

## The Doctrine of the Human Spirit

### I. Preliminary Considerations

- A) Definition of the term “spirit”: the immaterial but vital principle or animating force within living beings, whether physical, soulish, or spiritual; that which makes one alive in some respect.
- B) The term “human spirit” does not occur in Scripture, but is used to distinguish the spiritual apparatus for worship in humanity from God the Holy Spirit.
  - 1) only believers possess a human spirit, unbelievers possess only body and soul. Mt 10:28 cp 1Cor 2:15; 1Th 5:23
  - 2) as the body is not alive unless it is breathing (Eze 37:5), so the soul is not alive to God unless a human spirit is attached – Rom 8:10; 1Pet 4:6
  - 3) the Holy Spirit is the source of the regeneration of the human spirit – Jn 6:63 “*It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.*”
- C) The human spirit is the link between the Holy Spirit and the soul, wherein is stored all knowledge, true or false. cp Ecc 12:6-7 “*Remember Him before the silver cord is broken and the golden bowl is crushed...and the spirit will return to God who gave it.*”
- D) Just as one feels/experiences the wind, but has difficulty defining it, we experience the workings/effects of the human spirit, but have difficulty defining its exact nature; some aspects have not been revealed in sufficient detail to explain its nature completely. Jn 3:8

### II. Vocabulary

#### A) Hebrew

- 1) the Hebrew words used to communicate information regarding the human spirit have a non-technical use, and allow for a wide variation in meaning.
  - a) רוּחַ – *RUaCH* (n): “spirit; breath, wind” – may be used of God the Holy Spirit (Gen 1:2; Eze 43:5), animating life force/breathing (Gen 7:22; Jer 10:14), a supernatural connection (Gen 41:38; Dan 4:8), enthusiasm and vigor (Gen 45:27; Ps 34:18), wind (Ex 10:13; Jon 1:4), artistic sense (Ex 28:3), a specific mindset (Num 5:14; Isa 29:24), an angel {fallen or elect} (Jdg 9:23; Zec 13:2), a mental thought process (2Kin 19:7; Isa 29:10), or the human spirit (Job 32:8; Zec 12:1).
  - b) נְשָׁמָה – *NeSHeMaH* (n): “breath; spirit” – may be used of the animating principle {physical and spiritual} (Gen 2:7; Job 26:4), breath {as that which makes a body alive} (Gen 7:22; Jsh 11:14), the Holy Spirit (Job 32:8), wind (2Sam 22:16), or the human spirit (Pr 20:27).
- 2) certain words must be distinguished from the human spirit, including:
  - a) לֵב or לֵבָב – *LēBaB or LēB* : “heart” – may be used of the physical organ that pumps blood (3x – 2Sam 18:14; 2Kin 9:24; Jer 4:19), the general attitude or thinking (Gen 6:5; Ex 7:13), the central part of a body {of water} (Ex 15:8; Dt 4:11), one’s current thinking (Pr 23:7; Dan 4:16), or a man’s character (Ps 24:4; 1Kin 3:9); the heart is “created”, while the spirit is “renewed” (Ps 51:10)
  - b) נֶפֶשׁ – *NePHeSH* (n): “soul; living being; spirit” (THE ROOT IDEA FOR MAN SEEMS TO BE THE SOUL, THE REAL YOU) – may be used of a living creature (Gen 1:20; Lev 11:10), the animating principle of animals {the blood} (Gen 9:4; Lev 24:18), the soul of man (Gen 27:4; Ps 19:7), physical life of man (Gen 32:30, 35:18), emotional response (Gen 34:3), desire (Ex 15:9; Num 11:6), emotions (Ex 23:9; Dt 18:6), departed souls {the dead} (Lev 19:8; Num 5:2), the Holy Spirit (Lev 26:11; Pr 6:16), the seat of volition (2Kin 9:15); the spirit and soul co-exist with one another (Job 7:11; Isa 26:9)

## B) Greek

- 1) the vocabulary of the New Testament has a somewhat more precise usage, and it is from these uses that we derive most of our information on the human spirit; the primary source of information on the human spirit is the epistles.
  - a) πνεύμα – *pneuma* : “that which is elementally dynamic; that which fills vitally”; used of the Holy Spirit (Mt 4:1; Rev 2:11), immaterial existence of angels {elect and fallen} (Mt 12:43; Heb 1:14), anthropologically of the thought processes (Mk 2:8, 8:12), the animating principle of life (Lk 8:55; Js 2:26), a ghost/phantom (Lk 24:37, 39), the opposite of fleshly existence (Jn 3:6; Gal 5:17), the sum of one’s understanding/viewpoint/attitude (Ac 20:22), enthusiasm, fervency and vigor (Ac 18:25; 2Cor 2:13), the human spirit (Rom 8:10; 1Cor 5:5, 14:14), a source of revelation (2Cor 11:4; 2Th 2:2)
  - b) πνευματικός – *pneumatikos* : “spiritual”; connected to and aligned with Divine Viewpoint (Rom 7:14; 1Cor 2:15; Gal 6:1)
  - c) εἰκών – *eikōn* : “image, likeness, portrait”; a physical representation (Mt 22:20; Rom 1:23), the human spirit (2Cor 3:18; Col 3:10)
  - d) ὁ νέος – *neos* : “the new *man*”; what is renewed by intake of BD (Col 3:10; Eph 4: 24)
  - e) ἔσω ἄνθρωπος – *esō anthropos* : “inner man”; as opposed to the members of the body, the sinful flesh (Rom 7:22; Eph 3:16)
- 2) words to be distinguished from the human spirit include:
  - a) καρδιά – *kardia* : “heart; current prevailing attitude”; the Holy Spirit is placed in our hearts (Gal 4:6), the heart and spirit exist alongside one another (Heb 4:12)
  - b) ψυχή – *psuchē* : “soul; the Real You”; the soul may go to hell, but not the spirit (Mt 10:28), the two are distinguished {some difficulty is implied, and without the Word of God it is impossible} (Heb 4:12)
  - c) νοῦς – *nous* : “mind; the seat of intellect and awareness”; is distinguished from the spirit (1Cor 14:14), the spirit affects the mind (Eph 4:23), may be in agreement or disagreement with others (Phi 1:27, 2:2)

## III. The Human Spirit and Relationship with God

- A) Adam was created with a human spirit, but lost it at the point of spiritual death.
  - 1) he was created in the image of God, hence with capacity for spiritual understanding – Gen 1:27
  - 2) the command not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil contained the punishment of “a death” – Gen 2:17
  - 3) after eating from the fruit, Adam and his wife lost their spiritual understanding, and engaged in the first act of human good – Gen 3:7-8 cp Job 31:33 “*Have I covered my transgressions like Adam, By hiding my iniquity in my bosom?*”
- B) Adam’s progeny inherit the death gene, and with it spiritual death – the human spirit is inoperative. 1Cor 15:22
- C) Although unbelievers are under the requirements of the Mosaic Law to attain +R, after belief in Christ it is the “law” requiring spiritual growth that is incumbent upon man. Rom 7:6 “*But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of spirit* (THERE IS NO D.A. PRESENT, THIS IS A REFERENCE TO THE HUMAN SPIRIT, NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT) *and not in oldness of the letter.*”
- D) As an individual believes in the promise of the Savior, the human spirit is regenerated, brought back to life, and a spiritual connection is established. 1Cor 15:45
- E) The connection to God through the human spirit includes:
  - 1) praise – Lk 1:47 “*And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.*”

- 2) worship – Jn 4:23
  - 3) righteous indignation – Ac 17:16 *“Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was being provoked within him as he was beholding the city full of idols.”*
  - 4) fervency/intensity – Ac 18:25
  - 5) service – Rom 1:9 *“For God, whom I serve in my spirit in the preaching of the gospel of His Son, is my witness as to how unceasingly I make mention of you”*
  - 6) prayer – Rom 8:15 *“For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, ‘Abba! Father!’”*
  - 7) gentleness/compassion – 1Cor 4:21; Gal 6:1
  - 8) wisdom and revelation (understanding old and new information) – Eph 1:17 *“that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.”*
  - 9) receipt of grace – Gal 6:18 *“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.”*
  - 10) power, love, and discipline – 2Tim 1:7 *“For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.”*
  - 11) works (Divine Good Production) – Js 2:26 *“For just as (ὥσπερ) the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead.”*
  - 12) humility – 1Pet 3:8 *“To sum up, let all be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit”*
- F) The *pneuma* departs the body at the point of physical death, accompanying the soul. cp Ac 7:59; 2Cor 5:6-8; Js 2:26
- G) It is reunited with the Resurrection Body at the point of redemption. 1Th 5:23

#### IV. The Role of the Holy Spirit in Relation to the Human Spirit

- A) The Holy Spirit communicates directly through our human spirit. Rom 8:16 *“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God”*
- 1) at the time of gospel hearing, the Holy Spirit communicates that information directly to the soul, taking the place of the human spirit to provide a clear understanding – Mk 3:28-29
  - 2) the Holy Spirit communicates only truth – Jn 16:13 *“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, He will speak; and He will disclose to you what is to come.”*
  - 3) the human spirit filters out all untruth, accepting only that which is Dvpt – Eph 4:24 *“and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God (LIT – “ACCORDING TO/AFTER THE PATTERN OF GOD”) has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.”*
- B) The Filling of the Holy Spirit, then, is the removal of defilement of flesh and spirit, restoring a condition of holiness which then allows the truth to be implanted accurately into the soul through the human spirit. 2Cor 7:1 *“Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.”* cp 1Jn 1:6-10
- C) The terms “grieve the Holy Spirit” (Eph 4:30) and “quench the Holy Spirit” (1Th 5:19) are different ways of communicating the same principle – without the FHS, there is no spiritual connection between God, the human spirit, and the soul.

#### V. The Human Spirit as a Conduit to Bible Doctrine

- A) The human spirit is the vital link to understanding Bible Doctrine. 2Cor 3:18 *“But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.”*

- B) Without the human spirit, man cannot understand the things of Bible Doctrine. 1Cor 2:14 *“But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised”* cp Isa 55:9
- C) To take in false doctrine defiles the spirit, in the same sense that sin defiles the body, since it supplants a portion that would otherwise make it more complete. 2Cor 7:1
- D) Consistent rejection of a Doctrinal principle (reversionism) corrupts the human spirit, but recovery reestablishes it to its original condition of complete. 1Cor 5:5 *“I have decided to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.”*
- E) The more Bible Doctrine one has, the better a reflection of God it becomes. 1Cor 6:17 *“But the one who joins himself to the Lord is one spirit with Him”*
  - 1) at the Parousia, the spirit will be either incomplete or complete – 1Th 5:23 *“Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*
  - 2) receipt of the Resurrection Body includes the implantation of all BD into the soul, through the human spirit – Heb 8:10 (quoting Jer 31:33)
  - 3) the status of the human spirit at the point of death or immediately before Resurrection is the determining factor in this “completeness”; those connected accurately to God via the human spirit will be considered complete – Col 3:10 *“and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him”*

#### V. The Goal of the Christian Way of Life

- A) The purpose of the human spirit is to filter only Truth into the storage areas of the soul (memory) for use and application as needed.
  - 1) while principles and concepts may be memorized (stored in the brain), whether true or false, the human spirit only accepts Divine viewpoint
  - 2) the human spirit is designed to reflect and mirror the Holy Spirit:
    - a) the HS gives life, the human spirit receives it – Jn 6:63
    - b) the Leading of the HS is accomplished through the human spirit – Rom 8:16 *“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God”*
    - c) the HS teaches doctrine, the human spirit enables its receipt – 1Cor 2:13 *“which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.”*
    - d) the HS gives power through the human spirit – 2Tim 1:7 *“For God has not given us a spirit of timidity, but of power and love and discipline.”*
    - e) the HS regenerates, the human spirit is renewed – Tit 3:5 *“He saved us, ... by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit”*
- B) Therefore, BD taken in consistently and accurately builds the human spirit to the complete status in time, and is the goal of God’s provision of BD – Eph 4:11-16

**Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**1Th 5:23**