

## Notes on the Nature of the Holy Spirit

Key Texts: Isa 11:2; Rom14:17

### I. Creation

1. Of the **universe** (Gen 1:2; cf. 2:7) in partnership with Jesus (Jn 1:1-4; Col 1:16).
2. **Life force** of a person (Gen 6:3; Job 32:8; 33:4; 34:14-15; Psa 104:24-30; Ecc 12:7; Isa 42:5; 57:16; 63:14).
  - a. He impregnated Mary (Mt 1:18, 20; Lk 1:35). Isaac was also a product of the H.S. in a different way (Gal 4:29).
  - b. Our own spirit/breath is strong with the Lord's help but weak and broken without him. The Hebrews considered a person's spirit physical vigor. The N.T. seems to expand that to one's emotional and/or mental attributes (Mk 2:8; Jn 11:33; Acts 17:16; 18:26; 2 Cor 2:13; Eph 4:23), or even the ethereal spiritual essence of a person (Lk 24:38-39; 1 Cor 14:2, 14-17, 32).
3. **New Birth**
  - a. Our conversion is contrasted to physical birth (Jn 3:5-6). "The Spirit gives life," particularly through the words of Jesus (Jn 6:63; Rom 8:6, 9-11; 2 Cor 3:6).
  - b. This often demarks a reversal in our direction and/or condition (Acts 9:17).
4. Renewal of **social justice** (Isa 32:15-20; Isa 44:3), which is the proper use of power (Micah 3:8)
  - a. Especially through the Messiah (Isa 42:1-4; Mt 12:18-21).
  - b. Not only will our physical bodies be restored (Rom 8:23), even ecology will be renewed from man's curse (Isa 34:16-35:3).
  - c. It is interesting that the principle of "life force" [I2 above] applies to the restoration of the whole nation of Israel as well (Eze 37:14; 39:29).

### II. Power (Zech 4:6; Acts 1:8), which can at times be transferred (Elijah [2 Ki 2:9, 15] and Moses [Num 11:17, 25-29]).

1. Supernatural abilities
  - a. Joseph who **interpreted dreams** (Gen 41:38)
  - b. **Prophecy** was innate to **leadership**:
    - i. Saul prophesies as part of his leadership (1 Sam 10:6, 10).
      - (a) Yet it was clearly temporary for the individual (1 Sam 16:14; cf. Psa 51:11; Isa 63:10-11).
      - (b) Although the Spirit of God is an enduring promise to the nation of Israel (Hag 2:5).
    - ii. **Prophecy, Visions, Dreams**: One of the characteristics of the last days will be that ALL God's people will have access to the Spirit and his power (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:17-21).
  - c. **Exorcizing** demons (Mt 12:28).
  - d. **Miracles** validated the message (2 Ki 2:9, 15; Rom 15:19; 1 Cor 2:4; Heb 2:4).
2. Natural abilities, supernaturally empowered
  - a. Bezalel who **crafted** the tabernacle (Exo 31:3; 35:31) and David was given architectural plans by the Spirit (1 Chr 28:12).
  - b. Moses who **judged** disputes – his power could be transferred to the 70 elders (Num11:17, 25-29). It included prophecy, but only as initiation.

- c. **Leadership** was passed from Moses to Joshua, especially military ability (Num 27:18; Deut 34:9).
  - i. Likewise, Othniel (Jdg 3:10), Gideon (Jdg 6:34), and Jephthah (Jdg 11:29) became a powerful military leaders while Samson became physically overpowering (Jdg 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14).
  - ii. Saul's **righteous indignation** was stirred (1 Sam 11:6; cf. Eze 3:14) as part of his leadership.
  - iii. David becomes "**kingly**" (1 Sam 16:13).
  - iv. Micah takes this to an ethical dimension when he **preaches social justice** (Micah 3:8).
- d. Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit and **preached**, especially social justice for the oppressed (Lk 4:14, 18), the execution of which brought Jesus **joy** in the H.S. Likewise the disciples were empowered to preach (Acts 1:8).
- e. In the church:
  - i. leaders are empowered by the Spirit to carry out the ministry (Acts 6:3, 5; 20:28), defend the gospel (Acts 6:10; 11:24; 1 Thess 1:5,2 Tim 1:14), and even punish deviants (Acts 5:3, 9; 13:9).
  - ii. Christians in general are strengthened by the Spirit to comprehend the love of God and live lives of faith (Eph 3:16).

### III. Communication – it is innate to having the Spirit (Jn 3:34)

1. **Prophecy** (2 Peter 1:21) – this is a major way of contacting the Spirit (Zech 7:12). [Although this make one spiritual: 1 Sam 18:10; 19:20] These were for instructions (Neh 9:20, 30) and a major part of the promise of the new covenant (Isa 59:21).
  - a. Balaam (Num 24:2)
  - b. Saul prophesies as part of his leadership (1 Sam 10:6, 10; 19:23).
  - c. Saul's men prophesy, stymied from their task of capturing David (1 Sam 19:20)
  - d. David's last words testify to how he knew God spoke through him (2 Sam 23:2).
  - e. Azariah prophesied success to King Asa (2 Chr 15:1).
  - f. Jehaziel prophesied success to King Jehoshaphat (2 Chr 20:14)
  - g. Zechariah prophesied destruction to the people because of their disobedience (2 Chr 24:20).
  - h. Isaiah speaks against Judah (Isa 48:16; 61:1).
  - i. Ezekiel is empowered to prophesy in Jerusalem (Eze 2:2; 11:5).
  - j. John the Baptist would have the Spirit even from birth (Lk 1:15-17).
  - k. Zechariah prophesied at the birth of John (Lk 1:67).
  - l. Agabus predicted a famine (Acts 11:28) as well as Paul's arrest (Acts 21:11).
2. **Declarations**
  - a. Amasai, chief of the thirty, pledged his loyalty to David (1 Chr 12:18).
  - b. Elizabeth declared Mary blessed (Lk 1:41-42).
  - c. Peter spoke boldly the gospel to the Jewish leaders (Acts 4:8).
  - d. Paul's "judgment" was Spirit led (1 Cor 7:40); as are all Christian confessions of Christ (1 Cor 12:3).
3. **Evangelism/Preaching**
  - a. The Spirit speaks through us (Mt 10:20; Mk 13:11; Lk 12:11-12).
  - b. Even Jesus taught by/through the Spirit (Acts 1:2).

- c. This is the primary purpose of his empowerment (Acts 1:8).
- d. It is often accompanied by miraculous confirmation (Acts 4:31; 5:32).
- e. Even making our lives a letter to the world (2 Cor 3:3-10).
- 4. **Inspiration** of the prophets and hence of the Scriptures (Mt 22:43; Mk 12:36; Acts 1:16; 4:25-26; 28:25; 1 Thess 4:8; Heb 3:7; 10:15), described as the “sword of the Spirit” (Eph 6:17).
- 5. **Teaching**
  - a. *Revelation*
    - i. Simeon was “told” he would see the Messiah (Lk 2:25-27).
    - ii. Paul was told he would receive persecution (Acts 20:23) and that there would be deceiving spirits in the last days (1 Tim 4:1).
    - iii. The mind of the Christian is transformed to receive the things of God which the world cannot understand or receive (1 Cor 2:10-16; Eph 1:17). In fact, the entire message of God’s grace is a new revelation to the apostles and prophets (Eph 3:5; 1 Pet 1:11-12) as well as existentially to each believer (1 Jn 4:2, 6).
    - iv. He demonstrated how the first tabernacle was insufficient (Heb 9:8).
    - v. A vision to John concerning the state of the saved after death (Rev 14:13).
  - b. *Orders:*
    - i. Philip was commanded to join the Ethiopian’s chariot (Acts 8:29).
    - ii. He ordered Peter to go with the delegates from Cornelius (Acts 10:19; 11:12).
    - iii. The elders of Antioch were to send out Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:2-3).
  - c. *Prompting* – Paul wanted to go to Jerusalem (Acts 20:22), which may have, in fact (also) been his own desire (Acts 19:21). On the other hand, the believers urged Paul NOT to go (Acts 21:4).
  - d. *Counsel/Truth* – Jesus promised the *Paraclete of Truth* (Jn 14:17-18; 15:26; 16:13; Acts 28:25; Rom 9:1; 1 Jn 5:6). He is unknown by the world but intuitively and existentially perceived by believers. He teaches us all we need and prompts our memory (Jn 14:26). [This has specific reference to the Apostles but the principle certainly applies more broadly in the ministry of the church.]
  - e. *Warnings* – (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:13, 22).
- 6. **Tongues** (Acts 2:4)
- 7. **Prayer** – When we can’t pray the Spirit groans on our behalf (Rom 8:26-27; Eph 6:18; Jude 1:20).

#### IV. Feminine attributes

- 1. Wisdom
  - a. **Practical guidance** (Psa 143:10). He replaces our old spirit (Eze 36:26-27 cf. 11:19; 18:31)
  - b. Embodied in the **Messiah** who will have this Spirit of God, described as wise, understanding, counsel, power, knowledge, and fear of the Lord (Isa 11:2).
  - c. Embodied in church leaders, with faith and wisdom (Acts 6:3, 5), enabling them to be formidable proponents of the gospel (Acts 6:10; 11:24). It also allows them to imitate Jesus and die well as martyrs (Acts 7:51, 55).
- 2. Vindictive:
  - a. The Spirit killed Ananias and Sapphira who lie to him (Acts 5:3, 9).

- b. Blasphemy of the Spirit is a terminal offense (Mt 12:31-32; Mk 3:29; Lk 12:10).
  - c. It's not a good idea to stand in his way (Acts 13:9); insult him (Heb 10:29); grieve him (Eph 4:30), or quench him (1 Thess 5:19).
3. Nurturing:
- a. He **validates** those who are his own (Acts 15:8; 2 Cor 6:6) by sealing us (2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Eph 1:13). Expresses God's love (Rom 5:5; 15:30; Col 1:8) and prompts us to call God *Abba* (Rom 8:14-17, 23; Gal 4:6); and intercedes for us with the Father (Rom 8:26-27).
  - b. He **protects** his children from excessive burdens (Acts 15:28); he liberates us to live for God apart from the law (Rom 7:6; 8:4-16) in freedom (2 Cor 3:17). Sometimes he intervenes to rescue us (Php 1:19); other times he sustains us in our suffering (1 Pet 4:14).
  - c. Omnipresent (Psa 139:7); yet **abides** in the Christian Church (1 Cor 3:16; 6:19 [cf. v. 15]; Eph 2:22; 1 Jn 4:13).
    - i. He has fellowship with us (2 Cor 13:14; Php 2:1; Heb 6:4; 1 Jn 3:24) and worship (Php 3:3; Rev 1:10; 4:2; cf. Jn 4:23) who believe (Gal 3:2-5, 14).
    - ii. He is deeply concerned about the unity of the family (1 Cor 12:9, 13; Eph 4:3-4, 29-30; cf. Jude 1:19).
  - d. This includes his nurture and **edification** of the church (Acts 9:31),
    - i. The Spirit gives a variety of Gifts but all are for the edification of the body (1 Cor 12:1-11; Heb 2:4).
    - ii. With an emphasis on joy (Lk 10:21; Acts 13:52; Rom 14:17; 15:13; Gal 5:22; 1 Thess 1:5-6) and peace (Acts 9:31; Rom 8:6; 4:17; 15:13; Gal 5:22; Eph 4:3).
- V. Like the wind (Jn 3:8).
- 1. He is unpredictable, and so are his children (Jn 3:8).
  - 2. He moves people
    - a. Obadiah feared the Spirit would whisk Elijah away (1 Ki 18:12). He was, in fact, upon his death (2 Ki 2:16).
    - b. Ezekiel was raised to his feet or transported (Eze 2:2; 3:12-14, 24; 8:3; 11:1, 24; 37:1; 43:5) – synonymous with his empowerment to prophesy.
    - c. Movement of the seraphim *may* relate to the Holy Spirit (Eze 1:12, 20-21; 10:17)
    - d. Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert (Mt 4:1; Mk 1:12; Lk 4:1).
    - e. Simeon was moved by the Spirit in the temple courtyard to meet Jesus (Lk 2:27).
    - f. Philip was transported from the road to Gaza to Azotus (Acts 8:39).
    - g. Paul & Co. were ushered toward Macedonia (Acts 16:6-9).
    - h. John (in a vision) was taken to a desert (Rev 17:3) and a mountain (Rev 21:10).
- VI. Holy
- 1. He demands us to be holy and accomplishes that by transforming our minds (Rom 8:4-16; 14:17) and changing our allegiances (Gal 5:16-25; 6:8). This has practical implications like sexual purity (1 Cor 6:15-19), gossip and anger (Eph 4:29-32), and drunkenness (Eph 5:18).
  - 2. He sanctifies us through the atonement of Christ (Rom 15:16; 1 Cor 6:11; 2 Thess 2:13; Titus 3:5; 1 Pet 1:2) by our faith we wait for it (Gal 5:5).
- VII. Evil Spirits
- 1. Judges 9:23, between Abimelech and Shechem.

2. Judges 13:25 & 14:4, Samson is intoxicated with a Philistine woman.
3. 1 Sam 16:14-16, 23; 18:10; 19:9, the evil spirit may come from the Lord but it is clearly differentiated from the Lord's Spirit.
4. God asked for spirit volunteers to entice Ahab. Several made suggestions but one "won" the bid with the suggestion of deceiving him through false prophets (1 Ki 22:21-24; 2 Chr 18:20-23).
5. 2 Ki 19:7 & Isa 37:7, the king of Assyria was deceived into retreat by a spirit.
6. God will cleanse Zion by a spirit of judgment and fire (Isa 4:4).
7. Egypt was given a spirit of dizziness so they would stagger (Isa 19:14).
8. A spirit of prostitution (Hosea 4:12; 5:4), although this looks like something they generated, not the Lord.
9. A spirit of impurity (Zech 13:2).
10. A spirit of "stupor" (Romans 11:8, cf. Isa 29:10 says "deep sleep").

#### VIII. The Spirit's relation to Jesus

1. He cooperated in **creation** (Gen 1:2) in partnership with Jesus (Jn 1:1-4; Col 1:16 cf. 1 Cor 15:45) and continues to work with Jesus to grant access to the Father (Eph 2:18, 22). They both invite people to come to Jesus (Rev 22:17).
2. He was **validated** by the Spirit at his baptism (Mt 3:16; Mk 1:10; Lk 3:22; Jn 1:32-33; cf. Rom 1:4) **led** by the Spirit into the wilderness (Mt 4:1; Mk 1:12; Lk 4:1); empowered by the Spirit to perform his ministry, both preaching and miracles (Acts 10:38), even his death on the cross (Heb 9:14), was raised from the dead by the Spirit (1 Pet 3:18-19), and was vindicated by the Spirit at his ascension (1 Tim 3:16).
3. Jesus **baptizes** his followers in the H.S. (Mt 3:11; Mk 1:8; Lk 3:16; Acts 1:5; 10:44-45, 47; 11:15-17; cf. Rom 2:29). Christian baptism is in solidarity with the trinity (Mt 28:19).
  - a. Although it is the Father who gives the Spirit to those who ask (Lk 11:13; Jn 15:26; 1 Thess 4:8), it appears that the Spirit gives deference to the Son (Jn 15:26; 16:13-15). The Father is spirit (Jn 4:24) as is Jesus (1 Cor 3:17-18). The three are one (2 Cor 13:14; Rev 1:4-5).
  - b. At the same time, Jesus bestowed/sent the Spirit (Jn 15:26; 20:22) because God gave the Spirit to him which he then poured out (Acts 2:33 [since he holds the Spirit in his hand (Rev 3:1; 5:6)?]). The Spirit is intimately connected with Jesus (Acts 16:7) and connects the Christian to Jesus (Rom 8:9-11).
  - c. Accompanies water baptism (Acts 2:38; 19:2-3; 1 Cor 12:13; Titus 3:5; cf. 1 Jn 5:7-8), although there are exceptions (Acts 8:15). In those instances, the laying on of hands [of the Apostles] grants the gift (Acts 8:17-19; 19:6).
4. You can **blaspheme** Jesus and live through it, but not the H.S. (Mt 12:31-32; Mk 3:29; Lk 12:10).
5. He could only be given after Jesus was **glorified** (Jn 7:39).