

# THE HOLY SPIRIT

## “Cloud” – Part I

### I. Establishing the Symbol

#### 1. Children of Israel Led by the Spirit of God

Isa 63:11-14 NIV

11 Then his people recalled the days of old, the days of Moses and his people-- where is he who brought them through the sea, with the shepherd of his flock? **Where is he who set his Holy Spirit among them,**

12 who sent his glorious arm of power to be at Moses' right hand, who divided the waters before them, to gain for himself everlasting renown,

13 who led them through the depths? Like a horse in open country, they did not stumble;

14 like cattle that go down to the plain, **they were given rest by the Spirit of the LORD. This is how you guided your people to make for yourself a glorious name.**

*In recalling the days of Moses, Isaiah says that the children of Israel were led out by the Spirit of God. What was the tangible representation of the Spirit of God?*

#### 2. Children of Israel Led by Pillar of Cloud and Fire

A. Ex 13:17-18, 21

17 When Pharaoh let the people go, God did not lead them on the road through the Philistine country, though that was shorter. For God said, "If they face war, they might change their minds and return to Egypt."

18 So God led the people around by the desert road toward the Red Sea. The Israelites went up out of Egypt armed for battle.

21 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. NIV

B. Neh 9:19-20

19 "Because of your great compassion you did not abandon them in the desert. By day the pillar of cloud did not cease to guide them on their path, nor the pillar of fire by night to shine on the way they were to take.

20 **You gave your good Spirit to instruct them.** You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst. NIV

#### 3. What Type of Cloud Did the Cloud Appear to Be?

Ex 19:16 NIV

On the morning of the third day there **was thunder and lightning, with a thick cloud over the mountain,** and a very loud trumpet blast. Everyone in the camp trembled.

Ps 77:13-20

13 Your ways, O God, are holy. What god is so great as our God?

14 You are the God who performs miracles; you display your power among the peoples.

- 15 With your mighty arm you redeemed your people, the descendants of Jacob and Joseph. Selah
- 16 The waters saw you, O God, the waters saw you and writhed; the very depths were convulsed.
- 17 The clouds poured down water, the skies resounded with thunder; your arrows flashed back and forth.
- 18 **Your thunder was heard in the whirlwind, your lightning lit up the world;** the earth trembled and quaked.
- 19 Your path led through the sea, your way through the mighty waters, though your footprints were not seen.
- 20 You led your people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron. NIV

*In the natural, the Cloud would have been the anvil shaped thundercloud (or anvil cumulonimbus) with a tornado!*

## II. The Cloud in Scripture

### 1. A Combination of Symbols

*The symbol of the cloud combines aspects of wind, water, and fire. Wind is air in motion. Somewhere in the world, the wind is always in motion. In this case, the air would signify the Holy Spirit's omnipresence. The cloud would symbolize his manifest presence. The rain would symbolize his outpouring and the lightning his judgment.*

### 2. The Progressive Revelation of the Cloud

*The revelation of the cloud falls under the progressive mention principle of hermeneutics (Scriptural interpretation). Progressive mention means that there is a successive unfolding of a continuous theme to its consummation. In the revelation of the cloud we see the promise, the presence, and the person.*

#### A. The Promise – Gen 15:17-18

Gen 15:17-18

17 When the sun had set and darkness had fallen, **a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and passed between the pieces.**

18 **On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram** and said, "To your descendants I give this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the Euphrates-- NIV

*By this we see that the cloud is a place of covenant, a fact that is also seen in Genesis 9.*

Gen 9:8-17

8 Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him:

9 "I now establish my covenant with you and with your descendants after you

10 and with every living creature that was with you--the birds, the livestock and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you--every living creature on earth.

- 11 I establish my covenant with you: Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth."
- 12 And God said, "This is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come:
- 13 I have set my rainbow in the clouds, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and the earth.
- 14 Whenever I bring clouds over the earth and the rainbow appears in the clouds,
- 15 I will remember my covenant between me and you and all living creatures of every kind. Never again will the waters become a flood to destroy all life.
- 16 Whenever the rainbow appears in the clouds, I will see it and remember the everlasting covenant between God and all living creatures of every kind on the earth."
- 17 So God said to Noah, "This is the sign of the covenant I have established between me and all life on the earth." NIV

*Just as an aside, from God's perspective the rainbow is a full circle. Our perspective at best gives us only a half circle (full bow). Only when our perspective is elevated (as in a plane or on a mountain) can we see the 360<sup>o</sup> rainbow!*

B. The Presence – Ex 33:14

Ex 13:21-22

- 21 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.
- 22 Neither the pillar of cloud by day nor the pillar of fire by night left its place in front of the people. NIV

Ex 33:7-11

- 7 Now Moses used to take a tent and pitch it outside the camp some distance away, calling it the "tent of meeting." Anyone inquiring of the LORD would go to the tent of meeting outside the camp.
- 8 And whenever Moses went out to the tent, all the people rose and stood at the entrances to their tents, watching Moses until he entered the tent.
- 9 As Moses went into the tent, the pillar of cloud would come down and stay at the entrance, while the LORD spoke with Moses.
- 10 Whenever the people saw the pillar of cloud standing at the entrance to the tent, they all stood and worshiped, each at the entrance to his tent.
- 11 The LORD would speak to Moses face to face, as a man speaks with his friend. Then Moses would return to the camp, but his young aide Joshua son of Nun did not leave the tent. NIV

*The Lord spoke to Moses face to face **in the cloud!** The cloud had been with them since Egypt, but God reveals to Moses that this is His Presence, his face.*

Ex 33:14

The LORD replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest." NIV

C. The Person – Rev 10:1

i. His appearance – Ezk 1:4, 22-28

Ezek 1:4, 22-28

- 4 Then I looked, and behold, a whirlwind was coming out of the north, a great cloud with raging fire engulfing itself; and brightness was all around it and radiating out of its midst like the color of amber, out of the midst of the fire.
- 22 The likeness of the firmament above the heads of the living creatures was like the color of an awesome crystal, stretched out over their heads.
- 23 And under the firmament their wings spread out straight, one toward another. Each one had two which covered one side, and each one had two which covered the other side of the body.
- 24 When they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of many waters, like the voice of the Almighty, a tumult like the noise of an army; and when they stood still, they let down their wings.
- 25 A voice came from above the firmament that was over their heads; whenever they stood, they let down their wings.
- 26 And above the firmament over their heads was the likeness of a throne, in appearance like a sapphire stone; on the likeness of the throne was a likeness with the appearance of a man high above it.
- 27 Also from the appearance of His waist and upward I saw, as it were, the color of amber with the appearance of fire all around within it; and from the appearance of His waist and downward I saw, as it were, the appearance of fire with brightness all around.
- 28 Like the appearance of a rainbow in a cloud on a rainy day, so was the appearance of the brightness all around it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. So when I saw it, I fell on my face, and I heard a voice of One speaking. NKJV

ii. His alteration – Luke 9:29-35

Luke 9:29-35

- 29 As he was praying, the appearance of his face changed, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning.
- 30 Two men, Moses and Elijah,
- 31 appeared in glorious splendor, talking with Jesus. They spoke about his departure, which he was about to bring to fulfillment at Jerusalem.
- 32 Peter and his companions were very sleepy, but when they became fully awake, they saw his glory and the two men standing with him.
- 33 As the men were leaving Jesus, Peter said to him, "Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three shelters—one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." (He did not know what he was saying.)
- 34 While he was speaking, a cloud appeared and enveloped them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud.

35 A voice came from the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him." NIV

*The Amplified Bible says that they were seized with alarm and struck with fear as they entered the cloud. The language "they entered" is interesting. It makes it sound like they walked into the cloud, which is our perspective. The reality was that the cloud overshadowed them!! Often we talk of "entering into His Presence" which we need to do. But the reality is that He is in control. He overshadows us.*

iii. His ascension – Acts 1:6-9

Acts 1:6-9

6 Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"

7 And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority.

8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

9 Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud **received**<sup>1</sup> Him out of their sight. NKJV

*Thayer's definition-*

NT:5274 – **hupolambanoo**<sup>1</sup>; to take up in order to raise, to bear on high, to take up and carry away

iv. His advent – Rev 1:7

Dan 7:13-14

13 "In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the **clouds** of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence.

14 He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. NIV

*This is the same word used for the cloud of the column of cloud and gives us by way of prophecy a definite New Testament connection.*

Matt 24:30

"At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see **the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory.** NIV

Rev 1:7

Look, **he is coming with the clouds**, and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him; and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him. So shall it be! Amen. NIV

### III. Why Examine the Cloud?

1. God Does not Want Us Ignorant of It.

1 Cor 10:1

**For I do not want you to be ignorant** of the fact, brothers, **that our forefathers were all under the cloud** and that they all passed through the sea. NIV

2. It deals with the Spirit of God.

1 Cor 10:2-4

2 They were all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

3 They all ate the same spiritual food

4 and drank the same spiritual drink; for they drank from the spiritual rock that accompanied them, and that rock was Christ. NIV

*The cloud and the sea were baptism into Moses. Moses was a type of Christ. Thus the sea is water baptism and the cloud is Holy Spirit baptism. Being baptized in water (obedience after salvation) and the Holy Spirit is being baptized into Jesus.*

Acts 19:1-6

1 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples

2 and asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

3 So Paul asked, "Then what baptism did you receive?" "John's baptism," they replied.

4 Paul said, "John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus."

5 On hearing this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

6 When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. NIV

3. It Is an Example to Keep Us from Evil.

1 Cor 10:5-6

5 Nevertheless, God was not pleased with most of them; their bodies were scattered over the desert.

6 Now these things occurred as examples to keep us from setting our hearts on evil things as they did. NIV

*As we learn about the Holy Spirit as the cloud we should be encouraged to follow Him all the way to the promised land! Amen!*