

# Session Seven & Eight

## *Does the Indwelling Spirit Replace the Torah?*

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It is not uncommon in our day to hear people emphasize the “leading of the Spirit” to the exclusion of the role of God’s Torah in the lives of His people. The “rules” of the Torah are no longer needed, it is claimed, since we now have the Spirit to guide us. But is this what the Scriptures teach? What exactly is the role of the Holy Spirit in terms of teaching the believer what is right and wrong?

We will seek to investigate this important matter along the following lines:

1. What was the role of the Holy Spirit before the coming of Yeshua?
  - the work of the Spirit in the Tanach
  - John 7:39; 14:17, etc.
2. What was the significance of the outpouring of the Spirit on the Shavuot following Yeshua’s death and resurrection (Acts 2)?
  - the reason the Spirit was given on Shavuot
  - the fulfillment of Yeshua’s promise
  - the manifestation of the Spirit as a revelation of the purpose of His being given
3. What is the role of the Spirit in the life of the believer now?
  - to aid the Apostles in writing the Apostolic Scriptures
  - to guide the believer in accordance with the Scriptures
  - to enable the believer to actively participate in the work of the kingdom

### ***The Spirit of God was active in the Tanach***

- The Spirit of God was active in the creation of the universe: Gen 1:2 The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.
- The Spirit of God was active in convicting (“striving with”) mankind of sin: Gen. 6:3 Then the LORD said, “My Spirit shall not strive with man forever, because he also is flesh; nevertheless his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.”
- The Spirit of God filled Bezalel, Aholiab and the other craftsmen, empowering them to build the various parts and implements of the Tabernacle: Ex. 31:3 “I have filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship” (cf. 35:31)
- The Spirit of God filled the 70 elders of Israel: Num. 11:17 “Then I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit who is upon you, and will put Him upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you will not bear it all alone.”
- The Spirit of God enabled common men to prophecy: Num 11:26, “And the Spirit rested upon them

(now they were among those who had been registered, but had not gone out to the tent), and they prophesied in the camp.”

- the Spirit of God was given to Joshua, endowing him with wisdom for leadership: Deut. 34:9 “Now Joshua the son of Nun was filled with the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; and the sons of Israel listened to him and did as the LORD had commanded Moses.”
- the Spirit of God empowered the Judges (Othniel, Gideon, Jephthah, Samson)
- the Spirit of God was given to Saul and David as the anointed kings of Israel: 1Sam. 16:13 “Then Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the midst of his brothers; and the Spirit of the LORD came mightily upon David from that day forward.”
- the Spirit of God was given to those who assisted Saul as king: 1Sam 19:20 “... the Spirit of God came upon the messengers of Saul; and they also prophesied.”
- the Spirit of God enabled the Prophets of old to speak: (for example) Mic. 3:8 “On the other hand I am filled with power — with the Spirit of the LORD — and with justice and courage to make known to Jacob his rebellious act, even to Israel his sin.”
- the Spirit of God led the people of Israel in their journeys: Is 63:14 “As the cattle which go down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD gave them rest. So You led Your people, to make for Yourself a glorious name.”
- the Spirit of God was abiding in the midst of Israel as God’s chosen people: Hag. 2:5 “As for the promise which I made you when you came out of Egypt, My Spirit is abiding in your midst; do not fear!”
- the building of Zerubbabel’s Temple was done through the power of the Spirit: Zech. 4:6 “Then he said to me, “This is the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel saying, ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the LORD of hosts.”
- the Spirit of God was active in sanctifying the believing Israelites: Mal 2:15 “But not one has done so [acted unfaithfully to his wife] who has a remnant of the Spirit. And what did that one do while he was seeking a godly offspring? Take heed then to your spirit, and let no one deal treacherously against the wife of your youth.”
- **Conclusion: the Spirit of God was active both in the nation of Israel as well as in the individual lives of those who demonstrated genuine faith in God and His promise of Messiah**

### *The Spirit of God was active in the process of salvation*

- God has only one way of salvation: faith in His promised Messiah as the sacrifice for sin
  - this was just as true before the coming of Yeshua as after His coming
  - if there were more than one way of salvation, there would have been no need for Yeshua to die for sins

- Circumcision of the heart
  - Paul teaches that circumcision of the heart is accomplished only by the work of the Spirit:

Rom. 2:29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God.

- Yet Moses commanded the people to circumcise their hearts and promised that this would be the work of God upon them:

Deut. 10:16 “So circumcise your heart, and stiffen your neck no longer.  
Deut. 30:6 “Moreover the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, so that you may live.

- Apart from the work of the Spirit, Messiah is veiled (unknown) from the Torah (2Cor 3:17–18). Yet surely those who were true believers before His coming placed their faith in Him:

Gen. 15:6 Then he [Abraham] believed in the LORD; and He reckoned it to him as righteousness.  
Psa. 32:1 How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered!  
2 How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit!

- Apart from the work of the Spirit, the Torah brings condemnation, damnation, and death. Yet surely the true believers of old were saved by God’s grace:

Rom. 8:2 For the Torah of the Spirit of life in Messiah Yeshua has set you free from the Torah of sin and of death.  
Rom 8: 7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the Torah of God, for it is not even able to do so, 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Messiah, he does not belong to Him.

- it is clear that the believers of old were able to submit themselves in obedience to the Torah:

Psa. 19:7 The Torah of the LORD is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The precepts of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart; The commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes.  
Psa. 119:1 How blessed are those whose way is blameless, who walk in the Torah of the LORD. 2 How blessed are those who observe His testimonies, who seek Him with all their heart. 3 They also do no unrighteousness; they walk in His ways.  
Psa. 119:11 Your word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against You.

- it is by the work of the Spirit of God that an individual knows he is saved:

Rom. 8:16 The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God,

- those who were saved before the coming of Yeshua knew they were children of God:

Job 19:25 “As for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last He will take His stand on the earth.

Heb. 11:13 All these died in faith, without receiving the promises, but having seen them and having welcomed them from a distance, and having confessed that they were strangers and exiles on the earth.

- even before the Spirit was poured out at Shavuot (Acts 2), the gospel included the message of being born again by the Spirit:

John 3:5 Yeshua answered, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

- No one can know the thoughts of God apart from the work of the Spirit in revelation and illumination:

1Cor 2: 9 “Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and which have not entered the heart of man, all that God has prepared for those who love Him.” 10 For to us God revealed them through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. 11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God.

- it is certain that the believers of old knew the truth about God
- Paul quotes Is 64:4 here, in which Isaiah is describing the revelation of God at Sinai

- Sanctification (being made holy) is the work of the Spirit:

Gal. 5:16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

- David confessed that he walked obediently before the Lord:

Psa. 26:1 Vindicate me, O LORD, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the LORD without wavering.

- the Psalmist requests the leading of the Spirit

Psa. 143:10 Teach me to do Your will, for You are my God; Let Your good Spirit lead me on level ground.

- Paul teaches that those who are led by the Spirit are the children of God:

Rom. 8:14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

- Paul teaches that those who do not have the “Spirit of Messiah” do not belong to Him:

Rom. 8:9 However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him.

- + note that the “Spirit of God dwells in you” is parallel to “have the Spirit of Messiah”
- + the presence of the Spirit in one’s life is the proof of genuine salvation
- + were there true believers before the coming of Messiah?
- salvation is possible only through the regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit:

Titus 3:5 “He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit”

- **Conclusion: the Spirit is always active in the salvation of sinners. He opens the eyes of the soul (illumination), He brings the soul to life (regeneration), He gives faith (justification), and enables the believer to walk in obedience to God’s Torah (sanctification). Apart from the work of the Spirit, no one is saved.**

*What is meant, then, by John’s words, that the “Spirit was not yet given?”*

John 7:37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Yeshua stood and cried out, saying, “If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 “He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, ‘From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.’” 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet *given*, because Yeshua was not yet glorified.

- This teaching of Yeshua, regarding the work of the Spirit, parallels His promise to send the Spirit:

Luke 24:49 “And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”

- Yeshua promised His disciples that after His ascension, the Spirit would empower them to initiate the harvest of the nations through the proclamation of the Gospel
- the disciples were to wait in Jerusalem until they were given this special empowering of the Spirit, and then they were to begin their mission in Jerusalem, going throughout Judea, Samaria and eventually to the far reaches of the world (Acts 1:4–5)
- when Yeshua promises “rivers of living water,” He is referring to the gathering in of the harvest

of the nations through the proclamation of the gospel, empowered by the Spirit

- when John comments that “the Spirit was not yet *given*,” he’s referring to the fact that the Spirit had not yet empowered Yeshua’s disciples to begin the task of evangelism to the nations, which would eventually bring the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise: “in you all the families of the earth will be blessed” (Gen 12:3, cf. Gen. 18:18; 22:18; 26:4; 28:14).

### ***What is meant by John’s words, that the Spirit “abides with you and will be in you?”***

John 14:16 “I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; 17 that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you.

- Yeshua promised to send the Spirit with power to assist His disciples in carrying out the mission of gathering in the nations
- what is the meaning of “abides with you and will be in you?”
  - the preposition “in” can have a number of meanings in the Greek: “by,” “among,” “with”
  - in the Lxx, the same combinations of prepositions means “between” Ex 31:13, “...for this is a sign with Me and in you throughout your generations...”
  - the disciples already “knew” the Spirit, meaning they had already experienced His presence and His enabling
  - the Greek text has a variant here: other manuscripts read “abides with you and is in you” (present tense rather than future tense)
  - note Is 63:11, “...He who put His Holy Spirit in the midst of them” (ποῦ ἐστὶν ὁ θεὸς ἐν αὐτοῖς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον) - same construction as Jn 16:17
  - in the context, the promise of Yeshua regarding the Spirit is that He would continue to abide with the disciples, and would be active in them even after Yeshua ascended to the Father
  - particularly, the promise of the Spirit was for the success of the disciples’ mission. Yeshua’s request to the Father was that the Spirit would come with special enabling to accomplish the ingathering of the Gentiles

### ***The giving of the Spirit at Shavuot (Acts 2)***

- Why on Shavuot?
  - Shavuot is connected to Pesach (Passover) through the counting of the omer
    - + beginning on the second day of Unleavened bread, each family was to bring an omer of the barley harvest into the temple as first fruits of the harvest
    - + the bringing of the omer lasted for a full seven weeks (49 days), then Shavuot was celebrated. 49 + 1 is the picture of the sabbatical years (49) and the Jubilee (50th). Thus, Shavuot represents the Jubilee

- + the Jubilee is the time when all things return to their rightful owner
- Shavuot celebrates the completed harvest. Symbolically, it represents the completed harvest of the nations, when all of God’s chosen ones have been gathered into His family
- Shavuot also marked the giving of the Torah
  - Ex. 19:1 “In the third month after the sons of Israel had gone out of the land of Egypt, on that very day they came into the wilderness of Sinai.”
    - + “on that very day” = “rosh chodesh” (beginning) of the third month
    - + the time frame is given so that we would know that the Torah was given on the 6th of the third month = Shavuot
  - God had promised that the Torah would eventually be given to all the nations
    - + the Davidic covenant:

2Sam. 7:18 Then David the king went in and sat before the LORD, and he said, “Who am I, O Lord GOD, and what is my house, that You have brought me this far? 19 “And yet this was insignificant in Your eyes, O Lord GOD, for You have spoken also of the house of Your servant concerning the distant future. And this is the Torah for mankind, O Lord GOD.

- God had made an enduring covenant with David, promising that his kingship would be the only legitimate dynasty ruling over Israel
- David recognizes that the covenant God had made with him had its fulfillment in the “distant future.”
- David also recognized that it was through the reign of Messiah that the Torah would come to all mankind
- + the Prophets foretold that the Torah would go to all the peoples

Is. 42:1 “Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations. 2 He will not cry out or raise His voice, nor make His voice heard in the street. 3 A bruised reed He will not break and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish; He will faithfully bring forth justice. 4 He will not be disheartened or crushed until He has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands will wait expectantly for His Torah.”

- it is the work of Messiah to bring justice (=Torah) to the nations
- “coastlands” (צָר, 'iy) refers to the regions farthest away from Israel
- the completion of the work of the Servant of the Lord, is when He brings justice to all the nations. He will not become weary, but will accomplish this task.
- the power of the Spirit, enabling the Messiah to accomplish this task, is demonstrated in the giving of the Spirit at Shavuot (Acts 2)
- **Conclusion: the reason the Spirit was given at Shavuot was to signal the beginning of the harvest of the nations through revealing the Torah to them, for the goal of the Torah is the Messiah (Rom 10:4).**

*The manifestation of the Spirit at Shavuot (Acts 2) teaches this same thing*

Acts 2:1 When the day of Shavuot (Pentecost) had come, they were all together in one place. 2 And suddenly there came from heaven a noise like a violent rushing wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. 3 And there appeared to them tongues as of fire distributing themselves, and they rested on each one of them. 4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit was giving them utterance. 7 They were amazed and astonished, saying, “Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? 8 “And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born?

- The Spirit manifested His presence through the rushing wind
  - the people were gathered in the portico of Solomon, in the Temple precincts
    - + they were celebrating the festival, which would have been done at the Temple
    - + the crowds gathered about them
  - the rushing wind was symbolic of the presence of God and of His glory

2Sam. 22:11 “And He rode on a cherub and flew; And He appeared on the wings of the wind. 1Kings 8:10 It happened that when the priests came from the holy place, the cloud filled the house of the LORD, 11 so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the house of the LORD.

- The Spirit manifested His presence through the gift of languages:
  - the message of God had previously been given only in the Hebrew language
  - now, the ingathering of the nations had begun, the harvest was being gathered
  - thus, the message is heard in every language
  - the Rabbis had taught that the Torah was given in seventy languages (meaning all the languages of the world)

R. Johanan said: What is meant by the verse, The Lord giveth the word: They that publish the tidings are a great host? (Ps 68:12) — Every single word that went forth from the Omnipotent was split up into seventy languages. The School of R. Ishmael taught: And like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces, just as a hammer is divided into many sparks, so every single word that went forth from the Holy One, blessed be He, split up into seventy languages.

- to the Jewish believers who were gathered on the day of Shavuot, the manifestations of the Spirit was reminiscent of the giving of the Torah at Sinai on Shavuot
- the many languages reinforced the fact that now the Torah would go to all the nations
- the giving of the Spirit was the “power from on high” for which the disciples were to wait before they ventured forth to accomplish the mission of evangelizing the nations

- the Spirit manifested His presence through tongues of fire resting upon each one
  - even as the Rabbinic teaching connected “sparks” of fire with the giving of the Torah, so the Spirit manifested His empowerment for world evangelism through tongues of fire on the very day (Shavuot) when the giving of the Torah was being celebrated
  - the symbolism of the tongues of fire resting on each one was to emphasize that each one, now endowed by the special enabling of the Spirit, was to be engaged in the evangelism of the nations. *The harvest was underway!*
- **Conclusion: the giving of the Spirit on Shavuot (Acts 2) was directly connected to the giving of the Torah on Sinai, not as a means to replace the Torah. The empowerment of the Spirit was given to Yeshua’s disciples so that they could take the Torah to the nations, leading them to Messiah, and gathering them into the family of God.**

### *The ongoing work of the Spirit in the believer*

- the Spirit equips the remnant of Israel (believers in Yeshua) to be a light to the nations
  - this involves having boldness to share the message
  - this involves living in a way that is set apart to God so that one’s life is a witness of Messiah
  - this involves working together within the community of faith (“body of Messiah”)
    - so that each one becomes mature in the faith
    - so that together a community can maintain a clear witness of Messiah

Eph 4:11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Messiah; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Messiah. 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Messiah, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

- a special work of the Spirit was to enable the Apostles to write the Apostolic Scripture (Jn 14:25–26)
- the Spirit equips believers with spiritual gifts (χαρισμάτα, *charismata*; πνευματικά, *pneumatika*, cf. Rom 12:6; 1Cor 12:1; 14:1)
  - the gifts of the Spirit are for the building up of the body of Messiah, not for personal gratification or personal growth: 1Cor. 12:7 “But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”
  - the gifts of the Spirit are always exercised within the community of the believers, not privately
  - the Spirit enables each believer to use his or her unique abilities for service within the kingdom of Messiah

- note the example of Bezalel and Aholiab:

Ex. 31:1 Now the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, 2 “See, I have called by name Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah. 3 I have filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship, 4 to make artistic designs for work in gold, in silver, and in bronze, 5 and in the cutting of stones for settings, and in the carving of wood, that he may work in all kinds of craftsmanship. 6 And behold, I Myself have appointed with him Aholiab, the son of Ahisamach, of the tribe of Dan; and in the hearts of all who are skillful I have put skill, that they may make all that I have commanded you:

- the craftsmen were “filled with the Spirit of God in wisdom, understanding, knowledge, and in craftsmanship”
- yet they were already skilled: “in the hearts of all who are skillful I have put skill”
- the Spirit enabled the craftsmen to utilize their God-given abilities to construct the Tabernacle as God desired

### *Summary*

- The Spirit of God has always been active in the process of saving sinners. No one can be saved apart from the illumination, regeneration, faith-giving, and sanctifying work of the Spirit of God.
- The passages in the Gospels, often interpreted to teach that the Spirit of God was inactive before the incarnation of Yeshua, when studied in context, simply promise the on-going work of the Spirit in accomplishing God’s plan of salvation.
- The new work of the Spirit, as a result of Yeshua’s victory over sin, is specifically in the harvest of the nations. This is in fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise that God would bless all of the families of the earth.
- The outpouring of the Spirit came on Shavuot (Acts 2) in order to emphasize that through the power He would give, the revelation of God (the Torah) would now go to all mankind. By pouring out His Spirit in this kind of enabling, the harvest of the nations and the teaching of the Torah are combined.
- The giving of the Spirit at Shavuot (Acts 2) did not negate the Torah! Rather, the outpouring of the Spirit enabled the disciples of Yeshua to carry God’s revelation to all the nations, making disciples for Yeshua who would obey all that He had commanded (Matt 28:18–20).
- The abiding presence of the Spirit within the believing community equips and enables Yeshua’s disciples to continue the work of bringing in the nations, through the testimony of the believing community (edification), and the spreading of the message of the Gospel (mission).

