



Spirit of God E5: The Spirit of the Messiah in Moses

Official Transcript

Speakers

Hosts: Jon Collins and Tim Mackie

Credits read by audience members Haven and Amos, and by BibleProject team member Matt Brown

[Recap and Setup for the Spirit of the Messiah in Moses (0:00-10:42)]

[BibleProject theme]

Jon: Welcome to BibleProject podcast. We are in a series on the Spirit of God. The Spirit, or *ruakh* in Hebrew, is God's invisible, personal presence that gives life and breath to everything. The story of the Bible begins with God breathing his *ruakh* into humanity and appointing them as his representatives to rule the world with his wisdom.

Tim: [Audio clips from the episode below] God appointing humans as partners, representatives, and rulers on the land to mirror his heavenly rule is key foundation plot-setting, and humans foul it up because they reject God's wisdom.

Jon: So from the earliest pages of the Bible, we begin to hope that there can be an ideal human image of God filled with God's *ruakh*, truly representing God's wisdom and rule on the land. As we continue reading, we meet a handful of characters in the Hebrew Bible who get close to this ideal.

Tim: [Audio clips from the episode below] These are leader figures who bring all of the roles of a king: bringing order and responsible leadership, play a priestly role, mediating between God and people, and a prophetic role of representing God's words to people. When all those are bound together in one character, the *ruakh* is right there in the thick of the stories about these characters.

Jon: The first character we encounter in the Bible like this is Moses. God uniquely fills Moses with his *ruakh* to play a vital role in the story of Israel.

Tim: [Audio clips from the episode below] He does signs and wonders. He confronts unjust leaders. He can lead people and do signs and wonders that provide miraculous life for people in the desert. He brokers a covenant relationship between God and a whole people group. And then he uniquely ascends to the very presence of God and then speaks God's purpose and word and brings it back down to the people. I mean, he's the package deal, man.

Jon: But even filled with the *ruakh* of God, Moses is still just one guy with a lot of people depending on him. Moses needs help.

Tim: Moses goes and he gets these seventy elders, and he brings them out to the tent. And Yahweh came down in a cloud, and he spoke to him, and he "*sided off* some of the Spirit and placed that *ruakh* on the seventy." They spoke God's word.

Jon: The *ruakh* of Yahweh has gone from the one to the many. In fact, it's so powerful it spills out to two more guys who are just hanging back at camp. And this unexpected outpouring of the Spirit worries Moses's protégé, a guy named Joshua. "The Spirit is too much," he thinks. But for Moses, this is the ideal.

Tim: [Audio clips from the episode below] Moses says, "Joshua, are you jealous on my behalf? Listen, I wish that all of Yahweh's people were prophets. I wish Yahweh would put his *ruakh* on all of them."

Jon: These words of Moses stick with us as we continue to look for the next Spirit-empowered Messianic leader.

Tim: [Audio clips from the episode below] We need an anointed leader who's filled up with God's Spirit, and we need an anointed people who are filled with the same Spirit.

Jon: Today, Tim Mackie and I talk about the Spirit of the Messiah, and we begin with the story of Moses. Thanks for joining us. Here we go.

[Musical break (3:15-3:18)]

Jon: Hey, Tim.

Tim: Hi, Jon. Hey.

Jon: Hey. We're talking *ruakh*.

Tim: Yeah, we're many conversations in now.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: We're in it. We're in the *ruakh*. Or actually, the *ruakh* is in us.

Jon: Yeah, both are true.

Tim: Whoa. Yes, yeah.

Jon: So the *ruakh* is the Hebrew word—

[BibleProject theme fades out]

Jon: —that we have many words to try to—to describe.

Tim: [chuckles] Yeah, we do. That's part of our problem with understanding it.

Jon: Yeah. Yeah.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: The “wind,” our “breath,” our “mind.”

[Tim laughs]

Jon: [Tim agreeing throughout] It's all around us. It's within us. It animates everything. This then becomes a really wonderful way to think about the nature of God.

Tim: Yeah, God is *ruakh*.

Jon: God is in some way—

[Tim laughs]

Jon: —*ruakh*.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: [Tim agreeing throughout] We can't see God, but he's the animating force behind everything. In fact, it's the *ruakh* Elohim that hovers over the nothing-chaoticness and brings life and order.

Tim: Yeah, life itself is all the product of God's animating *ruakh*.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: Then humans, if they're filled with the *ruakh* of God, then they too will have the opportunity to use their *ruakh* to bring order, which means making calls between good and bad. And that's what wisdom is in its essence.

Jon: Hmm. Yeah.

Tim: [Jon agreeing throughout] Yeah. So God appointing humans as partners, representatives, and rulers on the land to mirror his heavenly rule is key, like, foundation plot-setting, and humans foul it up because they lack wisdom—or they reject God's wisdom. It's just sad because God had given them life all through the *ruakh*. And so now you've got mediocre human rulers—how'd you put it in our Image of God video? You had a great way of putting it that's in that video.

[Jon laughs]

Tim: Like: "What do you got? A bunch of mediocre rulers making a mess of things."

[Jon laughs]

Tim: Something like that.

Jon: [chuckles] Okay. Very mid rulers.

Tim: And so the rise of an ideal human partner with God who can truly represent God's wisdom and word and rule on the land, that's a need that's created by the plot conflict from the earliest pages of the Bible. God sets up humans to do this. They don't do it, and it goes terrible. So then that's just an open-ended plot conflict. I guess we need a human who can, like, be that image of God, bring God's rule and wisdom and word to the land.

Jon: Mmm.

Tim: And that's what we've called the messianic thrust of the storyline of the Bible.

Jon: Yeah. Right.

Tim: It keeps pushing you forward, looking for the ideal human.

Jon: "*Can we find at least one human who can do it so that all humanity can do it?*"
Yeah.

Tim: Yes. So a part of how the Hebrew Bible works is by putting generation after generation in front of you, and you are thinking, “*Well, maybe this generation it’ll work out and then the ideal human partner will come.*”

[Jon chuckles]

Tim: And then, usually there’s one or two moments of something going awesome, and then a whole bunch of moments of really going terrible. And then they die, and then the next generation comes.

[Jon chuckles]

Tim: But you hold on to those bright moments—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: —and those begin to collect in your mind. And what you’ll find is that in the handful of character stories who get closest to being, like, the ideal image of God—not all the time, but at least some of the time—

Jon: On their best days.

Tim: On their best days, you will find that these are leader figures who bring all of the roles of a king, bringing order and responsible leadership. They are characters that play a priestly role, mediating between God and people, and a—characters that play a prophetic role of representing God’s words to people. And when all those are bound together in one character, the *ruakh* is right there in the thick of the stories about these characters. And really, there’s not that many.

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Jon: Not many characters achieve all of this?

Tim: Not that many. And two get the most page count in the Hebrew Bible. One of them is Moses, and then the other one is King David. And their stories are super hyperlinked and modeled and connected to each other. There’s lots of other Spirit-filled characters who play a prophet or a priest or a king role, like a Joseph. We’ve looked at his story here. Like a Gideon, for certain moments, he’s—the Spirit comes on him. So there’s many other characters we could look at. I want to look at Moses and David and how the Spirit is depicted as playing a role in their stories because, as we’re going to see, at the very end of this conversation, I hope, the prophet Isaiah was a student of these stories about Moses and David, and the prophets who produced the Isaiah scroll are portraying a future anointed, ideal, messianic king using all of the language of the Moses and David stories to do it. And they particularly draw attention and draw language from

stories where the Spirit played a role in Moses and David's story. Does that make sense?

Jon: [Tim agreeing throughout] Yes. The grand story is: Can humanity live as image bearers of God ruling on God's behalf? To do that, of course, we're going to need the *ruakh* of God.

Tim: Yeah, on level one *ruakh*, just—we need to breathe.

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Jon: Well, yeah, level one: Just breathe.

Tim: [laughs] Yeah.

Jon: [Tim agreeing throughout] But then, to do it well, to have God's wisdom, to do it in line with the character of God, you need God's *ruakh*. But what we see is a portrait of humanity failing. And so we're going to look at two portraits of humanity just getting so close. Moses and David, they're not perfect.

Tim: Nuh-uh. Winner moments.

Jon: Winner moments, where all the things about ruling on God's behalf, leading and prophesying—

Tim: And mediating between God and people.

Jon: Being priestly.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: —are all coming together, and you're saying what we're going to see is the *ruakh* of God just very present in these stories.

Tim: Yep.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: That's it.

Jon: And then the Isaiah scroll—

Tim: Yeah, brings it together.

Jon: —will bring it together.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And you're saying we're going to see a lot of *ruakh*?

Tim: Yep. There you go.

Jon: Great.

Tim: That's great. You understood—

Jon: Your *ruakh*? [chuckles]

Tim: My *ruakh*.

[Jon laughs]

Tim: Yeah, which is—

Jon: Our *ruakhs* are connecting?

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: Yeah, which is kind of wild if you think about it.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Our minds—because we walked into this room, and you didn't know what I was going to talk about.

Jon: Nope, no.

Tim: And now you do.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And it just happened through me blowing *ruakh*—

Jon: Through your words.

Tim: —out of my vocal cords.

Jon: Whoa.

Tim: And you understood what I meant in my mind.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And now you have it in your mind.

Jon: [laughs] Okay. All right.

Tim: [excited] No, it's—like—dude, reality is a miracle.

[Music fades in]

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: It's a mir—

Jon: Consciousness is a miracle.

Tim: [excited] It—yes, it's incredible.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Sorry, I'm having that moment right now.

Jon: That's good. Sit in that moment.

Tim: It's okay. I also just am finishing a—

[Jon laughs]

Tim: —strong cup of coffee.

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: But that's—you know, those things go together: clarity and coffee.

[Jon chuckles]

Tim: God's gift to the human race. Okay. All right. Let's think about Moses.

[Musical Break (10:16-10:42)]

[Moses' Leadership Crisis (10:42-26:39)]

Tim: Okay, so Moses—I'm just—really truncated overview of Moses's story.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: People are enslaved in Egypt—the Israelites are enslaved in Egypt. And there's an Israelite woman who gets pregnant.

[Music fades out]

Tim: She's supposed to throw her son into the river, and she does, but in a—

[Jon laughs]

Tim: But in a little ark.

Jon: Yeah, plot twist. In an ark.

Tim: Yep. In an ark. And that baby floats into Pharaoh's household, who's ordering, you know, destruction of all of the Israelite boys. And that boy thrown in the river floats into his house and becomes Pharaoh's downfall. So: confrontation, ten plagues, all that kind of stuff. But God met with Moses on Mount Sinai right before that happened. And the burning bush is a key moment. And what God tells Moses is, "Go confront Pharaoh. Liberate my people. I'll empower you to do it. But when you leave, come with all the people and meet me on this mountain, and I'm going to enter into a covenant partnership with them." So all of that happens. So just—

Jon: Fast forward.

Tim: Fast forward. And: Passover, journeying through the wilderness, and the people arrive just like God asked at the foot of Mount Sinai. And it's been a tough road trip. It's a lot of people to feed, and they're hungry and thirsty, and God's super generous and patient, gives them the sky-bread and water from these oases. But when Moses finally makes it to the mountain, there's this really important story in Exodus 18 where he meets up with his father-in-law because he had married the daughter of a Midianite priest whose flock Moses was shepherding when he met God in the burning bush, you know, a long time ago.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And so his father-in-law meets him at the foot of Mount Sinai with all the people. And what his father-in-law—his name's Jethro—notices is that there's a line of people standing to talk to Moses all day long.

Jon: [laughs] Yeah. He's a popular guy.

Tim: Totally. And so Moses's father-in-law saw this, and he asks—Exodus 18, verse 14: "Moses, what are you doing? Why are you the only person sitting here sitting as a judge for the people?" [Jon agreeing throughout] So basically, people would bring their

disputes or disagreements to Moses, and they thought he was just the wisest one around.

Jon: Yeah. “*Tell us what to do.*”

Tim: “*Tell us what to do.*” And apparently, he could do it—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: —because people are lined up all day.

Jon: [chuckles] Yeah. [laughs]

Tim: And he’s just like, “This is not a good idea, Moses. You can’t—it’s not sustainable.”

Jon: “*This is not scalable.*”

Tim: So Moses says, “Well, listen, the people come to me to inquire of God. I mean, I met God on this mountain.”

Jon: Mmm. Yeah. It’s a bottleneck.

Tim: Yeah. And you know, presumed here is that Moses is so close to God that he can speak God’s wisdom and word.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So the word “spirit” doesn’t appear here yet. But it’s the assumption underneath it.

Jon: Okay. Yeah.

Tim: So Moses’s father-in-law says, “Yeah, but this is not going to work.” He says, “The thing you are doing is *lo’ tov*.”

[Jon chuckles]

Tim: Ooh, what he says is, “It’s *lo tov* that you do this alone.” Jethro sees that it’s not good that Moses is alone.

Jon: Mmm. [jokingly] Come now.

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: Yes. So for longtime listeners of the podcast, that’s a glowing hyperlink to the lone human in the garden in Genesis 2. It’s the same wording. “It’s not good that you sit here alone.” So we need more to accomplish the will of God for all the people.

Jon: Let’s split Moses in half.

Tim: We need to split Moses. Yeah. So just wait for it.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: So what he tells Moses is, “You should select a whole crew of men who fear God.” They’re called “men of truth who hate dishonest gain.” So they’re not looking to get rich —

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: —off of the people’s disputes. And they fear God more than people, and they care about the truth. Those are the people you want. And you know—and you’re like, “*Yeah.*”

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: “*That checks out.*”

Jon: That sounds pretty good.

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: Yeah. [laughs] Yeah. Totally.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: I think that’s what anybody’s looking for in the leader.

Jon: Let’s, uh—let’s elect those people to the Senate.

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: Let the listener understand. So “Place them as leaders of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens.” So truly scalable, you know, like a management scheme here. And Moses does it, and it begins to work. So you’re just giving this story here. And you’re like, “*Cool, all right. That’s cool.*” And it works out. The next story is: Now the people are at Mount Sinai. God says to Moses the famous words of, “I brought you all out of Egypt. You will be for me a kingdom of priests and represent me to the nations *if you listen to my words.*” And now we have in our minds: Okay, so Moses is going to become the spokesman for God, but he’s got a crew, now—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: —of—this whole crew who will actually be the ones to translate all of God’s word and wisdom at Mount Sinai into the life of the people through this crew. So chapter 18 comes before 19 in a really important way.

Jon: And 19 is famously then the 10 Commandments.

Tim: 19 and 20 kicks off the 10 Commandments and then the—

Jon: And then all the covenant laws.

Tim: And the hundreds that follow in the year that they camp out at Mount Sinai.

Jon: Yeah. Okay.

Tim: But the foundation is that Moses is the key mediator.

Jon: Yeah. And he continues to be as those commands come through him.

Tim: Yes. Because he goes up and down the mountain, and it's just him. So that's at the beginning of Mount Sinai. The moment they get to Mount Sinai, conversation with father-in-law, builds a staff team—

Jon: Okay. [chuckles]

Tim: And now Moses can go up and down the mountain, bring God's words back, and trust that it'll be responsibly distributed to the people.

Jon: Mmm. Okay.

Tim: Okay. They're there for a year. And that year corresponds in terms of book length through the rest of Exodus, Exodus 20 through 40. All of Leviticus, they're at Mount Sinai. Numbers chapters 1 through 10, they're—

Jon: Still at the foot of the mountain.

Tim: Yep. They're at Mount Sinai from Exodus 19 through Numbers chapters 10, verse 10. Somehow, the 10:10 locked it in my memory.

Jon: Hmm. Oh.

Tim: And in Numbers chapter 10, verse 11, they set out to leave Mount Sinai to go on to the land promised to Abraham and so on. So as they do so, they set out, and they're all organized and in camps, and Moses has a conversation with his father-in-law again. So just like—it's a little—

Jon: Mmm. Right before and now right after.

Tim: Exactly. It's a little sandwich.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Around-the-Sinai sandwich—

Jon: The Jethro bread.

Tim: —are these little Jethro bread, except he's not called Jethro. He's called by another name—

Jon: Oh.

Tim: Hobab.

Jon: [jokingly] And that's what his close friends call him?

Tim: [laughs] Hobab. Well, what's interesting is it means something like "sweet one" or "beloved one."

Jon: Hmm. Yeah, it sounds like a nickname.

Tim: Yeah, exactly. Yeah. So what he says to his father-in-law is, "Hey, we're getting ready to leave. You should come with us because Yahweh has good in store for us." And his father-in-law says, "Mmm, you know what? I'm not going to go with you. I'm going to go back to my land and to my family." And so they part ways.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Next story begins. Numbers 11: "And it happened that the people began to complain of hardship in the hearing of Yahweh." So the people start to grumble.

Jon: Mmm.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: And Yahweh's hearing it?

Tim: And Yahweh hears it, yeah.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Then, verse 4— [laughs]

Jon: [chuckles] Yeah.

Tim: —reading from the Lexham English Bible—

Jon: "The riffraff."

Tim: "The riffraff that were in their midst—"oh, this is fantastic. Number 11—

Jon: Lexham English?

Tim: Yeah, Lexham. NIV translates this "the rabble with them."

Jon: "The rabble." That's an old word.

Tim: ESV: "the rabble." NESV. King James—ooh: "the mixed multitude."

Jon: Huh.

Tim: So this is referring to a group of people back from chapter 12—all the non-Israelites that came—

Jon: Chapter 12 of?

Tim: Of Exodus.

Jon: Oh.

Tim: On the night of Passover—

Jon: Ohhh.

Tim: [Jon agreeing throughout] —we're told that not only Israelites went into their houses for Passover, a whole bunch of non-Israelites did too. And then they left Egypt with Israel.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: And they are called the mixed multitude. It's the word *'erev rav*, the mixing.

Jon: Oh. Okay. Most translations go with, like—

Tim: The rabble. [chuckles] Yeah.

Jon: What is a rabble?

Tim: It's a fascinating word: *'asaphsuph*. It's the only time this word appears. It literally means "the gathered ones."

Jon: This is the only time the word appears?

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: *'Asaphsuph*. [chuckles] Yeah, it's a funny word.

[Jon chuckles]

Tim: But the point is is that Israel's complaining like they have been.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: But now you've got this non-Israelite crew, and they're super bummed. Because what they say is "They desire a desire." And then the Israelites turn back also, and they start weeping, and they say, "Ah, who's going to feed us meat?"

[Jon chuckles]

Tim: "We remember the"—

Jon: "*We miss the meat.*"

Tim: “The fish that we ate in Egypt for free. And the cucumbers” —

Jon: Mmm.

Tim: [Jon agreeing throughout] —“and the melons, and the leeks, and the onion, and the garlic.” *“It was fruitful land, down by the river, where our children were murdered.”* But they don’t say that, but they’ve forgotten that.

Jon: They’ve—yeah, they leave that out of their memory, and they just smell the onions.

Tim: Yeah. And you know, let’s just pause. Hunger does things to human psychology.

Jon: Sure.

Tim: It can alter our state of mind— [chuckles]

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: —significantly.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So then what they say is, “All we have to eat is this manna, this sky-bread that appears. And” —

Jon: Yeah. It’s a little bit gross?

Tim: Yeah. They’re not into it anymore.

Jon: It’s a little—it’s plain?

Tim: Yeah. So Moses hears all this, and Yahweh is angry, and we’re told it was *ra’*, it was bad, evil, in the eyes of Moses. And so Moses gives this speech to Yahweh. What he says is this, “Why have you brought *ra’*”—this is the words for good and bad from Genesis 2. “You have brought bad upon your servant. Why have I not found favor in your eyes, that the burden of all these people has been placed on *me*?”

Jon: Mmm. *“Look who I have to deal with, Yahweh.”*

Tim: “Did I *conceive* these people?”

[Jon laughs]

Tim: “Did I give birth to them that you should say to me: ‘Carry them in your lap like a father or like a foster father carries a nursling to the land that you swore to their ancestors’? Where am I supposed to get meat to give all these people? They’re crying, saying, ‘Give us meat.’ I cannot carry these people alone. It’s too heavy for me.”

Jon: Yeah, a little breaking point for Moses.

Tim: Yeah. Yeah. Low point, and you know—

Jon: Yeah, justifiably so.

Tim: Yeah. Yep.

Jon: He's probably hungry, too.

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: Yeah, totally.

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: He's—this is hangry Moses.

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Jon: Hangry Moses.

Tim: Yeah, this is hangry Moses. Well, he gets even more angry because then he says, "If this is how you're going to treat me, God, kill me."

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: "I'd rather die than look upon this *ra'* that you've assigned for me." So low, low point for Moses. Now, it does raise the question of, like: Where's his staff crew? Like, why—

Jon: Mmm, that we were introduced to. Yeah.

Tim: Why is he saying he's alone?

Jon: Sure.

Tim: It's very similar to the story of Elijah.

Jon: Oh, yeah. "There's no other prophets that follow you."

Tim: [Jon backchanneling throughout] Yeah. Yeah. It's sort of like he breaks with reality and he forgets. He is feeling isolated and alone, but it causes him to forget what his father-in-law told him, and then this whole leadership crew that he has around him—he just acts like they're not there.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: But God hasn't forgotten that crew, so here's what he says. Yahweh says to Moses, "Get together for me seventy men from the elders of Israel, the ones whom you know are elders of the people, and I want you to take them to the tent of meeting, and they're going to stand there with you." So when the people are on the move, the tent would move from the center of the camps—

Jon: To the front.

Tim: —to the front, and be three days out ahead of them.

Jon: Oh, three days out ahead?

Tim: Mhm. Yeah.

Jon: Oh, I didn't realize that.

Tim: Yeah, you learn that at the end of chapter 10.

Jon: Oh.

Tim: Travels three days—

Jon: Oh.

Tim: Yep, to spy the land ahead of them. So: "Take the elders and go out"—like, "leave the camp, and go forward to where the tent is in the glory cloud," and all that. "And I will come down and speak with you there. And I will"—and this is so fascinating—"I will take from the side"—

Jon: Oh.

Tim: —"of the *ruakh* that is on you, and I will put it on them."

Jon: [with new clarity] Hmm, take from the side.

Tim: It's—yes. Yeah.

Jon: [with new clarity] Huh.

Tim: Take from the side. Most of our English translations just translate it as "take" because it's a very strange word to use right here, the Hebrew word.

Jon: Yeah. Yeah.

Tim: And it's so odd that most of our English translations just kind of—

Jon: Just kind of skip it?

Tim: Well, I think—if you don't see the hyperlink, you'll just think of it as some odd way of saying "I'm going to take some and put it on them."

Jon: Okay.

Tim: But it's a verb from the Hebrew word *'etse/*, which means the side of something. That's—and usually an architectural term, like the side of a building.

Jon: Okay. And it is the word from Genesis 2?

Tim: It's a synonym.

Jon: Synonym.

Tim: It's brilliant.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Yeah. [laughs] Yeah. Yeah. So the word is *tsad* [Oops, Gen. 2:21-22 actually has a different word for "side": *tsel*^a] in Genesis 2, but it's *'etse*^l here.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: So it's a verb of: "I will side off."

[Jon laughs]

Tim: So imagine removing the side of a building.

Jon: Yeah, okay.

Tim: And that's this verb.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Which means you're taking a portion of. A side of something isn't the whole thing.

Jon: In Genesis 2, the word is—

Tim: Ah, it's literally the word, "He took from the side of. . ."

Jon: Because you've called that an architectural term before, too.

Tim: It is. He took from one of the sides of the *'adam*.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: And there it is a word "side" that can refer to the side of a hill or a building, or an object.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Here, this is a verb, *vayya'tsel* that's derived from the preposition *'etse*^l. It's another word for the side of something.

Jon: Just a straight-up synonym?

Tim: Most often of a building. Yeah.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: Yeah. [chuckles] Totally. So it's a hyperlink to Genesis 2.

Jon: And it's the side of the *ruakh*.

Tim: "I will take from some of the side of the *ruakh* that is on you, and I will put it on them."

Jon: Yeah. "*I'm going to peel off a little ruakh.*"

Tim: [excited] Yeah. Yeah. It's such a weird thing to say in Hebrew.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: And if you say it in English—

Jon: It's even—yeah.

Tim: —it's just as weird. "I will side off"—

[Jon and Tim chuckle]

Tim: —"some of the *ruakh* on you." Not all of it. Now this is also new, like: Whoa, the *ruakh* is on Moses.

Jon: Mhm. Oh, we haven't been told that before.

Tim: Nuh-uh.

Jon: I mean, it's kind of assumed.

Tim: It's for sure assumed.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Just not explicit in any story.

Tim: Just not explicit. Exactly. That's right.

Jon: Okay. But here it is. Okay.

Tim: Yeah. Yep. Yep. So "I'm going to take some of the *ruakh* on you, and I will put it on them. And they will carry the burden of the people so that you don't carry it alone."

Jon: Mmm. Hmm.

Tim: So that's God's solution to the leadership crisis.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: There's also the food crisis, to which God says, "I'm going to provide more meat than they would ever want." And that's a whole other part of the story we don't have time for. But my point is—

Jon: This is where the quail comes?

[Music fades in]

Tim: Yes.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: A *ruakh* blows in a whole bunch of quail. [chuckles]

Jon: Nice.

Tim: Yeah.

Tim: So I want to go move forward to the moment where the spirit stuff happens in the story.

Jon: Okay.

[Musical break (26:15-26:39)]

[Moses' Ruakh Spreads to 72 Elders (26:39-38:26)]

Tim: So Moses goes, and he gets these seventy elders, and he brings them out to the tent of meeting, and—this is in verse 24: "And then the Lord came down—Yahweh came down in a cloud, and he spoke to him, and he *sided off* some of the spirit"—

[Music fades out]

Jon: Okay.

Tim: It's that verb again.

Jon: So it's just calling that back?

Tim: "He took from the side of the spirit that was upon him and placed that *ruakh* on the seventy. And when the spirit *noakh*-ed"—

Jon: Oh, okay.

Tim: —"noah-ed upon them"—

Jon: "Rested"?

Tim: —"they prophesied."

Jon: Oh. Yeah.

Tim: So they spoke God's word.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: So Moses has been the mouthpiece for God all of Mount Sinai.

Jon: Ah. Yeah.

Tim: And presumed that he had that staff team around him from right before that Jethro helped him form, but that staff team isn't brought up as speaking God's word to the people. It's only Moses until *this* moment. And what we're told is the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied, but they never did it again. So what Moses has been doing, now they're going to do.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: But it was temporary. The narrator just says, "But this was just, you know, a one-time deal." Not a permanent fix.

Jon: I'm picturing them as doing a Moses thing.

Tim: Moses-style prophecy.

Jon: Okay. Okay.

Tim: That's right.

Jon: Got it.

Tim: Yeah. But there were two guys, two of those elders, they actually didn't go out with Moses and the others. They actually had stayed back in the camp. Why? We're not told.

Jon: Wait, Moses and the others, where are they?

Tim: Well, remember, the tent is three days ahead of them.

Jon: Ohhh. Okay.

Tim: So he took those seventy out to the tent out of the camp—

Jon: Okay. Okay.

Tim: But there were two elders—

Jon: Two of the seventy?

Tim: Or just—

Jon: We don't know?

Tim: —this would make it a round number of seventy-two.

Jon: Ohhh, well, there you go.

Tim: Two remained back in the camp.

Jon: Mmm.

Tim: [Jon backchanneling throughout] The name of one of them was “Loved by God,” and the name of the other was “Darling,” or “Beloved.” Eldad and Medad were their names. And you know what's so interesting? The spirit *noakh*-ed also upon them. But they—they hadn't gone out to the tent.

Jon: Mmm. Bonus.

Tim: It was an overflow of *ruakh*. The *ruakh* on Moses is so powerful that it's like some spills out.

[Jon chuckles]

Tim: It spills out of the seventy over onto more.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So they were prophesying in the camp.

Jon: Mmm.

Tim: Now these were among those who had been registered, I think, as elders, but they had not gone out to the tent. So a young man came and told Moses, and said, “Moses,

Eldad and Madad are prophesying in the camp.” “And Joshua, the son of Nun, the servant of Moses from his youth, said, ‘Moses, my master, you—stop them. Restrain those guys. They’re not authorized.’”

Jon: Okay.

Tim: So this is the scene. Actually, the whole reason I’m telling you the story—

[Jon chuckles]

Tim: —is to lead up to what Moses is about to say.

Jon: Oh. Okay, here we go.

Tim: But before we get there—

Jon: Oh.

Tim: Let’s—

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: [Jon agreeing throughout] Let’s meditate on Joshua’s response. So the whole idea is: We need to share leadership. We need to share the unique, divine, human partnership that Moses has. We need to spread that for this to be successful, for all these people to really be God’s covenant partners.

Jon: Well, and Joshua saw the plan. *“You’re taking seventy guys out.”*

Tim: Mhm. Yep.

Jon: *“This is unauthorized. This is not part of the protocol.”*

Tim: Yeah, so you’ve got these two back in the camp, and they’re like, *“It’s not protocol. This is not part of what”*—

Jon: *“We didn’t plan for this.”*

Tim: *“We didn’t plan for this, and God’s word didn’t prepare us for this.”*

Jon: Mmm, interesting.

Tim: This is a surprise—

Jon: Oh, yeah, yeah.

Tim: Surprise way that God’s *ruakh* broke our expectations.

Jon: Hmm. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Tim: And so he's like, "Restrain them." And Moses says, "Joshua, are you jealous on my behalf?"

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: "Listen, I wish that all of Yahweh's people were prophets. I wish Yahweh would put his *ruakh* on all of them."

Jon: Hmm. Yeah.

Tim: Then Moses returned to the camp, he and the others.

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: So that's the mic drop moment, because that part of the story ends right there.

Jon: [chuckles] Yeah, okay. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Tim: So what are we supposed to make of this little—it's a little parable.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: And by that, I don't mean it's fictional.

Jon: Right. It's a riddle.

Tim: I'm just saying something very significant is happening in this conversation, and it's not fully spelled out for us. You've got to meditate on it. Moses says, "We got this problem with the people. They don't trust God."

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: Right?

Jon: I mean—

Tim: That's the crisis at the end of the story.

Jon: —let's be empathetic. They're in the middle of the wilderness.

Tim: Yeah, they're hangry.

Jon: They've been at the foot of this mountain for a year.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: They've been eating sky-goo-bread.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: They're frustrated.

Tim: Yeah, it's a tough circumstance they're in.

Jon: This is like—this is the part of the car trip where it's like—

[Tim laughs]

Jon: —the kids—

[Tim laughs]

Jon: —they're being kind of grumpy, and then you lose it a little bit, too.

Tim: [excited] Yes. It's that—

Jon: And you're like, "Stop or I'm going to pull this car over!" [laughs] moment in the car trip.

Tim: It's that family road trip.

Jon: Yeah. So Moses has his moment. He's like, "Kill me, God."

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: Okay. So that's the context. And this is when Moses is like, "This is what I'm dealing with." And—

Tim: Mhm. And I'm alone.

Jon: "And I'm alone." And by the grace of God, it's like, "*No, you're not alone. Remember, we've set this up. Let's, like—let's make this more real. The ruakh is going to side off, and we're going to do this demonstration.*"

Tim: [Jon agreeing throughout] Well, real quick: So "The *ruakh* that's on you, Moses"—that's the first time we've heard that. Then we go back, and we think: Well, what are all the things that Moses has done that now I need to fit in to my picture of a *ruakh*-filled person? Well, gosh, he does signs and wonders. He confronts unjust leaders—right?—holds them accountable. He can lead people and do signs and wonders that provide miraculous life for people in the desert. He brokers a covenant relationship between God and a whole people group. And then he uniquely ascends to the very presence of God that's dangerous for everybody else and then speaks God's purpose and word and brings it back down to the people. I mean, he's the package deal, man.

[Jon laughs]

Tim: He's the whole thing. And now here what we're saying is that's—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: This is a *ruakh*-filled human.

Jon: Okay. And so—hmm. And we’ve talked about how humanity is just—it’s so hard for any human to do this. The fact that Moses is doing it is such a rare, precious thing.

Tim: Yes. Right. Right.

Jon: And so the fact that then now God’s like—

Tim: “I’m going to spread that.”

Jon: “I’m going to spread that.”

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: That’s now some brand new, like—“*Wow, that can multiply to seventy-two?*” Like, “*Whoa.*”

Tim: [Jon agreeing throughout] Right. “*A Moses version of being filled with the ruakh?*”

Jon: “*Moses*”—yeah. Yeah.

Tim: “*Wow, that would be a pretty cool situation.*”

Jon: Okay. And so that’s already category-busting.

Tim: Mhm. I mean, Moses’s face is glowing.

Jon: Yeah. [chuckles]

Tim: You know, presumably, he’s still got to wear that weird little mask and—

Jon: Hmm.

[Tim laughs]

Jon: Yeah.

[Tim laughs]

Tim: Imagine a whole nation of people—

Jon: And now there’s seventy-two of them.

Tim: —glowing with God’s presence.

Jon: Yeah. And then—okay. And then Moses—the mic drop moment is: “*You know what? The thing that, like, only me, and now in some wild new way all these elders*”—

Tim: But just once, because they didn’t do it continually—

Jon: Ahhh.

Tim: —we’re told. It just happened for a little bit.

Jon: Okay.

[Tim laughs]

Jon: “*Just that taste you got of it, like, spreading out*”—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: [Tim agreeing throughout] —“*what I really wish could happen—Joshua, you’re feeling, like, threatened that more people get a taste of it. What I wish could happen is everyone could just fully—that could be the reality.*”

Tim: [Jon agreeing throughout] Yep. Yeah. It is not good for the human to be alone. It is not good that only Moses experiences this intimacy and hyper-intense filling with the *ruakh*. He wants it for everybody.

Jon: Hmm. Wow. [pause] Hmm.

Tim: Now, in this context, I think he wants it for everybody so that his problems go away. [laughs]

Jon: Yeah, so everyone can chill out.

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: But I think the point is is: Here, this is the mic drop moment, because these words are meant to resonate on the macro level of the whole biblical story.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So it’s so fascinating that at the end of the Torah what we’re told is actually only one person gets the *ruakh* that was on Moses where it lasted for the long run. It didn’t stick with these seventy-two. There was only one. And the last paragraph of the Torah tells us who that one was that got the *ruakh* of Moses, and it’s the young guy—

Jon: Mmm.

Tim: —who just got in Moses’s face to be like, “That’s too much *ruakh*. It’s too much, Moses.”

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: So: Joshua—

Jon: He becomes the protégé.

Tim: —as it were. Yeah. So in Deuteronomy 34, Moses dies, and—Deuteronomy 34, verse 9: “Now Joshua, the son of Nun, was filled up with the *ruakh* of wisdom because

Moses had laid his hands on him.” And that’s a—laying hands on is about appointing someone in your place.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: And everybody listened to him now like they had listened to Moses.

Jon: And we looked at this before because this is—we were told in—was it in Numbers that Joshua was, what, a man of God’s *ruakh* or something?

Tim: Yeah. This little moment at the end of the Torah is anticipated in Numbers 27 when Moses is being like, “Hey, who’s going to lead the people after I die?” And God says, in Numbers 27:18: “Take Joshua, son of Nun, a man in whom is the *ruakh*, and lay your hand on him, and he’ll lead the people.”

Jon: Yeah. Okay.

Tim: Oh. So this is so cool. Three chapters later is when Moses sends the spies into the land. And once again, it’s the twelve tribes, and each one has a leader. And the leader of the tribe of Judah is Caleb. The leader of the tribe of Ephraim is Joshua. And only those two come back from the land and say, “We can do it. There’s giants there, but we can take them. Yahweh’s with us.” Right? And the other ten leaders rebel. And when God describes the difference between Caleb and Joshua from the other leaders, what he says is: “There is a different *ruakh*”—this is in Numbers 14, verse 24. He says: “There’s a different *ruakh* in them, and they have followed me fully.”

Jon: Mmm.

Tim: So now you’re like, “*Oh, that ruakh—it’s the ruakh that sets Joshua apart, and Caleb.*” And then Deuteronomy 34 comes along and says not only was this *ruakh* in him already, but then he gets the Moses *ruakh* on him, and he is filled with the *ruakh* of wisdom and becomes the new Moses.

Jon: Mmm.

Tim: So what I said at the beginning of our conversation was I wanted to show you two sets of leaders in the Torah and Prophets—

Jon: Yeah, Moses and David. We’ve just been hanging with Moses.

Tim: Yeah, this was Moses and Joshua. And next was Saul and David. So we’ll do Saul and David in the next part of the conversation.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: But what I wanted to turn to was Isaiah in particular—

Jon: Uh-huh.

Tim: —and show how Isaiah and the authors of the Isaiah scroll are anticipating an ideal ruler—

[Music fades in]

Tim: —to come on the other side of Israel's exile. And when they write poems about this anticipated figure, they use language and imagery from the Torah and Prophets that was used to describe Moses and then also David.

Jon: Hmm.

[Musical break (37:58-38:26)]

[Isaiah's Messianic Hope Fueled by Moses (38:26-49:38)]

Tim: Isaiah chapter 11, it's a poem we've looked at many times over the years.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: So there's this thing that Isaiah calls "the stump of Jesse."

Jon: Okay. Right.

Tim: Jesse was David's dad.

Jon: And Jesse is David's dad. Okay.

Tim: So we're talking about the line of Davidic kings here.

[Music fades out]

Jon: Okay.

Tim: “We need a new shoot from the stump of Jesse.” It’s not just: “We need a new *son* of David, we need a new *David*.”

Jon: Okay.

Tim: A new branch from its roots that will bear fruit. And so that one, that shoot or branch to come out from the stump of Jesse, the *ruakh* of Yahweh will rest—

Jon: *Noakh*?

Tim: [Jon backchanneling throughout] —*noakh* on him. And you’re like, “*Okay, that word came from—right from Numbers 11 of the Spirit noakh-ing on someone.*” In other words, if you look for the words spirit and *noakh*, the first time that combination of words appears is in the story we just read, Numbers 11, the Spirit resting. The Spirit of Yahweh—all right, let’s count. We’ve done this many times.

[Jon laughs]

Tim: Spirit of Yahweh—

Jon: One.

Tim: —spirit of wisdom—

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: —a spirit of understanding—that’s two and three—a spirit of counsel and might, a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Yahweh. Sevenfold Spirit.

Jon: Mmm. Mhm.

Tim: So the Spirit of Yahweh—wisdom, understanding, counsel, power, knowledge, and fear of Yahweh— are seven words.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: [Jon agreeing throughout] And you’re like, “*Yeah, that kind of brings together many of the things we’ve been talking about.*” Wisdom and understanding, and counsel and knowledge, but also power, like, might, a spirit of power. But then the fear of Yahweh, like—this is somebody who that power—being charged with God’s own life-power is a part of what drives them to submit to Yahweh’s word and wisdom, to not call the shots on their own. And so very interesting. “His very breath, his *ruakh*”—

Jon: And this is the synonym, *neshamah*, or something?

Tim: No, this is the *ruakh* again.

Jon: Oh, this is *ruakh* again.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: “And his *ruakh*” —

Tim: “And his *ruakh* is the fear of Yahweh.”

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: And this is fear of God in, like, the positive sense, not, like, he’s terrified.

Jon: Yeah. We’ve never done, like, a fear of God —

Tim: Yeah, we need to. We need to.

Jon: —conversation.

Tim: Yeah, we should put a pin on that.

Jon: Put a pin in it.

Tim: [Jon agreeing throughout] And man, if you had somebody whose *very breath* submits to Yahweh’s authority and wisdom and word, imagine what that kind of leader could do. And so here’s a little picture. “He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes. And he won’t bring challenge or correction by what he hears with his ears. No, no, he’ll bring justice for the poor with righteousness. And he will decide on behalf of the needy of the Earth with uprightness. And man, if there’s wicked in the land, he’s going to strike the Earth with the rod of his mouth and sentence to death the wicked man with the breath of his lips.”

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: So true justice. You remember that’s what Moses was trying to do —

Jon: Yeah. Oh, yeah, yeah.

Tim: —in the camp, was bring justice between the people?

Jon: Hmm. That’s right.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: And we’ve been talking about how: When you do that as an agent of God, you’re still in tune with your faculties. Here, there’s a little bit of a focus on —

Tim: Ooh, that’s good.

Jon: —you know, your faculties can deceive you.

Tim: [realizing] Oh, right. That's exactly right.

Jon: Right?

Tim: You need more than just what you see and hear on the surface.

Jon: You need more than what you can see and hear.

Tim: Yes. Oh, thank you so much. This goes back to our early conversations about spirit and wisdom. Like, Joseph could interpret Pharaoh's dreams, remember?

Jon: Right. Yeah.

Tim: And you were like, "No amount of responsible management training"—

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: You know what I mean?

Jon: Yeah, yeah.

Tim: —"can prepare you to, like, see"—

Jon: Yeah, see into someone's mind and understand their dreams.

Tim: "and interpret their dreams." But I bet all of the intuition and experience that Joseph had through the years surely was part of the equation of what the Spirit could work with then to give him knowledge 2.0. We're tapping into that same idea here.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: A *ruakh*-filled human is somebody who, in one sense, operates with the normal human faculties. They see, and they hear, but they are able to see more, and they're able to hear more and not be led astray by mere appearance.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: See beneath the surface? I don't know. It's hard not to see—my mind's populating with stories of Jesus reading people's minds.

Jon: Ohhh.

Tim: It happens all the time in the Gospels.

Jon: Huh.

Tim: "Knowing their thoughts, Jesus said. . ."

Jon: Oh.

Tim: You know, that kind of thing.

Jon: Oh, interesting. Yeah. Wow.

Tim: He's depicted as somebody who, like, could see through the facade of people into their motives and hearts. That's the picture here.

Jon: Hmm. Hmm.

Tim: Mhm.

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So man, you get a leader like that, and—

Jon: That's—that's the image of God we need.

Tim: Mhm. You get a leader like that who can bring order with that kind of Spirit-empowered insight and wisdom, a—you'd have a new Eden. And that's what Isaiah goes on to depict.

Jon: Okay.

Tim: You have wolves laying with lambs and leopards with little sheep, kids playing around snake holes.

[Jon and Tim laugh]

Tim: And the whole land will be filled up with knowing Yahweh. So the poem goes on, but you get the idea here. So my point is to say: What Isaiah depicts as the ideal, messianic, hoped-for ruler is built on elements and words from the portrait of Moses in his best *ruakh*-filled moments in the Torah.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: Not only that, Isaiah is borrowing from other stories in the Torah and Prophets, but he's for sure borrowing from those.

Jon: Hmm. Yeah, that's cool.

Tim: I feel like the story of Moses, I have observed, has made a deep impact on you over the years we've been doing the project.

Jon: [chuckles] Oh, really?

Tim: Yeah, Moses's good days.

Jon: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Tim: [Jon backchanneling throughout] So I remember multiple times, we'd get to his glowing face or Moses on Mount Sinai, and—so for me, this story in Numbers 11 has had that kind of impact—

Jon: Ahhh.

Tim: —because it's the moment—

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: —where Moses is saying, “The thing that's so unique to me in my experience of God”—

Jon: Yeah. Yeah. “I wish everyone had it.”

Tim: “I wish it were everybody.”

Jon: Mmm.

Tim: It's such a beautiful moment.

Jon: And here in Isaiah 11 it's not: Everyone gets it. It's this one.

Tim: Oh, that's right. In 11.

Jon: In 11.

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: But then we looked at that Ezekiel passage.

Tim: Yes, “I will put a new *ruakh* in”—

Jon: Into everyone.

Tim: That's right. And I'll just—homework assignment for those of you listening: Isaiah 61 occurs, you know, fifty chapters later after this poem—

Jon: Uh-huh.

Tim: [Jon backchanneling throughout] —and it's: “The *ruakh* of Yahweh has anointed me—”this “me” starts speaking, who's anointed by the *ruakh*—“to announce good news to the poor.” And then what he says is: “People who are weeping and grieving in ashes, I'm going to pour oil, the oil of gladness, on them.” So “*The same anointing with oil that the Spirit has given me, I'm going to pour out on a whole crew.*” And it becomes a symbol of the liquid Spirit.

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: Mhm. So that it's like, "*Man, we need an anointed leader who's filled up with God's Spirit, and we need an anointed people who are filled with the same Spirit.*"

Jon: Hmm.

Tim: So these are ideas that maybe as Christians might only associate with the New Testament—

Jon: Sure, like Pentecost.

Tim: Like the filling of the Spirit for everybody.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: But they have deep roots, all of it back here in the Torah.

Jon: Mhm.

Tim: This is Moses's dream, was the thing that he experienced would actually be shared by all of God's people.

Jon: Yeah. Hmm.

Tim: So that's Moses and Joshua, key contributors to the picture of the Spirit-filled Messianic king in the Prophets. But not only that, there's also another leadership pair of kings that are crucial to the portrait of the Messiah and the Spirit in the Prophets. And that's the story of Saul and David and their contrast, because they are both filled with *ruakh*.

Jon: Right.

Tim: But it turns out they're filled with different kinds of *ruakh*.

Jon: Yeah, we've left that hanging—

Tim: Yeah.

Jon: —Saul's crazy *ruakh* moment.

[BibleProject theme fades in]

Tim: Saul's crazy *ruakh*. Yeah, what's that about?

Jon: Yeah.

Tim: So let's talk about that next.

[Musical break (46:47-46:51)]

Jon: Thanks for listening to BibleProject podcast. Next week, we'll continue to explore the Spirit of the Messiah in the stories of Saul and David. Both are empowered by God's Spirit to lead Israel, but only one is a man after God's own heart.

Tim: [Audio clips from Spirit of God (Reboot) E6: The Spirit of the Messiah in Saul and David] Just divine power of Spirit is not enough to transform a person. You actually need a different heart. You need a heart that's according to God.

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Amos: Hello, my name is Amos, and I'm from Boise, Idaho. I first heard about BibleProject several years ago at my church youth group.

Haven: I first heard about BibleProject when I was probably fourteen years old. My dad showed me the videos, and I used it every single time before I would start reading a new book of the Bible, and I would just go through the overview.

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