

"The Holy Spirit: Your Sr. Partner"

By Evangelist Dea Warford

(First of a four-part series edited from a sermon I preached at The Power Station: Come visit us soon!)

Word: *"This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the Lord of hosts." Zechariah 4:6*

All scriptural quotations are from the NKJV, Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1982.

Wisdom: David Yongi Cho is the pastor of the largest church in the world in Seoul Korea (750,000 members). He wrote a book called, "The Holy Spirit, My Senior Partner." In the book, he explained how every day when he wakes up, He tells the Holy Spirit "Good Morning", calls Him his "Senior Partner", and says to Him, "Let's go!" He attributes much of his success in building the largest church in the world with learning to walk with, listen to and partner with the Holy Spirit. Is the Holy Spirit your "Senior Partner?" I want to write this week on how we can partner more effectively with the Holy Spirit to be more successful in our lives, because to make our lives count, we must learn to work by the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

Zerubbabel is one of the finest examples in scripture of this principle. He was leading a contingent of Israelites who had been released from Babylonian captivity to rebuild the temple. He apparently had become discouraged in the work, as the Temple was but a pile of rubble. Thus the Lord sent Zechariah, the prophet, with a word of encouragement to him:

Zechariah 4:6, 7, 9— 6) "This is the word of the Lord to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the Lord . . . 7) 'Who are you, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel you shall become a plain! And he shall bring forth the capstone With shouts of "Grace, grace to it!" ' . . . 9) "The hands of Zerubbabel Have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it."

These three verses provide us with clues to four foundational truths of understanding how we partner with the Holy Spirit. Let's study them together.

1/ v. 6: *It's "Not by might nor by power, but only by (His) Spirit." that we successfully complete His assignments for us:*

Zerubbabel had an assignment straight from the throne room of heaven. He was to help rebuild the destroyed Temple. Cyrus, king of Babylon, appointed him governor of the land of the Jews and many Israelites were allowed to return to their homeland. When work on the Temple had begun, and as they were attempting to rebuild the foundation for the Temple, enemies of the Jews convinced Cyrus to stop the work, which he did. You can imagine how discouraged Zerubbabel had become. He knew God had called him to rebuild the Temple. The Lord had so miraculously provided their way out of bondage. But now, their work had come to a grinding halt. Had he really heard from God? With the most powerful king on earth now opposing the work, how could they possibly ever complete it? His skills were now useless. The authority he thought he had was powerless.

Can you relate to the way Zerubbabel must have felt? You had a promise from the Lord. You were so sure you had heard from him. You stood valiantly on this promise for a long time, but suddenly, you were slapped in the face with the grim realization that what you had been promised and what you had so looked forward to would now probably never happen . . . at least, not without a miracle!

It's called, "the death of a vision." Joseph experienced it while in prison for two years. Moses experienced it 40 years on the backside of the desert. Abraham experienced it as he waited for the promised child: for 25 years! Not only is this "death of a vision" common to many Christian's experience, but it is also an often necessary integral part of our graduate "School of the Spirit".

The prophet Jeremiah, like Zechariah, wrote about Israel's Babylonian captivity also. The Lord showed him that Israel was like a basket of figs (some good; some bad). Concerning these "figs" Jeremiah writes in . . . **Jeremiah 24:5-7:5: 5)** *"Thus says the Lord, the God of Israel: 'Like these good figs, so will I acknowledge those who are carried away captive from Judah, whom I have sent out of this place for their own good, into the land of the Chaldeans. 6) For I will set My eyes on them for good, and I will bring them back to this land; I will build them and not pull them down, and I will plant them and not pluck them up. 7) Then I will give them a heart to know Me, that I am the Lord; and they shall be My people, and I will be their God, for they shall return to Me with their whole heart.*

The Lord said that He allowed Judah to be taken into Babylonian captivity "for their own good" (v. 5). But, this was necessary because there were so many "bad figs" among them. After the difficulty of captivity, they were motivated to "return to Me with their whole heart." Perhaps as the Jews were rebuilding the Temple they had begun to boast. Perhaps Zerubbabel was a very self-confident man. We don't know for sure, but we do know that it was important for God to illustrate to him that he would rebuild the temple, but NOT . . .

"by might" Zech. 4:6: (The word translated "might" here is a Hebrew word that is translated elsewhere in the Bible as "substance", "wealth", "their goods", "valour"). In other words, the Temple would not be built by normal human resources.

In verse 6, He adds that the Temple will also be built NOT . . ."by power" (the word "power" in the Hebrew is also translated elsewhere "strength", "ability"). In other words: neither a powerful body; a powerful will; nor a powerful mind was enough to do this work. No, instead, it would only be accomplished, "by My Spirit."

Understanding it is truly only by partnership with the Holy Spirit we will ever "get the job done" may seem but a basic truth, but to process that truth through our human pride, ego, and self-confidence often makes for a difficult lesson to learn. Thus, God often allows us to enter a very hard place in our lives (Like being captive in Babylon, or facing a pile of rubble with no authority at all to change the circumstances). But, it is in this place that we can finally come to an end of self: our pride, ego and self-confidence all shattered! Then, we'll understand clearly that it is "not by might, nor by power, but . . . (only)

"by my Spirit." It is in that at last discovered place of wisdom the Holy Spirit can really start working with us as our Senior Partner! Tomorrow, now we move mountains with the Holy Spirit's help!

Prayer: "Father, there is a lot of rubble in my life. Teach me to partner with the Holy Spirit. Help me to learn to humble myself before you and let You take control of my life!"

Confession: "I'll get the job done! But, "not by might, nor by power, but by His Spirit."

"Move That Mountain!"

Part 2

Word: *"Who are you O mountain. Before Zerubbabel, you shall become a plain." Zech. 4:7*

Wisdom: To partner with the Holy Spirit you must prepare to take on the job of being a "mountain mover".

When the Temple was finally completed, Zechariah prophesied Zerubbabel would complete the building of the Temple in spite of the mountain of difficulties he faced . . .

As today's devotional verse says, "Who are you O mountain. Before Zerubbabel, you shall become a plain." (Zech. 4:7)

Who are you O Mountain: Mountains represent impossible situations. There is no way in the world we can get past a mountain, except with the help of the Holy Spirit. But, we still can do it with His help!

Jesus promised his disciples, *"Assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you."* Matthew 17:20:

Believers can and should be "mountain movers".

Have you got a mountain of rubble in your life? Jesus said, if you'll just say to that mountain "Move from here to there!" it will move! In fact, nothing will be impossible for you!

We used to sing an old song years back that went like this:

*Got any rivers you think are uncrossable.
Got any mountain, you can't tunnel through.
God specializes in things thought impossible,
And He will do what no other power can do.*

Who are you O Mountain: My parents were moving to the Fruitland, Idaho area (where Kathy and I were pastoring) to become our assistant ministers. We had rented a trailer and packed it high with furniture. It was much too heavy a load (especially for the mid-sized Plymouth Duster we were pulling it with). The four of us were riding in our car together; I was driving. The car and trailer did fine going uphill on the first big mountain pass, but when we got on the other side of the pass and began moving downhill, instead of the car pulling the trailer, the trailer began to push the car! It began weaving to the left and then to the right. I couldn't stop it. The trailer was in danger of tipping over and maybe even tipping the car with it. It seemed to go on and on.

Finally, my wife spoke out loud to the trailer crying, "You stop that!" I'm not exaggerating; that trailer just quickly and smoothly lined up in place again behind our car! I'll never forget it! I had knowingly loaded more weight in that trailer than the manufacturer recommended. I obviously was driving too fast for that big trailer load behind us. But, God's Spirit-power partnering with Kathy's faith was able to conquer a mountain!

Do you have an area of your life that seems to be careening down a mountain with the danger of causing a wreck! Speak to it! Tell it, "You stop that!" by the power of the Holy Spirit and look to God's power instead of your own resources!

Who are you O Mountain: A giant had the entire army of the Israelites hiding and ducking for cover. But David came to the battle and declared, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" He not only killed that giant with a slingshot and a rock, but he cut off his head (in case the Philistines happened to have any defibrillators on hand).

Have you got a demon in your life taunting you? Like David, confess: "Who is this uncircumcised demon, that he dare defy this soldier in the army of the living God?" Don't let a mountain, even a giant mountain stop you! Killing a giant with a slingshot necessitated the help of the Holy Spirit. And conquering an immortal invisible demon, trained personally by Satan himself, will happen with nothing less than the direction and assistance of your Senior Partner: the Holy Spirit!

We've all got mountains in our life, like Zerubbabel. But, we also all have the invitation to let the Holy Spirit become our Senior Partner. If you haven't done so already, invite Him to join you today. Move a mountain or two with His power!

Prayer: "Spirit of the Living God, fall fresh on me! I willingly and gladly invite you to be my Senior Partner today. Help me to move these mountains in my life!"

Confession: "Who are you O mountain to defy me, a soldier in the army of the living God?"

Part Three

Word: *"And (Zerubbabel) shall bring forth the capstone with shouts of 'Grace, grace to it.'" Zech. 4:7*

Wisdom: Whatever you and the Holy Spirit accomplish will happen only by God's grace

As today's devotional verse states in v. 7: "And (Zerubbabel) shall bring forth the capstone with shouts of 'Grace, grace to it.'" After the building of the temple had been suspended for a long period of time; after all human attempts to get back to work had failed; now humbled, repentant, and totally dependent upon God: the perhaps once proud Zerubbabel would at last see the Temple completed. In that moment, he would humbly and joyfully give God all the glory "With shouts of Grace, Grace to it!" Grace: God's goodness and unmerited favor accomplished it. Grace: that absolutely necessary ingredient without which we never would have completed the work. Grace: it was the "God-side" of the equation that made the real difference. These shouts of "grace!" were "shouts" because they were birthed out of a joyous whole-hearted gratitude towards God. Until you get so excited about God's grace that you begin to shout about, you haven't yet received the full revelation of grace. The concept and revelation of God's grace is of such infinite importance, that a man who leans on his works to earn salvation (instead of God's grace) is damned!

Ephesians 2:8-10 - "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

We are "saved by grace". It's "the gift of God" and "Not of works, lest anyone should boast." It's not accomplished by anything we do but our choice to accept it and believe it. If we could ever work it out on our own, we would boast! We'd gloat and be so proud of ourselves. God will not allow this, for it's following in the same path of Satan . . .

1 Timothy 3:6: *"Not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride he fall into the same condemnation as the devil."* A novice would be someone who has not had enough experience in the ways of God to realize that any abilities he has are a result of God's grace.

Eph. 3:10 continues, *"For we are his workmanship (Gr. "poema" , the word from which we get our English word "poem". The NLT says "masterpiece").* God is making a poem out of your life. His goal is to make you a masterpiece! As long as there is any vestige of pride, ego or self-confidence, you will be marred. It is only as you've learned to lean on God and His grace (thus partnering with the Holy Spirit) that you can ever approach the level of a "masterpiece".

If you are "doing it" on your own, you will not lean on the Holy Spirit; you will not let him truly be your Senior Partner; you will not diligently seek him in prayer, fasting, or diligent Bible study. Nor will you desperately cry out to God the equivalent of "Grace, grace!" Instead, keep confidently doing it in your own strength. I what I am talking about!

It was 1972. I was 23 years old. We had just taken over our first pastorate in Sheridan Wyoming. It was Saturday night before our first Sunday service. As I sat in the sanctuary playing the piano, I remember thinking to myself: "Yes, any day now and I'll have one of the biggest churches in our organization." Why did I think that? Because I was full of pride, ego and self-confidence. I really thought I would build that church on my own human talents and strengths: (preaching skill, high energy level, personality, intelligence, etc.). I apparently didn't need the help of my Senior Partner, the Holy Spirit. And, He took notice of it!

It wasn't very long before I realized that I was not going to have one of the biggest churches in the organization. In fact, the church began to shrink, instead of grow! I remember one night looking out at the small crowd listening to me preach. I counted them to myself; there were five people sleeping while I spoke! This wasn't what I wanted to be when I grew up! So, I started fasting and praying for power with God.

I was soon on the evangelistic field with God using me in a wonderful way. Many people got saved and healed. There was only one problem: I thought God was using me because I had fasted so long!!!! I even boasted about my "long fast" as the "price I had paid to have a healing ministry" (I still didn't get it!). Thus, God had to let me enter into a kind of "Babylonian captivity." In my personal case, that happened to be one weak or "failed" ministry after another; even out of the ministry a couple of times.

In 1978, I resigned my church in Nampa, Idaho, heading for Southern California believing I had a clear assignment from the Lord to "rebuild the Temple" of my evangelistic ministry. I actually thought that within weeks I would be the "leading evangelist" in my organization. (Years earlier, I was going to have a "biggest church"; now I'm expecting to become a "leading evangelist": I still hadn't learned!) God yet needed to teach me how to humbly partner with the Holy Spirit. So, within weeks, I was broke, out of the ministry and soon shoveling sand for a steel factory! Like Zerubbabel, I seemed to have little prospect of getting back in the ministry, much less being a "leading evangelist."

During this great trial of my life, I visited an evangelist's meeting and marveled at the crowd and the miracles in her ministry. When I got back home, I was despairing that my vision for a powerful nationwide healing ministry seemed dead. I asked the Lord if I ever was going to have a ministry like I had just witnessed and had prayed and longed for so long. I opened the Word and the Holy Spirit led my eyes immediately to: Acts 5:38-39: ³⁸ *"Keep away from these men and let them alone; for if this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing; ³⁹ but if it is of God, you cannot overthrow it--lest you even be found to fight against God."*

Look how closely these words parallel with Zechariah's:

- Zech. 4:4: *"Not by might, nor by power,*
- Acts 5:38: *"If this plan or this work is of men, it will come to nothing."*
- Zech. 4:4: *"but by my Spirit"*
- Acts 5:39: *"but if it is of God, you can't overthrow it."*

God was saying to me a similar thing He said to Zerubbabel: "If you are trying to do it in your own strength, in your own way, and in your own timing, it will never happen. But, if you'll allow my Spirit to work with you, it's a sure thing!" It was 16 years later that I was released to a now 14 year evangelistic thrust. I have seen many miracles, but I know that God wants to do much, much more.

I still have piles of rubble I'm working on! My key? I must continue to walk in humility before God and increasingly learn to partner with the Holy Spirit. Probably very few reading this feel called to a national healing ministry and have been being prepared for it by the Lord for decades (as I have), but I'm sure there are other important things that you (and the Spirit of God) feel strongly about: God's plan for your marriage; God's plan for your children; your health; your finances; your prayer life; your success as a Christian. The principle of "grace" applies to any area of life where you have tried and tried to "make it work" and failed. Your "plan was of men" and it "came to nothing". Now, you're where your Senior Partner can help you overcome every obstacle! And, He can do this through you as you learn to lean on His grace and walk in His grace!

Prayer: "Father, help me understand the concept of grace and not lean on my own "works". Show me how to make my voice, like David, "the pen of a ready writer" (Ps. 45:1) that You might write your best poem with my life."

Confession: "By His grace, He is making me a 'masterpiece'."

Part 4

Word: *Zech. 4:9. "The hands of Zerubbabel have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it."*

Wisdom: The Spirit will not "do it" without you! Remember, it's a partnership! As we have been learning, you cannot "do it" without the Holy Spirit. But, just as importantly, The Holy Spirit will not do it without you! Soon after Zechariah prophesied that the Temple would be rebuilt, "not by might, not by power, but by My Spirit." He also made it clear that Zerubbabel would still be very much involved in the building of it:

As our devotional verse states in Zech. 4:9: "The hands of Zerubbabel Have laid the foundation of this temple; His hands shall also finish it."

Zerubbabel's hands started the work. They would also finish it! The revelation to Zerubbabel was that he would be a co-laborer with God. This is a revelation all God's people who long to work for and with God must receive:

1 Cor. 3:9: *"For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building." The phrase "fellow workers" means "co-laborers" or "co-workers" (NASB77). This represents someone who is learning to work together with God's Spirit as his Senior Partner.*

We are now learning to do this at The Power Station on Sunday nights. The miracles that are happening are the result of a new commitment to be sensitive to what the Holy Spirit is doing and saying: to partner with Him. BUT, (and this is a very BIG but), it is ONLY when we step out in faith and expect the Spirit to use us that He can do His work!

One woman had been in a car accident and had back pain and a stiff neck. She would have to turn her whole body to look to the side. After prayer, the pain went away, and she demonstrated to us all how she could turn her neck all around without pain.

Another woman had been in pain in several areas of her body for a couple of decades. After prayer, the pain left. She could walk on her foot without pain. Her back pain was gone. Her neck pain was gone. It was a miracle!

One man, while in prayer during one of our services, a week later testified the ongoing back pain he had had for years, instantly left during the service and hadn't reoccurred!

Prophetic words, visible demonstrations of the Spirit's power, conversion: It is so exciting coming to The Power Station where on the front wall in large letters it reads: "In demonstration of the Spirit and of power." (1 Cor. 2:4) and where the Holy Spirit is actually doing that!

You can experience the Holy Spirit's touch also! If you live in So. Calif. come visit us Sunday nights at 6 PM at 2235 E. 4th St. Ontario, Calif. Call for directions are more info: 918-576-4680. Come learn more about letting the Holy Spirit be your Senior Partner!

Let's review the things we have learned. To partner with the Holy Spirit . . .

1. We are convinced that we can only do it with the Spirit's help;
2. We expect to move mountains, because that is the work of the Holy Spirit;
3. We know it is by grace alone and not by our wonderful "good works". And, if God has let us fail, it is only so we might learn to lean on His grace;
4. We understand the Spirit will not "do it" without us! We get the privilege of being His "co-worker."

So, pray as though everything depended on the Holy Spirit and work as though everything depended on you! Listen for His voice; study diligently; work hard; and step out in faith: because although the Holy Spirit is our Senior Partner, He is nevertheless still our "partner". He has a responsibility to do things ("by my Spirit") and we have a responsibility to do things ("His hands shall finish it.") Stir up yourself today to start and finish the work!

Prayer: "Father, teach me to learn to work with the Holy Spirit. I choose to be a co-worker with Him. Speak to me concerning my work."

Confession: "I will finish what the Spirit has started in me."

Philippians 1:6: *"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."*