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The Spirit in the Old Testament.

(2019)

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Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

The Spirit in the Old Testament.

Topics.

- The Spirit of God is placed on seventy elders.
- Bind God's words between your eyes.
- The Spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD.
- Power over mortal death.
- The spirit of a nation.
- Grieving the Holy Spirit.
- The human heart and the human spirit.
- The Holy Ghost and the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament.

INTRODUCTION

The following study looks at how the word Spirit is used in the Old Testament and what the word spirit means when referring to God and how the word spirit is used when referring to the human spirit and what they mean in the Old Testament and the different context they are used in to discover what God's Spirit and the human spirit embrace and to discover what they meant to the faithful of Israel and the writers of the Old Testament scrolls.

1

THE SPIRIT OF GOD, PLACED ON SEVENTY ELDERS

- **Numbers 11:24-26:** Moses went out and told the people the words of the LORD. And he gathered seventy men of the elders of the people and placed them around the tent. ²⁵Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke to him, and took some of the Spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders. And as soon as the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied. But they did not continue doing it. ²⁶Now two men remained in the camp, one named Eldad, and the other named Medad, and the Spirit rested on them. They were among those registered, but they had not gone out to the tent, and so they prophesied in the camp.

The word spirit comes from the Hebrew word (*ruwach*) and from Strong's concordance refers to the wind as being strong and violent (i.e., a tempest or whirlwind etc.,) or as being calm cool and pleasant. By resemblance it refers to life (i.e., to breath and exhale) and embraces the rational being including its expression and functions (sensible or violent). Figuratively it refers to the mind and embraces such things as, anger, vanity and courage etc., and the faculty of understanding, thinking and reasoning.

MOSES SPIRIT

These verses clearly show that God is able to place His Spirit in varying portions on whoever he chooses. Moses and the seventy prophets are a good example of God's Spirit being poured out upon believers with varying levels of power. God took some of the Spirit that was on Moses and put it on seventy other men and as soon as the Spirit God had taken off Moses rested on the seventy men they began to prophesy. The Spirit of God also rested on two other men named Eldad and Medad who also began to prophesy. Certain men told Moses to stop them prophesying. Moses told

them that he wished that God would put His Spirit on everyone so that they all would be able to prophesy. God is able to take all of His Spirit or a portion of His Spirit off one person and put it on another. When God puts His Spirit on a person and they prophesied it was a sign that God had accepted that person. Israel's prophets in the Old Testament were inspired by God to prophecy the messages of the LORD, so to the Jewish mind prophecy was a sign that a person was accepted by God and under His influence. When God poured out His Spirit on the Gentiles in the New Testament and they began to prophecy and speak the words of God and praise His name in languages and dialects (tongues) that they had not learned, but others who were listening and spoke that language clearly understood it was a testimony to the Jews that God had now accepting the Gentiles.

BIND GOD'S WORDS BETWEEN YOUR EYES

- **Deuteronomy 11:18:** You shall therefore lay up these words of mine in your heart and in your soul and you shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.

The Jews today take this verse so literally that they bind various Scriptures in small boxes to their door frames, their arms and upon their foreheads, but this is not what the verse means. God is saying that His people should meditate upon His words in their mind and commit them to memory so that they will take root in their hearts to do them and keep them. The idea is to engrave God's words on our mind and our heart so that they not only become a spiritual river underlying all our thoughts, dreams and passions, but also influence our lives so that outwardly we live a lifestyle that honours God and brings a good testimony to the Lord Jesus Christ and the Christian faith.

THE SPIRIT OF MAN IS THE LAMP OF THE LORD

- **Proverbs 20:27:** The spirit of man is the lamp of the LORD (the candle of the LORD in KJV) searching all his innermost parts.

The spirit in this context refers to the human spirit within that searches all the inward parts of the heart and the mind and the thoughts and intents, the motives and purposes which are the things within us that only we can know. It is by the light of this candle we are able to look into our own heart and mind and the inmost recesses of them and reflect upon our thoughts and schemes and judge in some measure whether what is dwelling within is right or wrong. This is because within the mind there is as it were a candle of light which of course is our conscience which unless it has been seared or hardened passes sentence on what is within and upon what we have done and either excuses or accuses us accordingly (1 Corinthians 2:10) (Romans 2:14).

POWER OVER MORTAL DEATH

- **Ecclesiastes 8:8:** No man has power to retain the spirit or power over the day of death. There is no discharge from war, nor will wickedness deliver those who are given to it.

The spirit in this context refers to mortal human life. No man or woman has any power over the day that death comes to them. We are all on a path of decay which will eventually end in death no one can escape this truth or the day when they will be no more. Now here is the good news, though not one of us has any power over mortal death we do have the power to choose whether eternal life in everlasting glory awaits us or the darkness of the grave. To discover more see the title:

- Gospel (ON WEBSITE MENU).

- **Isaiah 19:3:** The spirit of the Egyptians within them will be emptied out, and I will confound their counsel; and they will inquire of the idols and the sorcerers, and the mediums and the necromancers (they will seek them that have familiar spirit in KJV).

Almost every nation has a collective spirit meaning there is one dominant attitude of a nation that is within the nation and that arises above all others when all its individual citizens are viewed as a collective whole. The Bible calls this collective and dominate attitude of a nation the spirit within the nation or the Spirit over the nation. It could be said that:

- The spirit of America is pride.
- The spirit of Australia is very lay back (she'll be right mate).
- The spirit of France is permissiveness.
- The spirit of Italy is romantic.
- The spirit of Germany is superiority.

The spirit of Israel is religious and spiritual.

Now I am not saying these are the spirits of these countries, but simply using them as an example to help explain the principal. These attitudes can be called the spirit within a nation, the spirit of a nation or the spirit over a nation. All these titles simply refer to the collective and dominate attitude of all the nations' citizens as a collective whole. The spirit in this context of this verse refers to the collective spirit of the nation of Egypt which at the time of Isaiah was confidence in their strength, confidence in their might and extreme pride.

GRIEVING THE HOLY SPIRIT

- **Isaiah 63:10:** they rebelled and grieved God's Holy Spirit therefore he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them.

To understand what the expression, "Grieving God's Holy Spirit" means it will help to firstly take a look at what pleases God. Jesus said:

- You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸This is the great and first commandment. ³⁹And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. ⁴⁰On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets" (Matt. 22:37-40) (Mark 12:28-31).

James Jesus brother wrote:

- If you really fulfill the royal law according to the Scripture, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself," you are doing well (James 2:8).

And the apostle Paul said:

- Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 13:10).

These verses shine a brilliant spotlight on the truth that the spirit of the law regarding humankind is love, because each law protects the innocent from physical, financial, sexual, verbal and emotional and spiritual harm,

- Micah wrote: "What the LORD requires of mankind is to do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with their God" (Micah 6:5-10).
- Isaiah says: "The LORD loves justice, hates robbery and wrong doing" (Isaiah 61:8).

- Jeremiah said: “Those who know God practise steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth, because it is in these things that God delights” (Jer. 9:24).

The great prophets Micah, Isaiah and Jeremiah clearly show us that the people the LORD loves are not only those who acknowledge God, but who also uphold justice, do not lie, deceive or make promises they do not intend to keep, but speak the truth, do what is right, show respect and give help to others when able and make choices that lead to peace. These are the things the LORD delights in and that bring His favour. This means that grieving the Holy Spirit is about God’s people deliberately doing, speaking and acting in a manner that is offensive to God’s Holy character and nature in anyway and that brings any form of harm and hurt to other men and woman. It matters not how great our knowledge of Scripture might be or how regularly we go to a church and faithfully attend to its duties or how strictly we adhere to ceremonial rites, holy days or how faithfully we keep religious customs and traditions if we are wilfully living a lifestyle that brings dishonour to God and harm and hurt to others we are grieving the Holy Spirit.

THE HUMAN HEART AND THE HUMAN SPIRIT

The human heart when referred to spiritually is given the title: “the human spirit.” The human spirit can be defined as the sum total of a person’s mind, thoughts, will and attitudes gathered together as a collective whole, in this context the spirit refers to who we are at our core and inner most being. From the Old Testament we learn that the human spirit can be seen as being one spirit containing three parts, the first part being good, the second part being wicked and the third part being neither good nor wicked.

1 THE FIRST AND GOOD PART CAN BE FILLED WITH

4

- Integrity, faithfulness and trust (Prov. 11:13).
- Great understanding and wisdom (Prov. 14:29) (Eccl. 1:17) (Isaiah 29:24).
- Praise, gladness, joy and happiness (Prov. 17:22) (Isaiah 29:24) (Isaiah 61:3).
- Humbleness and open to instruction and willing to give (Prov. 16:19) (Prov. 29:23) (Isaiah 29:24).
- Remorse, repentance, regret and shame over wrongdoing (Isaiah 57:15) (Isaiah 29:24).
- Self-control, patience, strength and courage (Prov. 16:32) (Eccl. 7:8-9) (Prov. 25:28) (Isaiah 28:5-6).
- Justice (i.e., knowing what is right and fair).
- Excellence (i.e., full of wisdom, integrity, endurance, faithfulness and loyalty toward God and man) (Dan. 6:3) (Prov. 18:14).
- Courage (to stand up for what is right, good, just and fair) (Micah 3:8).

All of these are referred to as spirits in the Old Testament.

2 THE SECOND AND WICKED PART CAN BE FILLED WITH

- Slandering (i.e., revealing secrets about others) (Prov. 11:13).

- Anger, foolishness, pride and arrogance (Prov. 14:29) (Prov. 16:18-19) (Prov. 16:32) (Prov. 29:23) (Eccl. 7:8-9).
- Rebellion and whoredom (i.e., infidelity, disloyalty, falseness, betrayal, deceitfulness and faithlessness toward God (Hosea 4:12).
- Uncontrolled madness and foolishness (Prov. 25:28) (Eccl. 1:17).
- Deceit, lies and deception (Micah 3:1-5).
- Hypocrisy, dishonesty and pretence (Micah 3:1-5).
- Uncleanliness (i.e., acting and speaking in a manner that is against the nature and character of God).
- Deep sleep (i.e., spiritual blindness) (Isaiah 29:10).

All of these are referred to as spirits in the Old Testament.

3 THE THIRD PART THAT IS NEITHER GOOD NOR WICKED CAN BE FILLED WITH

- Sorrow, sadness, despair and depression (Prov. 15:13) (Prov. 17:22).
- Grief and disappointment (Prov. 17:22) (Isaiah 54:6).
- Sickness of all kinds (especially emotional hurt) (Prov. 18:14).
- Brokenness, frustration, dissatisfaction and weariness (Eccl. 1:17).
- Feebleness, frailty and mourning (Isaiah 61:3).

All of these are referred to as spirits in the Old Testament.

5

All of these attitudes not only apply to the human spirit but also to the human heart when it is spoken of spiritually this is because the human spirit and the human heart when spoken of spiritually refer to who we are at our core, who we are as a collective whole, the sum total of our mind, thoughts, intellect, emotions, passions, desires etc., another ways of explaining the spirit and heart is to say they refer to our essence and our persona (i.e., who we are as a person).

THE HOLY GHOST AND THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

The following verses show that the word ghost was the ancient word used for the human spirit and human life. Today most modern verses have translated the word ghost to Spirit.

The following are all the Old Testament verses that use the word ghost and all refer to mortal human life.

- Abraham gave up the ghost, and died in a good old age (Gen. 25:8).
- These are the years of the life of Ishmael, an hundred and thirty and seven years: and he gave up the ghost and died (Gen. 25:17).
- Isaac gave up the ghost, and died, and was gathered unto his people (Gen. 35:29).
- When Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people (Gen. 49:33).
- Why died I not from the womb? Why did I not give up the ghost when I came out of the belly? (Job 3:11).
- Wherefore then hast thou brought me forth out of the womb? Oh that I had given up the ghost, and no eye had seen me! (Job 10:18).

- The eyes of the wicked shall fail, and they shall not escape, and their hope shall be as the giving up of the ghost (to breathe their last in the ESB) (Job 11:20).
- Who is he that will plead with me? For now, if I hold my tongue, I shall give up the ghost (Job 13:19).
- Man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where *is* he? (Job 14:10).
- She that hath borne seven languisheth: she hath given up the ghost; her sun is gone down while it was yet day (Jer. 15:9).
- I called for my lovers, but they deceived me: my priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city (they perished in the ESB) (Lam. 1:19).

The ghost (the spirit in modern Bibles) in the context of these verses, refer to mortal life and the expression "giving up the ghost" simply means the person has died. It is interesting to notice when Job's life was full of pain, suffering and sorrow he felt so depressed, miserable and disheartened that he not only wished he had died at birth when he came out of the womb (Job 3:11), but also wondered why God let him be born (Job 10:18). This attitude is not limited to Job only I have visited a few secular men and woman in the nursing home who have reached that age where they have said, "James I just want to go." When people are living in pain, enormous stress or great suffering or are in deep despair and depression and have lost all hope death becomes a welcomed friend.

This is one of the reasons people commit suicide, the darkness of death to them is a place of peace and escape from their mental torment or the great hurt they are harbouring within. This reality is also true of those who deny God and are corrupt, this is because when their youthful body has become feeble and their mind forgetful and all their hope and joy in this world has failed and all the ways of escaping depression and despair and their hopelessness and guilt is lost to them their hope is to breathe their last breathe (Job 11:20), death becomes their welcomed hope because the darkness of the grave is their only escape from the pain, misery and depression when all the joy they once knew is gone. In contrast to this darkness is the light of the resurrection and eternal life in everlasting glory for all who belong to Christ's global Kingdom.

SUMMARY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

God's Spirit: is Holy and just this is why God's Spirit is often called the Holy Spirit. God's Spirit embraces the power to create out of nothing and miraculous power to alter the natural laws of the universe and heal the human body and raise it to everlasting life. It embraces the power to transform and save the lowest child of Adam to eternal life and inspire the human mind to speak the words of God and guide men and women in God's ways the core essence of God's spirit is love (1 John 4:8) (1 John 4:16).

The human spirit: embraces our persona our identity personality character who we are as a total whole and who we are at our core, (i.e., our true authentic essence).

All of the following attitudes are spoken of as spirits in the Old Testament:

- Humbleness, integrity, faithfulness, loyalty, trust, integrity, self-control, patience, comfort, repentance, wisdom, joy, happiness, strength, courage and justice, (i.e., having a spirit that knows what is right and fair).
- Despair, depression, disappointment, frustration, dissatisfaction, weariness, dishonour, regret, shame, sorrow, grief, remorse, mourning, foolishness, and spiritual blindness.

- Anger, pride, arrogance, rebellion, infidelity, disloyalty, falseness, betrayal, deceitfulness, faithlessness and hypocrisy.

Almost all nations have a collective spirit meaning there is one dominant attitude of a nation that is within the nation and that arises above all others when all its individual citizens are viewed as a collective whole. The Bible calls this collective and dominate attitude of a nation the spirit within the nation or the spirit over the nation it can be a good or bad spirit.

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