

The Holy Spirit and the Spirit of Prophecy

Read Time: 4 Minutes, 35 Seconds

Who is the Spirit of God? One of the most intriguing scriptures I have studied was the last line of Revelations 19:10:

“The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

Now, what does this mean and why is it relevant to answering the question Who is the Spirit of God?

My quest to answer these questions at hand in the most scripturally accurate way led me to dive deep into the depths of the first-century Jewish understanding of the Spirit of the Lord.

On my journey toward a deeper understanding, I was reminded that prophecy was more than “thus saith the Lord”. One of the unique ways we can understand the deeper meaning of prophecy is through the study of the role of the Holy Spirit as interpreted by the Jewish people of the first century. This component of biblical studies of the Holy Spirit is crucial due to its historical significance in scripture. The further we dive into this concept, the more accurate and broad our understanding of who the Holy Spirit is.

After researching this, I came to understand that the Jewish people of the first century had a very unique understanding of the Spirit of the Lord. To them, the proper term for “Spirit of the God” was rendered as “the spirit of prophecy.” This was the synagogue term used in the reading of the Torah to the multitudes who spoke Aramaic.

In the Aramaic Targums, this term was used by devout

translators. "The spirit of prophecy" appears over 70 times in the Aramaic translation of the Hebrew Scriptures.

In multiple instances throughout scripture, we see many figures being referred to as prophets. In Genesis 20:7, the text teaches that Abraham was a prophet, yet nowhere in the word of God do we see Abraham saying "thus saith the Lord". And in Acts 2:30 the scripture refers to David being a "prophet" but if we search the scripture, we will never see David prophesying to anyone. In many other places in the scripture with examples such as the Sons of Asaph who prophesied on their instruments and the Levites who also prophesied in the tabernacle of David, prophecy also alludes to them.

So how are these figures prophets? How is Abraham a prophet? How is David? Scripture is telling us that they are prophets yet we find no classical version of prophecy being used. This concept opens a tremendous amount of understanding of what the nature of prophecy actually is.

So, how does this enrich our understanding of who the Holy Spirit is today in our lives? It opens a vault of hidden treasures for us. This teaches us that "prophecy" is not limited to "Thus saith the Lord". We can learn from scripture, that the Spirit of Prophecy is also dreams and visions (Numbers 12:6 and Acts 2: 17-18) and an understanding of dreams and visions (Daniel 1:17 and Exodus 31:2-4).

What this means is that prophecy, for the people of the first century, was understood as "being lead by the Spirit" of God and the witness of the Spirit in the inward man. The relevance of the Targums (an ancient Aramaic paraphrase or interpretation of the Hebrew Bible, of a type made from about the 1st century AD when Hebrew was declining as a spoken language), is that most first-century Jews in Galilee spoke Aramaic and the religious language was Hebrew. However, in the synagogue, the translation for Torah readings and prayer for

the general population required translation.

From this, we can gain a deeper understanding of who the Spirit of God is. From the Jewish people of the first century, our understanding of who is the Holy Spirit is enriched. They understand the Spirit of God as something that is living and breathing through us.

Today in our lives, let us learn that when you are baptized in the Spirit of God, what happens in the upper room also happens to you. You become submerged in the supernatural.

If we compare Acts 2:18, "Your sons and daughter shall prophesy. Your young men shall see visions and your old men shall dream dreams. Upon My servants and My handmaidens, I will pour out of My Spirit and they shall prophesy" and Joel 2:29, "And also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit" we are able to see that these two scriptures are almost the same verbatim. However, one thing that makes Acts 2:18 different from Joel 2:29, is the words "they shall prophesy".

So why is this one small difference significant? It is significant because it perfectly explains the upper room experience that saturates all believers who experience the "outpouring" of the Spirit. The words "they shall prophesy" relates all the way back to the first century Jews' understanding of the Spirit of God as "the Spirit of Prophecy". So, because the Bible says that "they shall prophesy" it is saying to believers who experience the "outpouring" of the Spirit, that the Spirit lives and breathes through us.

If you have received baptism in the Holy Spirit, you have also received the Spirit of Prophecy in your life, it is alive within you! Being led by the Spirit of God is one of the greatest gifts of prophecy.

Today, we are being challenged to follow and depend on the

Holy Spirit in everything we do in this ever-changing world. Believers worldwide are facing persecution for their faith and are facing the battle without coverage from mainstream media or support from their governments. How are they able to bear this? How can we face this?

With the grace and strength of the Holy Spirit. Let us ask the Lord for more sensitivity to hearing his voice and perceiving the prompting of the Holy Spirit. Let us follow him as our greatest friend and companion.

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