

# The Holy Spirit of God

## (Intro. and Old Testament Overview)

### Introduction:

- A. Why study the Spirit of God?
  - 1. Why study about God?
  - 2. To know God we must come to know Him as “Spirit” (cf. John 4:24)
  - 3. Characteristics are learned by relationship and personality.
    - a. Jesus is the “Son” of God.
    - b. The Spirit of God rested upon the Son of God.
    - c. We learn about the person by learning of his “personality.”
  
- B. Many questions surround the Spirit and His work.
  - 1. A certain amount of mystery pervades the study, due in part, to the terms Ghost (KJV) and Spirit.
  - 2. Our curiosity and need to know compels us to evaluate His person and work.
  - 3. Your questions are solicited and will be received in writing on May 15th
  
- C. We want to embrace all that the Spirit has revealed about Himself as well as His revelation of the Father and the Son.
  - 1. Reception of the Holy Spirit and His gifts is considered a blessed experience.
  - 2. Examples: Luke 4:18; Acts 2:38; Ephesians 1:13 – 14; Titus 3:5 – 7; 2 Cor. 13:14
  - 3. New Testament references to the “spirit.” (Gk. *pneuma*)
    - a. Spirit mentioned 264 times (Copeland, executable outlines)
    - b. 60 or more references in the gospels
    - c. Acts has 57 references - some refer to this document as the [Acts of the Holy Spirit]
      - i. Future study of the Luke – Acts relationship of the Spirit’s work.
    - d. Holy Spirit referenced 132 times in the letters to Christians (epistles)
      - i. Greek term “*pneuma*”
        - ii. translated in NASB as “Breath 3 times, Spirit 239, spirit 103, spirits 32, spiritual 1, wind 1, winds 1
  
- iii.. **King James Word Usage - Total:** 385  
Spirit 111, Holy Ghost 89, Spirit (of God) 13, Spirit (of the Lord) 5, (My) Spirit 3, Spirit (of truth) 3, Spirit (of Christ) 2, human (spirit) 49, (evil) spirit 47, spirit (general) 26, spirit 8, (Jesus' own) spirit 6, (Jesus' own) ghost 2, miscellaneous 21
  
- <http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/nas/pneuma.html>
  
  - <http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/kjv/pneuma.html>
  
- D. This first study will consider the Holy Spirit and His work as revealed through the Old Testament.

E. In future lessons particular emphasis will be placed on God's purpose in Christ.

1. Focus on the coming of God's Spirit upon His people as described in Joel 2, Jeremiah 31 and Ezekiel 37 will help prepare us to see His work among His new covenant people.
2. Special attention will be given to the coming of the Spirit upon the Messiah as seen in announcements of Isaiah and other prophets.

## I. THE SPIRIT OF GOD

A. Prominence in the Old Testament.

1. The O.T. mentions the Holy Spirit **88 times** (Copeland, Executable Outlines)
2. **23 books** in the O.T. refer to the Holy Spirit

B. **Usage of terms:** (Hebrew - "Ruach")

1. Three basic meanings - "wind," "breath" and "spirit"
  - a. Ruach comes from a root meaning "wind; by resemblance breath, i.e. a sensible (or even violent) exhalation; fig. life, anger, unsubstantiality; by extens. a region of the sky; by resemblance spirit, but only of a rational being (includ. its expression and functions):--air, anger, blast, breath, X cool, courage, mind, , spirit ([ual]), tempest, X vain, ([whirl-]) wind (-y). (Strong's Hebrew Concordance)
  - b. Connotes unusual force or energy as seen in:
    - 1) "Breath of life" in man (Job 12:10; Psa.104:29)
    - 2) Mighty power of wind (Psa. 107:25; 148:8)
    - 3) Invasion by an external power in prophecy (1 Samuel 10:6)
    - 4) God's creative and /or sustaining power (Psa. 33:6; 104:30; Gen. 1:2)

2. Wind connotes mystery and power (John 3:8; Exodus 14:21 note Red Sea parted)

### 3. **Ruach in NASB**

<http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/hebrew/nas/ruwach-2.html>

- a. 346 verses that contain ruach and 375 individual usages in the NASB OT.
- b. air 2, anger 1, blast 2, breath 31, breathless\* 1, cool 1, courage 1, despondency\* 1, exposed 1, grief\* 1, heart 1, inspired 1, mind 3, motives 1, points 1, quick-tempered\* 1, side 4, sides 2, Spirit 76, spirit 127, spirits 3, strength 1, temper 2, thoughts\* 1, trustworthy\* 1, wind 98, winds 7, windy 2, wrath 1

### 4. **Ruach in KJV**

<http://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/hebrew/kjv/ruwach-2.html>

B. **Spirit of God**

1. The Holy Spirit has been active in the world since creation (Gen. 1:2).
2. The Old Testament has little to say about the person of the Spirit or His inner relationship to God the Father.
  - a. He is the "Spirit of God"

3. Distinction is made between God (spirit) and mankind (flesh) (Isa. 31:3).
4. The Spirit is closely related to God's power (Micah 3:8), and presence (Psa. 139:7).
5. The Spirit is depicted as the personal expression of God Himself in:
  - a. being grieved and giving rest (Isa. 63:10 - 14)
  - b. not being directed by men (Isa. 40:13)
  - c. instructor of the wilderness wanderers (Neh. 9:20)
6. The **"Holy"** Spirit is used only three times in the Old Test. (Isa. 63:10 and 11; Psa. 51:11).
  - a. The "holiness" of God, (including the Spirit) is sharply contrasted with the unholiness of men (Isa. 6:1-8).
  - b. When we choose unholy thoughts and behavior we recognize a chasm in our relationship with God. (Psalm 51:10 - 13)
  - c. In the New Testament the term "Holy" Spirit becomes the typical expression in reference to the Spirit of God.

### C. The Spirit and Man

1. (Hebrew "Nephesh" = Soul) is the typical word used to refer to qualities that distinguish a living person from a dead one. (Gen. 1:24) "living creature"
2. The "breath (ruach) of life" (Gen. 2:7; 6:17; Ezekiel 37:14 - spiritual life).
3. Ruach, at times, denotes:
  - a. full vitality (1 Kings 10:5) - no more "spirit" (breath) in her (Queen of Sheba)
  - b. spirit - seat of emotions, intellect and will (Prov.25:28; Psa.32:2; Num. 14:24)
4. Ruach (Spirit) and Nephesh (Soul) are used interchangeably at times, yet are distinct:
  - a. Generally *Nephesh* is natural - belongs to man.
  - b. Generally *Ruach* is spiritual - belongs to God (Eccl. 12:7) "spirit returns to God"

## II. THE SPIRIT'S INVADING FORCE

### A. Old Testament emphasizes God's powerful invasion from outside our experience (Isa.40:7).

1. Book of Judges is a prime example.
  - a. Othniel (Judges 3:9-10)
  - b. Gideon (6:34)
  - c. Samson (14:6; 16:20)
2. The Spirit set Ezekiel on his feet (Ezekiel 2:2).

### B. Brief New Testament notations: (Matthew 4:1; Acts 8:39) "snatched away"

## III. THE SPIRIT AND PROPHECY

### A. Note the relationship between the Spirit and the word of God.

1. The "inspiration" of prophecy - a major theme of the Old Testament

- a. God desires to communicate with us. The Spirit's work throughout time has been closely related with communicating the mind of the Father.
  - b. The Spirit demonstrates with powerful actions the will of God via communication
  - c. His purpose in doing so is to bring us into conformity with that will.
2. Note the connection between "the Spirit of the Lord" and "the Word of the Lord."
  - a. The breath and words of God are sometimes used interchangeably (Psa. 33:6; 2 Samuel 23:2).
  - b. Rejection of God's Word in Saul's life resulted in the departing of God's Spirit (1 Sam. 15:26; 16:14) (Note: argument lacks contextual cohesiveness, but the principle applies)

## **B. Early and Latter Old Testament Prophetic Experiences.**

1. The most frequent manifestations of the Spirit of God are in relation to prophecy.
2. God has communicated His message, via the Spirit, in various forms in the past.
  - a. Dreams (Gen. 41:38ff.; Joel 2:28-29)
  - b. Visions (Gen. 15:1; 46:2; Ezekiel, Daniel (1:17; 4:5; 7:7; Zechariah)
  - c. Unusual state of consciousness, invasive power, (1 Sam. 10:7-13; 19:20)
    - 1) Other accounts (cf. Numbers 11:25-26; 24:2) indicate the sudden, powerful action of the Spirit, evidenced by prophecy, whether momentary or permanent.
3. The Old Test. prophets and writings emphasized the source of the message, not an ecstatic experience (Amos 7:14-16).
4. The primary work of the Spirit in the prophets was to communicate God's message (2 Sam. 23:2; Micah 3:8; Zech. 7:12; 2 Peter 1:20-21).
5. Note that the Spirit employed these same methods, dreams and visions in communicating His will to the apostles. (Examples?)

## **C. The Spirit and Israel's Leadership**

1. A special endowment of the Spirit was seen in many of Israel's leaders.
  - a. Moses and the seventy (Num. 11:25 - 26)
  - b. Joshua (Num. 27: 18 - 20); Deut. 34:9)
  - c. Judges (Gideon, Jephthah and Samson) (Judges 6:34; 11:29; 14:6)
  - d. Kings - Saul (1 Sam. 10:1-13) and David (1 Sam. 16:13)
  - e. After exile - Zerubbabel (Zech 4:6).
2. These supernatural powers given to leaders points to a future king of kings.
  - a. The Messiah would also endow His spokesmen with supernatural power.
  - b. This conquering King would give supernatural gifts to men and women in order to announce the message of the King. (cf. Acts, 6 – 8; 21:8; 1 Cor. 12-14; Eph. 4:8f.)

## **D. The Spirit and the Messiah**

1. Old Test. prophecies: (Deut. 18:15-20; Isa. 11:2; 42:1; 61:1).
2. New Test. fulfillment (John 1:32 - 33; cf. Mark 1:10; Jn. 3:34; Luke 4:18)

3. In Jesus we have the embodiment of God's ideal ruler, fully equipped with the Holy Spirit.
4. The Old Test. foretells what the Christ would accomplish.

**E. The Spirit and the People**

1. In the Old Test. primarily the supernatural gifts of God's Spirit were on the whole, "to special people for special tasks." Relatively few people had these gifts.
2. God's prophets foretold of a time when others would be given supernatural revelation from God (Joel 2:28). Again the Scriptures record only a few people receiving these gifts. The benefits of these supernatural gifts, however, would be for all mankind. (Acts 2:7 - 21, 38 - 41).
  - a. It would be marked by changed hearts (Jer. 31:31-34; 32:37 - 40)
  - b. The Spirit's role in the new covenant is not detailed by the O.T. prophets, but they inform us of His involvement (Ezekiel 36:25 - 27).

**Conclusion: We have learned that:**

- A. God's Spirit has been active since creation.
- B. His invading power was manifested by the supernatural power demonstrated in the lives of men.
- C. The primary work of the Spirit throughout the Old Test. was communicating the will of the Father.
  1. He did that through prophets, dreams, and visions.
  2. He communicates God's will regarding the past and present.
  3. He also points ahead to the work of the Messiah and Himself in the age to come.
- D. To us, that age has come (Eph. 3:1-5; John 6:44-45; 12:48)