studies is intended to deepen your understanding of what that ministry is, and transform your experience through the enjoyment of that ministry in your life.

You can find the background to this short series [here](#).

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## 4. The work of the Spirit

(Ezekiel 36.<sup>22-28</sup> & 37.<sup>1-24</sup>)

[w/b Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May 2019]

*“.. and you will live ..”*

Step by step we're getting there! We've looked at the *promise* of the Holy Spirit, the '*person-hood*' of the Spirit, and in the last study the '*pictures*' which the Scriptures use to help us get some sense of just who He is and what He does. In this study we look more specifically at what He does.

Ezekiel was a prophet of the exile, bringing God's Word (and in these chapters the richness of His promise) to a people whose persistent disobedience and waywardness had resulted in their being removed from the land God had promised to them. The insight given to the prophet was that left to ourselves we will always go astray - we need a work within us, from beyond us!

*[Despite your best intentions, there may not be time for all the questions to be addressed in your Community Group! It may be helpful to try and ensure that in this study you cover questions 3-6. As always try to leave good time for shared prayer!]*

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1. **Read Ezekiel 36.22-37.28.** This is quite a long passage, but worth reading in its entirety! It will give you a sense of the scope of what God promised He would do by His Spirit.

Which bits of the passage stand out for you and why?

Put yourself in the position of one of the exiles to whom these prophecies were first addressed: how might they have encouraged you?

**2. Read Ezekiel 36.22-25.** Before declaring what it was that He would do, the Lord, through the prophet, explains *why* He is going to do this.

What is the reason the Lord gives for the gracious work which He commits Himself to effecting?

*"It is not for your sake.."* declares the Lord - it's not about you in the end of the day: in what ways does this challenge your thinking?

**3. Read Ezekiel 36.25-28.** These short verses articulate one of the richest and most encouraging promises which God makes in the whole Bible.

What does the Lord promise to do in the life of His people?

Read **Jeremiah 31.31-34** for a very similar promise, again addressed to an exiled people: what difference will your grasping these promises (in Jeremiah & Ezekiel) make?

4. **Read Ezekiel 37.1-8.** The promise of the indwelling Spirit is matched now by the promise of His regenerating power, in the vision Ezekiel received in the valley of dry bones.

*"..and you will come to life"*: how did the Spirit of God use His Word to cause you to 'come to life'?

**Read Eph.2.1-5:** why do you think the Spirit took Ezekiel to a valley full of 'dry bones'?

What encouragements do you take from reading these verses in Ezekiel?

5. **Read Ezekiel 37.9-14.** The exhortation to prophesy to the bones is now complemented by the call to prophesy to the 'breath' (the Spirit of God).

What are the implications for ourselves (the challenges and the encouragements) of this call in v.9 to prophesy to the breath?

Why do you think the work of 'regeneration' likened here to resurrection (vv.13-14)?

**6. Read Ezekiel 37.15-19.** The promise of 'spiritual' renewal to which the previous verses have pointed is matched now by the promise of 'relational' renewal: God's people had been divided for centuries since the death of Solomon.

What might be some of the applications of this promise to ourselves?

What relational 'divides' would you long for the Spirit to be healing today? Make this a matter of prayer (if you haven't already!)

**7. Read Ezekiel 37-20-28.** The re-uniting of the people of Israel is tied to there being "*one king over all of them*" (v.22): the unity of the Spirit is effected as we are brought under Jesus' Lordship.

**Read Ezekiel 34:** how does Jesus as the 'Good Shepherd' exercise His kingship over our lives?

How does that help secure the unity of His people?

In what ways has your studying these chapters helped, encouraged and challenged you?