## 2

# Symbols of the Holy Spirit in the Bible



### **SABBATH—APRIL 1**

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S STUDY: Matthew 3:11; Matthew 10:16; John 1:9, 32; John 7:37-39; 2 Corinthians 1:20-22; 1 Peter 1:22.

MEMORY VERSE: "The wind blows where it wants to. You hear the sound it makes. But you can't [cannot] tell where it comes from or where it is going. It is the same with everyone who is born through the [Holy] Spirit" (John 3:8, NIrV).

"THE HOLY SPIRIT IS A LIGHT TO ENLIGHTEN US. He is a Friend we turn to for advice. He is Water to refresh us. He is a Comforter to cheer us. He is a Teacher to teach us. He is a Guide to lead us. He serves as Oil to make us shine and as a Fire to cleanse us. He is a Dove to bring us mercy.¹ He serves as a Seal² to make us safe. He is the Witness³ for us to look up to... He is the Power to help us pray. He is the Fruit Bearer and Sap⁴ to make us grow. He is the Reminder to help us remember God's promises. And He is the Earnest (Guarantee) of the coming glory."—Adapted from F. E. Marsh, Emblems [Symbols] of the Holy Spirit (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Kregel Publications, 1971), p. 246. This week, we will learn what some of these symbols mean.

Study this week's lesson to prepare for Sabbath, April 8.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>mercy—kindness we do not deserve.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup>seal—when kings in Bible times sent a letter, they sealed (closed) the letter with a mark in hot wax. This mark showed the letter was from them. This mark was called a seal. The seal kept what was inside the letter safe. The Holy Spirit seals us to show we belong to God, our King. The Holy Spirit's seal keeps us safe from sin.

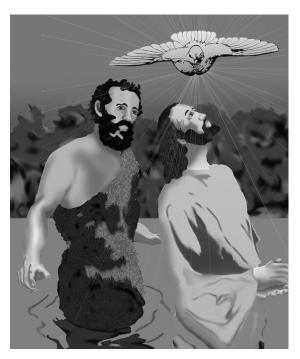
<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup>witness—someone or something that tells us about God.

<sup>4</sup>sap—the liquid in trees that helps the plant to grow.

### **SUNDAY—APRIL 2**

### **DOVE (John 1:32).**

Read John 1:32. "The Lord had promised to give John a sign so he might know who was the Messiah. As Jesus went up out of the water, the promised sign was given. John saw the heavens opened. He saw the Spirit of God, the same as a dove of burnished (shining) gold, flying over Christ's head."—Adapted from Ellen G. White Comments, *The Seventh-Day Adventist Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1078.



Why is a dove a good symbol for the Holy Spirit? Matthew 10:16.

The word in Matthew 10:16 translated as "harmless" (NKJV) can be translated as "pure" or "without a mixture of evil." This is a good

description of Jesus. It is also an example of what the Holy Spirit can do in our lives.

# What do we learn about the Holy Spirit's work from Ephesians 5:9, 10; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; and 1 Peter 1:22?

The Bible is clear about how Christians should live. The Bible is also clear that we can live such a life only through the Holy Spirit working in our hearts. We are too spiritually dead to change ourselves. Only the cleansing and re-energizing power of the Spirit can help us develop Jesus' character. To develop Jesus' character is the goal of all who wish to follow Him.



We can live a Christian life when the Holy Spirit lives in our heart.

What areas in your life need to change? How can you help the Holy Spirit make these changes?

### **MONDAY—APRIL 3**

### WATER (John 7:37-39).

There can be no life without water. In the same way, there can be no spiritual life without the Spirit. Also, we cannot make water. We are totally dependent upon God for it. We also are totally dependent on God for the Spirit.

Notice the idea of water flowing out from those who love Jesus (John 7:38). This is an important truth about those who love Him. When believers receive something through the Spirit, it will flow from them to others.

### How does Isaiah 44:3 show the same idea Jesus talked about in John 7:38?

The second part of Isaiah 44:3 explains what the first part means. Isaiah 44:4 shows that growth will come from the pouring out of water upon dry land. In the same way, spiritual growth comes from the outpouring of God's Spirit. Growth is proof of life. Dry land becomes green because of water. So, the Spirit can change a "dry" soul into a person of Christian beauty. "The Spirit of God through faith makes a new life in the soul." —Adapted from *The Desire of Ages*, p. 176.

How does Matthew 18:21-35 show the idea that what we receive

from the Holy Spirit will flow out to others?

What are some things the Holy Spirit has done for you that you also should be doing for others?



Water helps plants to grow. The Holy Spirit helps us to grow in Christ.

### **TUESDAY—APRIL 4**

### OIL (Matthew 25:1-4).

Read Matthew 25:1-4. Lamps in the time of Christ did not give light without oil. In the same way, a Christian cannot bring light (God's message) to the world without the Spirit in his or her life (Matthew 5:14-16). "The wise virgins symbolize people who received the grace of God and the renewing power of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's power makes the Bible a lamp to the feet and a light to the path. In the fear of God these people had studied the Bible to learn the truth. They had worked hard for purity of heart and life."—Adapted from The Great Controversy [War], p. 394.



Oil is a symbol of the Holy Spirit.

How does Zechariah 4:1-6 describe the light-giving power of the Holy Spirit? What do you think the angel meant in verse 6?

The lamps or the lampstands (candlesticks) represent the church or Christ's followers (Revelation 1:20). The holy ones that stand in God's presence give the Holy Spirit to humans who are dedicated to His service. Only through the renewing power of the Holy Spirit can we develop the right attitude toward God's light and truth. Only through the Holy Spirit can we be messengers of mercy and grace to the world.

The two olive trees are draining the golden oil out of themselves into a bowl. This bowl feeds the sanctuary

lamps so they always can give a bright light. So, from the chosen messengers that stand in God's presence, the fullness of God's light, love, and power is shared with His people. They in turn become messengers to share God's love to the world.

In the past 24 hours, were you a dim bulb, a weak lantern, or a bright lamp of light giving hope and grace?

### **WEDNESDAY—APRIL 5**

SEAL AND GUARANTEE (2 Corinthians 1:22).

What is Paul teaching us in 2 Corinthians 1:20-22?

Where do you see the work of the Three-in-One God in 2 Corinthians 1:20-22? How do these verses give us hope about salvation?

Notice that 2 Corinthians 1:20 teaches that in Jesus, we have all these promises. These promises are made sure through the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 1:22). The promises come because of what Jesus did for us on the cross. Because of the cross, we can receive the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the seal of our salvation.

The gift of the Spirit is God's promise to believers that He will bring them the full gift of salvation by taking them out of this world of sin and giving

them the right to enter His eternal<sup>5</sup> kingdom.

Second Corinthians 1:20-22 does not teach "once saved, always saved." But we can resist the Spirit (Acts 7:51). God does not want to force us to follow Him. It is up to us to follow Him by faith, by claiming His power to overcome when tempted, and by claiming His forgiveness when we fall. When we do these things, He will do all He has promised. What more hope do we need?

"All the promises of God find their Yes in him [Jesus]" (2 Corinthians 1:20). Which promises mean the most to you?

### **THURSDAY—APRIL 6**

### LIGHT AND FIRE (John 1:9).

"Many worldly people have no knowledge of God's written law. They have never heard Christ's name. But they have been kind to His servants....They have protected His servants at the risk of their own lives. Their acts show the working of God's power. The Holy Spirit has planted the grace of Christ in the hearts of worldly people, awakening sympathies that are not normal. The 'Light that gives light to every man was coming into the world' (John 1:9, NIrV) is shining in their world. And this Light, if obeyed, will guide their

feet to God's kingdom."—Adapted from *Christ's Object Lessons*, p. 385.

What important questions does the above quote answer? What questions does it not answer?

With what did John the Baptist say Jesus would baptize His followers? What do you think he meant? Matthew 3:11.

Fire showed God's presence (Exodus 3:2), His protecting care and leading (Exodus 13:21), His approval (Leviticus 9:24), and His sanctifying<sup>6</sup> power (Isaiah 6:6, 7).

How have you experienced a baptism of fire? What lessons did you learn from this experience?

### FRIDAY—APRIL 7

ADDITIONAL STUDY: Ellen G. White, *Christ's Object Lessons*, "Two Worshipers," pp. 158, 159, and "To Meet the Bridegroom," pp. 405–408; *The Desire of Ages*, pp. 190, 453, 454; *The Ministry [Work] of Healing*, pp. 36, 37; *The Great Controversy [War]*, pp. 425, 426; *Steps to Christ*, "The Test of Discipleship," pp. 57, 58.

Jesus used another symbol to describe the Holy Spirit's work. He

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>eternal—forever; without beginning or end; lasting forever.

<sup>°</sup>sanctifying—the Holy Spirit's work of helping us to have the character of Jesus.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup>discipleship—surrendering fully our lives and hearts to God.

compared<sup>8</sup> the Spirit's work to the wind (John 3:8).

We cannot see the wind. We do not know where the wind comes from. We do not know where it goes. But we can see what the wind does. Likewise, we cannot see the Spirit. But we can see what the Spirit does in the lives it changes. The Spirit is a mystery. Of the Three Persons in the Godhead, the Spirit is the most unfamiliar to people. Jesus came to show the Father (John 1:18). And people saw Jesus in human form. But no one has ever seen the Spirit.

"Christ uses the wind as a symbol of the Spirit of God. 'The wind blows where it wants to. You hear the sound it makes. But you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going' (John 3:8, NIrV). It is the same with the Spirit of God. We do not know through whom the Spirit will be shown."—Adapted from *Selected Messages*, book 2, p. 15.

#### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- 1. As a class, compare your answers to the last question in Wednesday's study. What promises came up again and again?
- 2. This week's study focused on the changes the Holy Spirit brings to our lives and how we should show these changes. But how should the Holy Spirit change the church as a group? How would these changes be shown in the church's relationship to the local community?

 $<sup>^{\</sup>circ}\text{compared}\text{---}\text{showed how things}$  are the same.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup>Godhead—God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit make up the Godhead.