

Come to Understanding

**They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding,
and they that murmured shall learn doctrine. — Isaiah 29:24**

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Discernment

Our ability to separate and distinguish one thing from another is called discernment. It is often easy for us to discern tangible things. That is because we can rely on our physical senses to show us differences among them. Is the color red or blue? Is the sound loud or soft? Is that the smell of a skunk or a rose? Is this a rock or a feather? Does this taste sweet or sour?

Spiritual things, however, are different. While we may be able to see physical manifestations of their activity, spirits are not discerned with our physical senses. Therefore, we must rely upon our spiritual sense to distinguish the differences among them, knowing that the things of the Spirit of God are spiritually discerned:

14 But the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. -1 Corinthians 2

The gift of discerning of spirits is a manifestation of the Spirit of God:

- 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit therewith.
- 8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;
- 9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;
- 10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another *diverse* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:
- 11 But all these works that one and the very same Spirit, dividing to every man individually as he will. -1 Corinthians 12

If we have the gift of “discerning of spirits” then we know that we cannot assume that all spirits are from God. John writes of the need to discern the spirits:

1 Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets have gone out into the world. -1 John 4

This means that a spirit must be put to a test to see whether or not it is from God. John explains the key test to which we must subject the spirit. What does it say about Yahshua the Messiah (Jesus Christ)? Does

it “confess” that He has come in the flesh? If so, then the spirit is of God. If not, then the spirit is not of God. It is an “antichrist” spirit, which denies that Yahshua is God manifested in the flesh:

- 2 Hereby know you the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Yahshua the Messiah has come in the flesh is of God:
- 3 And every spirit that confesses not that Yahshua the Messiah has come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that *spirit* of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. -1 John 4

The Greek word that is translated as “confess” is homologos (same as the Word). The spirit that confesses that Yahshua (Yah the Savior) has come in the flesh says the same thing as the Word of God. For that confession to be true, the spirit must therefore agree that the Word was God:

1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. -John 1

In addition, the confessing spirit must believe that the Word, which was God, dwelt among us in the flesh:

14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth. -John 1

However, before we believe that the confession of the spirit is a true confession of its belief, we need to remember that Satan (the Devil) is the father of lies:

44 You are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and stayed not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. -John 8

We also need to remember that Satan and his demonic servants are convincing imitators. He shows himself as an “angel of light” and they present themselves as being sent forth by the Messiah and as ministers of righteousness:

- 13 For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of the Messiah.
- 14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.
- 15 Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also are transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works. -2 Corinthians 11

**So they read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense,
and caused them to understand the reading. — Nehemiah 8:8**

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When we are out of the will of God, as King Saul was, we open ourselves up to being deceived by the spirits. In direct opposition to Yahweh's clear commandment (see Leviticus 19:31), Saul went to a woman having a "familiar spirit" and asked her to call up the spirit of the dead prophet Samuel. She called up "gods" (spirits) from the earth:

13 And the king said to her, Be not afraid: for what saw you? And the woman said to Saul, I saw gods ascending out of the earth. -1 Samuel 28

These spirits, which did not come from Yahweh, assumed the physical appearance of the godly prophet. Saul, convinced that they were really Samuel, responded in submissive worship as he bowed before them:

14 And he said to her, What form *is* he of? And she said, An old man comes up; and he *is* covered with a mantle. And Saul perceived that it *was* Samuel, and he stooped with *his* face to the ground, and bowed himself. -1 Samuel 28

How can we discern whether spirits that profess to be godly are of God or whether, as liars, they are really servants of Satan? The Spirit of God is the Spirit of Truth, called the Comforter, which dwells in the people who truly know God:

16 And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever;

17 *Even* the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it sees him not, neither knows him: but you know him; for he dwells with you, and shall be in you. -John 14

The Spirit of Truth does not boast of Himself. Instead, He guides us into all truth and gives us the desire to glorify Yahshua:

13 However, when he, the Spirit of truth, has come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak: and he will show you things to come.

14 He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show *it* to you. -John 16

The Spirit of Truth confesses that Yahshua is the Truth and that He is the only way to God the Father:

6 Yahshua said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man comes to the Father, but by me. -John 14

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The Truth is God and the Truth is the Word of God, through which we are sanctified:

17 Sanctify them through your truth: your word is truth. -John 17

To sanctify means to set apart that which is of God from that which is not of God. The Spirit of Truth uses the Word of God as a "sword:"

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: -Ephesians 6

The Sword of the Spirit dissects hearts to discern what manner of spirits are dwelling deeply within them. It reveals the kind of thoughts and intentions those spirits may produce:

12 For the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing apart of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and *is* a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. -Hebrews 4

Without the work of the Spirit of Truth through the Sword of the Spirit, we are often unable to tell the difference between the work of the Spirit of God and that of the spirit of Satan. Even the priests of Judah taught the people that there was no difference between the holy and the profane:

26 Her priests have violated my law, and have profaned my holy things: they have put no difference between the holy and profane, neither have they shown *difference* between the unclean and the clean, and have hidden their eyes from my sabbaths, and I am profaned among them. -Ezekiel 22

It is the work of the Spirit of God through His Word that shows us the difference between the holy and the profane.

As difficult as it is for us to comprehend, God shows His love for us through afflictions, called "chastening." He uses these trials to break our hearts, even to crush them. The Sword of the Spirit can then open our hearts to see the profaneness within them. Through faith, he brings us to repentance, thereby sanctifying us unto His holiness:

10 For they truly for a few days chastened *us* after their own pleasure; but he for *our* profit, that *we* might be partakers of his holiness. -Hebrews 12

It is the Spirit of God through the Word of God that discerns and overcomes the spirits of the world, giving them no place within our hearts:

4 You are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. -1 John 4

Yahweh says that it shall come to pass that the priests will teach His people that there is a difference between that which is holy and that which is profane:

23 And they shall teach my people *the difference* between the holy and profane, and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. -Ezekiel 44

If we can discern the spirits, then we can be led by the Spirit of God, totally trusting Him as His own children:

14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. -Romans 8