

The Spirit in the OT 4. SPIRIT AND PROPHECY

Ecstatic Prophecy *A tradition of music-induced ecstasy among the “schools of prophets”* (1 Samuel 10:5-12) [Samuel predicting of Saul.]: “there, as you come to the town, you will meet a band of prophets coming down from the shrine with harp, tambourine, flute, and lyre playing in front of them; they will be in a prophetic frenzy. Then the spirit of the LORD will possess you (lit: rush on you), and you will be in a prophetic frenzy along with them and be turned into a different person.” ... When they were going from there to Gibeah, a band of prophets met him; and the spirit of God possessed him, and he fell into a prophetic frenzy along with them. ... When his prophetic frenzy had ended, he went home.

Prophets and “the Word of the Lord”

Prophets more frequently speak of “the word of the Lord”. They are messengers to whom the word of the Lord ‘comes’ and who communicate it. “Spirit of the Lord” is less frequent.

Autobiographical statements

The prophet Micah comparing himself to false prophets:

Micah 3:5-8 (NRSV) Thus says the LORD concerning the prophets
who lead my people astray,
who cry ‘Peace’
when they have something to eat,
but declare war against those
who put nothing into their mouths.
Therefore it shall be night to you, without vision,
and darkness to you, without revelation.
But as for me, I am filled with power,
with the spirit of the LORD,
and with justice and might,
to declare to Jacob his transgression
and to Israel his sin.

The anonymous prophet in Isaiah describing his mission of preaching hope:

(Isaiah 61:1-3) The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me,
because the LORD has anointed me;
he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed,
to bind up the broken-hearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and release to the prisoners;
to proclaim the year of the LORD’s favour,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn;
to provide for those who mourn in Zion—
to give them a garland instead of ashes,

the oil of gladness instead of mourning,
the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

Prophecies of a future righteous king:

(Isaiah 11:1-5) A shoot shall come out from the stock of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots.

The spirit of the Lord shall rest on him,

the spirit of wisdom and understanding,

the spirit of counsel and might,

the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord.

His delight shall be in the fear of the Lord.

He shall not judge by what his eyes see,

or decide by what his ears hear;

but with righteousness he shall judge the poor,

and decide with equity for the meek of the earth;

he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth,

and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked.

Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist,

and faithfulness the belt around his loins.

The Servant of the Lord:

(Isaiah 42:1-7) Here is my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;

I have put my spirit upon him;

he will bring forth justice to the nations.

He will not cry or lift up his voice,

or make it heard in the street;

a bruised reed he will not break,

and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;

he will faithfully bring forth justice.

He will not grow faint or be crushed

until he has established justice in the earth;

and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

Thus says God, the LORD,

who created the heavens and stretched them out,

who spread out the earth and what comes from it,

who gives breath to the people upon it

and spirit to those who walk in it:

I am the LORD, I have called you in righteousness,

I have taken you by the hand and kept you;

I have given you as a covenant to the people,

a light to the nations,

to open the eyes that are blind,

to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,

from the prison those who sit in darkness.