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# Spiritual Leadership

A Biblical Theology of the Role of the Spirit in the Leadership of God's People



**David Huffstutler**

*foreword by Andreas J. Köstenberger*

How should we see the Spirit at work in spiritual leaders today? How did the Spirit work through spiritual leaders in the Bible? While many books on spiritual leadership look at the culture around us and offer sound advice from biblical principles, this study asks Scripture first what the Spirit did through spiritual leaders in the Bible in order to figure out what the Spirit should be doing through spiritual leaders today.

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—LARRY J. PURCELL

PhD, Professor of Leadership and Discipleship, Associate Dean of Advanced Degrees, Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary

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SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

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To those who formally and informally lead the church today in local churches and parachurch ministries. May their leadership truly be a genuine work of the Spirit.

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## Foreword

COMPREHENDING THE PERSON AND work of the Holy Spirit is a challenging, even mind-stretching, task. How do you wrap your brain around the teaching of Scripture regarding this unique person that is so vital in the life of the Christian—and the Christian leader in particular—and yet at times so difficult to understand?

Consider the following selection of passages:

- At creation, the writer of Genesis tells us, the Spirit was mysterious hovering over the face of the primordial waters.<sup>1</sup>
- Moses and the Seventy, the craftsmen working on the Tabernacle, and Israel's first king, Saul, as well as David, his successor, were all endowed with the Spirit for their respective tasks.<sup>2</sup>
- In one of his psalms, King David prays following his sin with Bathsheba, "Don't take your Holy Spirit away from me."<sup>3</sup>
- Jesus, when preaching his inaugural homily in his hometown synagogue of Capernaum, claims to be the Spirit-anointed Servant of the Lord featured in the book of Isaiah.<sup>4</sup>
- The risen Jesus breathed on his new messianic community (the Eleven), symbolically prefiguring the endowment of the Spirit at Pentecost.<sup>5</sup>

1. Genesis 1:2.

2. Exodus 31:3; Numbers 11:17, 25; 1 Samuel 11:6; 16:13.

3. Psalm 51:11.

4. Luke 4:18–19; cf. Isa 61:1–2.

5. John 20:22.



## FOREWORD

- According to the book of Acts, and in keeping with Joel's prophecy, the Holy Spirit would empower the church for her witness to the ends of the earth.<sup>6</sup>
- Paul calls on believers to "walk" in the Spirit, to be "led" by the Spirit, and to "keep in step" with the Spirit. He also asserts that if anyone does not have the Spirit, he is not a true believer.<sup>7</sup>
- Conversely, Jude characterizes the false teachers as those who are devoid of the Spirit.<sup>8</sup>

This selected assortment of Old and New Testament passages with reference to the Spirit reflects a colorful array of pieces of a puzzle. But how do these pieces all fit together? And what do they teach us about God's work, particularly in the life of those he calls to a role of leadership?

In this volume, the author takes up the challenging but rewarding task of trying to assemble this puzzle, or, to change the metaphor, to connect the dots. He appropriately adopts a biblical-theological approach, paying careful attention to the unfolding revelation regarding the Spirit throughout the course of Scripture.

- Did the Spirit indwell leaders in Old Testament times as he does in the New Testament era? Or did he come on leaders only temporarily to equip them for their task?
- Is there any difference between God's work in leaders and his work in ordinary believers? What is the Spirit's role particularly in the New Testament period and in the church today?
- What are the different ways in which God has been, and continues to be, at work in and through leaders' lives?

These are the kinds of questions addressed in this helpful, well-written volume. As one who is about to embark on the project of co-authoring a monograph on a biblical theology of the Spirit, I deeply appreciate the judicious treatment the author has provided on this important issue.<sup>9</sup>

The present volume will prove particularly useful for pastors and church leaders. In an age when the study of leadership often lacks proper

6. Acts 1:8; cf. Joel 2:28–29.

7. Galatians 5:16, 18, 25; Romans 8:9.

8. Jude 19.

9. My volume will be co-authored with Gregg Allison and published by B&H Academic.

## FOREWORD

biblical grounding, it is refreshing to see a work that engages the Scriptures consistently and in depth rather than by mere occasional proof texting.

This book is also much needed because many discussions of leadership either neglect or ignore the Spirit. This is inexcusable, however, because the Spirit is God's indispensable instrument in calling, empowering, and guiding leaders he appoints, as the Scriptures attest.

I am grateful to be able to commend this book. I am confident that those who read it will find much food for thought. Not only this, but leaders, in particular, will be able to clarify their place in God's plan and arrive at a deeper appreciation of the Spirit's work in and through their lives.

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*Senior Research Professor of New Testament & Biblical Theology*  
*Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary*

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I WOULD BE AMISS to not say that there are many individuals besides the few mentioned here who have contributed to this study in one way or another. Some, however, played a larger role than others:

- To my wife Holly, whose employment provided the funds for several years of tuition; the editor whose scholarship improved every page of this study; the mother who watched our children alone for many days while I studied; and the helpmeet who encouraged me throughout all my studies;
- To my children Calvin and Mackenna, who always hugged me as I went out the door to study but never quite understood what it meant for “daddy to work on his paper”; to my daughter Ashlyn whose unseen presence motivated me to finish this study in its first format as a dissertation before her birth; and to my daughter Gwendolyn whose unseen presence motivated me to publish my dissertation as this book before her birth as well;
- To the faculty and staff of Bob Jones University, Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary for their example and expectation in biblical scholarship, and especially to my major professor, Dr. Andreas Köstenberger, who mentored me in the fields of Christian leadership and biblical theology and provided me with an example of scholarly excellence;
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- To my parents, Dale and Linda Huffstutler, and to my brothers Daniel, Joel, and Nathan, who encouraged me in my studies.
- To Dr. Bruce Compton, professor of biblical languages and literature at Detroit Baptist Theological Seminary, for encouraging me to publish my dissertation into the pages that follow.

## Abbreviations

ESV	<i>The Holy Bible: English Standard Version</i> . Wheaton, Ill.: Standard Bible Society, 2001.
HALOT	Koehler, L., W. Baumgartner, and J. J. Stamm. <i>The Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> . Translated and edited under the supervision of M. E. J. Richardson. 5 vols. Leiden, 1994–2000.
HCSB	<i>The Holy Bible: Holman Christian Standard Version</i> . Nashville, Tenn.: Holman Bible Publishers, 2009.
ISBE	Bromiley, Geoffrey W., ed. <i>The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised</i> . Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1979–1988.
LXX	Septuagint
MT	Masoretic Text
NASB	<i>New American Standard Bible: 1995 Update</i> . LaHabra, Calif.: The Lockman Foundation, 1995.
NET Bible	<i>The NET Bible First Edition</i> . Dallas, Tex.; Biblical Studies Press, 2005.
NIV	<i>The Holy Bible: New International Version</i> . Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 1984.
NKJV	<i>The New King James Version</i> . Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 1982.

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## Introduction

### Statement of Thesis and Purpose

THE THESIS OF THIS study argues that a biblical theology of the role of the Spirit in the leadership of God's people demonstrates a distinct work of the Spirit in biblical leaders.

The purpose of this study is to discover how a biblical theology of the role of the Spirit in the leadership of God's people demonstrates a work of the Spirit in leaders that is distinct from other works of the Spirit such as prophecy, indwelling, or regeneration. Though these other works of the Spirit cannot be discussed in detail, it can at least be demonstrated that there is a distinct work of the Spirit involved in the leadership of biblical leaders.

### Definition of Key Terms and Phrases

Key terms and phrases that require definition for this study are the following: "God's people," "biblical leaders," "spiritual leadership," "the Spirit of God," and "the work of the Spirit of God in biblical leaders."

### God's People

As it is used in this study, the term *God's people* generally applies to the people of God in both the OT and NT. More specifically, the people of God in the OT refers to national Israel (Deut 7:6–9) and other nations on occasion (e.g., Egypt in Isa 19:25). The people of God in the NT refers to the church (2 Cor 6:16–18), a people of God not restricted by ethnicity (cf. Rev 5:9–10). For the purposes of this paper, *God's people* or *the people of God* will refer to Israel and the church.



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### Biblical Leaders

The term *biblical leader* refers to anyone who has been formally recognized by God or his people to lead the people of God. As this term applies to leaders in the OT, though prophets and foreign leaders occasionally led God's people in some way (e.g., Joseph, Cyrus, Daniel), this term will be limited to those who have been officially appointed by God or God's people to be the head of Israel. With reference to men in the NT, the term *biblical leader* will apply to Jesus, the apostles, apostolic delegates, elders, and those who enjoy what is commonly called the spiritual gift of leadership.

### Spiritual Leadership

The term *leadership* denotes any activity of a biblical leader that is an exercise of his authority over the people of God. This study limits its discussion to the activity of leadership that the Scriptural text explicitly or implicitly describes to be the result of the work of the Spirit. As the Spirit is involved in the exercise of a leader's leadership, this leadership may be called *spiritual*. Unless otherwise noted, this paper will not use the phrase *spiritual leadership* beyond this narrow definition.

### The Spirit of God

The Hebrew term *rûaḥ* and the Greek term *pneuma* carry a range of meanings,<sup>1</sup> but, unless otherwise noted, the focus of this study involves uses of *rûaḥ* and *pneuma* when they mean *spirit*, and specifically *the Spirit of God*. Of the 305,500 words in the OT,<sup>2</sup> the term *rûaḥ* occurs 394 times,<sup>3</sup> and approximately 100 of these occurrences refer to the Spirit of God,<sup>4</sup> roughly one out of every four occurrences. The ratio of the use of *rûaḥ* in comparison to the number of all the words in the OT is 1:785. The ratio

1. See HALOT, s.v., “רוח,” and BDAG, s.v., “πνεῦμα.”

2. Anderson and Forbes, *The Vocabulary of the Old Testament*, 3.

3. Hamilton, “God with Men in the Torah,” 131–33, catalogues 389 references to *rûaḥ* in the OT. 378 are Hebrew, and 11 are found in the Aramaic portions of Daniel. See also Firth and Wegner, “Introduction,” 16. Firth and Wegner assume the legitimacy of *rûaḥ* for 5 variants, bringing the total uses of *rûaḥ* to 394.

4. Wood, *The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament*, 23. Cumming, *Through the Eternal Spirit*, 17–24. Cumming carefully catalogues 88 passages “in which a Divine Person seems to be spoken of . . . contained in the Old Testament” (*Through the Eternal Spirit*, 17).

## INTRODUCTION

of the use of *rûah* with reference to the Spirit of God in comparison to the number of all the words in the OT is approximately 1:3055.

Of the 138,162 words of the NT,<sup>5</sup> the term *pneuma* occurs 379 times,<sup>6</sup> and approximately 275 of these occurrences refer to the Spirit of God,<sup>7</sup> almost three out of every four uses. The ratio of the use of *pneuma* in comparison to the number of all the words in the NT is 1:365. The ratio of the use of *pneuma* with reference to the Spirit of God in comparison to the number of all the words in the NT is approximately 1:502.

These numbers indicate that, whatever meaning is in view for *rûah* or *pneuma*, the use of *pneuma* in the NT (1:365) occurs more than twice as frequently as the use of *rûah* in the OT (1:785). Also, for every time *rûah* refers to the Spirit of God in the OT (100 of its 394 uses), the use of *pneuma* in the NT refers to the Spirit of God almost three times (275 of its 379 uses). A comparison of the ratios of the use of *rûah* and *pneuma* to all the words in their respective testaments (1:3055 and 1:502) indicates that every time the OT refers the Spirit of God with the term *rûah*, the use of *pneuma* in the NT refers to the Spirit of God six times.

Narrowing this data further, Chapter 2 will demonstrate that approximately 30 of the 100 OT uses of *rûah* that refer to the Spirit of God are used in relation to the leadership of the leaders of Israel. Chapter 3 will demonstrate that approximately 90 of the 275 NT uses of *pneuma* that refer to the Spirit of God are used in relation to the leadership of NT leaders as defined above. Given this data, the discussion in Chapter 2 will be considerably shorter than the discussion in Chapter 3.

In defining the phrase *the Spirit of God*, it is necessary to recognize the progress and accumulation of revelation about the Spirit from one biblical era to the next. To define the Spirit according to the revelation of the OT alone would not yield the same definition as if one were to define the Spirit according to the whole of Scripture. This is not to say that the OT data about the Spirit contradicts what is found in the NT. It is to say, however, that the NT reveals developments and truth about the nature and role of the Spirit that was not given in the OT. The combined data of the OT and NT naturally yields a definition of the Spirit of God that is more complete than a definition of the Spirit of God from the OT alone.

5. Wallace, *Greek Grammar Beyond the Basics*, 31.

6. See Bullinger, *Word Studies on the Holy Spirit*, 209–17.

7. EDNT, s.v., “πνεῦμα” 3:117.

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A debated topic along these lines is whether or not the OT gives enough revelation to conclude from the OT alone that the Spirit of God is a person. Some believe the OT data allow the interpreter to conclude that the Spirit in the OT is no more than an extension or personal manifestation of the one and only God. Others make a case that because the NT describes the Spirit of God as a person by quoting OT passages, these passages in the OT may have also understood the Spirit to be a person. Some suggest other lines of evidence to see the Spirit as a person in the OT as well.<sup>8</sup> Whatever one may say as to whether or not the OT understood the Spirit to be a person, the present writer assumes that the Spirit was understood to be a person by Jesus and the early church (cf. Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:14). Their understanding of the Spirit as a person may have developed from passages in the OT (see Acts 2:17–18, 33 with Joel 2:28–29).<sup>9</sup>

Unfortunately, this study cannot discuss the issue of the Spirit's personality in depth, and there will be other significant issues related to the doctrine of the Spirit that cannot be given the attention they deserve. However, it will at least be attempted to footnote debated matters and the writer's presuppositions when more cannot be said due to the constraints of this study. It is assumed that the Spirit of God in the OT is the same Spirit of God in the NT, and it is recognized that God's people had less revelation about the Spirit of God in the earlier ages of biblical history.

### The Work of the Spirit of God in Biblical Leaders

The thesis of this paper speaks of a distinct *work* of the Spirit in biblical leaders, and it is this work that is more difficult to define than any of the terms above. In fact, one might say that the purpose of this dissertation is given to describing this work in each leader so as to gather the findings and define this work in detail toward the study's end. This being said, all that can be offered at this point are some introductory matters related to a definition of the work of the Spirit in biblical leaders.

The biblical terminology for the work of the Spirit in biblical leaders is complicated and diverse. Multiple verbs describe the work of the Spirit, and sometimes the work of the Spirit must be inferred from the context and the

8. For a survey of these positions, see Firth and Wegner, "Introduction," 17–21.

9. For a discussion of the NT's understanding of the Spirit as person, see Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 65–69.

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nature of a preposition that indicates some kind of connection between the Spirit, a biblical leader, and his exercise of leadership.

A few examples from the OT illustrate these points. The Spirit was “on” Moses, “put . . . on the seventy elders,” and “rested on” Eldad and Medad (Num 11:17, 25).<sup>10</sup> Joshua was a man who the Spirit was “in” (Num 27:18). He was also “full of the spirit of wisdom” (Deut 34:9). The Spirit “clothed” (Judg 6:34), “was upon” (Judg 11:29), “began to stir” (Judg 13:25), and “rushed upon” (Judg 14:6, 19; 15:14) the judges. The Spirit likewise “rushed upon” Saul (1 Sam 10:10; 11:6) and David (1 Sam 16:13). The Spirit would “rest upon” the Messiah (Isa 11:2).

A few examples from the NT illustrate this diverse terminology as well. The Spirit “descended on” Jesus (Luke 3:22; cf. Mark 1:10) in order to “rest on him” (Matt 3:16) for the duration of his ministry. Whether he spoke “in the power of the Spirit” (Luke 4:14–15) or performed a miracle “by the Spirit of God” (Matt 12:28), it was clear that “God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with power” (Acts 10:38). In turn, Jesus would “baptize” his followers “with the Holy Spirit” (Matt 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; cf. John 1:33; Acts 1:8), which he did when he “poured out” the Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2:33; cf. 11:16).

The work of the Spirit is variously described among other NT leaders as well. Jesus “breathed on” the apostles and commanded, “Receive the Holy Spirit” (John 20:22). Individual apostles and their coworkers are described as being “filled with the Holy Spirit” (Acts 4:8; 9:17; 13:9), “full of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 11:24), and “in the Spirit” (Rev 1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10). “The Holy Spirit has made” elders overseers (Acts 20:28), and the first deacons were to be “full of the Spirit and of wisdom” (Acts 6:3). Apart from a reference to a particular individual, Paul also speaks of what is commonly called the spiritual gift of leadership (Rom 12:8; 1 Cor 12:28), which he describes as a “manifestation of the Spirit” (1 Cor 12:4, 7, 11).

This diversity in the biblical literature is reflected in secondary literature as well. Among other terms that could be added, biblical leaders are said to experience the Spirit’s gift, power, inspiration, endowment, energy, sealing, filling, infilling, imbuelement, enduement, indwelling, anointing, enabling, moving, baptism, and abiding presence.<sup>11</sup> This study has chosen

10. Unless otherwise noted, all biblical quotations are taken from the English Standard Version.

11. For a sampling of the various discussions on the terminology related to the Spirit, see especially the appendix in Hamilton, “God with Men in the Torah,” 131–33. See also Averbeck, “Breath, Wind, Spirit and the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament,” 25–37; Ryrie,

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the general term *work* to capture the idea that the Spirit is in some way active in connection to the exercise of a biblical leader's leadership.

### **The Present State of Research on the Topic of Spiritual Leadership and the Unique Contribution of the Present Study**

"As much as there is written on Christ, so little is there written on the Holy Spirit."<sup>12</sup> This statement by Abraham Kuyper was made over a century ago, and one could certainly not say the same today. In fact, one might wonder at the wisdom of writing another work on the Holy Spirit when so much literature on the topic already exists. At the same time, to the writer's knowledge, there is not a work written such as this study proposes to endeavor. However, many works do touch upon the topic at hand in one way or another, and it is necessary to survey what has been said up to this point.

Whole-Bible studies of the Spirit survey most or all of the passages that refer to the Holy Spirit.<sup>13</sup> Biblical theologies of the Spirit are also helpful to this study in that they bring out the progress of revelation concerning the Spirit and the continuity and discontinuity from one era of biblical history to the next.<sup>14</sup> The similarity of these works to the study at hand is that they survey most or all of the passages in this study. However, the nature of such a broad survey does not allow for an in-depth development of themes specific to the study at hand.

Other surveys limit themselves to the OT or NT in order to give a deeper analysis of a smaller number of texts. As seen above, the number of references to the Spirit of God in the OT is approximately one-third the number of references to the Spirit of God in the NT. The secondary literature shows this variance between the testaments in that OT works on the Spirit typically have room to deal with both exegetical and systematic concerns while NT works may be limited to simply an overview of each

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*The Holy Spirit*, 53–55; Cole, *He Who Gives Life*, 79–83; and Firth, "The Spirit and Leadership," 259–80.

12. Kuyper, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*, ix.

13. Examples of these surveys are Horton, *What the Bible Says about the Holy Spirit*; Rea, *The Holy Spirit in the Bible*; and Thomas, *The Holy Spirit of God*.

14. Examples of biblical theologies of the Spirit are Inch, *Saga of the Spirit*; Montague, *The Holy Spirit*.

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text. Some NT works further limit themselves to an examination of the Spirit within a select portion of the NT.<sup>15</sup>

Other works on the Spirit are systematic in nature and deal with passages that will be examined in this study, but their systematic concerns assume or do not allow for an exegetical analysis of each passage that is necessary in formulating a biblical theology of the Spirit.<sup>16</sup> Yet other works focus on select issues such as the Spirit's role in spiritual gifts or indwelling due to the NT data on these topics.<sup>17</sup> A catalyst for many of these topics is to discover the continuity and discontinuity that lies between the testaments or, as in the case of spiritual gifts, the continuity and discontinuity that lies between the early church and the church today.<sup>18</sup>

Numerous works contain the phrase "spiritual leadership" in their titles, and there is an abundance of literature aimed at "spiritual leaders," that is, leaders in any kind of Christian organization (church, para-church organization, etc.). As promising as these titles may be, and as helpful as these works may be for their target audience, they offer little to the study at hand. A classic work from this type of literature is *Spiritual Leadership* by J. Oswald Sanders.<sup>19</sup> Sanders uses Acts 6:3 to support his claim that being filled with the Spirit is essential for deacons and "those who preach and

15. For OT works on the Spirit, see Firth and Wegner, *Presence, Power and Promise*; Hildebrandt, *An Old Testament Theology of the Spirit of God*; Wood, *The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament*; Wright, *Knowing the Holy Spirit through the Old Testament*. For a NT work on the Spirit, see Warrington, *Discovering the Holy Spirit in the New Testament*. For an older German work on the Spirit of God in the NT, see Büchsel, *Der Geist Gottes im Neuen Testament*. Büchsel briefly surveys the Spirit of God in the OT and extrabiblical literature as well. For a survey of the Spirit in relation to Christ in the Gospels, see Hawthorne, *The Presence and the Power*. For an thorough examination of the Spirit in Pauline literature, see Fee, *God's Empowering Presence*.

16. For examples of systematic works on the Spirit, see Cole, *He Who Gives Life*; Ferguson, *The Holy Spirit*; Green, *I Believe in the Holy Spirit*; Gromacki, *The Holy Spirit*; Owen, *The Holy Spirit*; Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*; Palmer, *The Holy Spirit*; Rylie, *The Holy Spirit*; Schweizer, *The Holy Spirit*; and Scofield, *Holy Spirit in Both Testaments*.

17. For example, see Berding, *What Are Spiritual Gifts?*; and Hamilton, *God's Indwelling Presence*.

18. For the view that some spiritual gifts are no longer for today, see Edgar, *Miraculous Gifts*. For the view that all spiritual gifts are for today, see Turner, *The Holy Spirit and Spiritual Gifts Then and Now*. Numerous works could be mentioned on both sides of this issue.

19. Sanders, *Spiritual Leadership*.

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teach the word of God”<sup>20</sup> He later notes the necessity of the Spirit’s role in a leader’s courage by referring to Acts 2:4 and 2 Tim 1:7.<sup>21</sup> He mentions the spiritual gift of leadership in Rom 12:8, but this mention is more to emphasize one’s zeal in leadership rather than to explain the Spirit’s relationship to gifting. He also discusses the servant of Isa 42:1 and rightly sees the fulfillment of this prophecy in Jesus (cf. Acts 10:37–38). He then claims “God offers us the same anointing,” but he does not explain this statement further.<sup>22</sup> Apart from these occasional references, the role of the Spirit in the life of a leader is assumed and not explained in depth, if at all. Other popular works from this realm of literature are similar in that they do not address the Spirit’s role in detail.<sup>23</sup>

One can see from the survey above that there is much literature about the Spirit that is too general to be helpful to the study at hand. Other literature addresses specific topics outside the scope of this present study. Some works, however, are similar to the topic at hand, such as John D. Harvey’s *Anointed with the Spirit and Power: The Holy Spirit’s Empowering Presence* (2008)<sup>24</sup> and Don N. Howell’s *Servants of the Servant: A Biblical Theology of Leadership* (2003).<sup>25</sup>

Harvey’s work is similar in that it gives a like-minded biblical theology of the empowering role of the Spirit. His discussion of the Spirit in the OT is similar to what will be found in this dissertation. However, unlike Harvey’s work, the present study does not focus as much on the role of prophets,

20. Ibid., 31–32.

21. Ibid., 60.

22. Ibid., 24–25.

23. Another popular work along these lines is Blackaby brothers’ *Spiritual Leadership*. The question is raised as to whether leadership is secular or spiritual and then goes on to speak about “Christian leadership” and “Christian leaders,” indicating that his idea of *spiritual* leadership is synonymous with *Christian* leadership (*Spiritual Leadership*, 9). In answering the question, the Spirit is given no reference at all. The authors later refer to the essential enabling of the Spirit for spiritual leadership, but there is only a brief explanation of only two biblical references to the Spirit, all of which amounts to less than a page (Ibid., 42–43). The Spirit’s role in guiding decisions is discussed, but Scripture is referenced only in passing and is not explained in detail (Ibid., 179–85). The works by Sanders and Blackaby are representative of this kind of literature. When speaking of *spiritual* leadership, what is really in mind is *Christian* leadership, and the Spirit is discussed as necessary for an explanation of a given principle.

24. Harvey, *Anointed with the Spirit and Power*.

25. Howell, *Servants of the Servant*. For a brief overview of a biblical theology of leadership, see Gangel, “Biblical Theology of Leadership,” 13–31. It is admittedly “only the most cursory overview” (“Biblical Theology of Leadership,” 13).

## INTRODUCTION

which allows for more attention to be given to the work of the Spirit through biblical leaders.<sup>26</sup> Also, Harvey's focus in the NT is more general, and the present study uniquely focuses on NT leaders as defined above.

Howell's work is similar as well. His method of biblical theology is similar to the study at hand in that his study "seeks to follow the progressive record of the drama of redemption" by looking at brief profiles of many of the leaders who will be studied in the present study.<sup>27</sup> Also, the present study ends with a section titled, "A Biblical Portrait of a Spiritual Leader," which is similar to Howell's closing essay, "Profile of the Servant-Leader."<sup>28</sup> However, Howell's focus is on the themes of servanthood and leadership, not the Spirit and leadership. Though there will be some overlap between this dissertation and Howell's study, this study's focus guarantees a product that significantly differs from what is offered by Howell.

### **A Brief Explanation of Biblical Theology and How This Method Is Applied in the Present Study**

Just over ten years ago, D. A. Carson stated, "The history of 'biblical theology' is extraordinarily diverse. Everyone does that which is right in his or her own eyes, and calls it biblical theology."<sup>29</sup> Though some of the confusion over defining biblical theology has been cleared within recent years, it remains necessary for a scholar to articulate his understanding of biblical theology if he is going to attempt as much.<sup>30</sup> This section explains and defends biblical theology as a sound method of research methodology for the topic of spiritual leadership.

26. For an excellent article on this topic, see Firth, "The Spirit and Leadership," 259–80.

27. Howell, *Servants of the Servant*, 4.

28. *Ibid.*, 295–301. This similarity is not a conscious attempt by the writer to imitate Howell's work.

29. Carson, "Systematic Theology and Biblical Theology," 91.

30. Köstenberger, "The Present and Future of Biblical Theology," 464. After a survey of various types of biblical theology, Köstenberger states, "The past decade and a half has witnessed a tremendous amount of progress in evangelical scholarship on biblical theology" (*Ibid.*). He continues in the next paragraph, "At the same time, there remains a need for scholars to be precise in defining what they mean when they claim to engage in biblical-theological work and to carefully distinguish between biblical and systematic theology" (*Ibid.*).



## SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP

Briefly put, this study understands biblical theology to be “essentially a historical discipline calling for an inductive and descriptive method.”<sup>31</sup> This definition implies a contrast between biblical and systematic theology, the latter of which approaches Scripture with preexisting categories and questions in order to relate Scripture to issues of the present day. Biblical theology begins with the text itself and lets the Bible create its own categories and conclusions according to its own themes. To clarify, this approach by no means suggests that systematic theology is unhelpful or unnecessary in any way. Perhaps this study will incidentally unearth some biblical data that are helpful for addressing any related systematic concerns.

As much as possible, this study will recognize the diversity that exists from one biblical book to the next. This study will also take into account the overarching storyline of Scripture. After an initial study of spiritual leadership in the Old and New Testaments, themes that have emerged from this study will be correlated and discussed in relation to broader themes of Scripture and the overarching narrative of Scripture as necessary. The purpose for relating these themes to their broader themes and the Scripture as a whole will be to offset any perceived exaggeration of the importance of the theme at hand.

In defense of this approach to researching the topic of spiritual leadership, several points may be made. First, according to the knowledge of the present writer, the topic of spiritual leadership has not been given a biblical-theological treatment such as this study proposes. Though the nature of this study does not allow for a detailed exegesis of every passage or an in-depth look at certain topics that could call for a dissertation in and of themselves (e.g., the nature of the work of the Spirit in the leadership of Jesus or the apostles), this study shows merit in that it uniquely gives a broad picture of spiritual leadership throughout the Bible. Second, a biblical theology of spiritual leadership creates a means of discovering the continuity and discontinuity that exists between the leaders of God’s people in the Old and New Testaments, as well as areas of continuity and discontinuity from one period of biblical history to the next within the testaments. Third, a biblical theology of spiritual leadership recognizes the unity of Scripture as a whole and also allows for the diverse emphases from one biblical book to the next. Fourth, a biblical theology of spiritual leadership sources the topic of spiritual leadership first and foremost in the Scriptures. Fifth, a biblical theology of spiritual

31. Ibid., 445. See also the discussion the “Chicago School” of biblical theology by Klink and Lockett in *Understanding Biblical Theology*, 68–70.

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leadership allows for the Bible to speak for itself as to what it expects of spiritual leaders, which could give the church and its leaders proper guidance for today. Sixth, if done properly, a biblical theology of spiritual leadership may illustrate how to practice biblical theology in general.

### Delimitations and Assumptions of the Present Study

The present study is limited to demonstrating a distinct work of the Spirit in biblical leaders. In light of this narrow aim, this study cannot discuss in detail many significant topics about the Spirit. However, it will be helpful to at least make known the present writer's assumptions about a number of these topics. For example, it was briefly discussed earlier that this study assumes the personality of the Spirit. Other assumptions concerning the Spirit include but are not limited to the identification of the Spirit as God (Acts 5:3–4) and the Spirit's divine nature as shown through attributes such as eternality (Heb 9:14), omnipotence (Luke 1:35; Rom 15:19), omniscience (1 Cor 2:10–11), and omnipresence (Ps 139:7–10).

This study likewise cannot speak in any depth (if at all) to the Spirit's work in other events in the OT and NT. This work includes but is not limited to the following: creation (Gen 1:2); restraint upon the sinfulness of mankind (Gen 6:3); Jesus' incarnation (Luke 1:35); inspiration of Scripture (2 Pet 1:19–21); and works in salvation such as regeneration (John 3:3, 5), sealing (Eph 4:30), sanctification (2 Thess 2:13), and assurance (Rom 8:14–16; 1 John 3:24).

Other topics involving the Spirit will bear more on this study than others, but these topics will not be able to receive the attention they deserve as well. These topics include the New Covenant, Spirit baptism, prophecy, and indwelling. The topic of spiritual gifts will be discussed to a certain degree, but this discussion is limited to an analysis of the gift of leadership in particular.

Another delimitation of this study is the range of data to be included. The writer assumes the inspiration, inerrancy, and preservation of Scripture, as well as its being limited to the sixty-six books of the traditional protestant canon. This understanding of Scripture excludes any discussion of the Spirit in the Apocrypha<sup>32</sup> or writings from intertestamental Judaism.<sup>33</sup>

32. For a discussion of the Spirit in the Apocrypha, see Thomas, *The Holy Spirit of God*, 18–22.

33. For a discussion of the Spirit in writings from intertestamental Judaism, see Schweizer, *The Holy Spirit*, 29–45.

### Criteria for Inclusion and Exclusion of Biblical Texts

The last introductory matter to discuss is what criteria have been used for the inclusion or exclusion of biblical texts in the present study. As this study begins, these criteria are simple. First, there must be an explicit mention of the Spirit of God with the use of either *rûah* (OT) or *pneuma* (NT). Second, there must be an explicit reference to a biblical leader as defined above. Third, the text should describe the work of the Spirit as having affected the exercise of the leader's leadership.

As this study continues, however, these criteria need to be flexible to also allow for what may seem at first glance to be something other than an explicit reference to the Spirit, the Spirit's work, a biblical leader, or his leadership. Although later texts do not describe these topics in exactly the same way as previous revelation, they refer to these topics by more subtle means that would have nonetheless been clear to the original reader (e.g., quotation, echo, or allusion). This being said, a fourth criterion (if one could call it that) would be to recognize that later texts may refer to the Spirit, the Spirit's work, and the leadership of a biblical leader by some other means than the direct terminology that was used to speak of these topics at first.

### Summary and Overview

This study aims to show that a biblical theology of the role of the Spirit in the leadership of God's people demonstrates a distinct work of the Spirit in biblical leaders. Chapter 2 begins the biblical theology of spiritual leadership by examining the OT, and Chapter 3 will examine the NT. As seen above, the data for Chapter 3 is roughly three times as much as that in the OT, which will be reflected in the respective length of each chapter. Chapter 4 will systematize the findings of Chapters 2 and 3 and then discuss the present study's relationship to broader theological concerns and the overarching storyline of Scripture as necessary. Chapter 5 demonstrates how a biblical theology of spiritual leadership informs and illustrates spiritual leadership in the church today. Chapter 5 ends with a biblical portrait of a spiritual leader, and a summary of the entire study is given in Chapter 6.