

Rick Wadholm Jr., *A Theology of the Spirit in the Former Prophets: A Pentecostal Perspective* (Cleveland, TN: CPT Press, 2018). xiii + 244 pp. \$18.95 paperback, \$9.99 e-book.

Rick Wadholm Jr. is an adjunct professor of Bible and theology at School of Urban Missions (SUM) Bible College & Theological Seminary in El Dorado Hills, California. He holds a PhD in Pentecostal and Biblical Studies from Bangor University in Wales. This book is an adaptation of his PhD dissertation, completed in 2017 under the supervision of John Christopher Thomas.

The author's central aim in this book is to articulate the continuity of the Holy Spirit's presence throughout the biblical texts (both Old and New Testaments) by examining the role of the רִיחַ (Spirit) in the Former Prophets (Joshua–2 Kings). His purpose is to correct what he regards as a misunderstanding in that the indwelling role of the Holy Spirit has been seen by many Pentecostals (and others) as only occurring in the New Testament. While some acknowledge that the Spirit was present in the Old Testament as being upon, *but not in*, the patriarchs and prophets, it was relegated only as empowerment for a temporal work, but when consummated, the Spirit departed from those individuals.

In this monograph, Wadholm sets out to prove that the Eternal Spirit's presence was *in* the Old Testament Former Prophets using *Wirkungsgeschichte* (history of effects) as his theological hermeneutical methodological framework. He commences this task (chapter one) with the examination of the writings of Pentecostal scholars from the two quests of the Spirit in the Former Prophets, one historical (history of religions and historical reconstruction) and the other theological (confessional/credal and biblical-theological).

Chapter two discusses Pentecostal Hermeneutics, where he summarizes the themes and methodologies of contemporary Pentecostal theologians and frames Pentecostal interpretations as call and response, tongue-speech, and charismata. Wadholm is now ready to join the cacophony of voices which preceded him.

Employing the *Wirkungsgeschichte* hermeneutic (chapter three), Wadholm uses a narrative approach with a close literary reading focus of the Former Prophets. The benefit of this approach allows for "the dialectic interaction of the text and reader in the negotiation of meaning" (60). Wadholm researches early Pentecostal literature (1906–1920), mostly in the form of periodicals and newsletters of Pentecostal organizations, yielding how the Spirit in the Former Prophets was understood in the formative years of Classical Pentecostalism. His investigation was limited to these books and personalities: Judges,

Samson; 1-2 Samuel, Saul: 1-2 Kings, Micaiah, Elijah and Elisha, The Double Portion, and the Son of the Prophets.

Wadholm's findings in these early Pentecostal publications can be summarized in seven categories. They are: 1) the Baptism in the Holy Spirit is the most predominant use throughout the literature with every publication offering some connection to the Spirit in the Former Prophets as giving witness to their experience of the baptism; 2) the power (often associated with the Baptism) of the Spirit is present to overcome, deliver, enable witness, heal, prepare, and make provision; 3) prayer functions as primary to the experience of the Spirit for all of these journals; 4) every journal affirms that the Spirit can be lost through faithlessness; 5) the texts of the Former Prophets serve an apologetic function for the early Pentecostals; 6) several contend for (divine) love in relation in the Spirit; and 7) the Spirit in the Former Prophets bears witness in several explicit Pentecostal testimonies to being the Spirit of Christ (115–117).

Many of these early understandings were inherited by contemporary Classical Pentecostals and others, which Wadholm calls us to revisit in chapters four–seven. He explicates the working of the רוח (Spirit) in the close reading of the narratives of the Former Prophets in the Old Testament. “The texts which are enjoined in this study are: Judges 3:10 (Othniel); 6:34 (Gideon); 11:29 (Jephthah); 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14 (Samson); 1 Sam. 10:6, 10; 11:6; 16:14–16, 23; 18:10; 19:9; 20 (Saul); 16:13; 2 Sam. 23:2 (David); 1 Kgs 22:21–24 (Micaiah); and 2 Kgs 2:9, 15–16 (Elijah and Elisha)” (63).

In the Book of Judges, the author investigates the רוח (Spirit) in the lives of the Former Prophets Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah, and Samson. The author summarizes the work of the Spirit in these narratives as the Spirit testifies in Othniel; the Spirit clothes Gideon; the Spirit in Jephthah is one of promise; and in Samson the Spirit stirs. Wadholm summarizes the Spirit's functionality in Judges articulated in five points, which are: 1) the Spirit is identified so clearly with the work of Yahweh that the Spirit in Judges functions as Yahweh in relating to the Judges; 2) the function of the Spirit in Judges serves to guarantee that Israel will continue to enjoy life in the land; 3) these Spirit texts seem not only to serve for guaranteeing the continuing life of Israel in the land by delivering from enemies (even if only partially and temporarily), but also by indicating the leadership chosen by Yahweh had already, prior to noted Spirit empowerment, functioned as leaders; 4) the Spirit of Yahweh transforms individuals, but does not so overpower them as to annul their ability to be unfaithful; and 5) the Spirit does not vouchsafe every action of the one who is Spirit endowed, but is noted instead to bring about deliverance regarding the immediate needs of the individual and the community (132–135).

The narratives of the Spirit's working in Saul and David are recorded in 1 and 2 Samuel. The Spirit comes upon Saul and he is changed into another man and begins to prophesy. Afterwards, the Spirit departs from Saul and David is empowered with the Holy Spirit. Yahweh sends a troubling spirit to Saul and he becomes disruptive. Saul's only comfort was music that David played with the lyre as songs of the Spirit. The author summarizes this Spirit's presence in Saul and David in four points.

Micaiah is a prophet who first prophesied success for the king, then his downfall, which raises doubt by the king and the prophetic court. The court of the king's prophets also makes proclamations, which Micaiah counteracts by saying, Yahweh put a "lying spirit" in all their mouths. This is a troubling statement which calls for discernment. While readers of this narrative might grapple with this text, the author provides six points to consider for understanding.

The *Double Portion* narrative represents Elisha asking Elijah for a double portion of his spirit. This represented successorship and sonship with Elisha taking up Elijah's mantle. Wadholm explicates twenty signs of the *Double Portion Spirit* then concludes this section offering five insights of the Spirit's presence. They are: 1) the Spirit is not limited by the life of the prophet; 2) the Spirit will carry forward the work of Yahweh with another; 3) the Spirit empowers for witness to the God of Israel as Yahweh; 4) the Spirit enables supernatural insight; and 5) the Spirit gives supernatural signs as affirming testimony of Yahweh's choice of leadership for Israel (190–191).

In Chapter Eight, Wadholm draws upon the *Wirkungsgeschichte* and his narrative work in this book regarding the רוּחַ (Spirit) in the Former Prophets to move towards a more constructive Pentecostal theology of the Former Prophets. He admits that there is no single Pentecostal theology, but multiple Pentecostal theologies, but identifies *Pentecostal* to represent a particular segment of the Church. He lists six categories in moving to that more constructive theology of the Spirit in the Former Prophets. They are; "abiding, purity, baptism, power, singing and anointing" (202).

Overall, Rick Wadholm has written an excellent book. In his own assessment, this monograph is a first of many where he lists six contributions. They are: 1) this is the first project specifically examining the texts of the Spirit limited to the Former Prophets and from an explicitly Pentecostal reading methodology; 2) this is the first attempt at a Pentecostal hermeneutic of the Former Prophets; 3) this is the first Pentecostal hermeneutic to attempt to hear both the narrative of the Former Prophets and Pentecostal experience as interpretive phenomenological interplay toward discerning meaning; 4) this is the

first use of the method of a history of effects (*Wirkungsgeschichte*) of the Spirit in the Former Prophets upon early North American Pentecostals; 5) this study has offered the most comprehensive reading on the role of the Spirit in the Former Prophets; and 6) this is the first monograph to offer a constructive Pentecostal theology of the Spirit in the Former Prophets (223–224).

The format and style of the writing is good, where the manuscript flows smoothly in reading. His exegetical analysis of biblical texts coupled with his own research of the early Pentecostal periodicals from 1906–1920 offers an informative reading of the רוח (Spirit) in the Former Prophets.

In conclusion, this monograph makes a ground-breaking contribution to Pentecostal scholarship. I would recommend this book as a primary or supplemental text to be read by seminary students. Clergy and scholars would also find this book extremely valuable.

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