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# TRAGEDY OF SPIRIT-EMPOWERED HEROES

A CLOSE LOOK AT SAMSON AND SAUL

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**Key Words** *Spirit of God, Samson, Saul, charismatic leaders, moral failure*

## **Abstract**

This study is motivated by the ongoing dilemma of the ethical failures among well-known leaders of the modern Pentecostal-charismatic movements. Through a close look at Saul and Samson, the two charismatic leaders of the Old Testament who have the most frequent references to the Spirit of God, the study probes the internal and private layers of their experience with the Spirit of God. The intention of the Spirit's presence includes both an internal transformation as well as empowerment for external tasks. The scriptural evidence demonstrates that the internal working of the Spirit is no less important than the empowering outward acts of deliverance. It was these heroes' failure to receive the private and internal transformative work of the Spirit that resulted in their failure.

## **Introduction**

The emergence and growth of Pentecostal and charismatic Christianity are often regarded as contributing significantly to making the twentieth

century a “surprise Christian century.” Among many positive contributions of the Pentecostal-charismatic movements today, however, bright charismatic “stars” have fallen on moral grounds and have punctuated like deep scars its otherwise glowing face. The problem is, this grave failure is not limited to the “stars” such as megachurch pastors and televangelists: a lax attitude is also observed among less-than-starry leaders in the Pentecostal-charismatic world. Even if the rate of failure is comparable to that of other leaders, it is still a disturbing reality. Why are people who experience the presence of the Holy Spirit no different from those who do not share the same experience? If “empowerment for service” is the main purpose of such spiritual encounters, then would it not be unfair for these leaders to be used as a machine or tool for specific purposes and then thrown away the next moment? If the Holy Spirit is not a force but a person, doesn’t this create a serious theological dilemma? This rather disturbing question has led me to notice similar failures among the Spirit-empowered heroes of old.

Samson and Saul are two leaders who have first and second place on the leader board of Spirit-endued charismatic leaders in the Old Testament. Samson records four references to the coming of the Spirit, all positive (Judg 13:25; 14:6, 19; 15:14). On the other hand, Saul has a whopping ten references, but five of them are to “the evil spirit (from God)” (1 Sam 16:15, 16, 23; 18:10; 19:9).<sup>1</sup> Then two refers to the departure of God’s Spirit (1 Sam 16:15) and the Spirit’s work to immobilise him (19:23). These leave only three references (1 Sam 10:6, 10; 11:6). My immediate inquiry is this: is there any textual evidence to suggest the presence of the Spirit beyond the empowerment of heroes? I decided to limit my search to historical Spirit-empowered heroes, or charismatic leaders, as the future figures such as the ideal king in Isa 11 and the Servant in Isa 42 would represent an ideal type of Spirit-empowered leader(s).

If the Spirit would affect the inner being of the hero, it would have to be in a private setting. Such a case would also be expected at the beginning of the hero’s career rather than later. And references then would employ language which would suggest the internal and private effect of the Spirit. In both heroes, such passages are found: Judg 13 and 1 Sam 10. The inclusion of these passages is made possible due to

the multiple references by Samson and Saul to the coming of God's Spirit. Understandably, almost no attention will be given to the famous passages which describe their exploits of the enemies. At the same time, this study faces a serious challenge: we are talking about only a few passages, and sometimes the meaning of certain terms is uncertain. This challenge will make it almost impossible to investigate the process and nature of the Spirit's work on the values, spirituality, and morality of a person. At the end, there may be no conclusive outcome.

This study, therefore, will take a close look at the two passages and capture any notion of the Spirit's internal work within the heroes. The study concludes with any implications to contemporary Christian life, especially applicable to Pentecostal-charismatic believers.

### **Judges 13:24–25**

The woman bore a son, and named him Samson. The boy grew, and the Lord blessed him. The spirit of the Lord began to stir him in Mahaneh-dan, between Zorah and Eshtaol.<sup>2</sup>

The book is structured by what is often called the repetition of a "theological cycle": Israel deserted its God and resorted to other gods, God "gave" Israel to an oppressive enemy hand, Israel sought God in repentance, then God prepared a deliverer (e.g., Judg 2:10–16). This destitute state of the loosely organized tribal alliance is regularly attributed to the lack of a central rule, or king: "In those days there was no king in Israel; all the people did what was right in their own eyes" (Judg 17:6; also 18:1; 19:1; 21:25). In a way, the whole book prepares for the emergence of an Israelite monarchy. Samson is the last judge to be recorded. At the conclusion of the previous judges (in this case, Jephthah followed by three others, Judg 12), strangely the normal theological cycle simply disappears. Conspicuously lacking is the repentance element.<sup>3</sup> Instead, Samson's miraculous birth account is introduced.

The birth of a hero has a certain literary pattern, and Samson's case shares some of its features, including these: the appearance of God's messenger; pregnancy after an extended period of barrenness; child

birth through God's intervention; restrictions imposed on the mother, as well as on the child; and above all, God's special plan for the new hero. The chapter also serves to present Samson's call to judgeship. This cascading of extraordinary elements surrounding his birth builds a strong sense of expectation.<sup>4</sup> After all, God gave him a "sound mind and a strong body as he grew to maturity."<sup>5</sup> Now, on what basis commentator Herbert Wolf assumes that Samson is endowed with a "sound mind" is uncertain.

Judges 13:25 records the fulfillment of God's promise of a child and his early years. In this brief statement, God's blessing is upon him. In his growing years, he experiences God's Spirit. In referring to the coming of the Spirit upon Samson, the author of Judges employs a strange word instead of the stereotypical verb, **נָצַח**, which is quite frequently used in association with the coming of the Spirit. In fact, in all the subsequent occasions when the Spirit of God comes upon Samson, the author employs this common verb. In this first incident of the Spirit upon him, there is a strong sense that the context is in a private setting. No reference is made to anyone else being present when this occurred. A close look at this experience needs to take two components of the text into account: the verb and its effect, and the significance of the locations or the lack thereof.

## **Verb פָּעַם**

Determining the exact meaning of the verb **פָּעַם** also poses a challenge. Its verbal form occurs only five times in the Old Testament: once in qal or piel form (in the present tense), three times in niph'al (Gen 41:8; Ps 77:4; Dan 2:3) and once in hithpa'el form (Dan 2:1).<sup>6</sup> Nonetheless, its usages are consistent: four of the five times, the term is used with "spirit": once with that of Yahweh, and the others with human spirits. When it is used in relation to the human spirit, the persons are actively influenced or "stirred," in each case by dreams. Pharaoh's spirit was disturbed by dreams (Gen 41:8), and so was Nebuchadnezzar's (Dan 2:1, 3). In these cases, the verb can denote the emotional state of the persons, such as "disturbed" or "agitated."<sup>7</sup> But this can also refer to a more active state, such as "moved, anxious, restless" to learn the meaning of the dream.<sup>8</sup>

Of course, Samson's encounter is with God's Spirit and its effect, and, one may argue, it can be different from other cases. Here are several translations: "to stir" (NIV, NRSV), "to move [him] at times" (KJV), "to drive [him] hard,"<sup>9</sup> "to arouse,"<sup>10</sup> "to direct,"<sup>11</sup> or simply "to accompany" (LXX). Drawing from the passages associated with dreams, a generally disturbing or restless state of mind may be agreed on. Although a dream and God's Spirit may be quite different, both were considered by ancient minds to belong to the spiritual realm. For this reason, David Firth argues that the Spirit's stirring was "in directions he would not have chosen."<sup>12</sup> Wolf contends, along this same line, that the intention of the stirring was for Samson to deliver his people from the Philistine oppression.<sup>13</sup>

However, I would like to argue that this encounter tends to point to a more internal and personal nature of the Spirit's work. First, unlike the subsequent coming of the Spirit upon Samson, there is neither an enemy present nor imminent danger. In fact, this experience may have taken place away from people (as seen below). Secondly, despite its brevity, this is part of the record of his initial "call." In this context, the coming of the Spirit serves to affirm God's call upon the hero, not to empower for a military campaign. In the case of Saul, after his initial encounter with the Spirit in a private setting in this passage, the empowering nature of the Spirit took place subsequently in 1 Sam 11. In this case, the Spirit's presence and its effect served as a sign of God's call to Samson. Thirdly, related to the preceding point, the result of the Spirit's coming in this passage does not indicate anything public, such as a military feat as seen in the subsequent record. Yes, there is no record of the effect whatsoever. Nonetheless, the absence of any publicly displayed action points to the private nature of this experience. Consequently, Wolf's suggestion may have gone beyond the warrant of the text.

## Places

In view of extremely insufficient textual evidence, would the place named found in the same verse help us towards the establishment of the internal work of the Spirit? Ancient place names are often hard to identify with accuracy. Mahaneh-dan is a region which includes Zorah and Eshtaol. Zorah is identified as Samson's hometown (13:2). Although the exact location of Eshtaol cannot be established, these two locations were

customarily used to identify the extent of the Danite territory. For this reason, these two places appear as a pair, except in 13:2.

In the Samson narratives, the Spirit “stirred” him “between Zorah and Eshtaol,” and he was later buried “between Zorah and Eshtaol” (16:31). Although several commentators believe that, unlike Zorah, Eshtaol was an area with no population,<sup>14</sup> the usage in ch. 18 does not support this. In all three references, “men from Zorah and Eshtaol” went out to spy a new land (18:2, cf. 18:8). Later, six hundred men from these two places went out to fight for the land (18:11). Moreover, the passages are clear that these men from the two locations were “all the Danites” (18:2, 11).

It is evident that Danites at this time were in a nomadic state, before moving to the northeast. That is why their oppressors were Philistines, while ch. 18 records their attempt to explore a new territory. Zorah and Eshtaol served as the boundary markers as well as the major towns of the Danite territory. However, there seemed to be an inhabited area between these two major locations, and this is where Samson’s references took place. Hence, the first experience of Samson with the Spirit is likely intended to be private due to its location and its circumstance.

## Summary

The nature of the internal effect is not apparent beyond any textual evidence. However, one thing is clear: This experience is meant to remind Samson of his life calling and God’s lordship. The “stirring” or “agitating” work of the Spirit can easily be perceived as challenging his comfort zone. Combined with God’s careful endowment of life’s gifts, including his birth itself, he then is truly expected to be a godly hero. Thus, it is not too farfetched to argue for the transformative work of the Spirit at this stage, either in attitude, spiritual and contextual awareness, his life calling or mission, etc.

Butler is right, as are others, that the coming of the Spirit is not an approval of his spiritual condition. But I am not sure if I can completely agree with him that the Spirit does not “fill him with an inner spirituality.”<sup>15</sup> Yes, the text does not represent a “transformation” of Samson by the Spirit.<sup>16</sup> However, the current discussion suggests at least the possibility of the inner-working of the Spirit in Samson as he grew. Elsewhere, the work of the Spirit in inner transformation is observed.

For example, in Gideon's case, Firth argues that he was transformed from a "fearful" to a "wise and courageous" leader, although this did not occur immediately after his experience of the Spirit.<sup>17</sup> It was through the radical victory with a small army which can only be attributed to divine work (Judg 7:2).

Then, a lesson drawn by several scholars is worth noting. In spite of God's extraordinary preparation of gifts, Samson failed in character development,<sup>18</sup> and his whole life is marked by tragedy.<sup>19</sup> The victories he achieved through manifestation of his military and physical prowess by the Spirit just amount to "saving his own neck."<sup>20</sup> Furthermore, some threats he had to face were of his own making!

What then was the Spirit doing in the making of this young hero? As with many endowed gifts, I may argue, the coming of the Spirit was to enhance God's giftedness in him, and to challenge him with the encounter of God's reality to contribute to the process of his character development. Then, Bowman is absolutely right: "It . . . appears that divine power is constrained by the exercise of human freedom. . . . Divine success appears contingent upon an appropriate human response."<sup>21</sup>

## **1 Samuel 10:6–7, 9**

<sup>6</sup> Then the spirit of the LORD will possess you, and you will be in a prophetic frenzy along with them and be turned into a different person. <sup>7</sup> Now when these signs meet you, do whatever you see fit to do, for God is with you. . . . <sup>9</sup> As he turned away to leave Samuel, God gave him another heart; and all these signs were fulfilled that day.

This passage records the long process of Saul's accession to kingship. After the book of Judges' portrayal of longing for the appearance of a king in Israel, the books of Samuel picture a rather troubling origin of monarchy. Samuel, who combined the offices of prophet and priest, practically ruled the nation in continuation of the judge tradition. The people's demand for a king was caused by the misbehaviors of Samuel's sons (1 Sam 8:5), and God's consent to the demand marks a new era.



It is natural, though, to expect that the new leader, now called **דָּוִד**, would follow the pattern of the judges. And the divine appointment accompanied by the coming of God's Spirit is the core of the rise of God's chosen leader. In an extremely private and even secretive circumstance, Saul was now anointed by Samuel into kingship. The passage depicts in great detail a part of the third sign, the experience with the Spirit, which the prophet promised to validate this election.

Before we go any further, there are two small points to clarify. The first is, whether "turning into a different person" (v. 6) and God's "giving him another heart" (v. 9) refer to the same event. Most commentators agree that this is the case.<sup>22</sup> The second is the matter of the order. The prediction is for the "turning into a different person," to take place after all three signs have taken place, but verse 9 places the giving of a new heart immediately after this prediction, that is, before the fulfillment of the signs. This caused some commentators to move this phrase after v. 10.<sup>23</sup> However, many take this as part of the summary statement.

## **The Nature of Saul's Experience with the Spirit**

A number of studies point out a close link between the first monarch and the prophetic movement. In this chapter, we find already that Saul was anointed by the prophet, met by the sons of the prophet, experienced the prophetic Spirit, and even linked with the prophetic guild by a popular saying. But more importantly, the entire "Former Prophets," to which this book belongs, present and evaluate the national history of Israel according to prophetic standards. The prophetic tradition stands "as a refreshing counterpoise to the potential despotism of the monarchy."<sup>24</sup>

The third sign involved Saul's journey to Gibeath-elohim (1 Sam 10:5), where he encountered the "sons of the prophet," coming down from a high (cultic) place, "prophesying," presumably under the influence of the Spirit and accompanied by music. Then the Spirit of God rushed upon him, and he also began to prophesy along with the prophetic guild. The hithpael form of the verb **נָבֵא** is generally understood as referring to prophetic trance or ecstatic behavior.<sup>25</sup> The presence of music and the absence of any oracular activity also support this interpretation.

Throughout the Old Testament, there are several references to “a new heart” or “a different heart.” As “heart” and “spirit” are often used in the Hebrew Bible either interchangeably or parallel with each other, “a new spirit” may be considered in this survey. The psalmist pleads for God to “create . . . a clean heart . . . and put a new and right spirit” within him (Psa 51:10). In three places, Ezekiel declares God’s promise for forgiveness and a radical transformation using the same terms. “A new heart I will give you, and a new spirit I will put within you” (Ezek 36:26). In a parallel passage, a different expression is used: “I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh” (Ezek 11:19). The prophet admonishes Israel, “Cast away from you all the transgressions that you have committed against me, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit!” (Ezek 18:31). “A new or different heart” (or “a new spirit”) is an exclusive expression for a radical inner transformation to return to God and align to his will. The result of the “new heart” in Ezek 11 is telling: “. . . so that they may follow my statutes and keep my ordinances and obey them” (Ezek 11:20). This radical transformation is all attributed to a divine action, far beyond human behavioral change.

Then in Saul’s case, to what does this radical transformation, that is turning to “a different person” or having “a new heart,” specifically refer? A number of scholars believe that this refers to the prophetic experience he was to have among the sons of the prophet. For example, in an extremely useful book on the three first kings of Israel, T. Czövek, frequently using Polzin for this passage, argues that there was a sort of prophetic conspiracy to restrict this new kingship under the firm prophetic control.<sup>26</sup> Although a close examination of this point is reserved below, it is less convincing for the following reasons. First, Saul’s prophetic experience was temporal, and he was not intended to remain in the company of the prophets. The riddle which was later associated with him (“Is Saul among the prophets?”) begs a response, “Of course not.” Second, the unusual endorsement recorded in v. 7 (then “. . .do whatever you see fit to do, for God is with you”) does not naturally fit the prophetic experience. It may be better suited to a military undertaking. Third, as briefly observed above, the “new heart” throughout the Old Testament clearly points to an inner transformation rather than anything external. And, fourth, the nature of this promise refers to Saul’s discretionary

action, which is quite different from the invasive and overwhelming (and sometimes demobilizing) nature of the prophetic experience.

Then Saul's experience is "a radical transformation of personality," as Parker rightly argues,<sup>27</sup> that is, an inner transformation. Such a divine blanket endorsement is possible only when a human heart is in a complete alignment with God's will. This also presupposes God's complete approval and his enduring presence. In the spirit of a great degree of ambiguity in the text and also perplexity in Saul's mind, this is a reasonable conclusion we can safely make.

## **The Role of the Spirit Experience**

Then what is this radical transformation for? As introduced above, there has been a strong argument that there was a political motivation to maintain a prophetic control over kingship. Like many others, Czövek acknowledges the ambiguity of the passage both to the readers and to Saul. However, he maintains that the intention of the narrator is increasingly clear: "[he has become] a dupe at the prophet's disposal, created with God's assistance, as 10:9 suggests."<sup>28</sup> Through this process, Saul is no longer "the son of Kish and in his father's service; from now on he will be the son of Samuel."<sup>29</sup> Saul's experience was to demonstrate "how impressive a prophetic power can be."<sup>30</sup> Accordingly, Czövek rephrases v. 7 to mean, "If you listen to me, you will do whatever you like to."<sup>31</sup> Only when Saul was to become both king and prophet, a "double warrant for royal dependence on Samuel" is achieved, thus, achieving the prophet's personal control over the king.<sup>32</sup> This religious experience, according to this interpretation, was a political means to set a paradigm of hegemony for prophetism over kingship.

This perspective puts a strong emphasis on the power dynamic in the formative stage of Israelite kingship. In fact, Samuel viewed the demand for kingship as the people's rejection of theodicy or the political authority of Samuel. However, for the reasons I presented above, it is unlikely that the entire experience, including his experience with God's Spirit, was to keep Saul in the company of the prophets, over which Samuel exercised a decisive control. It is important to be reminded that this is part of the call narrative, and the "rushing" of the Spirit upon Saul is the most critical part of the call process. During the wilderness

era, Israel witnessed the link between the “call,” the Spirit, and “prophesying.” Numbers 11 records Moses’ election of seventy elders as his administrative assistants. God authenticated his selection of them by granting the Spirit to them: “[God] took some of the spirit that was on him and put it on the seventy elders; and when the spirit rested upon them, they prophesied. But they did not do so again” (Num 1:25). In this “call” account, the “prophesying” served as a sign of the presence of God’s Spirit, which in turn served as a sign of God’s election:

[P]rophesying was perhaps one of the best phenomena which includes objectivity, demonstrability as well as its cultural acceptability among the Israelites. This visible demonstration of the spirit’s presence was probably intended to provide an objective sign of God’s authentication upon the seventy elders to the people.<sup>33</sup>

In this case, the link between the prophesying and the presence of the Spirit is clear: the former serves as a sign of the latter. In fact, this link is more prevalent within the prophetic tradition. It is hard to suspect, therefore, any political agenda in arranging a prophetic experience, if it is at all possible. I imagine that not everyone who was around the sons of the prophet also prophesied like Saul did.

Parker, on the other hand, hints that Saul experienced the conferral of extraordinary power from God through the Spirit.<sup>34</sup> He may have taken Samuel’s command for Saul to journey to “Gibeath-elohim, at the place where the Philistine garrison is” (1 Sam 10:5) as an important clue. However, the passage does not show any military significance of Saul’s experience in this place. In fact, the link between the Spirit and military exploit comes in ch. 11. Firth also observes a historical development of the Spirit’s role on the charismatic leaders: from the empowerment for deliverance (especially among the judges) to exclusively serving as a sign of God’s election to leadership (as in David). According to him, Saul is situated in the middle of this continuum, presumably with a possibility of the Spirit’s empowerment for military activities, although less prominent by now.<sup>35</sup> McCarter pays attention to the stereotypical verb used here, “[the Spirit will] rush (צָלַח) upon [you].” The verb is normally used to refer to a military exploit, but here, instead,

it refers to prophetic ecstasy.<sup>36</sup> It is therefore not plausible to place the coming of the Spirit as an empowerment for military purposes. The whole narrative of Saul's call including his experience of the Spirit is dominated by prophetic elements, although he was not to be a prophet.

Then the only possible role for the Spirit's coming upon Saul is to authenticate his election as Israel's king through the anointing by Samuel. As observed in Num 11, a human element was affirmed by God through the coming of his Spirit, sometimes with a resultant prophetic experience. And this tended to be temporary and also a behavioral expression rather than an oracular one. In this passage, Samuel's election of Saul now becomes God's election. This sign was essential to the perplexed Saul, as well as to the apprehensive Samuel. The experience must have been striking and radical to Saul, thus serving as a sure sign of God's election (but known only to him and Samuel at this time).

Then, does the Spirit's rushing upon Saul serve only to signify externally the Spirit's presence? The language of the passage adds enough weight to the assumption that a radical inner transformation may also be referred to here. McCarter rightly observes the effect of the Spirit's presence as "a loss of self, or rather, the emergence of a new self."<sup>37</sup> God's blanket endorsement of Saul's subsequent actions (v. 7) is an extremely rare statement throughout the Bible, although some commentators believe it is intended to be an attack on the Philistines.<sup>38</sup> The only comparable ones may mostly refer to the future king or the Servant: e.g., "my servant, whom I uphold, my chosen, in whom my soul delights" (Isa 42:1). In fact, this passage presents stronger evidence than the Judg 13 for the inner transformative work of the Spirit. In Saul's case, as in Samson's, it is also noteworthy that he is naturally a man of exceptional stature and character (1 Sam 10:21-24). With all these elements put together, it is not unreasonable to conclude that the experience with the Spirit, as in Samson, was meant to enhance Saul's personal and character development as a chosen leader of God.

## Conclusion

When this study began, it was already suspected that the two passages might not provide sufficient data to draw any reasonable conclusion,

and this suspicion proves to be correct. The Samson passage is particularly difficult, for there is only one verse to work with, and the passage abruptly ends the chapter. The Saul passage, on the other hand, presents more information to picture the process of anointing and ensuing signs. However, in both cases, several commonalities are observed:

1. Both passages fall into the same category: Leadership Spirit tradition, which is charismatic in nature;<sup>39</sup>
2. Both have multiple references to the Spirit; thus, they are still better cases to use to look into the inner working of the Spirit in leaders;
3. In both cases, the passages mark the initial experience with God's Spirit in private settings;
4. The subsequent experiences with the Spirit involve military activities;
5. Both had inherited favorable dispositions and upbringings.
6. The coming of the Spirit may serve as a sign of God's election for leadership.
7. This function tends not to include the empowering work of the Spirit for specific tasks.
8. On the other hand, there are textual evidences that the coming of the Spirit in these initial encounters may have a role in enhancing their character development through the realization of divine reality and their calls.

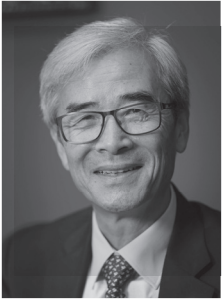
Then what lessons do we learn from this study, and how do we gain a sense to be faithful "people of the Spirit"? These failed charismatic lives suggest several important lessons:

1. As discussed above, the Spirit's coming upon the leaders is not just to turn the recipients into a "fighting machine." On the contrary, we can observe God's careful attention to the "formation" of the heroes before, during, and after the giving of his Spirit;
2. However, the effect of the Spirit's presence is contingent upon the human response or the lack thereof. The character formation

through the Spirit is a joint work between divine and human;

3. Although leaders and prophets are both considered “charismatic” when it comes to the work of the Spirit, it is the leaders who are more susceptible to character and moral failures, which ultimately leads to spiritual (and also national) failure.
4. The seductive nature of political power places the leaders in a more vulnerable position, thus, requiring a higher level of awareness of God and the need for God’s intervention to resist this seduction. The experience with his Spirit may be just that.

As we conclude, in spite of our less-than-fruitful efforts to unearth any work of the Spirit in the ethical or character development in the recipients’ lives, the strongest argument may come from other cases of the Spirit encounter. The ideal king in Isa 11, the Servant of God in Isa 42, and ultimately the life of Jesus epitomize the highest form of Spirit-empowerment. And another study will form a pair with the current one.



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## Notes

1 My count is among historical figures, excluding the “Servant,” for example, with a good number of references to the Spirit of God in the book of Isaiah.

2 All the scriptural quotes are from New Revised Standard Version.

3 David G. Firth, “The Spirit and Leadership: Testimony, Empowerment and Purpose,” in David G. Firth and Paul D. Wegner (eds.), *Presence, Power and Promise: The Role of the Spirit of God in the Old Testament* (Nottingham: Apollos, 2010), 274.

- 4 Trent C. Butler, *Judges*, Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2009), 331
- 5 Herbert Wolf, “Judges,” in *Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1, 2 Samuel*, Expository Bible Commentary 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), 464.
- 6 M. Sæbø, “**ספד**,” *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, vol. 12 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 43.
- 7 John Gray, *Joshua, Judges, Ruth*, New Century Bible Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1986), 327.
- 8 Sæbø, “**ספד**,” 46.
- 9 James D. Martin, *The Book of Judges* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1975), 151.
- 10 Robert G. Boling, *Judges: Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 6A (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1975), 226.
- 11 Firth, “The Spirit and Leadership,” 275.
- 12 David Firth, “The Historical Books,” in Trevor J. Burke and Keith Warrington (eds.), *A Biblical Theology of the Holy Spirit* (London: SPCK, 2014), 17.
- 13 Wolf, “Judges,” 465.
- 14 Trent C. Butler, *Judges*, Word Biblical Commentary (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2009), 331.
- 15 Butler, *Judges*, 330.
- 16 R. G. Bowman, “Narrative Criticism of Judges,” in G. A. Yee (ed.), *Judges and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, 2nd ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), 38–39.
- 17 Firth, “Historical Books,” 16.
- 18 J. C. Exum and J. W. Wheedbee, “Isaac, Samson, and Saul: Reflections on the Comic and Tragic Visions,” in P. R. House (ed.), *Beyond Form Criticism: Essays in Old Testament Literary Criticism* (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 302.
- 19 Wolf, “Judges,” 465.
- 20 Wonsuk Ma, “The Empowerment of the Spirit of God in Luke-Acts: An Old Testament Perspective,” in Wonsuk Ma and Robert P. Menzies (eds.), *The Spirit and Spirituality: Essays in Honour of Russell P. Spittler* (London: T & T Clark, 2004), 31.
- 21 Bowman, “Narrative Criticism of Judges,” 38–39.
- 22 For example, P. Kyle McCarter, Jr., *1 Samuel: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes and Commentary*, Anchor Bible 8 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1980), 183.
- 23 For example, Hans Wilhelm Hertzberg, *I & II Samuel*, trans. J. S. Bowden, Old Testament Library (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1964), 77.
- 24 Ronald F. Youngblood, “1, 2 Samuel,” *Expositor’s Bible Commentary* 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992), 624.
- 25 The distinction between the two common verbal forms (the other being the niphil form) is not straightforward. See a useful discussion in Robert R. Wilson, *Prophecy and Society in Ancient Israel* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980), 137–38.



- 26 Tamás Czövek, *Three Seasons of Charismatic Leadership: A Literary-Critical and Theological Interpretation of the Narrative of Saul, David and Solomon* (Oxford: Regnum Books, 2006), 57–58.
- 27 Simon B. Parker, “Possession Trance and Prophecy in Pre-Exilic Israel,” *Vetus Testamentum* 28:3 (1978), 272.
- 28 Czövek, *Three Seasons*, 57.
- 29 Nico ter Linden, *The Stories of Judges and Kings*, The Story Goes, 3, trans. John Bowden (London: SCM Press, 2000), 95.
- 30 R. Polzin, *Samuel and Deuteronomist: A Literary Study of the Deuteronomistic History, Part 2: 1 Samuel* (Bloomington and Indianapolis, IN: Indiana University Press, 1989), 105.
- 31 Czövek, *Three Seasons*, 58.
- 32 Polzin, *Samuel and Deuteronomist*, 106; also Czövek, *Three Seasons*, 59.
- 33 Wonsuk Ma, “‘If It Is a Sign’: An Old Testament Reflection on the Initial Evidence Discussion,” *Asian Journal of Pentecostal Studies* 2:2 (1999), 167.
- 34 Parker, “Possession Trance,” 272.
- 35 Firth, “Historical Books,” 19. Also Czövek, *Three Seasons*, 57.
- 36 McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 183.
- 37 McCarter, *1 Samuel*, 183.
- 38 For example, V. Philips Long, *The Reign and Rejection of King Saul: A Case for Literary and Theological Coherence* (Missoula: Scholars, 1989), 207.
- 39 For this classification, see Wonsuk Ma, *Until the Spirit Comes: The Spirit of God in the Book of Isaiah* (London: T & T Clark, 1999), 29–31.