

THE SPIRIT COMES AS GOD'S BREATH

Genesis 2:4b-7 (all reading from Common English Bible)

⁴ This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created. On the day the LORD God made earth and sky—⁵ before any wild plants appeared on the earth, and before any field crops grew, because the LORD God hadn't yet sent rain on the earth and there was still no human being^[a] to farm the fertile land, ⁶ though a stream rose from the earth and watered all of the fertile land—⁷ the LORD God formed the human^[b] from the topsoil of the fertile land^[c] and blew life's breath into his nostrils. The human came to life.

Ezekiel 37:1-10

The LORD's power overcame me, and while I was in the LORD's spirit, he led me out and set me down in the middle of a certain valley. It was full of bones. ² He led me through them all around, and I saw that there were a great many of them on the valley floor, and they were very dry.

³ He asked me, "Human one, can these bones live again?"

I said, "LORD God, only you know."

⁴ He said to me, "Prophesy over these bones, and say to them, Dry bones, hear the LORD's word! ⁵ The LORD God proclaims to these bones: I am about to put breath in you, and you will live again. ⁶ I will put sinews on you, place flesh on you, and cover you with skin. When I put breath in you, and you come to life, you will know that I am the LORD."

⁷ I prophesied just as I was commanded. There was a great noise as I was prophesying, then a great quaking, and the bones came together, bone by bone. ⁸ When I looked, suddenly there were sinews on them. The flesh appeared, and then they were covered over with skin. But there was still no breath in them.

⁹ He said to me, "Prophesy to the breath; prophesy, human one! Say to the breath, The LORD God proclaims: Come from the four winds, breath! Breathe into these dead bodies and let them live."

¹⁰ I prophesied just as he commanded me. When the breath entered them, they came to life and stood on their feet, an extraordinarily large company.

John 20:19-22

¹⁹ It was still the first day of the week. That evening, while the disciples were behind closed doors because they were afraid of the Jewish authorities, Jesus came and stood among them. He said, "Peace be with you." ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. When the disciples saw the Lord, they were filled with joy. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent me, so I am sending you."²² Then he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit.

THE SPIRIT COMES AS THE WIND

John 3:1-9

There was a Pharisee named Nicodemus, a Jewish leader. ² He came to Jesus at night and said to him, "Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one could do these miraculous signs that you do unless God is with him."

³ Jesus answered, "I assure you, unless someone is born anew, it's not possible to see God's kingdom."

⁴ Nicodemus asked, "How is it possible for an adult to be born? It's impossible to enter the mother's womb for a second time and be born, isn't it?"

⁵ Jesus answered, "I assure you, unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, it's not possible to enter God's kingdom. ⁶ Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh, and whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit. ⁷ Don't be surprised that I said to you, 'You must be born anew.' ⁸ God's Spirit blows wherever it wishes. You hear its sound, but you don't know where it comes from or where it is going. It's the same with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

⁹ Nicodemus said, "How are these things possible?"

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Acts 2:1-2

When Pentecost Day arrived, they were all together in one place.² Suddenly a sound from heaven like the howling of a fierce wind filled the entire house where they were sitting.

THE SPIRIT COMES AS FIRE

Acts 2:3-4

They saw what seemed to be individual flames of fire alighting on each one of them.⁴ They were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit enabled them to speak.

Romans 12:1-2

So, brothers and sisters, because of God's mercies, I encourage you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice that is holy and pleasing to God. This is your appropriate priestly service.² Don't be conformed to the patterns of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds so that you can figure out what God's will is—what is good and pleasing and mature.

THE SPIRIT COMES AS A DOVE

Genesis 8:1-12, 20-22

God remembered Noah, all those alive, and all the animals with him in the ark. God sent a wind over the earth so that the waters receded.² The springs of the deep sea and the skies^a closed up. The skies held back the rain.³ The waters receded gradually from the earth. After one hundred fifty days, the waters decreased:⁴ and in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day, the ark came to rest on the Ararat mountains.⁵ The waters decreased gradually until the tenth month, and on the first day of the tenth month the mountain peaks appeared.

⁶ After forty days, Noah opened the window of the ark that he had made.⁷ He sent out a raven, and it flew back and forth until the waters over the entire earth had dried up.⁸ Then he sent out a dove to see if the waters on all of the fertile land had subsided,⁹ but the dove found no place to set its foot. It returned to him in the ark since waters still covered the entire earth. Noah stretched out his hand, took it, and brought it back into the ark.¹⁰ He waited seven more days and sent the dove out from the ark again.¹¹ The dove came back to him in the evening, grasping a torn olive leaf in its beak. Then Noah knew that the waters were subsiding from the earth.¹² He waited seven more days and sent out the dove, but it didn't come back to him again.

²⁰ Noah built an altar to the LORD. He took some of the clean large animals and some of the clean birds, and placed entirely burned offerings on the altar.²¹ The LORD smelled the pleasing scent, and the LORD thought to himself, I will not curse the fertile land anymore because of human beings since the ideas of the human mind are evil from their youth. I will never again destroy every living thing as I have done.

²² As long as the earth exists, seedtime and harvest, cold and hot, summer and autumn, day and night will not cease.

Matthew 3:13-17

¹³ At that time Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan River so that John would baptize him.¹⁴ John tried to stop him and said, "I need to be baptized by you, yet you come to me?"

¹⁵ Jesus answered, "Allow me to be baptized now. This is necessary to fulfill all righteousness." So John agreed to baptize Jesus.¹⁶ When Jesus was baptized, he immediately came up out of the water. Heaven was opened to him, and he saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and resting on him.¹⁷ A voice from heaven said, "This is my Son whom I dearly love; I find happiness in him."