

## Sequim Community Church

### Heart to Heart Women's Bible Study

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LESSON TWO - HOLY SPIRIT SERIES

"HOLY SPIRIT IN THE OLD TESTAMENT"

"Understanding The Holy Spirit Made Easy" reading: pp. 7, 14, 39, 45, 60, 69.

The descriptors "the Spirit," "His Spirit," "My Spirit," "the Spirit of Wisdom," "the Spirit of God," "the Holy Spirit," and "the Spirit of the Lord" are virtual synonyms. Human wisdom alone cannot accomplish God's purposes.

We begin our study with "**The Spirit**" and "**His Spirit**" in the Torah (The Law).

Moses' seventy elders needed **the Spirit** to rest on them to provide the help Moses required. When **the Spirit** rested on the seventy elders, they prophesied. This is the beginning of a pattern of Spirit-empowered speech in conjunction with the coming of **the Spirit**, a pattern that is finalized on the day of Pentecost.

1. Read Exodus 28:1-5. Write out verse 3.
  
2. Read Numbers 27:18. What was Moses commanded to do to Joshua?

While the same Spirit that rested upon the seventy elders filled the Believers who waited in the upper room, the fact that the first-century Believers spoke in languages they had never learned indicates that their experience with **the Spirit** surpassed anything before that day. Read Acts 1:4-5.

3. What did Jesus do that surpassed what John the Baptist did?
  
4. Read Genesis 6:3. The Lord says He will not contend with man forever because we are mortal. How many years did our Lord give us to live from this moment forward?

The reference to “**My Spirit**” in Genesis 6:3 is a statement regarding the diminishing length of the human lifespan. Human beings are not divine; they are flesh. There is no access now to Eden’s Tree of Life, so there is no expectation of eternal life on this earth. The promise of eternal life is not of this life.

5. Read I Thessalonians 4:13-18. Who is given the promise of eternal life? (vs. 16-17).

Now we move from the Torah (The Law) to the “**The Spirit of the Lord**” and “**The Spirit of God**” in the Prophets.

6. The first time the “**Spirit of the Lord**” is mentioned in the Prophets is in Judges. Read Judges 3:7-10. How did our Lord view the Israelites? (vs. 7) Why? (vs. 7) What did our Lord do to save the Israelites from their evil ways? (vs. 9) What is the “deliverers” name? (vs. 9) What did our Lord do to this “deliverer” that helped him save the people? (Vs. 10).
7. God raised up four judges to enable them to deliver the Israelites from their enemies. Read Judges 6:34; 11:29; 13:24-25 and write down the names of the other three judges in which the “Spirit of the Lord” came upon.

Now we turn to **I and II Samuel**. References to the “**Spirit of the Lord**” and the “**Spirit of God**” in Samuel offer intriguing insights when compared with previous uses of the terms. The first mention of **the Spirit** in connection with Israel’s first King, King Saul sounds quite hopeful: Saul was “turned into another man,” and he prophesied. He had “another heart.” But because King Saul was disobedient to the Lord. The Lord raised up another man to be king. The Lord raised up David, son of Jesse of Bethlehem. The **Spirit of the Lord** came upon David, departing from Saul and giving way to a distressing spirit from the Lord.

Read I Samuel 10:1-6. We learn that after Samuel anointed Saul to be Israel’s king, he explained to Saul that there would be **three events** serving as signs that God was with him. After these signs were fulfilled, the **Spirit of God** came upon Saul, and he prophesied with a group of prophets and was “turned into another man.”

8. Name the three “places” or “signs.”

After Saul's disobedience to the Lord. Saul wanted to kill David. Saul sent messengers to capture David. But the Lord stepped in and caused Saul's plans to fail. Read I Samuel 19:20-24.

9. How many times did King Saul send messengers to capture David? (vs. 21) What happened to all the messengers (vs. 20), including King Saul himself? (vs. 23)?

King Saul never captured David, but he chased after him for many years. King Saul died, and David was anointed King of Judah. (II Samuel 2:4). All the tribes of Israel eventually came to David, and they anointed David king over Israel. (II Samuel 5:3). After restoring the nation to peace and great military power. David's personal life becomes entangled in sin. He commits adultery with Bathsheba and then orders her husband killed in an attempted cover-up. David deeply regretted what he had done and sought God's forgiveness, but the child of his sinful act died. We may be forgiven by God for our sins, but we will often experience harsh consequences.

The last mention of the ***Spirit of the Lord*** in II Samuel involves David's last words: “***The Spirit of the Lord*** spoke through me, and His word was on my tongue. The God of Israel spoke, the Rock of Israel said to me: ‘When one rules over men in righteousness, when he rules in the fear of God, he is like the light of morning at sunrise on a cloudless morning, like the brightness after rain that brings the grass from the earth. Is not my house right with God? Has He not made with me an everlasting covenant, arranged, and secured in every part? Will He not bring to fruition my salvation and grant me my every desire?’” II Samuel 23:2-5.

10. In the style of a prophet, David spoke of a just and righteous ruler. Who will fulfill this prophecy to rule in perfect justice and peace?

Now we move on to **I and II Kings**. There are two references to the ***Spirit of the Lord*** in I Kings.

11. Read I Kings 18:7-12. Who mentions the “Spirit of the Lord?” (vs. 12). And what does he say the “Spirit of the Lord” will do?

In I Kings 22 we learn that Micaiah prophesies against King Ahab regarding victory against Ramoth Gilead. All the prophets (false prophets) were predicting victory, including one false prophet named Zedekiah (vs. 11). Micaiah knew that was a lie and proceeded to tell King Ahab that if he attacked Ramoth Gilead, he would surely die. Read I Kings 22:19-24.

12. What did Zedekiah do to Micaiah? (vs. 24) Why? (vs. 23)

Since Zedekiah was a false prophet, the only thing we may learn from him is that he understood that the ***Spirit of the Lord*** spoke to true prophets. He claimed, falsely, that this had been the case when he prophesied victory. Zedekiah declared, “This is what the Lord says...”

Now we turn to Isaiah, Ezekiel, and Micah. There are ten references to the ***Spirit of the Lord*** in these books. The descriptor “***the Spirit of the Lord***” is used six times in Isaiah, twice in Ezekiel, and twice in Micah. The “***Spirit of God***” appears once in Ezekiel.

13. Read Isaiah 11:2. In this messianic prophecy, ***the Spirit of the Lord*** that will rest upon the Messiah is further described in six additional characteristics of ***the Spirit***. What are these six characteristics?

The six references to the ***Spirit of the Lord*** are found in Isaiah 40:7, 13, 14; 59:19; 61:1-2; 63:14.

Isaiah 40:7 is translated in the English versions of the Bible as meaning “wind” or “breath.” The King James version is completely alone in translating the Hebrew word *ruach* as “Spirit” in this case.

Three of the six characteristics of the ***Spirit of the Lord*** listed above in Isaiah 11:2 is found in Isaiah 40:13-14: understanding, council, and knowledge.

The ***Spirit of the Lord*** refers to divine defense against his enemies in Isaiah 59:19. This verse also translates the Hebrew word *ruach* into “wind” or “breath.”

Read Isaiah 61: 1-2.

14. In verse 1, the Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on who? (Clue: What book are we reading?) Why? What was this person sent to do? (vs. 1, 2)

The first time the term ***the Spirit of the Lord*** is used in Ezekiel, it introduces Spirit-empowered speech: “The Spirit lifted me up... He said to me... prophecy against them, prophecy, O son of man! Then ***the Spirit of the Lord*** fell upon me and said to me, speak! Thus says the Lord: Thus, you have said, O house of Israel; for I know the things that come into your mind.” Ezekiel 11: 1-5.

The second and last time the phrase ***the Spirit of the Lord*** is used in Ezekiel, marks the beginning of the vision of the valley of dry bones: “The hand of the Lord came upon me and brought me out in ***the spirit of the Lord***, and set me down in the midst of the valley; and it was full of bones.” Ezekiel 37:1.

Micah's first reference to *the Spirit of the Lord* poses a question to the false prophets in Jerusalem: "You who are named the House of Jacob: Is the *Spirit of the Lord* restricted? Are these his doings? Do not My words do good to him who walks uprightly?" Micah 2: 7

The second reference to *the Spirit of the Lord* in Micah has the Spirit as the source of Micah's power: "But truly I am full of the power by *the Spirit of the Lord*, and of justice and might, to declare to Jacob his transgression and to Israel his sin." Micah 3:8.

Now we turn our focus to the descriptor "*my Spirit*." After Genesis 6:3, the first time the words "*my Spirit*" appear in the Old Testament is in Isaiah 30:1: "Woe to the rebellious children, says the Lord, who take counsel, but not of Me, and who devise plans, but not of *my Spirit*, that they may add sin to sin."

The next use of "*my Spirit*" occurs in the messianic prophecy of Isaiah 42:1: "Behold! My Servant whom I uphold, my Elect One in whom My soul delights! I have put "*my Spirit*" upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the Gentiles."

15. Who is the Servant; Elect One; Him and He?

Isaiah 44:3 anticipates a time when the Lord will pour out *His Spirit* on Israel's descendants: "For I will pour out on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour "*my Spirit*" on your descendants, and My blessing on your offspring."

16. Read Numbers 11:29; Joel 2:28-29; and Acts 2:17-18 and compare with Isaiah 44:3. What is the theme in these verses?

Isaiah was not alone in his anticipation of the New Covenant. In his first use of the term *my Spirit*, Ezekiel explained why the Israelites were in captivity. They had defiled the name of the Lord while dwelling in the land God had promised them. Nevertheless, Ezekiel offered hope.

17. Read Ezekiel 36:26-28. What will be renewed? How?

Joel twice used the descriptor "*my Spirit*" to prophecy of an event that would, as Peter said, "Come to pass in the last days." Acts 2: 17. The Spirit to which this refers is identified in Joel 2: 27: "I am the Lord your God."

The second time Joel refers to "*my Spirit*" is in chapter 2 verse 29. "Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out *my Spirit* in those days."

Haggai's use of the term "**my Spirit**" refers to the **Spirit of the Lord**: "According to the word that I covenanted with you when you came out of Egypt, so *My Spirit* remains among you; Do not fear," Haggai 2:5.

Zechariah twice uses the term "**My Spirit**." First, the Lord informed Zerubbabel that the building of the Second Temple would not "be by might nor by power, but by **My Spirit**." Zechariah 4:6. Second, an angel, speaking on behalf of the Lord, informed Zechariah in a vision, "See, those who go toward the north country have given rest to **My Spirit** in the North Country." Zechariah 6:8.

The "north country" is Persia, and the "rest" given to "**My Spirit**" indicates that the Lord's work of judgment on his people had been completed.

There are occasions when the term "**the Spirit**" is used in connection with a descriptive noun or verb to address a specific work of the Spirit. Such is the case with the first appearance of "**the Spirit**" in *Isaiah*.

18. Read Isaiah 4:4. How will the Lord cleanse the filth and bloodstains?

The figurative or theological attestations of fire generally relate to some manifestation of God's being or action. In this case, the cleansing and purging of Jerusalem has occurred in a messianic context.

19. Read Isaiah 4:2 and write down the word that is used to describe the Messiah?

The second appearance of the words "**the Spirit**" occurs in Isaiah 32:15. "Until **the Spirit** is poured upon us from on high, and the wilderness becomes a fruitful field, and the fruitful field is counted as a forest." Again, this is a messianic context created by Isaiah 32: 1. "Behold, a king will reign in righteousness, and princes will rule with justice." This is the king of Isaiah 9:6-7 who judges with righteousness. Isaiah 11: 4-5.

In Ezekiel, the first use of the term "**the spirit**" to refer to the **Spirit of the Lord** is found in Ezekiel 2:2.

Read Ezekiel 2:2; 3:12; 3:14; 3:24; 8:3; 11:1; 11:24; 43:5.

20. What are the reoccurring words of action in these verses?

The book of Ezekiel begins with "visions of God." Ezekiel 1:1. Readers often focus on the breathtaking imagery created by the whirlwind, the raging fire, the four "living creatures," each

with four wings and four faces like a man, lion, ox, and eagle, and the transient torches, wheels within wheels with rims of eyes, and finally, a rainbow. Much has been written to describe this truly awesome spectacle. No doubt there is significant meaning to many of the details. The book of Ezekiel also reminds us, in the above versus that the spirit has awesome power to lift us up and carry us to different places in order to show us the grandeur of our Lord.

The words “***the Spirit***” appear twice in Zechariah.

21. Read Zechariah 12:1. What words are used to reference “the Spirit?” (Very obvious – but we all have different versions.) Also read Zechariah 12:10a. What words are used to reference “the Spirit?”

Because of their context, we know the second reference is to “***the Spirit***” that is the gift of the Lord. The chapter begins with the words of the Lord, who says in verse 10, “I will pour out on the House of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a Spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a first born son.”

These verses refer to the promise fulfilled with the events involved in the crucifixion of Christ (John 19: 34-37). They are also connected with the Second Coming of Jesus (Revelation 1:7). Since the Lord declared “they will look on me” in this messianic text, the Lord is identified as the Messiah.

Also, since Zechariah 12:10 has to do with the Messiah pouring out the Spirit, there may be an anticipation of Acts 2:33, where the Messiah has poured out the Spirit.

Now on to ***Isaiah***.

There are two references to “***His Spirit***” in Isaiah.

22. Read Isaiah 34:16. (I realize we all have different versions of the Bible). Write down what your version says or calls the Spirit.
23. Read Isaiah 48:16 together with Isaiah 48:12. Who is the “speaker” in these verses?
24. Read Zechariah 7:12 along with Zechariah 7:7. How did our Lord send his Word to the earlier Prophets?

Both verses call for accountability to hear the words of “the former prophets.” In the first case, these are words which “the Lord proclaimed.” In the second, they are words which the Lord of hosts sent “***by His Spirit***.”

Let us look further into the Old Testament and read about the “**Holy Spirit**” in Isaiah. Isaiah has two of the only three uses of the term “**Holy Spirit**” in the Old Testament.

25. Read Isaiah 63:10-11. What did the people do to the “Holy Spirit?” What did our Lord mention He did to the people?

Israel's rebellion against the **Holy Spirit** delivers the shocking news that the Lord relates to Israel as an enemy. But then, the Lord remembers “the days of old,” the days when Moses led the Israelites through the divided Red Sea, when He “put his **Holy Spirit** within them.”

The **Holy Spirit** is not some kind of impersonal force but can be rebelled against and grieved.

The Hebrew word translated “within” or “among” in the phrase *Where is he who put his **Holy Spirit** within them (or among them)* can also be translated “midst”, to render the meaning “in midst of them”, “placed his **Holy Spirit** among them” or “set his **Holy Spirit** among them.”

We know from other texts in the Old Testament that there were people who were filled with the spirit in that era but given the context of Israel’s rebellion in this text, it seems doubtful that Isaiah means the Holy Spirit was put within the ancient Israelites as individuals. Rather, the Holy Spirit was in their midst as they exited Egypt.

Now we move into the third section of the Hebrew scriptures as referred to by Jesus and as arranged in the Hebrew order of the Old Testament books. Known as the “**Writings**” (but often referred to simply as the Psalms). This unit of scripture consists of Psalms, Job, Proverbs, Ruth, Song of Solomon, Ecclesiastes, Lamentations, Esther, Daniel, Ezra-Nehemiah, and Chronicles.

We begin to look at the “**Spirit of God**” in the Job.

26. Read Job 27:3. Write down the entire verse.

An intriguing use of the Hebrew word *ruach* appears in Job 27:3. Job said, “All the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils.” In this case, some translations, including the New King James Version, render *ruach* as “breath.” This is a legitimate translation. But a different word, *nishmat*, is translated “breath” earlier in the verse. So, if your translation says “breath of God” that is the more possible interpretation.

The next reference to the “**Spirit of God**” in Job, comes on the lips of Elihu, the youngest of those who wish to set Job straight as to the cause of his suffering.

27. Read Job 33:3-4. Where did Elihu’s words come from? Who did Elihu say made him? Who did Elihu say gave him life?



Both Job and Elihu spoke of breath and Spirit, but in the end, it was Job who heard from God. The Lord answered Job and rebuked his three friends, but He had no word for Elihu, who had to a large extent merely reiterated the words of Job's three friends. It is almost as if Elihu inserted himself into Job's story as an unwelcome intruder. Both Job and Elihu derived their existence from the "**Spirit or breath of God**," but Job's confession is that of a man who wants to please God.

The third reference to the "**Spirit of God**" in the Hebrew Scriptures appears in II Chronicles 15:1-2.

28. Read II Chronicles 15:1-2. What was the **action** of the "**Spirit of God**" in this verse?

We note again that when this "**Spirit of God**" comes upon a person, it is not unusual for that person to speak prophetically under the influence of the Spirit.

Now we will look at the words "**my Spirit**" in Proverbs.

29. Read Proverbs 1:20-23. Who is the proverbial spokesperson in this verse?

The promise to "**pour out my Spirit**" or some versions may read "*poured out my heart*" is not unique here. The same language is used in Joel 2:28-29, the fulfillment of which is recorded in Acts 2:17-18. We may be tempted to dismiss any thought of a connection between Proverbs, Joel, and Acts, but we should keep in mind that the "**Spirit of Wisdom**" with which Joshua was filled is an attribute of the "**Spirit of the Lord**." See numbers 27:18; Deuteronomy 34:9; Isaiah 11:2. To some, wisdom may seem an optional virtue. But the wisdom seen here in Proverbs is a reference to the "**Spirit of the Lord**," spurned at risk by those who "hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the Lord." Proverbs 1: 29.

The first use of the term "**your Spirit**" is in David's prayer of repentance for his sin with Bathsheba.

30. Read Psalm 51:12. Write down what your version calls the **Spirit** in this verse.

This follows immediately his prayer, "Do not cast me away from Your Presence, and do not take your Holy Spirit from me." Psalm 51:11. It is evident here that the descriptive term "generous Spirit" or "willing Spirit" refers to the **Holy Spirit**. This is one of the only three times in the Old Testament where the term "Holy Spirit" is used. It seems, also, that "presence" and "willing" is used in parallel with "**Holy Spirit**."

The *presence of God* is the *Holy Spirit*. The word translated “generous,” (*nadib*), includes in its range of meaning “ready, willing,” as referring to “one who distributes according to his own will.”

The next use of the term “*your Spirit*” is in Psalm 104: 30.

31. Read Psalm 104:30. Who are the words “*you*” and “*your*” referring to?

32. Read Psalm 139:7. Who does the “*I*” refer to in this verse? Does this verse pertain to you? How?

The final use of “*your Spirit*” in the Psalter is also in a prayer of David. Psalm 143:10. In response to a sense of being persecuted, crushed, overwhelmed, and distressed, David prayed. The Hebrew word *tov*, translated “good,” has a wide range of meanings. Contextually, the reference here is probably to something joyous, pleasing, desirable, friendly, or kind. Amid his sense of depression – “my spirit fails!” Psalm 143:7- David needed the joy that came from the work of the *Spirit* in his life.

There are two references to “*your Spirit*” in Nehemiah, both located in an extended prayer by the Levites, a prayer that traced the history of the people of Israel from the call of Abraham to their return from captivity.

33. Read Nehemiah 9:20, 30. What did “*the Spirit*” do for the people? How does this relate to us today?

The **Holy Spirit** is a free gift from God, the presence of God in our lives. But where there is a persistent lack of repentance, that presence can be removed. The presence of the **Holy Spirit** enables us to teach others the ways of God. The **Spirit of the Lord** creates and renews creation. The **Spirit** restores joy to those who are emotionally devastated. **The Spirit** continually and mercifully continues to speak to those in rebellion, seeking to bring them to a place of restoration and obedience. This study is a reminder to us to remain filled with the **Spirit**, and to continually teach others. May the Holy God of these scriptures indwell you with his **Mighty Spirit** all the days of your life. Amen!