

Empowering Humans

Genesis 41:37-40; Exodus 31:1-5; Judges 3:9-10;
Micah 3:8

- Throughout Scripture, God empowers ordinary people with wisdom, skill, and His Spirit to fulfill extraordinary purposes — from Joseph's God-given discernment to lead Egypt, to Bezalel's Spirit-filled craftsmanship in building the tabernacle, to Othniel's Spirit-empowered leadership as a judge, to Micah's Spirit-filled boldness to declare truth.
 - These accounts reveal a consistent pattern: God equips those He calls, empowering human hands and hearts to accomplish His purposes.

Genesis 41:37-40 NASB

³⁷ Now the proposal seemed good to Pharaoh and to all his servants.

³⁸ Then Pharaoh said to his servants, “Can we find a man like this, in whom there is a divine spirit?” ³⁹ So Pharaoh said to Joseph, “Since God has informed you of all this, there is no one as discerning and wise as you are. ⁴⁰ You shall be in charge of my house, and all my people shall be obedient to you; only regarding the throne will I be greater than you.”

Consider

- As we learned in last week's study from Job 34:14-15, God breathes his life-sustaining *ruakh* ("breath" or "spirit") into all people.
- But in the Hebrew Bible, God's Spirit also empowers certain people to do specific tasks.
- In Genesis 41, Pharaoh has dreams that puzzle all the wise men of Egypt.
 - When Joseph interprets the dreams, Pharaoh recognizes that Joseph's ability comes from God's Spirit.

Exodus 31:1-5 NASB

¹ Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, ² “See, I have called by name Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. ³ And I have filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship, ⁴ to create artistic designs for work in gold, in silver, and in bronze, ⁵ and in the cutting of stones for settings, and in the carving of wood, so that he may work in all kinds of craftsmanship.

Consider

- God fills Bezalel with his Spirit so that he can create intricate designs for the tabernacle.
 - The tabernacle was a moveable temple, intended to resemble Eden, where God could live with his people as they traveled through the wilderness.
 - When God first created humans, his aim was for them to continue his creative work by being fruitful and multiplying life, which included cultivating the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:15).
 - So, as God first acted through his Spirit to create the world, God's Spirit now acts through Bezalel.
 - He continues God's creating work by designing the tabernacle as a new Eden.

Judges 3:9-10 NASB

⁹ But the sons of Israel cried out to the LORD, and the LORD raised up a deliverer for the sons of Israel to set them free, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother. ¹⁰ And the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, and he judged Israel. When he went to war, the LORD handed over to him Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia, so that he prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.

Micah 3:8NASB

⁸On the other hand, I am filled with power—
With the Spirit of the LORD
And with justice and courage
To make known to Jacob his rebellious act,
And to Israel his sin.

Consider

- God's Spirit also empowers judges like Othniel to deliver the Israelites from their enemies (Judg. 3:9-10).
- And the Spirit empowers prophets like Micah (Mic. 3:8) to hear God's words of judgment and hope and speak them to the people.

Reflect

- What kinds of things did God's Spirit empower people to do in the Bible?
- Do you see any patterns or themes?
- Why do you think people needed God's Spirit to accomplish these tasks?

More Relevant Scripture References

Numbers 11:26-29

Deuteronomy 34:9

Judges 6:34

Judges 13:25

1 Samuel 16:13