

UPWARD CALL

Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but this is my one aim: to forget everything that's behind, and to strain every nerve to go after what lies ahead. I press on toward the finish line, where the prize waiting for me is the upward call of God

IN KING JESUS.

(Philippians 3:13-14)

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Dove of Peace

In the natural, the dove is known as a peaceable bird. Doves mate for life, remaining faithful to each other throughout. While hawks and other birds of prey are not very neighborly as they try to devour others, doves are neighborly and more interested in working together to build nests and raise a family. Doves eat seeds and are easily domesticated. Given these few traits, the dove has become a symbol in many cultures as a bird of peace. The Egyptians saw the dove as a symbol of quiet innocence, the Chinese as a symbol of peace and long life, and the early Greeks and Romans as a symbol of love and devotion and care for the family.

Biblically, in the Song of Solomon, the Shulamite, who was in love with a shepherd, not the king, was referred to as *My dove, my perfect one* (Song 5:2; 6:9). According to Strong, the Hebrew word translated *perfect* means "*complete*; usually (morally) *pious*; specifically, *gentle, dear*: - coupled together, perfect, plain, undefiled, upright." So, in this context, the dove is personified as one who is complete, undefiled, and gentle. We often hear the expression "gentle as a dove."

The most well-known example in scripture of the dove is revealed through Jesus' baptism and the Father's declaration of sonship.

Jesus was also baptized ... and the holy spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased." (Luke 3:21-22 NASB)

The holy spirit is personified as a dove—the gentle, peaceful, devoted, caring, loving, undefiled, family-oriented, fully devoted, and complete spirit of God. The spirit dove descended upon the Son of God, the prince of peace. Could we not say that the dove of God has been sent to produce many sons of God, all in the character of a dove?

Oh, but it goes even beyond this, for scripture reveals that this beautiful dove must fill the whole earth and all mankind. We see this in the first mention of the dove as presented in the book of beginnings when Noah sent forth a dove to see if the water had receded from the flooded earth.

Then he sent out a dove from him, to see if the water was abated from the face of the land; but the dove found no resting place for the sole of her foot, so she returned to him into the ark, for the water was on the surface of all the earth. Then he put out his hand and took her, and brought her into the ark to himself. So, he waited yet another seven days; and again, he sent out the dove from the ark. The dove came to him toward evening, and behold, in her beak was a freshly picked olive leaf. So, Noah knew that the water was abated from the earth. Then he waited yet another seven days, and sent out the dove; but she did not return to him again. (Genesis 8:8-12 NASB)

There is something significantly prophetic in the three occasions that Noah sent forth a dove from the ark. The first time the dove went out, it came back without anything; the second time, it came back with an olive leaf; and the third time, it did not return, signifying it had found a place of rest on earth. Of further significance, this occurred over a 21-day period, comprising three 7-day periods.

Knowing that the dove signifies the *holy spirit* as revealed through Jesus' baptism, these three occasions represent spiritual truths related to three outpourings of the holy spirit. The first two have occurred already, and we are waiting for the third and most expansive outpouring, which we trust is not long in coming.

The first time the dove went out and returned speaks of the day when the Lord descended on Mt. Sinai to appear before the sons of Israel to write His laws on their hearts and for them, ultimately, to be filled with His spirit in order to enter the land. However, they feared for their lives and withdrew from the Lord, sending Moses up the mountain to receive the law on stone tablets; the letter that kills and does not give the life of the spirit. As a result of their fear and rebellion, the law was placed in another ark, the ark of the covenant. The spirit of God did not take up residence in the people but rather remained in a physical ark located within the tabernacle of Moses and the temple of Solomon, until it was removed entirely from even these structures. Thus, the first dove returned to the ark just as the spirit of God remained in the ark and in the temple.

The second time the dove went out and returned with an olive leaf speaks of the outpouring of the holy spirit on the day of Pentecost when the believers of the body of Christ received an earnest of the spirit. Of course, all who have believed since that day also receive an the same. The single olive leaf prophetically speaks of the believer receiving a down payment of the spirit. The olive branch is good, but it is only a portion of the whole olive tree, especially its oil, which refers to the anointing of the spirit. It seems the second time the dove did not enter the ark, for Genesis 8:11 states that she came into Noah. Prophetically speaking, this refers to the holy spirit coming into believers as a Pentecostal anointing.

The third time the dove went out she did not return, signifying the spirit of God filling the whole earth. The spirit of God will fill mankind, no longer as a partial filling or down payment but in full! Just as Noah went forth from the ark to establish a new world (orderly system) on earth, so will a new-world order come—the new creation—only this time it will succeed beyond anyone's imagination. The sons of God will go forth to establish the kingdom of our Lord on earth with the complete fall of the old-world order—the old creation. Then, the kingdom of our Lord will continue to increase; it will take time for all to be filled with the spirit and for the glory of the Lord to fill all the earth. There is a mighty work to be done by those chosen to reign with Christ as His complement. However, this work will be done to the glory of God; it will not fail!

This leads to the 21 days (three 7-day intervals) in which Noah's dove was sent forth. The number 7 signifies *spiritual perfection*. The number 3 signifies *divine perfection or completeness*. Thus, these 21 days signify a complete and perfect work. This ties in with the fall feasts that run for 21-22 days. The 7th month of Tishri starts with Trumpets (day 1), proceeds to the Day of Atonement (day 10), and then Tabernacles (days 15-22). The second time the dove returned with the olive branch would have been the 15th day, signifying the start of Tabernacles, meaning God was going to have a true tabernacle on earth based on the olive tree, its leaves, and its oil, signifying *the Christ*, both His spirit and His body. The dove not returning after 21 days leads to the 22nd day, which is the 8th day, the last day, the great day of Tabernacles in which the spirit will flow like rivers of living water (John 7:37-39) until the whole earth is filled with the glory of God as the waters cover the sea. This is the work of the spirit of God. The number 22 signifies *light*. The spirit of God filling the whole earth means the earth will be filled with the glory of God, which is also typified as light. The spirit, the glory, and the light filling the earth are one and the same, and speak of the ultimate purpose that *God may be All in All* (1 Corinthians 15:28).

Thus, God, who declares the end from the beginning, speaks to us through Noah and the dove of peace. Peace and rest are coming to this weary world of the flesh of men to revive us through His perfect spirit that has all the attributes of the natural dove. God is a family man, and He will have a glorious family. He will start with many sons of glory and proceed until all humanity and creation are filled with glory.

But let us not overlook this one great fact: the presence of King Jesus is required for this new creation order to fill the earth and all creation. He is the new creation, the new humanity. The dove of peace is the life of the prince of peace filling all so that He is truly all in all in summing up things in heaven and one earth. This is the Father's way of becoming all in all.