



The Spirit in the Gospels and Acts: Divine Purity and Power

Craig S. Keener

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Keener presents two categories of Jewish understanding of the Holy Spirit: purity and prophecy. From these two fundamental streams, other tributaries flow: supernatural knowledge, traditional prophecy, insights into the divine plan of Scripture.

Early Christianity appropriated, modified, and utilized these Jewish categories for understanding the work of the Holy Spirit. The continuity and contrast between Judaism and early Christianity's understanding of the Holy Spirit must be acknowledged and examined.

Craig Keener argues forcibly, and with the weight of much primary material in his favor, that early Christian experience centered around the Holy Spirit. Keener examines carefully the New Testament Gospels and the book of Acts in an effort to provide us with a fuller understanding of what the Holy Spirit meant in the life of the early believers. We are rewarded by his efforts with perhaps the most detailed study of the Holy Spirit in the Gospels and Acts in light of the ancient evidence of the religious world in which these texts emerged. Keener's grasp of the relevant ancient literature is both impressive and illuminating. Christianity did not arise in a vacuum, and by understanding the world in which it emerged we can better understand the earliest believers' experience of God's empowering and purifying Spirit.

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