

BETWEEN THE LINES™

DEEPER LOOK STUDY GUIDE

THE HOLY SPIRIT • Heaven's Sacred Wind

The Holy Spirit is so “other” to our humanity that sometimes this divine Entity almost seems mystical. But we have one great assurance about this being whom we really don’t understand well at all. If you can’t wait for that great conclusion it is the last sentence of this *Deeper Look Study Guide*. (I’m curious if you will have the patience to read through the provided material in order to build the case for that conclusion!) Let’s build a case for three facets of the ministry of the Spirit:

The Holy Spirit as the Divine Guide

Jesus was very clear (**John 14:26, 16:13**, etc.) that it is the Spirit’s job to lead a receptive person toward the direction of God’s thinking. Let’s see where this comes to pass in the lives of some of the Bible biographies...

- Genesis 41** • Even the Egyptian monarch recognized Joseph’s supernatural connection.
- Exodus 28** • Aaron and the priestly line were given unique gifts of wisdom to lead.
- Exodus 31** • Bezaleel is given craftsmanship and wisdom by the Spirit.
- Numbers 11** • The Spirit came to direct the leadership of the camp.
- Numbers 24** • Even a failing man can be shown insights beyond his own understanding.
- Numbers 27 & Deuteronomy 34** • Joshua recognized his need for special guidance.
- I Samuel 10** • Gifts of wisdom and leadership were both promised and given to Saul.
- I Samuel 16** • David received those gifts as Saul threw them away.
- I Samuel 19** • The cohorts of Saul give guidance by the wisdom of the Spirit.
- Isaiah 61** • The Spirit empowered and guided even in Messianic work.
- Daniel 4** • The refugee was renowned for his ability to tap into divine wisdom.
- Acts 2** • The Spirit came to reveal the truth about the ritual and events of Pentecost.
- Acts 18** • Apollos gives evidence of receptivity to the wisdom of the Spirit.
- Revelation 1** • Old John is shown events to the end of time by the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit as the Divine Convictor

Sometimes the guidance of Heaven is given to show me a correct path. That’s really something I need, especially if I’m on the wrong path. If I’m headed toward catastrophe I really want a voice behind me saying, “This is the way, walk ye in it!” (**Isaiah 30:21**). If I’m hooking up the wrong hoses to the wrong pipes I want a mechanic looking over my shoulder and saying, “Hey, you’re fouling it up!” Don’t you? Therefore, conviction is not bad news. Conviction is, again, only the revelation of truth. If there’s a God such as the Bible describes I’d really like to know what He’s thinking, wouldn’t you?

Let’s consider some passages where we find conviction to be a step toward salvation and something for which we should be thankful...

- Genesis 6** • A world was spinning toward self-destruction but they wouldn’t listen.
- II Chronicles 15** • Azariah gives Asa the path to prosperity.
- II Chronicles 20** • God’s people are encouraged with the truth about their enemy.
- Isaiah 48** • God gave conviction about His sovereignty to a discouraged nation.
- Ezekiel 11** • What sounds like bad news actually is good news, if I’ll listen.
- Matthew 3 & Mark 1** • The Spirit convicts people about the man in the water.
- Acts 6** • Many were convicted and rejoiced in the conviction of the truth.
- Acts 8** • An Ethiopian comes to know God’s thinking and intentions.
- Acts 16** • Paul had a plan but the Spirit had another plan... obviously a better one.

Conclusion

If you want to spend time focusing on a really challenging section of Scripture about the work and ministry of the Holy Spirit then I'd encourage you to meditate on **Romans 8**. It's a passage filled with insights.

Thoughts on the "Wind of God" from Judaism

As we've mentioned, the Holy Spirit is not a uniquely New Testament entity. It isn't just newly present seven weeks after the crucifixion in an event called Pentecost. There are dozens of references to "the Spirit of God" in the Old Testament text too.

But, if you didn't have the New Testament insights into this element what would you think about the Holy Spirit, first called the *ruach elohim* in the second verse of the Bible?

The truth is that the demand of for absolute monotheism in the *Shema* (**Deuteronomy 6:4**) makes any form of a Trinitarian concept exceedingly difficult. What then, to a Jew, is the Holy Spirit?

It's very hard to find in the writings. But, let me share with you the thinking of one of Judaism's giants of the 20th century, Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel..

*The power of the spirit has never gone farther than the Bible...
It is not a book – it is the limit of the spirit on the earth.
Our heart stops when we ponder its terrible greatness.
It is the only thing in the world which we may associate with eternity;
the only thing in the world which is eternal.
The eternal Book.
The earth may not be the most important planet, our eon may not be the only one.
But in this world, in this eon,
the Bible is the most enduring vessel of the spirit.
God in Search of Man, p. 241*

*To perform a mitsvah is to meet the spirit.
The spirit, however, is not something we can acquire once and for all
but something we must be with.
For this reason the Jewish way of life is to reiterate the ritual,
to meet the spirit again and again,
the spirit in oneself
and the spirit that hovers over all beings.
God in Search of Man, p. 344*