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"THE SPIRIT OF YOUR FATHER": SUGGESTIONS FOR A FULLER PENTECOSTAL PNEUMATOLOGY WITH ACCOMPANYING PASTORAL IMPLICATIONS

Yee Tham Wan

1. Introduction

This paper makes the somewhat obvious point that Pentecostals have much to gain by highlighting the unique Matthean phrase, "the Spirit of your Father" (τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ πατρὸδ ὑμῶν); rather than gloss it over as many commentators throughout the ages seem to have done. Pentecostals miss an important interpretative opportunity to speak into their own theology of the Spirit if they simply identify the "Spirit of your Father" as a synonym for the "Spirit of God"[1] or even as the "Holy Spirit of Prophecy."[2] And, it is not simply an opportunity to shore up the main articles of classical Pentecostal theology; it also helps Pentecostals see the possibilities of their role in the larger church world.

The unique Matthean phrase in question is found in Mt. 10:20.

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[1] Blaine Charette, *Restoring Presence: The Spirit in Matthew's Gospel*, Journal of Pentecostal Theology Supplement Series no. 18 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 134.

[2] Craig S. Keener, *A Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 321 & 324.

M t. 10:20

οὐ γὰρ ὑμεις ἐστε οἱ λαλουντεi ἀλλὰ **τὸ πνευμα του πατρὸi ὑμφν** τὸ λαλουν ἐν ὑμιν.

Literal English Translation

Mt. 10:20 For you (plural) are not the ones who are speaking but **the Spirit of your Father** (is) the One speaking through you (plural).

2. Contextual Analysis

This reference in Matthew comes after more than five chapters without any mention of the Spirit in Matthew's Gospel, with the last reference coming from Mt. 4:1. Between 4:1 and 10:20 there was the inaugural ministry of Jesus in Galilee, the calling of the His disciples, the description of the growth of His ministry, the great Sermon on the Mount section (ch. 5-7), and the reports of powerful miracles in His ministry (including healings, exorcisms, calming of a storm, and even the raising of a dead girl). All this led to growing crowds following Jesus. Jesus therefore called twelve disciples and delegated them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal. H. J. Held makes the point that the great teaching section of chapters 5 to 7, together with the following the collection of the accounts of the miraculous deeds of Jesus in chapters 8 and 9; have the Christological function of presenting Jesus as the "Messiah of the word" and also as the "Messiah of deed."[3] Matthew's intention that these two groups of chapters (5 - 7 and 8 - 9) be read together can perhaps be seen in the "framework-verses"[4] of Mt. 4:23 and 9:35.

The references to the twelve disciples in 10:1 and 11:1 form an inclusio marking out the entire chapter 10 as an identifiable block. It follows the lament in Mt. 9:37 of the lack of workers. Chapter 10 responds with the calling and commissioning of the twelve apostles. The specific verse that is of interest to this paper forms part of the instructions given to the twelve apostles at their commissioning. This commissioning was given for the exclusive purpose of reaching the Israelites. "Matthew was eager to record that Jesus sent his disciples first exclusively to the Jews, thus highlighting the fulfillment of the promises to Israel and confirming that Christianity is

[3] Gunther Bornkamm, Gerhard Barth and Heinz Joachim Held, *Tradition and Interpretation in Matthew*, trans. Percy Scott (Philadelphia, PA: Westminster Press, 1963), 246.

[4] Ibid., 249.

not a different 'religion' nor one intended primarily for the Gentiles, although Jews were quickly becoming a minority in the Church of Matthew's day."[5] It is perhaps also significant that these instructions to preach only to the "lost sheep of Israel," come just before the remarks of Jesus about John the Baptist in chapter 11. The reader will be reminded that John the Baptist represents the Old Covenant directed towards Israel.

Ulrich Luz, however, goes beyond this common interpretation that the commissioning of the Twelve was to fulfill the divine obligations of the Old Covenant to Israel.[6] For Luz, Matthew chapter 10 is fundamental to a Matthean ecclesiological perspective and should be seen as the "ecclesiological prolongation of chapters 5-9."[7] Indeed, the formulation καὶ θεραπεύειν πασαν νόσον καὶ πᾶσαν μαλακίαν ("and healing every disease and every sickness") in 10:1 closely follows that of Mt. 4:23 and 9:35, suggesting an identification of the disciples here with the ministry of Jesus.[8] Chapter 10 therefore challenges today's mere "conceptual definition" of the church and confronts us with a "non-idealistic understanding" of the church – one that is dynamic "in its obedience and its deeds".[9]

> For (Matthew), the church is not something static and primarily institutional. His concept is that of a dynamic church. The church in its institutional appearance is not yet the church, but only in its obedience and its deeds. It is the church insofar as it has a task, authority, and power from the Lord and insofar as it *lives* according to its mission, is obedient, and *practices* what is given and commanded to it (emphases all Luz's).[10]

Donald Hagner, however, takes a somewhat softer stand about applying chapter 10 to the church. He doubts if Matthew's church would be expected to fulfill literally the commandments given here. Nontheless, he still believes that the church "was called to exhibit a similar mindset . . . (allowing)

[5] Donald A. Hagner, *Matthew 1-13, vol. 33A* in Word Biblical Commentary, gen. ed. Bruce M. Metzger (Dallas, TX: Word, 1993), 273.

[6] Ulrich Luz, "Itinerant Radicals, Settled Communities, and the Church Today" in *Matthew in History: Interpretation, Influence, and Effects* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1994), 39-55.

[7] Ibid., 42.

[8] Bornkamm, Barth, and Held, 249.

[9] Ibid., 54-55.

[10] Ibid., 54.

nothing to distract from the call to spread the message of the kingdom. . . . (And,) be prepared for a mixed response to their message"[11]

Leon Morris follows up on this opinion that chapter 10 may apply to the church but limits its application only to certain sections of the chapter. For him, 10:16ff form a different section and refers to perhaps a future beyond the immediate mission for which the twelve was being sent out then. Instructions given by Jesus in the earlier section (10:5-15) seem to suggest that the twelve will expect a friendlier reception, unlike the section of 10:16ff, which suggests that the twelve should expect to undergo severe persecution.[12]

In fact, the Matthean context for the saying of Mt. 10:19-22 is unique among the Synoptics. Both Mark and Luke have the eschatological teachings of Jesus as the context for the same sayings (Mk. 13:11-13; Lk. 21:12-17). Matthew seems to have a much more contemporaneous application for this saying with perhaps a continuing application for the church of all ages; rather than a purely futuristic application.

3. Verbal Analysis

The main finite verb in the sentence, ἐστε ("you are") is in the present tense so that the promise of help to the disciples becomes more vivid. Very likely, Matthew's readers are already experiencing the fulfillment of this promise.

το πνευμα του πατρὸδ ὑμων ("the Spirit of your Father") is a uniquely Matthean contribution. The phrase is found nowhere else in the New Testament. Mark has the Holy Spirit (Mk. 13:11-13) in the parallel Markan passage while Luke leaves out the Spirit entirely (Lk. 21:12-15) in the Lukan parallel. Matthew relates the Spirit very closely to the Father here. The phrase is also very specific and speaks of *your* (i.e. the disciples') Father. This description of the Spirit as the Spirit of the Father seems closer to the more developed Johannine (Jn. 14:26) and Pauline (Rom. 8:15; Eph. 2:18) pneumatologies.

πατρὸι ("father") anticipates the following verses (Mt. 10:21 and 34ff) where family members will betray each other as well as 10:29-32 where the Heavenly Father is also mentioned. πατηρ is one of Matthew's favorite words, found 20 times in Matthew, but only once in Mark and 3 times in

[11] Hagner, 274.

[12] Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to Matthew* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1992) 251-2.

Luke. The reference to the Father in the midst of persecution echoes Mt. 5:44-45 in the Sermon on the Mount, "But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven . . ."

πατρὸι ὑμων ("your Father") will surely also echo the Lord's Prayer, where the disciples were taught to pray, πατρὸι ἡμων ("our Father"); especially when read together with Mt. 10:32 and 33. Matthew, in fact, places πατηρ in critical places of his story-telling. One could also relate these references to the promised provisions of the Father in 6:31-34 in the Sermon on the Mount. The fatherhood of God is a very important theme here as well as the Sermon on the Mount (Mt. 5:16, 45, 48, 6:4, 6:9, 6:15, 6:18, 6:32, 7:11, 7:21, 10:20, 10:29, 10:32). In Mt. 7:21, the concept of the fatherhood of God is applied to the test of a true charismatic: a true charismatic is one "who does the will of (Jesus') father in heaven." ὑμων makes the Spirit available to the disciples who are children of the Heavenly Father. Daniel Harrington perhaps unwittingly highlights the importance of this pronoun here when he notes that, "(it) is unusual to talk about the availability of the gift of the Holy Spirit to the disciples, since during his ministry Jesus is the primary bearer of the Spirit."[13]

Davies and Allison ask provocatively if there was an early Christian tendency to use λαλεω ("speak") rather than λεγω ("speak") for inspired or ecstatic utterance (cf. 1 Cor. 12:3; 13:1; 14:2).[14] Despite Grundmann's suggestion, [15] most interpreters prefer to take ἐν ("in"), as a dative of instrument and translate the phrase as "speaking *through* you." However, if we translate ἐν as "in" and take Davies and Allison's suggestion seriously, we can easily follow Craig Keener to see the "Holy Spirit of prophecy"[16] here. R. T. France even suggests that Matthew may have Joel 2:28-29 in mind here.[17]

4. Theological and Pastoral Implications for Pentecostals

[13] Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, Sacra Pagina, ed. Daniel J. Harrington (Collegevile, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 145.

[14] W. D. Davies and Dale C. Allison, *The Gospel According to Saint Matthew*, 3 vols. in The International Critical Commentary, gen. ed. J. A. Emerton, C. E. B. Cranfield, and G. N. Stanton (Edinburgh, UK: T. & T. Clark, 1988), 185.

[15] Bruner cites Grundmann's argument against the instrumental understanding of ἐν here. Frederick Dale Bruner, *Matthew: A Commentary, The Christbook: 1-12.* Vol. 1 (Dallas, TX: Word Publishing, 1987), 383.

[16] Keener, 324.

Despite the importance of this verse for understanding Matthew's pneumatology, there is little theological follow up in commentaries on this verse. In fact, Luz notes that "a certain reserve toward this promise is frequently evident" in the history of interpretation.[18] Luz suggests that this could be due to the concern that preachers may neglect careful study of the scriptures and take the lazy way of simply relying on the Spirit of their Father!![19]

The unique phrase, "the Spirit of your Father," is an important evidence of Matthew's "advanced" pneumatology; reflecting Matthew's Trinitarian pneumatology. It continues the implicit development of the concept of the divine Trinity in the Matthean narrative that began with the role of the Spirit in the birth of the Son[20] and developed further with the heavenly pronouncement at the baptism of Jesus (Mt. 3:16-17); and which will climax with the baptismal formula at the end of his gospel. The phrase also allows us to relate Matthew's pneumatology with Johannine and Pauline pneumatology. This "advanced" pneumatology is Matthew's own post-Pentecost reading of his source. Theologically, this phrase informs our understanding of the Trinity and the role of the Holy Spirit within the Trinity. "The fatherhood of God is the pivot upon which hinges the mystery of the Trinity."[21]

Doctrinally, Pentecostals have generally taken the Western Model of the Trinity where the Spirit proceeds from the Father *and the Son*.[22] However, praxis-wise, Pentecostals generally have a kind of a linear model where the Spirit proceeds from the Son and the Son is begotten by the Father.[23] Accordingly, this moves the Spirit down to third place in the "intra-

[17] R. T. France, *Matthew: Evangelist and Teacher* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1989), 183.

[18] Ulrich Luz, *Matthew 8-20: A Commentary*, translated by James E. Crouch, Hermeneia: A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible, ed. Helmut Koester (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2001), 90.

[19] Ibid.

[20] Concerning the Mt. 1:18-20, Michael Green observes: "This passage is strongly, if not unself-consciously, Trinitarian. God the Father reveals himself through his Son, Jesus Immanuel. But all this is brought about through the agency of the Holy Spirit. . . . All three persons of the Trinity are brought before our gaze, . . ." Michael Green, *The Message of Matthew: The Kingdom of Heaven,* The Bible Speaks Today, ed. John Stott (Leicester, England: IVP, 1988 & 2000), 60-1.

[21] Francis Kelly Nemeck and Marie Theresa Coombs, *The Way of Spiritual Direction.* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1985), 33.

Trinity hierarchy" and diminishes the deity of the Spirit even further. It is imperative that the Spirit be allowed the dignity as a full member of the Trinity. The phrase, "the Spirit of your Father" relates the Spirit directly to the Father rather than through the Son, and gives Pentecostals a useful biblical proof-text to argue for an Eastern Model of the Trinity.[24] This proof-text is often overlooked because Matthew is generally not considered as helpful for pneumatology or general Pentecostal theology.

Taking the Matthean phrase, "the Spirit of your Father" seriously and adopting an Eastern Model of the Trinity will move the Spirit out of the subordination to the Son and theologically free the Spirit from a Christological "bondage." The Spirit will then be *more than simply* a "Christian" Spirit. It reminds us that He is the Spirit of the Father "from whom all things came"(1Cor. 8:6) and "who is over all and through all and in all"(Eph. 4:6). The Spirit's role outside of Pentecostalism and indeed, outside the Church, will then be appreciated. Such an appreciation of the Spirit's universal role will make us more effective in ecumenical and inter-faith dialogues.

Pentecostals generally do not appreciate their history as much as they should. If they should trace their historical legacy, it would usually follow the Catholic-Protestant thread with little or no reference to the Eastern Orthodox branch of the church. Pentecostal theology therefore takes after the Western (Latin) tradition. Perhaps because of this, the modern Pentecostal revival has naturally spilled over into the Catholic and Protestant branches of the church as the Charismatic Renewal while the Eastern Orthodox branch of the Church remains largely outside of the modern Pentecostal-Charismatic movement. Perhaps encouraged by Michael C. Harper's highly publicized faith journey from Evangelical Anglicanism through the Charismatic Renewal Movement to the Orthodox Church, [25] there have been more and more who talk about an "orthodox homecoming."[26] Amos Yong tells of a similar "homecoming," in terms of theological reflection – without the formal ecclesial changes.[27] He describes

[22] Unlike the Western or Latin Model of the Trinity, the Eastern or Greek model of the Trinity has *both* the Son and the Spirit proceeding from the Father. This difference was historically expressed by the *filioque* controversy.

[23] Walter J. Hollenweger, *Pentecostalism: Origins and Developments Worldwide* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1997), 218.

[24] Hollenweger and others (e.g. Stanley M. Burgess and Gerald T. Sheppard) have argued that Pentecostals should adopt a pneumatology that follows the Eastern or

his personal theological journey which has taken him "from the Pentecostalism of (his) upbringing to Evangelicalism to Orthodoxy, from charismaticism to biblicism to community, from the Spirit to the Son to the Triune God."[28] Greater reflection on the Spirit and the Father (without giving up on the evangelical commitment to the Son) will give Pentecostal theology a more complete, Trinitarian *orthodox Christian* theology.

Pastorally, we can perhaps also identify at least three implied elements in Mt. 10:20 that should especially interest Pentecostals today: the *prophetic-missionary* dimension, the *democratic* dimension and the *ethical* dimension.

A missionary dimension is implied by the context of this verse, where the "Spirit of the Father" is promised for those who are being commissioned to preach the good news. We may perhaps notice the possibility of the shared tradition with Luke's "promise of the Father" (Lk. 24:49; Ac. 1:4). The related prophetic dimension is seen in the specific application of this promise to inspired speech. The disciples are promised supernatural help in their witness before "governors and kings." The activity of the Father's Spirit here is to inspire prophetic speech to be a witness, which is one of the common approaches to understanding the *Pentecostal Spirit*.[29] Luz agrees: "Behind this promise is the experience of early Christian prophecy."[30]

The democratic dimension is suggested by the possessive pronoun, ὑμῶν. Apart from Mt. 10:20, the Baptist's prophecy in Mt. 3:11 is the one other place in Matthew where the Spirit is made available to the disciples; although Luz sees the Trinitarian baptismal formula in Mt. 28:19 as yet another evidence of Matthew's understanding of Spirit's availability to the disciples.[31] Although in Matthew the Holy Spirit is seen mainly as an endowment for the Messiah, the Holy Spirit is also clearly available to the Messiah's disciples. Matthew's post-Pentecost community will understand

Greek model of the Trinity. They have however generally used historical and theological arguments. Hollenweger, 218-21.

[25] Michael Harper, *Three Sisters: A Provocative Look at Evangelicals, Charismatics, & Catholic Charismatics and Their Relationship to One Another* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1979) and Michael Harper, *The True Light: An Evangelical's Journey to Orthodoxy* (London, England: Hodder & Stoughton, 1994).

[26] http://www.antiochian-orthodox.co.uk/journeys.htm, accessed 1st July, 2007.

[27] Amos Yong, *Spirit-Word-Community: Theological Hermeneutics in Trinitarian Perspective* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate Publishing, 2002), ix.

that the Spirit is available to them: " . . . the Spirit, though it is that of the transcendent Father, is immanent in the disciples."[32] Here, the disciples are promised that they will have the Spirit *in* them and it is the same Spirit that was upon Jesus.

The appellation of God as the disciples' Father could refer back to the Lord's Prayer, which is the central focus of the Sermon on the Mount.[33] This relationship between Matthew's understanding of the Spirit and the Sermon on the Mount is also highlighted by Matthew's repetitive usage of πατηρ as an important "catchword"[34] in the Sermon on the Mount. Janice Capel Anderson has made a case for reading the Sermon on the Mount as playing an integral role in the Matthean narrative and she concluded that if one does that, one should see that "there are important links between sermon and story."[35] If so, we may bring to fore the relationship between the *Pentecostal Spirit* and the Kingdom ethics of the Sermon on the Mount. Those who have the Spirit of the Father are expected to have the Spirit speak through them (Mt. 10:20) and at the same time, do the will of the Father (Mt. 7:21). Thus, Matthew's unique appellation for the Holy Spirit here can perhaps be seen as having an ethical dimension, in addition to the prophetic dimension.

5. Conclusion

Matthew's pneumatology should be of special interest to Pentecostals today. Pentecostals have today gone beyond the polemics of their founding fathers, who had sought mainly to argue for a biblical theology for the Pentecostal experience. John Christopher Thomas suggests that Pentecostal scholarship has gone through at least three generations of theological

[28] Ibid.

[29] William W. Menzies and Robert P. Menzies, *Spirit and Power: Foundations of Pentecostal Experience* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000), 90.

[30] Luz, *Matthew 8-20*, 89.

[31] Ibid., 90.

[32] Alan Hugh McNeile, *The Gospel According to St. Matthew: The Greek Text with Introduction, Notes and Indices* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1915), 140.

[33] Luz demonstrates convincingly that the Sermon on the Mount is structured symmetrically with "ringlike inclusions" around the Lord's Prayer as the center. "The structure of the Sermon on the Mount already clearly gives indications as to how it should be understood: The Lord's Prayer as its central text." Ulrich Luz,

scholarship, with the fourth generation today expected to "construct Pentecostal theological paradigms from the ground up."[36] To do that, Matthew (for that matter, any other book of the Bible) must be allowed a rightful place alongside the Lukan, Johannine and Pauline corpuses. There is enough material on the Holy Spirit from Matthew, to warrant its place in a Pentecostal theological paradigm. Pentecostal theology and praxis will be enriched by Matthew's contribution. Furthermore, Matthew stands as a critical bridge between the Testaments; between the Messianic-Jesus tradition and the ἐκκλησια. Indeed, one will be hard-pressed to find a coherent biblical pneumatology that will include both Old and New Testaments if Matthew were to be left out.

Beyond the usual Pentecostal categories of prophecy and missions, we find in Matthew a balanced, attenuating pneumatology rooted in his understanding of the Trinitarian Godhead. The new Messianic age of the Gentile church is expected to have both the Spirit and the teachings of Jesus. The empowerment that is available from the Spirit for every member of the church does not negate the moral requirements of Jesus' teachings. However, these moral requirements are no longer binding as legal statutes. Instead, they take on a *relational* dimension. As children invested with the Spirit of the Heavenly Father, it is naturally expected of them to follow the example of the Messianic Son of God in obeying *all things*.

Matthew 1-7: A Commentary, tr. Wilhelm C. Linss (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1989), 211-3.