

The top half of the page features a light blue rectangular background. Overlaid on this are several thick, wavy blue lines that curve across the space. The text is positioned within this area.

STUDY GUIDE ON

# 40 DAYS WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Jack Levison

## GETTING STARTED

Use this guide together with your copy of *40 Days with the Holy Spirit*. Either individually or as part of a group, consider these questions, that are organized according to the chapters of the book. Then journal your answers.

### STARTING OUT

---

In *The Message*, Eugene Peterson translates Genesis 1:2: “God’s Spirit brooded like a bird above the watery abyss.” Where are you confused, feeling out of control, overwhelmed by conflicting circumstances? How can the image of the Holy Spirit hovering over your life encourage and give you hope today?

## BREATHING

---

In the Upper Room “[Jesus] breathed on [his disciples] and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit.’” What is your experience of “receiving” the Holy Spirit? Levison writes: “The Spirit doesn’t pop in, pull off a miracle, and head out. The Spirit is the durable presence of God from first breath to last.” How does this match your experience? How does “settled breathing” invoke the presence of the Holy Spirit?

## PRAYING

---

“Prayer is not so much request as rejuvenation: listening, receiving, and whispering ‘Abba. Father,’” Levison writes. How does this challenge your prayer life? “Disputes without and fears within.” Does this describe your life? Talk about an experience where your fears were calmed through prayer. Do you see people in the Old Testament experiencing the Holy Spirit differently than people in the New Testament? How?

## PRACTICING

---

Levison observes that Joseph’s (Old Testament) ability to interpret dreams “is the upshot of experience rather than a burst of inspiration.” How is our perseverance in the faith as much an evidence of the presence of the Spirit as the miraculous moments? Is it encouraging to you that Levison repeatedly points out that the Holy Spirit is as much present in the mundane duties of daily life as in our moments of spiritual inspiration? How? There is a popular saying: “You can’t steer a parked car.” Where is God asking you to step out in faith, trusting that the Holy Spirit will meet you on the way?

## LEARNING

---

“Jesus teaches that study and spirituality, a vibrant spiritual life and a life of learning, go and in hand.” This is Levison’s encouragement for us to study. How have you found this to be true? Do you remember a time when the Holy Spirit “quickened” a verse of Scripture that you had previously learned, and it was just the encouragement you needed at that moment? Paul portrays the Spirit as a revealer of wisdom. What little revelations have you had today?

## LEADING

---

Levison says that inspired leadership is not so much the ability to restore the glory days, as it is to bring safety and wholeness out of ruins. Why would this be encouraging to you? Isaiah describes a “suffering servant”: Henri Nouwen a “wounded healer.” Describe a person in your life through whom the Spirit worked through weakness. The gentle dove of Jesus’s baptism next *drove* Jesus into the wilderness. How do you understand this progression?

## BUILDING

---

Levison writes about someone in the church fellowship who “keeps the church honest without an ounce of risk for speaking the truth.” How easy has it been to be honest in your fellowship? Why? How does dishonesty squelch the Spirit? Levison further declares that in “the tough, gutsy work of conflict and compromise we find the Holy Spirit.” How have you found this to be true or is this foreign to your understanding of the Holy Spirit?

## BLOSSOMING

---

Levison tells us that the Holy Spirit is not so much about protection and comfort as about transformation. What in your life needs transforming right now? Also in this chapter, Levison writes that “the Spirit melts the glue that holds together society in social tiers.” Where is the Holy Spirit leading you in ways you would prefer not to go? If the coming of the Holy Spirit is predicated on obedience, can you give two examples in your life where simple obedience led to great blessing?

## LOOKING AHEAD

---

Will you pray that the Holy Spirit will increase your thirst, your eagerness, your desire for him? Jesus said, “Out of the believer’s heart shall flow rivers of living water.” How can you better release the power of the Holy Spirit in you so that you can be a blessing to those around you?