

The Holy Spirit

SPIRIT (spir'-it) (ruach; pneuma; Latin, spiritus):

1. Primary and Figurative Senses: (1) Used primarily in the Old Testament and New Testament of the wind, as in Gen 8:1; Num 11:31; Amos 4:13 ("createth the wind"); Heb 1:7 (angels, "spirits" or "winds" in margin); often used of the breath, as in Job 12:10; 15:30, and in 2 Thess 2:8 (wicked consumed by "the breath of his mouth"). (2) In a figurative sense it was used as indicating anger or fury, and as such applied even to God, who destroys by the "breath of his nostrils" (Job 4:9; Ex 15:8; 2 Sam 22:16; see 2 Thess 2:8). (3) Hence, applied to man-as being the seat of emotion in desire or trouble, and thus gradually of mental and moral qualities in general (Ex 28:3, "the spirit of wisdom"; Ezek 11:19, "a new spirit" etc.). Where man is deeply stirred by the Divine Spirit, as among the prophets, we have a somewhat similar use of the word, in such expressions as: "The Spirit of the Lord came upon him" (1 Sam 10:10).

2. Shades of Meaning: (1) The spirit as life-principle in man has various applications: sometimes to denote an apparition (Matt 14:26, the King James Version "saying, It is a spirit"; Luke 24:37, the King James Version "had seen a spirit"); sometimes to denote angels, both fallen and unfallen (Heb 1:14, "ministering spirits"; Matt 10:1, "unclean spirits"; compare also 12:43; Mark 1:23,26-27; and in Rev 1:4, "the seven Spirits before his throne"). (2) The spirit is thus in man the principle of life-but of man as distinguished from the brute-so that in death this spirit is yielded to the Lord (Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59; 1 Cor 5:5, "that the spirit may be saved"). Hence, God is called the "Father of spirits" (Heb 12:9). (3) Thus generally for all the manifestations of the spiritual part in man, as that which thinks, feels, wills; and also to denote certain qualities which characterize the man, e.g. "poor in spirit" (Matt 5:3); "spirit of gentleness" (Gal 6:1); "of bondage" (Rom 8:15); "of jealousy" (Num 5:14); "of fear" (2 Tim 1:7 the King James Version); "of slumber" (Rom 11:8 the King James Version). Hence, we are called upon to "rule over our own spirit" (Prov 16:32; 25:28), and are warned against being overmastered by a wrong spirit (Luke 9:55 the King James Version, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of"). So man may submit to the "spirit of error," and turn away from the "spirit of truth" (1 John 4:6). Thus we read of the "spirit of counsel" (Isa 11:2); "of wisdom" (Eph 1:17).

3. Human and Divine Spirit: (1) We go a step higher when we find the human spirit brought into relationship with the Divine Spirit. For man is but a creature to whom life has been imparted by God's spirit-life being but a resultant of God's breath. Thus life and death are realistically described as an imparting or a withdrawing of God's breath, as in Job 27:3; 33:4; 34:14, "spirit and breath" going together. The spirit may thus be "revived" (Gen 45:27), or "overwhelmed" (Ps 143:4), or "broken" (Prov 15:13). And where sin has been keenly felt, it is "a broken spirit" which is "a sacrifice to God" (Ps 51:17); and when man submits to the power of sin, a new direction is given to his mind: he comes under a "spirit of whoredom" (Hos 4:12); he becomes "proud in spirit" (Eccl 7:8), instead of being "patient in spirit"; he is a fool because he is "hasty in spirit" and gives way to "anger" (Eccl 7:9). The "faithful in spirit" are the men who resist talebearing and backbiting in the world (Prov 11:13). In such instances as these the difference between "soul" and "spirit" appears. See SOUL; PSYCHOLOGY.

(2) On this higher plane, too, we find the Divine Spirit at work. The terminology is very varied here: In the New Testament we read of the "Holy Spirit" (1 Cor 6:19; Matt 1:18,20; 1 Thess 1:5-6); the "Spirit of God" (1 Cor 2:10 ff; 3:16; Rom 8:9,11; Eph 3:16, etc.); the "Spirit of Christ" (Rom 8:9; 1 Cor 3:17; Gal 4:6); or simply of "Spirit," with distinct reference to God (1 Cor 2:10;

Rom 8:16,23, etc.). God Himself is Spirit (John 4:24). Hence, God's power is manifested in human life and character (Luke 4:14; Rom 1:1; 1 Cor 2:4; especially Luke 24:49). The Book of Acts may be termed the Book of the Holy Spirit, working with power in man. This Spirit is placed on a level with Father and Son in the Apostolic Benediction (2 Cor 13:14) and in the parting message of the Saviour to His disciples (Matt 28:19). As the agent in redemption and sanctification His work is glorified by lives "renewed" in the very "spirit of the mind" - a collocation of terms which has puzzled many interpreters (Eph 4:23-24), where *pneuma* and *nous* appear together, to indicate a renewal which is all-embracing, 'renewed in the spirit of your mind, so that the new man is put on, created in righteousness and true holiness' (see also John 14:17,26; 15:26; 16:13; 1 Cor 12:11, etc.)

4. Old Testament Applications: In the Old Testament this spirit of God appears in varied functions, as brooding over chaos (Gen 1:2; Job 26:13); as descending upon men, on heroes like Othniel, Gideon, etc. (Judg 3:10; 6:34), on prophets (Ezek 37:1), on "cunning workmen," like Bezalel and Aholiab (Ex 31:2-4, "filled with the Spirit of God"), and specially in such passages as Ps 51:11, where the very presence of God is indicated by an abiding influence of the Holy Spirit: "The Spirit of Yahweh is Yahweh himself."

5. Various Interpretations: May we not reach a still higher stage? Wendt in his interesting monograph (*Die Begriffe Fleisch und Geist*), of which extracts are given in Dickson's *St. Paul's Use of the Terms Flesh and Spirit*, draws attention to the transcendental influence of the Divine *ruach* in the Old Testament as expressed in such phrases as 'to put on' (Judg 6:34), 'to fall upon' (14:6,19), 'to settle' (Num 11:25 f). May we not then rightly assume that more is meant than a mere influence emanating from a personal God? Are we not right in maintaining with Davidson that "there are indeed a considerable number of passages in the Old Testament which might very well express the idea that the Spirit is a distinct hypostasis or person."? (see *SUBSTANCE*). Rejecting the well-known passage in Genesis: "Let us make man after our own image," which some have interpreted in a trinitarian sense, we may point to such texts as Zech 4:6, "by my Spirit"; Isa 63:10-11, "They rebelled, and grieved his holy Spirit"; "Where is he that put his holy Spirit in the midst of them?" This is borne out by the New Testament, with its warnings against "grieving the Holy Spirit," "lying against the Holy Spirit," and kindred expressions (Eph 4:30; Acts 5:3). It is this Spirit which "beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God" (Rom 8:16)-the spirit which, as Auberlen has put it (*Hauch-Herzog, Realencyklopadie fur protestantische Theologie und Kirche* (1), article "Geist des Menschen"), "appears in a double relationship to us, as the principle of natural life, which is ours by birth, and that of spiritual life, which we receive through the new birth (*Wiedergeburt*)." Hence, Paul speaks of God whom he serves "with his spirit" (Rom 1:9); and in 2 Tim 1:3 he speaks of serving God "in a pure conscience." See *CONSCIENCE; FLESH; HOLY SPIRIT; PSYCHOLOGY; SOUL*.

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