

EQTH105 Basic Bible Doctrine

Unit 5 Reading 1 — Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

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Dictionary :: Holy Spirit, 1

Below are articles from the following dictionary:

- International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia

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Holy Spirit, 1:

ho'-li spir'-it:

I. OLD TESTAMENT TEACHINGS AS TO THE SPIRIT

1. Meaning of the Word
2. The Spirit in Relation to the Godhead
3. The Spirit in External Nature
4. The Spirit of God In Man
5. Imparting Powers for Service
 - (1) Judges and Warriors
 - (2) Wisdom for Various Purposes
 - (3) In Prophecy
6. Imparting Moral Character
7. The Spirit in in the Messiah
8. Predictions of Future Outpouring of the Spirit

II. THE SPIRIT IN THE NON-CANONICAL LITERATURE

1. The Spirit in Josephus
2. The Spirit in the Pseudepigrapha
3. The Spirit in the Wisdom of Solomon
4. The Spirit in Philo

III. THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

1. In Relation to the Person and Work of Christ
 - (1) Birth of Jesus
 - (2) Baptism of Jesus
 - (3) Temptation of Jesus
 - (4) Public Ministry of Jesus
 - (5) Death and Resurrection and Pentecostal Gift
2. The Holy Spirit in the Kingdom of God
 - (1) Synoptic Teachings
 - (2) In the Writings of John
 - (3) In Acts
 - (4) In Paul's Writings
 - (a) The Spirit and Jesus

- (b) In Bestowing Charismatic Gifts
- (c) In the Beginnings of the Christian Life
- (d) In the Religious and Moral Life
- (e) In the Church
- (f) In the Resurrection of Believers

(5) The Holy Spirit in Other New Testament Writings

LITERATURE

The expression Spirit, or Spirit of God, or Holy Spirit, is found in the great majority of the books of the Bible. In the Old Testament the Hebrew word uniformly employed for the Spirit as referring to God's Spirit is ruach meaning "breath," "wind" or "breeze." The verb form of the word is ruach, or riach used only in the Hiphil and meaning "to breathe," "to blow." A kindred verb is rawach, meaning "to breathe" "having breathing room," "to be spacious," etc. The word always used in the New Testament for the Spirit is the Greek neuter noun pneuma, with or without the article, and for Holy Spirit, pneuma hagion, or to pneuma to hagion. In the New Testament we find also the expressions, "the Spirit of God," "the Spirit of the Lord," "the Spirit of the Father," "the Spirit of Jesus," "of Christ." The word for Spirit in the Greek is from the verb pneo, "to breathe," "to blow." The corresponding word in the Latin is spiritus, meaning "spirit."

I. Old Testament Teachings as to the Spirit.

1. Meaning of the Word:

At the outset we note the significance of the term itself. From the primary meaning of the word which is "wind," as referring to Nature, arises the idea of breath in man and thence the breath, wind or Spirit of God. We have no way of tracing exactly how the minds of the Biblical writers connected the earlier literal meaning of the word with the Divine Spirit. Nearly all shades of meaning from the lowest to the highest appear in the Old Testament, and it is not difficult to conceive how the original narrower meaning was gradually expanded into the larger and wider. The following are some of the shades of Old Testament usage. From the notion of wind or breath, ruach came to signify:

- (1) the principle of life itself; spirit in this sense indicated the degree of vitality: "My spirit is consumed, my days are extinct" ([Job 17:1](#); also [Jud 15:19](#); [1Sa 30:12](#));
- (2) human feelings of various kinds, as anger ([Jud 8:3](#); [Pr 29:11](#)), desire ([Isa 26:9](#)), courage ([Jos 2:11](#));
- (3) intelligence ([Ex 28:3](#); [Isa 29:24](#));
- (4) general disposition ([Ps 34:18](#); [51:17](#); [Pr 14:29](#); [16:18](#); [29:23](#)).

No doubt the Biblical writers thought of man as made in the image of God ([Ge 1:27 f](#)), and it was easy for them to think of God as being like man. It is remarkable that their anthropomorphism did not go farther. They preserve, however, a highly spiritual conception of God as compared with that of surrounding nations. But as the human breath was an invisible part of man, and as it represented his vitality, his life and energy, it was easy to transfer the conception to God in the effort to represent His energetic and transitive action upon man and Nature. The Spirit of God, therefore, as based upon the idea of the ruach or breath of man, originally stood for the energy or power of God ([Isa 31:3](#); compare A. B. Davidson, *Theology of the Old Testament*, 117-18), as contrasted with the weakness of the flesh.

2. The Spirit in Relation to the Godhead:

We consider next the Spirit of God in relation to God Himself in the Old Testament. Here there are several points to be noted. The first is that there is no indication of a belief that the Spirit of God was a material particle or emanation from God. The point of view of Biblical writers is nearly always practical rather than speculative. They did not philosophize about the Divine nature. Nevertheless, they retained a very clear distinction between spirit

and flesh or other material forms. Again we observe in the Old Testament both an identification of God and the Spirit of God, and also a clear distinction between them. The identification is seen in [Ps 139:7](#) where the omnipresence of the Spirit is declared, and in [Isa 63:10](#); [Jer 31:33](#); [Eze 36:27](#). In a great number of passages, however, God and the Spirit of God are not thought of as identical, as in [Ge 1:2](#); [6:3](#); [Ne 9:20](#); [Ps 51:11](#); [104:29 f](#). Of course this does not mean that God and the Spirit of God were two distinct beings in the thought of Old Testament writers, but only that the Spirit had functions of His own in distinction from God. The Spirit was God in action, particularly when the action was specific, with a view to accomplishing some particular end or purpose of God. The Spirit came upon individuals for special purposes. The Spirit was thus God immanent in man and in the world. As the angel of the Lord, or angel of the Covenant in certain passages, represents both Yahweh Himself and one sent by Yahweh, so in like manner the Spirit of Yahweh was both Yahweh within or upon man, and at the same time one sent by Yahweh to man.

Do the Old Testament teachings indicate that in the view of the writers the Spirit of Yahweh was a distinct person in the Divine nature? The passage in [Ge 1:26](#) is scarcely conclusive. The idea and importance of personality were but slowly developed in Israelite thought. Not until some of the later prophets did it receive great emphasis, and even then scarcely in the fully developed form. The statement in [Ge 1:26](#) may be taken as the plural of majesty or as referring to the Divine council, and on this account is not conclusive for the Trinitarian view. Indeed, there are no Old Testament passages which compel us to understand the complete New Testament doctrine of the Trinity and the distinct personality of the Spirit in the New Testament sense. There are, however, numerous Old Testament passages which are in harmony with the Trinitarian conception and prepare the way for it, such as [Ps 139:7](#); [Isa 63:10](#); [48:16](#); [Hag 2:5](#); [Zec 4:6](#). The Spirit is grieved, vexed, etc., and in other ways is conceived of personally, but as He is God in action, God exerting power, this was the natural way for the Old Testament writers to think of the Spirit.

The question has been raised as to how the Biblical writers were able to hold the conception of the Spirit of God without violence to their monotheism. A suggested reply is that the idea of the Spirit came gradually and indirectly from the conception of subordinate gods which prevailed among some of the surrounding nations (I.F. Wood, *The Spirit of God in Biblical Literature*, 30). But the best Israelite thought developed in opposition to, rather than in analogy with, polytheism. A more natural explanation seems to be that their simple anthropomorphism led them to conceive the Spirit of God as the breath of God parallel with the conception of man's breath as being part of man and yet going forth from him.

3. The Spirit in External Nature:

We consider next the Spirit of God in external Nature. "And the Spirit of God moved (was brooding or hovering) upon the face of the waters" ([Ge 1:2](#)). The figure is that of a brooding or hovering bird (compare [De 32:11](#)). Here the Spirit brings order and beauty out of the primeval chaos and conducts the cosmic forces toward the goal of an ordered universe. Again in [Ps 104:28-30](#), God sends forth His Spirit, and visible things are called into being: "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created; and thou renewest the face of the ground." In [Job 26:13](#) the beauty of the heavens is ascribed to the Spirit: "By his Spirit the heavens are garnished." In [Isa 32:15](#) the wilderness becomes a fruitful field as the result of the outpouring of the Spirit. The Biblical writers scarcely took into their thinking the idea of second causes, certainly not in the modern scientific sense. They regarded the phenomena of Nature as the result of God's direct action through His Spirit. At every point their conception of the Spirit saved them from pantheism on the one hand and polytheism on the other.

4. The Spirit of God in Man:

The Spirit may next be considered in imparting natural powers both physical and intellectual. In [Ge 2:7](#) God originates man's personal and intellectual life by breathing into his nostrils "the breath of life." In [Nu 16:22](#) God is "the God of the spirits of all flesh." In [Ex 28:3](#); [31:3](#); [35:31](#), wisdom for all kinds of workmanship is declared to be the gift of God. So also physical life is due to the presence of the Spirit of God ([Job 27:3](#)); and Elihu declares ([Job 33:4](#)) that the Spirit of God made him. See also [Eze 37:14](#) and [39:29](#). Thus man is regarded by the Old Testament writers, in all the parts of his being, body, mind and spirit, as the direct result of the action of the Spirit of God. In [Ge 6:3](#) the Spirit of God "strives" with or "rules" in or is "humbled" in man in the antediluvian world. Here reference is not made to the Spirit's activity over and above, but within the moral nature of man.

5. Imparting Powers for Service:

The greater part of the Old Testament passages which refer to the Spirit of God deal with the subject from the point of view of the covenant relations between Yahweh and Israel. And the greater portion of these, in turn, have to do with gifts and powers conferred by the Spirit for service in the ongoing of the kingdom of God. We fail to grasp the full meaning of very many statements of the Old Testament unless we keep constantly in mind the fundamental assumption of all the Old Testament, namely, the covenant relations between God and Israel. Extraordinary powers exhibited by Israelites of whatever kind were usually attributed to the Spirit. These are so numerous that our limits of space forbid an exhaustive presentation. The chief points we may notice.

(1) Judges and Warriors.

The children of Israel cried unto Yahweh and He raised up a savior for them, Othniel, the son of Kenaz: "And the Spirit of Yahweh came upon him, and he judged Israel" ([Jud 3:10](#)). So also Gideon ([Jud 6:34](#)): "The Spirit of Yahweh came upon (literally, clothed itself with) Gideon." In [Jud 11:29](#) "the spirit of Yahweh came upon Jephthah"; and in [13:25](#) "the Spirit of Yahweh began to move" Samson. In [14:6](#) "the Spirit of Yahweh came mightily upon him." In [1Sa 16:14](#) we read "the Spirit of Yahweh departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from Yahweh troubled him." In all this class of passages, the Spirit imparts special endowments of power without necessary reference to the moral character of the recipient. The end in view is not personal, merely to the agent, but concerns theocratic kingdom and implies the covenant between God and Israel. In some cases the Spirit exerts physical energy in a more direct way ([2Ki 2:16](#); [Eze 2:1 f](#); [3:12](#)).

(2) Wisdom for Various Purposes.

Bezalel is filled with the Spirit of God in wisdom and in understanding to work in gold, and silver and brass, etc., in the building of the tabernacle ([Ex 31:2-4](#); [35:31](#)); and the Spirit of wisdom is given to others in making Aaron's garments ([Ex 28:3](#)). So also of one of the builders of Solomon's temple ([1Ki 7:14](#); [2Ch 2:14](#)). In these cases there seems to be a combination of the thought of natural talents and skill to which is superadded a special endowment of the Spirit. Pharaoh refers to Joseph as one in whom the Spirit of God is, as fitting him for administration and government ([Ge 41:38](#)). Joshua is qualified for leadership by the Spirit ([Nu 27:18](#)). In this and in [De 34:9](#), Joshua is represented as possessing the Spirit through the laying on of the hands of Moses. This is an interesting Old Testament parallel to the bestowment of the Spirit by laying on of hands in the New Testament ([Ac 8:17](#); [19:6](#)). Daniel is represented as having wisdom to interpret dreams through the Spirit, and afterward because of the Spirit he is exalted to a position of authority and power ([Da 4:8](#); [5:11-14](#); [6:3](#)). The Spirit qualifies Zerubbabel to rebuild the temple ([Zec 4:6](#)). The Spirit was given to the people for instruction and strengthening during the wilderness wanderings ([Ne 9:20](#)), and to the elders along with Moses ([Nu 11:17, 25](#)). It thus appears how very widespread were the activities of the redemptive Spirit, or the Spirit in the covenant. All these forms of the Spirit's action bore in some way upon the national life of the people, and were directed in one way or another toward theocratic ends.

(3) In Prophecy.

The most distinctive and important manifestation of the Spirit's activity in the Old Testament was in the sphere of prophecy. In the earlier period the prophet was called seer (ro'eh), and later he was called prophet (nabhi'). The word "prophet" (prophetes) means one who speaks for God. The prophets were very early differentiated from the masses of the people into a prophetic class or order, although Abraham himself was called a prophet, as were Moses and other leaders ([Ge 20:7](#); [De 18:15](#)). The prophet was especially distinguished from others as the man who possessed the Spirit of God ([Ho 9:7](#)). The prophets ordinarily began their messages with the phrase, "thus saith Yahweh," or its equivalent. But they ascribed their messages directly also to the Spirit of God ([Eze 2:2](#); [8:3](#); [11:1, 24](#); [13:3](#)). The case of Balaam presents some difficulties ([Nu 24:2](#)). He does not seem to have been a genuine prophet, but rather a diviner, although it is declared that the Spirit of God came upon him. Balaam serves, however, to illustrate the Old Testament point of view. The chief interest was the national or theocratic or covenant ideal, not that of the individual. The Spirit was bestowed at times upon unworthy men for the achievement of these ends. Saul presents a similar example. The prophet was God's messenger speaking God's message by the Spirit. His message was not his own. It

came directly from God, and at times overpowered the prophet with its urgency, as in the case of Jeremiah ([Jer 1:4 ff](#)).

There are quite perceptible stages in the development of the Old Testament prophecy. In the earlier period the prophet was sometimes moved, not so much to intelligible speech, as by a sort of enthusiasm or prophetic ecstasy. In [1Sa 10](#) we have an example of this earlier form of prophecy, where a company with musical instruments prophesied together. To what extent this form of prophetic enthusiasm was attended by warnings and exhortations, if so attended at all, we do not know. There was more in it than in the excitement of the diviners and devotees of the surrounding nations. For the Spirit of Yahweh was its source.

In the later period we have prophecy in its highest forms in the Old Testament. The differences between earlier and later prophecy are probably due in part to the conditions. The early period required action, the later required teaching. The judges on whom the Spirit came were deliverers in a turbulent age. There was not need for, nor could the people have borne, the higher ethical and spiritual truths which came in later revelations through the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah and others. See [2Sa 23:2](#); [Eze 2:2](#); [8:3](#); [11:24](#); [13:3](#); [Mic 3:8](#); [Ho 9:7](#).

A difficulty arises from statements such as the following: A lying spirit was sometimes present in the prophet ([1Ki 22:21 f](#)); Yahweh puts a spirit in the king of Assyria and turns him back to his destruction ([Isa 37:7](#)); because of sin, a lying prophet should serve the people ([Mic 2:11](#)); in Micaiah's vision Yahweh sends a spirit to entice Ahab through lying prophets ([1Ki 22:19](#)); an evil spirit from Yahweh comes upon Saul ([1Sa 16:14](#); [18:10](#); [19:9](#)). The following considerations may be of value in explaining these passages. Yahweh was the source of things generally in Old Testament thought. Its pronounced monotheism appears in this as in so many other ways. Besides this, Old Testament writers usually spoke phenomenally. Prophecy was a particular form of manifestation with certain outward marks and signs. Whatever presented these outward marks was called prophecy, whether the message conveyed was true or false. The standard of discrimination here was not the outward signs of the prophet, but the truth or right of the message as shown by the event. As to the evil spirit from Yahweh, it may be explained in either of two ways. First, it may have referred to the evil disposition of the man upon whom God's Spirit was acting, in which case he would resist the Spirit and his own spirit would be the evil spirit. Or the "evil spirit from Yahweh" may have referred, in the prophet's mind, to an actual spirit of evil which Yahweh sent or permitted to enter the man. The latter is the more probable explanation, in accordance with which the prophet would conceive that Yahweh's higher will was accomplished, even through the action of the evil spirit upon man's spirit. Yahweh's judicial anger against transgression would, to the prophet's mind, justify the sending of an evil spirit by Yahweh.

6. Imparting Moral Character:

The activity of the Spirit in the Old Testament is not limited to gifts for service. Moral and spiritual character is traced to the Spirit's operations as well. "Thy holy Spirit" ([Ps 51:11](#)); "his holy spirit" ([Isa 63:10](#)); "thy good Spirit" ([Ne 9:20](#)); "Thy Spirit is good" ([Ps 143:10](#)) are expressions pointing to the ethical quality of the Spirit's action. "Holy" is from the verb form (*qadhash*), whose root meaning is doubtful, but which probably meant "to be separated" from which it comes to mean to be exalted, and this led to the conception to be Divine. And as Yahweh is morally good, the conception of "the holy (= Divine) one" came to signify the holy one in the moral sense. Thence the word was applied to the Spirit of Yahweh. Yahweh gives His good Spirit for instruction ([Ne 9:20](#)); the Spirit is called good because it teaches to do God's will ([Ps 143:10](#)); the Spirit gives the fear of the Lord ([Isa 11:2-5](#)); judgment and righteousness ([Isa 32:15](#)); devotion to the Lord ([Isa 44:3-5](#)); hearty obedience and a new heart ([Eze 36:26 f](#)); penitence and prayer ([Zec 12:10](#)). In [Ps 51:11](#) there is an intense sense of guilt and sin coupled with the prayer, "Take not thy holy Spirit from me." Thus, we see that the Old Testament in numerous ways recognizes the Holy Spirit as the source of inward moral purity, although the thought is not so developed as in the New Testament.

7. The Spirit in the Messiah:

In both the first and the second sections of Isaiah, there are distinct references to the Spirit in connection with the Messiah, although the Messiah is conceived as the ideal King who springs from the root of David in some instances, and in others as the Suffering Servant of Yahweh. This is not the place to discuss the Messianic

import of the latter group of passages which has given rise to much difference of opinion. As in the case of the ideal Davidic King which, in the prophet's mind, passes from the lower to the higher and Messianic conception, so, under the form of the Suffering Servant, the "remnant" of Israel becomes the basis for an ideal which transcends in the Messianic sense the original nucleus of the conception derived from the historic events in the history of Israel. The prophet rises in the employment of both conceptions to the thought of the Messiah who is the "anointed" of Yahweh as endued especially with the power and wisdom of the Spirit. In [Isa 11:1-5](#) a glowing picture is given of the "shoot out of the stock of Jesse." The Spirit imparts "wisdom and understanding" and endows him with manifold gifts through the exercise of which he shall bring in the kingdom of righteousness and peace. In [Isa 42:1 ff](#), the "servant" is in like manner endowed most richly with the gifts of the Spirit by virtue of which he shall bring forth "justice to the Gentiles." In [Isa 61:1 ff](#) occur the notable words cited by Jesus in [Lu 4:18 f](#), beginning, "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me" etc. In these passages the prophet describes elaborately and minutely the Messiah's endowment with a wide range of powers, all of which are traced to the action of God's Spirit.

8. Predictions of Future Outpouring of the Spirit:

In the later history of Israel, when the sufferings of the exile pressed heavily, there arose a tendency to idealize a past age as the era of the special blessing of the Spirit, coupled with a very marked optimism as to a future outpouring of the Spirit. In [Hag 2:5](#) reference is made to the Mosaic period as the age of the Spirit, "when ye came out of Egypt, and my Spirit abode among you." In [Isa 44:3](#) the Spirit is to be poured out on Jacob and his seed; and in [Isa 59:20 a](#) Redeemer is to come to Zion under the covenant of Yahweh, and the Spirit is to abide upon the people. The passage, however, which especially indicates the transition from Old Testament to New Testament times is that in [Joe 2:28,32](#) which is cited by Peter in [Ac 2:17-21](#). In this prophecy the bestowal of the Spirit is extended to all classes, is attended by marvelous signs and is accompanied by the gift of salvation. Looking back from the later to the earlier period of Old Testament history, we observe a twofold tendency of teaching in relation to the Spirit. The first is from the outward gift of the Spirit for various uses toward a deepening sense of inner need of the Spirit for moral purity, and consequent emphasis upon the ethical energy of the Spirit. The second tendency is toward a sense of the futility of the merely human or theocratic national organization in and of itself to achieve the ends of Yahweh, along with a sense of the need for the Spirit of God upon the people generally, and a prediction of the universal diffusion of the Spirit.

II. The Spirit in Non-Canonical Jewish Literature.

In the Palestinian and Alexandrian literature of the Jews there are comparatively few references to the Spirit of God. The two books in which the teachings as to the Spirit are most explicit and most fully developed are of Alexandrian origin, namely, The Wisdom of Solomon and the writings of Philo.

In the Old Testament Apocrypha and in Josephus the references to the Spirit are nearly always merely echoes of a long-past age when the Spirit was active among men. In no particular is the contrast between the canonical and noncanonical literature more striking than in the teaching as to the Spirit of God.

1. The Spirit of Josephus:

Josephus has a number of references to the Holy Spirit, but nearly always they have to do with the long-past history of Israel. He refers to 22 books of the Old Testament which are of the utmost reliability. There are other books, but none "of like authority," because there has "not been an exact succession of prophets" (Josephus, Against Apion I, 8). Samuel is described as having a large place in the affairs of the kingdom because he is a prophet (Ant., VI, v, 6). God appears to Solomon in sleep and teaches him wisdom (ibid., VIII, ii); Balaam prophesies through the Spirit's power (ibid., IV, v, 6); and Moses was such a prophet that his words were God's words (ibid., IV, viii, 49). In Josephus we have then simply a testimony to the inspiration and power of the prophets and the books written by them, in so far as we have in him teachings regarding the Spirit of God. Even here the action of the Spirit is usually implied rather than expressed.

2. The Spirit in the Pseudepigrapha:

In the pseudepigraphic writings the Spirit of God is usually referred to as acting in the long-past history of Israel or in the future Messianic age. In the apocalyptic books, the past age of power, when the Spirit wrought mightily, becomes the ground of the hopes of the future. The past is glorified, and out of it arises the hope of a future kingdom of glory and power. [Enoch says to Methuselah](#): "The word calls me and the Spirit is poured out upon

me" (En 91:1). In 49:1-4 the Messiah has the Spirit of wisdom, understanding and might. Enoch is represented as describing his own translation. "He was carried aloft in the chariots of the Spirit" (En 70:2). In Jubilees 31:16 Isaac is represented as prophesying, and in 25:13 it is said of Rebekah that the "Holy Spirit descended into her mouth." Sometimes the action of the Spirit is closely connected with the moral life, although this is rare. "The Spirit of God rests" on the man of pure and loving heart (XII the Priestly Code (P), Benj. 8). In Simeon 4 it is declared that Joseph was a good man and that the Spirit of God rested on him. There appears at times a lament for the departed age of prophecy (1 Macc 9:27; 14:41). The future is depicted in glowing colors. The Spirit is to come in a future judgment (XII the Priestly Code (P), Levi 18); and the spirit of holiness shall rest upon the redeemed in Paradise (Levi 18); and in Levi 2 the spirit of insight is given, and the vision of the sinful world and its salvation follows. Generally speaking, this literature is far below that of the Old Testament, both in moral tone and religious insight. Much of it seems childish, although at times we encounter noble passages. There is lacking in it the prevailing Old Testament mood which is best described as prophetic, in which the writer feels constrained by the power of God's Spirit to speak or write. The Old Testament literature thus possesses a vitality and power which accounts for the strength of its appeal to our religious consciousness.

3. The Spirit in the Wisdom of Solomon:

We note in the next place a few teachings as to the Spirit of God in Wisd. Here the ethical element in character is a condition of the Spirit's indwelling. "Into a malicious soul wisdom shall not enter: nor dwell in the body that is subject unto sin. For the holy spirit of discipline will flee deceit, and will not abide when unrighteousness cometh in" (The Wisdom of Solomon 1:4 f). This "holy spirit of discipline" is evidently God's Holy Spirit, for in 1:7 the writer proceeds to assert, "For the Spirit of the Lord filleth the world," and in 1:8,9 there is a return to the conception of unrighteousness as a hindrance to right speaking. In The Wisdom of Solomon 7:7 the Spirit of Wisdom comes in response to prayer. In 7:22-30 is an elaborate and very beautiful description of wisdom: "In her is an understanding spirit, holy, one only, manifold, subtle, lively, clear, undefiled, plain, not subject to hurt, loving the thing that is good, quick, which cannot be letted, ready to do good, kind to man, steadfast, sure," etc. "She is the brightness of the everlasting light, the unspotted mirror of the power of God, and the image of his goodness," etc. No one can know God's counsel except by the Holy Spirit (9:17). The writer of The Wisdom of Solomon was deeply possessed of the sense of the omnipresence of the Spirit of God, as seen in 1:7 and in 12:1. In the latter passage we read: "For thine incorruptible spirit is in all things."

4. The Spirit in Philo:

In Philo we have what is almost wholly wanting in other Jewish literature, namely, analytic and reflective thought upon the work of the Spirit of God. The interest in Philo is primarily philosophic, and his teachings on the Spirit possess special interest on this account in contrast with Biblical and other extra-Biblical literature. In his Questions and Solutions, 27, 28, he explains the expression in [Ge 8:1](#): "He brought a breath over the earth and the wind ceased." He argues that water is not diminished by wind, but only agitated and disturbed. Hence, there must be a reference to God's Spirit or breath by which the whole universe obtains security. He has a similar discussion of the point why the word "Spirit" is not used instead of "breath" in Ge in the account of man's creation, and concludes that "to breathe into" here means to "inspire," and that God by His Spirit imparted to man mental and moral life and capacity for Divine things (Allegories, xiii). In several passages Philo discusses prophecy and the prophetic office. One of the most interesting relates to the prophetic office of Moses (Life of Moses, xxiii ff). He also describes a false prophet who claims to be "inspired and possessed by the Holy Spirit" (On Those Who Offer Sacrifice, xi). In a very notable passage, Philo describes in detail his own subjective experiences under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and his language is that of the intellectual mystic. He says that at times he found himself devoid of impulse or capacity for mental activity, when suddenly by the coming of the Spirit of God, his intellect was rendered very fruitful: "and sometimes when I have come to my work empty I have suddenly become full, ideas being, in an invisible manner, showered upon me and implanted in me from on high; so that through the influence of Divine inspiration I have become greatly excited and have known neither the place in which I was, nor those who were present, nor myself, nor what I was saying, nor what I was writing," etc. (Migrations of Abraham, vii).

In Philo, as in the non-canonical literature generally, we find little metaphysical teaching as to the Spirit and His relations to the Godhead. On this point there is no material advance over the Old Testament teaching. The

agency of the Holy Spirit in shaping and maintaining the physical universe and as the source of man's capacities and powers is clearly recognized in Philo. In Philo, as in Josephus, the conception of inspiration as the complete occupation and domination of the prophet's mind by the Spirit of God, even to the extent of suspending the operation of the natural powers, comes clearly into view. This is rather in contrast with, than in conformity to, the Old Testament and New Testament conception of inspiration, in which the personality of the prophet remains intensely active while under the influence of the Spirit, except possibly in cases of vision and trance.

Written by [E. Y. Mullins](#)