

## **Emotions: The Personality of the Spirit in the Old Testament**

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### **Abstract:**

*The existence of the Spirit has been received a long discussion in systematic theology, especially speaking, her existence in the Old Testament where the Spirit leaves less evidence of her personality. As the consequence, the personality of the Spirit has been shaken to discover its knowledge. This essay intends to grasp the personality of the Spirit in the Old Testament in which relates to her divinity and works. This article is a qualitative-descriptive, articles, books, and other related academic references are the main sources to construct the argumentation. Furthermore, tracing the emotions of the Spirit in the Old Testament is the main attention of this research and expected could offer a new perspective on how the Spirit, as a being, rather than a power, shares emotions; grieving, love, and shyness in the Old Testament.*

**Keywords:** *Holy Spirit; Old Testament; Systematic Theology; Emotion.*

### **Abstrak:**

Eksistensi Roh menerima perdebatan panjang di sistematik teologi, secara khusus, keberadaannya di Perjanjian Lama yang meninggalkan bukti yang kurang sehubungan dengan personalitasnya. Sebagai akibatnya, personalitas Roh diguncang untuk menemukan informasi-informasinya. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menemukan personalitas Roh di Perjanjian Lama yang berhubungan dengan pekerjaan dan keilahianNya. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif-deskriptif, buku-buku, artikel-artikel dan rujukan akademik lainnya sebagai sumber utama dalam membangun argumentasi. Selanjutnya, menjejaki emosi Roh di Perjanjian Lama merupakan tujuan utama penelitian ini dan diharapkan dapat menawarkan persepektif baru tentang bagaimana Roh, sebagai pribadi, bukan sekedar tenaga, menunjukkan emosi, dukacita, kasih dan sifat pemalu di Perjanjian Lama.

**Kata Kunci:** Roh Kudus; Perjanjian Lama; Sistematik Teologi; Emosi.

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### **1. Introduction**

The bible itself is a book of the Spirit but offers more concerning the function of the Spirit rather than her nature (Bonting, 2006). Pneumatology shares large fluctuations in theological discussion. Its relation to the doctrine of the trinity, spiritual activities of saints, continuity in the New Testament, and other related subjects experience intense discussion. One of the dominant resistance appears in the connection between the Spirit and the OT. Gerhard von Rad in his work on creation and pneumatology declares that the role of the Spirit in creation belongs to chaos. The Spirit has no significant contribution to and participation in the Old Testament (Rad, 1972). Furthermore, in the OT, the Spirit was regarded simply as a force or energy from God while in the NT, the Spirit is considered as a person, even more, part of trinity member (Firth & Wegner, 2011b). Therefore, the personality of the Spirit in the OT contributes to fluctuations. Bible scholars express less concern for the existence of the Spirit in the OT. However, the possibilities to formulate the doctrines of the Holy Spirit based on the Old Testament have been ruled out by

some theologians because of the obstacle in translating the exact meaning of the Spirit (Gosling, 1995). It shares confusion, pessimism, and doubts. The word “spirit” is similar to surround words and could be translated as “wind” or “breath” (Firth & Wegner, 2011a). Consequently, it does not prepare a single unique identity that may differ the Spirit and other words surround. Therefore, the reference of the Holy Spirit bears an unclear meaning and causes no confidence to construct a solid belief (Benware, 2000). Generally speaking, developing the knowledge of the Spirit grounded in the Old Testament is less of hope, however, it does not mean have no opportunity at all. In the strict sense, the personality of the Spirit in the OT portrays blur pieces of evidence.

Indeed, urgency takes place in the personality of the Spirit, where throughout decades, in the history of dogmatic development, opponents against the personality of Spirit and eventually deny the inspiration of the Word of God (Walvoord, 1954). However, denying the personality of the Spirit, is extremely important, because it means denying the divinity, reality, and existence of the Spirit, even more, it echoes the existence of Trinity (Ryrie, 1997). Linzey (2004) argues that the Bible testifies several indications concerning the personhood of Spirit, and not simply consider as energy, power, or force. But according to Firth & Wegner (2011b), the personality of the Spirit is only expressed by the NT instead of the OT. Some works have been placed in this tension, for instance, Owen (1960) and Kuyper (1946) contributed essays to the Spirit and employed by present churches as a foundation of their Christian theology. Wright (2006) introduces the work of the Spirit from the second verse of the Bible and moves to the action of the judges, craftspeople, kings, prophets, and psalmists. In short, he explores the Spirit from the creation to new creation (Wright, 2006). Hamilton, Jr (2006) reflects the work of the Spirit in the OT and NT and tries to see the differences and similarities. He shares the ministry of the Spirit both in the OT and NT (James M. Hamilton, 2006). Wood (1998) discusses the concepts of regeneration, indwelling, sealing, filling, and empowering where he concluded that these nature already in action in the OT. And recently, a compilation of works by some scholars, a book entitled ‘The Spirit is Moving: New Pathways in Pneumatology’ explores the recent fluctuation and debates on pneumatology. But all works do not specifically share the personality of the Spirit, rather, work to uncover the deity of Spirit and its work.

Consequently, the personality of the Spirit has no solid ground in the OT and leads to lost its meaning after the OT period (Westermann, 1977). Childs (1992) argues that the tension on Trinity and the nature of Spirit is a battle for the OT books, and not against the Old Testament itself. The personality of the Spirit in the OT owns urgency and needs to be explored to proves its existence and links it to other subjects of discussion where it is needed. However, the main intention of this treatise is to evaluate the personality of the Spirit in the Old Testament. Indeed, exercising the subject requires narrowing down the area of discussion due it encompasses a large number of conversations in the OT. Ryrie (1997) who exists among pneumatology scholars suggests some indication concerning the personality attributes of the Spirit such as; intellect, emotions or feeling, and will. This essay attempts to investigate the emotions of the Spirit in the OT as part of her personality.

However, the ultimate reason why emotion is important in exploring the nature of the Spirit is that the Bible displays God in emotional terms, consists of emotional language where both the OT and NT express the divine emotion with love or anger (Spencer, 2017). The OT leaves evidence on how God expresses emotions. For instance, a key passage that reflects the emotions of God in Exodus 34:6-7. Dennis Olson argues that the text suggests the most important and definitive emotions of God. Specifically, in a strict sense, he insists that Exodus 34:6-7 does not speak about God in saving acts, creative activity, and stoic attributes, but in the context of emotional relationality (Olson, 2011). In psychological studies, Shaver et al. (1987) suggest six basic types of emotions; love, joy, surprise, anger, sadness, and fear. An exploration of the OT concerning the emotions of the Spirit probably could share the expression of emotions in a psychological sense where important in order to merit with theological sense and leads to comprehensive knowledge regarding the Spirit.

In sum, the OT potentially shares clues and evidence concerning the nature of the Spirit's emotions. Moreover, it is interesting to be explored for some reasons; first, it could offer a new perspective on the activities Spirit in the OT, second, it affirms her existence, thirdly, confirms her personality and lastly, contributes additional knowledge to systematic and the OT studies. Investigating the emotions of the Spirit will help man to gain a comprehensive idea concerning the personality of the Spirit. Moreover, the emotions personality bears interesting knowledge to be discussed due to its continuity in the New Testament is presented clearly; Ephesians 4:30 expresses how the Spirit grieves, and Hebrew 10:29 demonstrates the Spirit being insulted. In contrast, the emotions of the Spirit in the Old Testament is less of attention. However, exploring the emotions of the Spirit will donate an alternative perspective in OT studies where the Spirit is considered simply as energy from God. Indeed, several passages and narratives such as Isaiah 63:10 and Genesis 1:2 indicate the nature of the Spirit's emotions. It is expected to rich and color the activity of the Spirit in the OT. therefore, the research question that leads this essay is; what can be learned from the personality of the Spirit concerning emotions in the Old Testament?

This research is qualitative work. A systematic-hermeneutical approach is employed in order to gain knowledge and notion from the Old Testament, further, critical analysis is attempted in order to gain ideas related. Therefore, theological journals and books are the main sources of this study, combined with a few physiological references where the nature of emotions is treated more comprehensively. Eventually, ideas of emotions in the personality of the Spirit are reconstructed and renovated as the conclusion in the end, and expected would share contributions and new perspectives in pneumatology.

## **2. The Theology of Emotions**

An investigation in the Hebrew Bible concludes that the term emotions are dead language and shared very little knowledge. Therefore, modern comparative of social-scientific, cultural setting, social-construction, anthropological and physiological approaches are extremely needed in order to grasp its idea (Kruger, 2015). Prinz (2004) argues that emotions have a close connection to feelings in which occupy bodily changes, conscious, and modulation of a mental process such as attention. In contrast, Konstan (2006) insists that some expression of emotions in which relates to feelings such as anxiety or distress, jealous, guilty are not accommodated in psychological expression. The language of emotions contains cultural and social meaning, the consequence is an interpretation in which lack of socio-cultural approach will lead to misunderstanding toward the nature of emotions. For instance; when Jesus addresses woe in Luke 6:24-26 where the Greek translation is 'ouai,' such as shared to Pharisees in several passages, should not be interpreted in modern cultural norms, because it potentially bears the sense of hyperbole language (Wierzbicka, 2018). Therefore, in order to define biblical emotions, a comprehensive approach involves modern scientific knowledge, social and cultural consideration, and anthropological essay must be considered in a very sensitive way.

As emotions plays surround the psychological, a biblical-physiological approach is considered as the best contributor to define emotions. Galati et al. (2007), in their works of theology and psychological, defines emotions as a reaction of the body such as pleasant or unpleasant, expressive and behavioral changes and cognitive evaluation in which caused by stimulation and targeted at a given object that may produce angry, afraid, love and other related reaction. In sum, a subject that could be considered owns emotions should express any kind of reaction encouraged by causes. Furthermore, employing the terminology above, biblical emotions demonstrate how Jesus shares his emotions that occur in the New Testament. In Mark 10:13-14 NKJV, states that Jesus was 'displease' while in RSV says that he was 'indignant'. The word 'indignant' in Greek is 'aganakteo', which implies a sense of angry and indignant (Wierzbicka, 2018). However, in some sense, indignant does not similar to angry or displeased, but the minimum expectation here is, it indicates that Jesus shows emotions toward the disciples.

In conclusion, the original nature of emotions is less of directions and clues, biblical historical setting should be considered and not literally interpreted in the modern sense. However, some passages show the indication of emotions, even though/despite bears hermeneutical problem because of its setting background. But through the definition of some contributions in biblical approach, modern scientific knowledge and psychological insight concerning emotion, together with an example on how Jesus reflects and response toward any triggers, it is academically correct to conclude that biblical emotions relate to expressions of love, angry, grieve, anxiety and other related feelings, and most importantly, these emotions only possible expressed by a person.

### **3. Traces of the Emotions of the Holy Spirit**

The word 'spirit' in Hebrew is 'ruah', which refers to wind, breath, spirit, and life. The combination word appears as Spirit of the Lord, Holy Spirit, Spirit of God, and Spirit of the Lord God. The book of Isaiah accommodates several items of the Spirit (Isaiah. 48,61,63) and presents a field of discussion concerning the Spirit. In a strict sense, Martin (1985) defines the attributes of the Spirit in the book of Isaiah would characterize the Messiah. In connection to the emotions of the Spirit, Isaiah 63:10 testifies the apostasy of Israel in the wilderness and the Holy Spirit grieves, shares strong evidence of emotions, where the Spirit experiences personhood feeling and reacts sadly because of the rebellion of Israel. Further, this text demonstrates the opposition of Israel toward God, in the flip side, it proves that the Holy Spirit is obviously a personality, active agency of Godhead and even more, points to his deity (Nwaomah, 2018).

In the Old Testament setting, acts of grieving, mourning, and lamentation are imaged to the gesture of sitting in the dust, laments-failing and weeping. Even more, in ancient Israel, amid the outpouring grief, certain desolate communities coordinated shared emotion by grieving (Greenstein, 2010). Expression of sadness or reflecting emotions is common in the Ancient Near East. Lamentation and grieving are a native genre in Israel culture. It relates to the ceremony of national calamities, destruction, and dead humans (Samet, 2017). However, the attitude of grieving has commonly occurred and close links to the shyness and suffering of the supplicants to a divine person. It is a communication from the earth to heaven, considered as a vertical relationship of an inferior being to a superior being (Hwang, 2017). In contrast, the author of the book of Isaiah shares an indication that it is possible for a divine being, the Spirit, to express similar emotions to creatures. Therefore, the text in Isaiah in which expresses the grieving of the Spirit strongly relates to the setting of Ancient Near East. It is the Spirit who bears a deep feeling of pain and sadness because of the rebellion of Israel. Isaiah reflects the emotion of the Spirit according to his ancient background.

In the biblical-psychological approach, grieving has a strong link to pain where could react because of physical causes or, it reflects sign that the emotion is not well, a warning of something unusual happens (Odendaal, 2010). Further, it impacts different degrees to various persons (Melender, 2006). On the other side, in the Hebrew bible context, grieving is usually linked to the context of travail in the birthing process (Lier, 2019). It implies the experience of emotions, associates with the feeling of sadness and distress, challenges the vital dimensions. According to the Hebrew bible, pronounces the Spirit as a grammatically feminine term, the consequences are, the Spirit's works appear feminine as a comforter, life, and birth giver (Pinnock, 1997) (Van Oort, 2016). Here the role of Spirit in which experience suffer, grieve and pain of giving birth is portrayed in her grieving in Isaiah 63:10, offers a sense of feminine sadness, and emotions contain feminine nature. Furthermore, Gudrun Lier suggests items of grieving and pain in Hebrew bible events such as; judgment, exile, despair, shame, death, disobedience, disease, and oppression, where most of them are associated with the ceremonial and liturgical sense (Pinnock, 1997). In response, Becking & Human (2009) argue that the grieving of the Spirit in Isaiah 63:10 is considered its context as a prayer expression and should be considered in liturgical setting, and

most importantly reflects divine emotions and dilemma. Clearly, the Spirit expresses deep emotions by performing grieving toward the rebellion of Israel.

Similar emotions were presented by Job in his experience. Job 14:22 provides a display of physical pain and a grieving soul (Lier, 2019). The Spirit experiences the same pain of personhood, Job, and proves that the Spirit owns emotions as an indication of his personality. In sum, Isaiah 63:10 shares testimony on how the Spirit expresses emotions and grieving for the rebellion of Israel. Furthermore, a minor intention that could be gained for trinity purposes, emotions of the Spirit implies a solid conclusion of his personality, an existing person.

Another emotion sample of the Spirit could be traced in the creation where discussion in large numbers focuses on the book of Genesis, the derivation of the creation narrative. Indeed, the role of the Spirit in creation yields controversy. Sjoerd L. Bonting argues that the word *ruah* in Genesis 1:2 means 'wind' rather than 'spirit' because the word '*merachefet*' means to flutter, shake and flap offers its indication. Therefore, the best translation of this text is, a mighty wind swept over the face of the waters. In short, he against the involvement of the Spirit in creation (Bonting, 2006). The Spirit in creation is considered as God's presence and intervention rather than a person or creator, in which share no emotions (Bonting, 2006). In contrast, Pinnock (1996) highlights the involvement, presents, and activities of the Spirit in creation (Proverbs 8:29-31, 7:21-30, 1:4-8, Ezekiel 37:1-6, Isaiah 32:15). His main argument is grounded in creation and redemption, Genesis 1:2 and Luke 1:35. He implies that the Spirit breathes life into creation and sets free from sin and death, furthermore, as the Spirit involved in the creation, it should be considered that the Spirit is the source of creation, expresses divine ecstatic love where she extends emotions of genuine love to create the universe and restore the broken relationship of divinity and humanity through Jesus Christ (Pinnock, 1997). In most discussions, Christ receives attention concerning the relationship of love and redemption. The conversations of love are awarded to the role of Christ, but the Spirit is less of exercise. Indeed, Pinnock (1997) insists the Spirit as a life-giver (Genesis 2:7, Job 33:4, Psalms 33:6, 104:3, and John 6:63), reflects her radiance, joy, and love, where these articulations are considered as expressions of emotions. Therefore, in sum, the Spirit shares love in creation and even redemption. She is encouraged by genuine love to share breath and demonstrates her emotions to extend life toward the creatures.

Moreover, evaluating Genesis 1:2 cannot be separated for Deuteronomy 32:11-13 in order to uncover the light of the emotions of the Spirit (Ouro, 2000). The word 'hover' or 'shake' where on Hebrews is *merahepet* in v. 2 demonstrates the personal nuance and emotions of the Spirit (Young, 1976). It denotes the activities of personal and progressive action, in Deuteronomy 32:11 is described as an eagle who protects its young by hovers over and spreads the wings. Therefore, it influences the translation in Genesis 1:2 and suggests that the Spirit is an active person in creation (Bediako, 2017). However, this interpretation does not show openly any evidence that the Spirit share emotions, but in a deep sense, it could be assumed that it implies a motherhood sense of birthing, creating the universe and protecting, hovering, and spreading the wings to keep the creature. The Spirit in creation bears the sense of love, motivated by love, therefore, she is involved in the creation and continues to protect the creature. Furthermore, Gaybba (1987) articulates the personality of the Spirit, suggests that the Spirit should not be considered as love, rather, yields love, love is the fruit or result of the Spirit, likewise the Spirit generates the emotions of love (Williams, 2016). Job 12:10 and 33:4 testify on how the Spirit infuses the world with love and joy (Pinnock, 1996). The Spirit introduces love into the world then the creatures could receive and feel the emotions of the Spirit (Pinnock, 1996). The activity of the Spirit is an ongoing action, continue sharing her love, and potentially will grieve toward the rebellion of human being. Haberer (2001) argues that Psalm 51:11 "implies not being able to enjoy close fellowship with God", in other words, the Spirit owns enjoyment that she transforms to the creatures in order to experience a relationship with God. With this in mind, the Spirit presents two roles, as the mediator of Godhead and humanity, and emotions bearer spread enjoyment.

Robert L. Hubbard Jr., argues that the Spirit has no significant role over the creation. He stands in a neutral position by saying that the Spirit does not actively involve in creation but acts as the co-creativity. Clearly, he against scholars who insist on the participation of the Spirit but at the same time, he does not say that the Spirit doing nothing. The Spirit manifests superhuman divine power where inhuman reality the power is visible while in a divine sense it is invisible. Therefore, in order to grasp the knowledge of the Spirit's participation in creation, contextualization is required. In fact, in his conclusion, Hubbard insists that the Tobu hobu condition is not battle or against the nature of the Spirit but simply contrast to her nature. The Spirit is moving, active, life-giving, protective, powerful while the earth was stationary, powerless, unproductive, and inert deep waters. Furthermore, in his discussion, he tries to describe the nature of the earth before creation and link to the activity of a divine being (Firth & Wegner, 2011b). If light symbolized God, darkness evokes everything in which contrast to God (Wenham, 2017). Therefore, the earth was inanimate objects, had no life, and share no emotions. In contrast, the Spirit as a life-giver, light, and powerful, owns emotions and concern to help the mastery of God in creation. The Spirit involve in creation as the co-creativity where she shares love and passion to the earth. The main intention of the Spirit to share her emotions in creation is to gain the acknowledgment that the creature is great. Clearly, Psalms 104:30 declares the involvement of the Spirit in creation. In my view, it is not the quantity of the spirit, rather the quality of participation. In sum, the Spirit actively involve in the creation and share her feelings and emotions toward the creatures.

However, another emotional degree of the Spirit relates to her shyness. Howell (2011) argues that the nature of the Spirit is moveable and hidden, all her works are presented and experienced but it is not the Spirit herself, therefore, the Spirit is considered as the shy member of Trinity. She shares the shyness toward creatures, her works in Old Testament reflect on how the Spirit demonstrated all her responsibilities; creating the universe but hiding from the text (Genesis 1, Psalm 104:30, Job 33:4), empowering saints but did not show her self to the multitude (Zechariah 4:6, Haggai 2:5), and transforming power for spiritual purpose without presenting herself (Numbers 27:12-23, 27:18, Judges 3:10). Further, Howell (2011) says that the shy voice of the Spirit is barely whisper and slow, it requires an open mind, heart, eyes, and ears to catch the form or being of the Spirit, but it is almost effortless to gain and experience her works. In addition, Fison (1950) says that the true Holy Spirit of God does not advertise Himself: He effaces Himself and advertises Jesus. Throughout the Old Testament books, the participation of the Spirit in the text is minimum and encourages the Spirit doubters against her existence let alone her divinity. But it could be concluded that her silent present, especially in the Hebrew books, however, is evidence of her shyness and on how the Spirit intends to advertise the Father in the Old Testament and Christ in the New Testament. In other words, the infrequency of the Spirit is not a theological or biblical weakness on pneumatology, further, it proves and strengthens that the Spirit owns emotions, owns shyness. Nevertheless, the works of the Spirit are prepared in the Old Testament.

#### **4. Conclusion**

The OT shares the personality of the Spirit, specifically speaking, the emotions of the Spirit in the OT is portrayed clearly. It has been discovered that the Spirit reflects grieving, love, and shyness where they are considered as emotions. First, Isaiah 63:10 demonstrates how the Spirit could be grieved by the rebellion of Israel and the continuity of this expression is recorded in the New Testament (Ephesians 3:20). Second, the Spirit clearly involved in the creation, Genesis 1:2 has a strong indication that ruah potentially expresses the motherhood and friendship sense where an eagle could cover and hover its young with wings, encouraged by love to create and maintain the creatures. Moreover, the participation of the Spirit as co-creativity of God expresses the emotions in order to extend life and productivity toward the earth. Third, the silence of the Spirit in the Old Testament, however, is evidence of her shyness, but her works are revealed throughout

the Hebrew books. Further, the Spirit has no urgency to advertise herself, therefore, it could be assumed that the Spirit advertises the Father in the Old Testament and Jesus Christ in the New Testament. In sum, clearly, the Old Testament testifies that Spirit owns emotions and could be considered as a personality rather than impersonality.

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