The study of any concept which is tied to a particular word, a concept which comes from a different and ancient culture, is no easy task. The Hebrew Bible comes from such a culture, from another era, and the very act of translating the language, the ideas and the experiences portrayed, is apt to distort its meaning. The cultural situation of the modern inquirer is of crucial importance. The questions asked, the base of intellectual inquiry, the doctrinal situation of the inquirer, all impinge on any study of any concept contained within the Hebrew Bible.

The importance of the theoretical basis of the inquiry can be illustrated by reference to the work of various scholars. Oesterley and Robinson\(^1\) make use of a Frazerian approach to the development of religion, a method of inquiry which when applied to the study of the concept of spirit leads to significantly different conclusions from the results obtained from the 'personality' approach of H. W. Robinson\(^2\) or the more theologically oriented method of Edmund Jacob.\(^3\) Theological considerations can also determine the results of investigation in this field. This is best shown by a recent work of L. J. Wood entitled: *The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament,*\(^4\) in which Wood assumes the identity of 'the Holy Spirit' of the New Testament to be the same as 'the Holy Spirit' of the Old Testament, notwithstanding the fact that there are only two references to the 'spirit of holiness' in the Old Testament. Further, an assumption is made based on orthodox Christian theology that the Holy Spirit is a person, the 'Third Person of the Godhead'. References to the 'spirit of God' and many references to the 'spirit' are simplistically equated with the person, the third member of the trinity. So in Gn.1:2 where 'the Spirit of God is said to have moved or brooded upon the face of the waters. . . . certainly the meaning is that the Third Person of the Godhead so moved and brooded'.\(^5\)

This doctrinal approach is not confined to 'fundamentalists' like Wood. Much critical theology assumes also an identity, though there are varying

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5. Ibid., pp.19f.
degrees of developmental views of the history of religion, and different critical attitudes towards Scripture.6 However one might regard the techniques and methods of many such theologians, writing from within a faith-situation is not necessarily an invalid exercise, but our task in this paper is to look at a concept in a particular era, contained in a closed volume of books, not through the eyes of a Christian, or of a Muslim, or of an atheist. It is not possible for the scholar to escape from his background: the very words used, the language, the culture, the models used, must all impinge on how the texts are read. But if an awareness of these issues is shown, then any interpretation can be seen for what it is, and also, one may try and shed many of one's own culturally-bound assumptions and try as far as possible to investigate what a person living in the time of Josiah, or of Ezra, in the land of Judah experienced, and why he used, and how he or his contemporaries understood, the word ruah. This last point is significant. Although there are many occasions where it is possible to interpret any given experience or action in a variety of ways, the reported experience of a person who exhibits certain characteristic ecstatic experiences should be taken at face value. The people of old perceived certain experiences in terms of the spirit. These were not for them superstitious, literary phrases or unreal experiences, but they were valid ways in which, according to their understanding, they perceived the divine at work.

Finally, two other constraints upon the inquiry should be noted. First, when one wishes to trace the history of an idea or attempt a semantic study of a word in an ancient era, a limited book and a language in articulo mortis, it is impossible to recover an unbroken diachronic reconstruction of the concept and word. Secondly, there are inevitable changes and development in the use of the concept over time, for example, what may be assigned to the role of the spirit in one age may be assigned to the role of 'angels' in a different period, as was the case for visions.

The Contextual Problem

To discuss the word ruah in the context of pneumatology, we must begin by examining its everyday usage in ancient Hebrew. The word occurs some 378 times in the Old Testament.7 Cognate words occur in many ancient West Semitic languages such as8:

7. For the purpose of this paper I will not include in such figures reference to the Aramaic portions of Daniel, unless explicitly stated.
Ugarit:  \( rh \) wind, fragrance (smell)
Biblical Aramaic:  \( r\dot{u}a\dot{h} \) wind, spirit
\( r\dot{e}a\dot{h} \) smell (of fire)
Punic:  \( rh \) spirit (active part of human soul)
Palmyrian:  \( rw\dot{h}' \) spirit?
Biblical Hebrew:  \( r\dot{e}a\dot{h} \) odour, scent (of clothes, water, oil, breath)
\( h\dot{e}ri\dot{a}h \) to smell

For such examples and from the popular usage of \( r\dot{u}a\dot{h} \) as ‘wind’ many scholars suggest the basic idea is of ‘air in motion’.\(^9\) From this idea of ‘air in motion’ \( r\dot{u}a\dot{h} \) stood for ‘wind’ and ‘breath’. A semantic development of \( r\dot{u}a\dot{h} \) was the metaphorical notion of the ‘spirit’ of both God and of man, and further an emotional response in man such as the ‘spirit of jealousy’. Derived meanings such as ‘odour’ and ‘space’ have all also been suggested.\(^10\)

This last meaning ‘space’ has been traditionally thought of as another root \( r\dot{w}a\dot{h} \) with the idea ‘to be wide, spacious’ hence ‘to feel relieved’, with its derivative nouns \( r\dot{e}w\dot{a}\dot{h} \) ‘space, interval, respite, relief’, and \( r\dot{e}w\dot{a}\dot{h}a \) ‘respite, relief’. Some scholars also see this root in Punic, Palmyrian\(^11\) and it also occurs in South Arabic, Syriac and Aramaic.\(^12\) In the Akkadian or East Semitic language there exists also \( r\dot{a}\dot{h}u \) ‘to pour out, flow into’ which is used not of wind, but of liquids and in particular, sperm. The verb is also used metaphorically of falling into sleep and becoming sick. Henri Cazelles argues that the idea of ‘space’ is the basic connotation of this word, which in some cases includes the vulva.\(^13\) However, it would seem that the concept of ‘space’ is not integral to the root of the Akkadian word.

Be that as it may, in West Semitic there does exist a word which has the idea of ‘space’ and, in a metaphorical extension, of ‘respite, relief’. The question is what is the relationship between the two ideas of ‘moving air’ and of ‘space’? The older lexicographies saw them as distinct.\(^14\) A second view is to see the two as either cognate\(^15\) or thirdly, ‘space’ as a derived

\(^{9}\) So e.g. : A. R. Johnson, The Vitality of the Individual in the Thought of Ancient Israel, (Cardiff 1964) p.23.
\(^{10}\) L. J. Wood, op.cit., pp.16f.
\(^{11}\) See Jean et Hofijzer, op.cit., p.275.
\(^{13}\) idem, p.80
\(^{15}\) A. R. Johnson, op.cit., p.23, n.2, who points out a similar semantic equivalence between Hebrew \( nepes \), ‘soul’, with the Akkadian \( nap\dot{a}su \), ‘to expand’ and \( rap\dot{a}su \), ‘to be wide’.
meaning based on the idea that it is where air moves.\textsuperscript{16} The fourth possibility is to see the basic meaning as ‘space’ and hence to what is in ‘space’, ‘air’ and in particular ‘moving air’. Cazelles has recently taken up this last option\textsuperscript{17} and some of the passages he studies are developed exegetically in interesting ways because he permits the spatial concept to be manifest. There are many expressions where physical actions or moral behaviour are normally associated with the idea of breath. So for instance in Ex.6:9 there occurs the phrase \textit{miqqősèr rûah}, ‘short of rûah’, the image conveyed being one lacking in breath and hence translations like ‘impatience, anger, dejection, depression, broken spirit’ are found. But for Cazelles the reason the people are not able to move themselves freely is that they lack living space. However, the context of this passage makes clear that this clause expresses the reason for the peoples refusal to listen to (and act on) the word of Moses, namely their affective response to the situation of their bondage.

Cazelles argues for the semantic development of the term into wind, the four cardinal points of the compass, the qualities of men, and the Spirit of God. But the basic meaning for him is spatial. The air is only occasionally the agitated air, wind, or breath.

Though we cannot dogmatise about the primitive mind in terms no longer popular, T. H. Robinson’s ‘animatism’ which he defines as ‘the attribution of personality . . . to inanimate objects’\textsuperscript{18} may still be suggestive. Would not a moving thing, be it leaves on a tree rustling, or wind blowing on one’s face, or clouds skidding across the sky, be a prior idea to the static spatial image? Movement denotes the presence of life on animatistic or animistic principles. Certainly this doctrine would tend to confute Cazelles’ approach to the history of rûah. Indeed as Smart suggests even primitive space concepts may be those of a moving substance.\textsuperscript{19} Further, the very existence of a concept of both space and void is unlikely for the primitive Hebrew mind.\textsuperscript{20} In discussion of the use of rûah, the idea

\textsuperscript{16} L. J. Wood, \textit{op.cit.}, p.17.
\textsuperscript{17} H. Cazelles, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.78-90.
\textsuperscript{18} \textit{op.cit.}, p.26 and see further pp. 26-29, 37. See also W. O. E. Oesterley and T. H. Robinson, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.5-11.
of motion, inferred from the cause-effect observations, is the concept behind its usage.

One must heed the warning of James Barr in his writings where he has pointed out the dangers inherent in both etymological and comparative approaches to ascertain the meanings of words. 'Etymology is not', Barr says, 'and does not profess to be a guide to the semantic value of words in their current usage, and such value has to be determined from the current usage and not from the derivation'. Etymology he says refers to the history of the word, not its meaning. Usage is the decisive element. Barr's warning about the comparative approach is also significant: any suggestion 'will be probabilistic and approximate rather than decisive and exact'. Ultimately it is the rule of use derived from the context in which an expression is used which is the final judge of meaning. But etymology and comparative linguistics may help in establishing that meaning, provided that the dangers of their use are realized.

Ruah as Wind

Ruah is the generic term for wind and is so used over a hundred times within the Hebrew Bible. The number cannot be exact as there are many passages where the meaning of ruah is ambiguous. Other words for wind do occur such as šārāh, 'hot desert wind', sūpā 'windstorm' sa'ar and sē'arā, 'gale', mēzūrīm, 'scattering wind', and also terms which are associated with the east (qādīm), south (dārīm, tēman), north (šāpōn) used without ruah but describing winds from those directions. In these directional usages sometimes ruah is used in a construct relationship, sometimes simply understood. Further, it may well be that the directional sense was not always accurately adhered to and that the attributes of a certain wind, say the destructive, easterly sirocco, could be applied to any destructive wind. A late development sees the four winds representing the four cardinal points of the world (e.g. Jer. 49:32, 36; Ezek. 37:9; Dan. 8:8), and also the four sides of a building (Jer. 52:23), though some see spatial imagery involved here.

The sirocco wind of Palestine, springing up from the Arabian deserts is very similar to the westerly wind experienced on the east coast of Australia or the northerly on the south coast. It is hot, dry, dusty, and its scorching

23. See e.g. Ex. 10:13 where the east wind is said to bring the plague of locusts in Egypt. This is written from a Palestinian point of view as the locusts in Egypt came from the South. So U. Cassuto, A Commentary on the Book of Exodus, tr. by I. Abrahams, (Jerusalem 1967) p.127. Cassuto suggests that ruah qādīm is equivalent to a 'fierce wind'.
fierceness burns and destroys (e.g. Gn. 41:6; Hos. 13:15; Isa. 40:7; Ezek 27:26; Jer. 4:11-12; 13:24). Jonah found the combination of the intensity of the sun and the vehemence of the east wind so much that he wanted to curl up and die (Jonah 4:8). Modern descriptions of the wind abound and point to its severity. Because of its physical characteristics this east wind was used in metaphors of announcements of divine judgement such as the promise of Yahweh to scatter the people of Jerusalem 'like chaff driven by the wind from the wilderness' (Jer. 13:24; cf. Isa. 17:13; Ps. 35:5). There are occasions where the east wind itself is the symbol of God's judging: 'Like the east wind I will scatter Judah before the enemy' (Jer. 18:17). In some passages the actual means of destruction is the wind itself which will bring havoc (see Job 1:19).

A common use of the metaphor of the east wind is when the symbol becomes almost the reality. The sirocco is the means of punishment, as an instrument in the divine hand used to bring about his judgement. The east wind (qâdîm) which arises from the wilderness is the ruâh of Yahweh which will destroy the land (Hos. 13:15).

The rich vine of Judah will die 'when the ruâh haqâdîm strikes it' (Ezek. 17:10). One of the most vivid passages is an oracle of Jeremiah's announcing the impending destruction of Judah (Jer. 4:11-12)

A scorching wind from the bare heights in the desert,  
on to the daughter of my people,  
not to winnow, not to sift,  
such a wind, a full gale, shall come from me.

The east wind, which as the instrument of God's judgement and refining, is in turn a symbol for the foreign armies who are to come at the command of God. Building on the effect of the sirocco, and allying this effect with God as controller of the elements and as creator of the elements, the writers of the Old Testament have expressed the judgement in terms of wind sent by and from God.

The interpretation of the wind as coming from God is not a monotheistic upgrading of an animistic or a sentient view of the universe, but springs from a monotheistic view of God as the one creator of the world, and controller of the winds. Mythical aspects of the Canaanite religion, however, helped to develop and reinforce the view of Yahweh as controller of the elements. It was the wind from God, his breath that destroyed. Ruâh as


wind becomes the symbol of the activity of God. The small step to anthropomorphize ūnḫ as the breath of God in turn leads to a link with the idea of ūnḫ as the living force, the breath of God breathed into man. This last point will be discussed further below.

In both the old and the new exodii Yahweh is portrayed as using the wind as an instrument in his plan.

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and Yahweh drove the sea back with a strong east wind (ūnḫ qāḏîm) all night. (Ex. 14:21).

Yahweh . . . will wave his hand over the Euphrates with his scorching ūnḫ.

and the people of Israel would cross the river dryshod, just as the Israelites did at the sea of Reeds at the first Exodus. (Isa. 11:15).

However it is possible in the second passage, which is dated by many scholars in the post-exilic period, to translate ūnḫ as ‘breath’. The poetic parallel to Ex. 14:21, namely Ex. 15:8, describes the drying up of the sea in anthropomorphic terms:

and with the ūnḫ of thy nostrils, the waters piled up.

So, the development from the idea of ‘wind from God’ to the ‘breath of God’ took place quite simply, given both the theological (often expressed in mythical terms) point of view of God as both creator and controller of the elements and also the attempt to understand reality and God’s relation to it.

It is the ‘breath of God’ which is the life giving power of God. As man feels the cool evening breeze (Gn. 3:8), he responds to the hot easterly; as he sees new life in the westerly rains (1 Kg. 18: 44–45; Lk. 12:54) which in turn bring new life and prosperity, man responds to the God who gave him these winds. The wind from God, his breath, is both the ‘spirit’ of God and the ‘spirit’ from God. This is a point which will be noted again.

Rūnḥ as Breath. The Anthropological Use.

Although the physical make-up of man in the Old Testament is not consistently described, it can be generalized in the following manner: āšār, nepēš, nēšāmā, and ūnḥ, which through the LXX comes into English as body, soul, breath and spirit.

Āšār is that which is basic both to people and animals. It is flesh, be it the whole body or parts thereof. It is what is visible. It is frail, it perishes.


But it is not used of a corpse. In later literature bāšār can stand for a person:

For fear of thee my flesh trembles
and of thy judgements I am afraid
Ps. 119:120.

It is a term of relationship (Gn. 37:27). Flesh is not evil in itself, but it is weak and is a symbol of ethical frailty (Gn. 6:12; Ps. 65:2-3).

In order to make the flesh a living being it needs nēšāmā from God (Gn. 2:7) and the person is a nepeš hayyā a living nepeš, being (Gn. 1:20; 2:7). Lack of nēšāmā and rūāḥ means death (Job 34:14-15).

The word nepeš like its Akkadian and Ugarit cognates napištu and nps has a physical connotation, namely, ‘throat, neck’, that is the organ through which a person or animal breathed. Other scholars argue that ‘breath’ is the basic meaning, but as H. W. Wolff points out the throat would have been seen by the ancient Semites as the seat of the three elemental needs of eating, drinking and breathing, not just one. The nepeš is the organ for eating and drinking (Ps. 107:9), and the neck (Pss. 69:1; 105:18) the organ for breathing. When a person died it was the nepeš ‘breath’ which departed (Gn. 35:18); nepeš could return to a corpse (1 Kg. 17:21-22) in order to give it life. To take away nepeš is to kill (Gn. 37:21). It is nepeš which makes a living being. In later literature nepeš is associated with blood: the blood is the nepeš (Dt. 12:23; Gn. 9.4), or the nepeš of the bāšār is in the blood (Lv. 17:11, 14).

As nepeš is the vital principle in man, the word became identified with the whole man, ‘self’ and is used thus as a personal pronoun:

Whoever kills a nepeš ... (Nu. 31:19).
that my nepeš may bless thee ... (Gn. 27:4).

Finally nepeš has a psychical connotation when it describes the desires of people which arise from the need for food, sex, and the preservation of one’s life. So nepeš cries for and desires food (Prov. 23:2; Mic. 7:1), wine (Dt. 14:26), possessions (Prov. 28:25), land (Jer. 22:27), falsehood (Ps. 24:4), sons and daughters (Ezek. 24:25), love (Ct. 1:7), lust (Gn. 34:2-3). Thus nepeš itself becomes ‘longing’, ‘desire’ of the emotional, as well as of the physical things that pass through the throat. It is the seat of feelings and emotions, and as such is normally translated as ‘soul’ (ψυχή) in the LXX. Though this ‘desire’, ‘longing’ is normally associated with iniquity, it can be for God (Ps. 42:1-2; 1 Sa. 1:15; Dt. 6:5).

30. So with e.g. H. W. Wolff, op.cit., p.11 against e.g. A. R. Johnson, op.cit., p.10, n.4.
31. There is no unambiguous example but Wolff, op.cit., p.13, refers to Jer.2:24; 15:9; Job 11:20; 41:21.
In Gn. 2:7 when God put his ‘breath’ into the physical body of man, man became a living nepeš. What God breathed into the nostrils was the nišmat hayyîm, the breath which gives rise to life and makes man a nepeš. The word for ‘breath’, nēšāmā, occurs some 25 times in the Old Testament, and almost always means ‘breath’ in people, and animals (only in Gn. 7:22), and hence by synecdoche to ‘life’, ‘living being’ (Isa. 57:16), but never losing its basic idea of ‘breath’. Most of the references occur in the later literature (Gn. 2:7 is an exception), especially the wisdom literature. It is the breath of God who is in man (Gn. 2:7; Job 33:4; 34:14). Life is dependent on God. All that has breath is to praise God (Ps. 150:6). God’s breath is not only creative, but also brings judgement (Job 4:9; Isa. 30:35; Ps. 18:15). There are possible references to the meaning of the word developing into the idea of ‘spirit’ or ‘soul’, the innermost being within a person (Prov. 20:27; Job 26:4).

Nēšāmā is thus basically ‘life in the body’. As ‘the basic function of human life [it] is to keep man bound together with his Creator and preserver, with the God of wrath and the God of mercy’.32 This is a theological interpretation of the physical element.

Occasionally nēšāmā is used in parallel with rūah such as in Job 27:3 where Job relates that ‘my nēšāmā is in me, and the rūah of God is in my nostrils’.

Lack of rūah and nēšāmā means death (Job 34:14–15). It is God ‘who gives nēšāmā to the people upon the earth and rūah to those who walk in it’ (Isa. 42:5). The rūah in people, the breath, the living force in men comes from God, and all flesh has it (Gn. 6:17; 7:15). Animals have rūah as breath (Eccl. 3:19), but idols do not (Hab. 2:19; Jer. 10:14; Ps. 135:17). When man’s rūah departs, man returns to the ground (Ps. 146:4) and the rūah to God (Eccl. 12:7; cf. Gn. 6:3). When a person is thirsty or hungry and is almost dead, and when the person is satisfied with victuals, then rūah returns and the person is revived (Jdg. 15:19; 1 Sa. 30:12).

The basic idea of rūah is ‘air in motion’, and hence ‘wind’ and ‘breath’. This breath is a part of the physical make-up of all flesh, and it is given to animate beings by God himself. If rūah comes from God, rūah is also of God. The concept of rūah as breath is applied anthropomorphically to God as the passage from Ex. 15:8 cited above demonstrates: ‘at the rūah of thy nostrils, the waters piled up’. More explicitly in an oracle against the Nations, Isaiah describes the action of Yahweh as:

Behold: the Name of Yahweh comes from afar, burning is his nostrils, and heavy is the doom; his lips are full of curse, and his tongue like a devouring fire,

his ṭūʿāḥ is like an overflowing stream, that divides up to the neck. (Isa. 30:27–28).

Hominal terms such as nostrils, lips, tongue, would suggest that ṭūʿāḥ in this context is ‘breath’ of God which may well also have mythical and theophanic overtones.33 ṭūʿāḥ which gives life is described by Gunkel as ‘a real breath of God’.34

The breath from God regarded either in an anthropomorphized manner, or as the life-giving breath which he breathes into flesh in order to vivify it, and the concept of ṭūʿāḥ as the wind of God, the wind coming from God, became intertwined. That is, the natural (the wind) and the anthropological (human spirit) merge. This connexion can be illustrated by the Vision of the Valley of dry bones of Ezek. 37:1–14. Ezekiel is ordered to deliver a command to the ṭūʿāḥ:

Prophesy unto the ṭūʿāḥ . . . and say to the ṭūʿāḥ:
From the four winds (ṭūḥōt) O ṭūʿāḥ, come and breathe into these slain, that they may live. (v.9).

The bones of the slain did not have ṭūʿāḥ, nor sinew, flesh or skin (vv. 5–6) The latter three components came together with the bones still lacking the promised ṭūʿāḥ. In verse five, the promise, the hipʿīl is used: ‘I will cause a ṭūʿāḥ to enter into you’. In the following verse a different verb occurs: ‘I will put a ṭūʿāḥ in you’. This ṭūʿāḥ is not defined except it is clear that God has power or authority over it. Zimmerli suggests it is ‘regarded as something that pervades the whole world’, and like the wind blows into the bodies.35 In verse ten, Ezekiel did as commanded and the ṭūʿāḥ entered into the reconstituted bodies ‘and they lived’. The model for this process is probably that of Gn. 2:7 in which the formation of the body is followed by the endowment of the divine-given nēṣāmā of life, but in contrast to that passage, the source of the ṭūʿāḥ which gives life is the four winds (v.9). However in the interpretative oracle of verse fourteen, the ṭūʿāḥ is now said to be ‘my ṭūʿāḥ’. In this interpretation the writer is extending the concept of ṭūʿāḥ to Yahweh himself not only as the source of life, but to his own being.

The final significant development in ṭūʿāḥ is similar to that of nepeš, in that ṭūʿāḥ can relate to the psychical aspects of life referring to emotions, dispositions, thoughts, intelligence, and moral energy. In several phrases

such as ‘short of nepeš,’ nepeš and ruah are used interchangeably. H. W. Robinson describes this development (which he sees as post-exilic) as ‘the permanent substratum or entity of man’s own consciousness...’ 36 H. W. Wolff stresses the gap between ruah as ‘breath’ and ruah as ‘spirit’ when the former is seen as ‘the organ of knowledge, understanding and judgement’.37

In despondent and difficult situations the ruah of the person can become sullen (1 Kg. 21:5), grow dim (Ezek. 21:7), faint away (Ps. 142:3), fail (Ps. 143:7), be in a state of anguish (Job 7:11), be anxious (Dn. 7:15), be angry (Eccl. 10:4).

On the positive side, to be ‘patient in ruah’ is better than to be ‘proud in ruah’ (Eccl. 7:8), or to be ‘short in ruah’ (Prov. 14:29)38. A person can be ‘trustworthy in ruah’ (Prov. 11:13). The man to whom God will look is ‘humble and contrite of ruah’ (Isa. 66:2).

In this sample of feelings and emotions the use of ruah for psychical aspects of life is well illustrated. Some of these feelings and emotions may well be based on observable physical aspects such as shortness of breath arising from a situation of anger. But not all aspects need have physical connotations. There were also attitudes of mind expressed such as the ‘patient’, the ‘trustworthy’. God knows the things which are in Israel’s ruah (Ezek. 11:5; 20:32). Wisdom ‘will pour out’ her ruah on to the pupil, she will make her words known to him (Prov. 1:23). In this context ruah must mean something like ‘mind, thought, counsel’, what Zimmerli describes as: ‘man’s intellectual center from where his thoughts arise’.

It is in this post-exilic development that the intellectual and volitional aspects of ruah move beyond that of nepeš.

It is the ruah in men,
that nēśūmā of the Almighty
that makes them understand. (Job 32:8).

This verse is significant for in it Elihu stresses that it is not age, but divine inspiration that is the source of understanding and of wisdom. It is the same ‘breath’ which gives life to mankind (Gn. 2:7) that gives the mental abilities of understanding and insight. Such gifts are also proclaimed in the prophetic promise on the ideal king, attributed to Isaiah:40

37. op.cit., p.36.
38. In this verse ‘short in ruah’ is opposed to ‘slow to anger’. Cf. also Prov. 16:32.
40. The commentators are divided as to the date of this passage: some suggesting that it is Isaianic (e.g. Wade, Skinner, Herbert, Whedbee, Kaiser in first edition), others as exilic (Gray, McKane, Lindblom, Kaiser second edition) or early post-exilic (Clements), or can’t be determined (R. P. Carroll, When Prophecy Failed, (London 1979) p.144).
The \(\text{rua}h\) of Yahweh shall rest upon him,
a \(\text{rua}h\) of wisdom and understanding,
a \(\text{rua}h\) of counsel and power,
a \(\text{rua}h\) of knowledge and the fear of Yahweh. (Isa. 11:2)

As well as the intellectual aptitudes the endowment also covers the administrative skills and the fundamental precepts of the moral life. These rather temperate qualities are all dependent on the recipient having the \(\text{rua}h\) of Yahweh.

\textit{Ruah as the ‘Spirit’ of God}

These examples lead the argument into a final idea of concern, namely, the \(\text{rua}h\) which comes from the world of the divine. The divine generative breath is often translated by ‘spirit’, especially when an experience occurs which is interpreted as having special invasive power.

There is often a lack of definition in the translation of \(\text{rua}h\) into ‘spirit’. For instance, Zimmerli, whilst wishing to translate \(\text{rua}h\) in Ezek. 36:27; 37:14 as ‘the spirit (of God)’ and \(\text{rua}h\) as the ‘spirit of life’ in Ezek. 37:5, 9, 10, does not really define what he means by ‘spirit’, other than that it is that which brings life." It would be best to confine the translation of \(\text{rua}h\) as ‘spirit’ to the situation when the translator feels there is some degree of distinction between the origin of the source of life and what is transmitted, between the origin of the source of \(\text{rua}h\) and the \(\text{rua}h\) as an invasive breath or power. Yet the ‘spirit’ is not to be regarded as a power on its own. The link with the divine as its source preserves for the mind of the recipient and of the theologian, that the \(\text{rua}h\) is the divine in action.

The spirit of God in pre-exilic literature (as distinct from the life-giving power ‘breath’ and the divine ‘wind’) is concerned with the empowering from God, in order that the recipient might be equipped to perform certain tasks. Just as the generative breath comes from God, just as the wind itself though not visible but recognizable in its effects serves as a model, so the concept of a personalized power is itself generated. This special invasive power need not have a worthwhile effect or moral value, nor need its divine purpose always be ascertained. For example, an ‘evil spirit from Yahweh’ came upon Saul while David was playing the lyre (Isa. 19:9). The result was depression. No morally uplifting, no worthwhile effect, or no divine purpose, is evident. That this was apparently the case, is suggested by the fact that Saul did not lose the support of his people.

The special invasive ‘spirit’ was given to many people for various tasks and manifested itself in several ways. So there is the prophetic-group ecstasy with Samuel as their leader, whose ecstasy was contagious (Isa. 10:5–12, 41. W. Zimmerli, \textit{op. cit}, p.567.)
The spirit came upon prophets (I Kg. 18:12; Mic. 3:8), leaders and ‘judges’ (Nu. 11:17; Jdg. 3:10), which in the exilic period was extended to cover wise men (Gn. 41:38; Dn. 4:5, 6, 15), the ‘Messiah’ (Isa. 11:2; 32:15; 61:1), the ‘Servants’ (Isa. 42:1), contemporary Israel (Isa. 59:21; Hg. 2:5), the new Israel (Isa. 44:3; Ezek. 36:27; 37:14; 39:29) and cultic craftsmen (Ex. 31:3; 35:31). The verbs used to describe the empowering by and the reception of נух (Nah) by these recipients, illustrate that this נух was outside a person, it was sent from a higher source, and imposed on the recipient like a mighty wind from God.

This concept of נух is not the concept of a separate substance. The use of the same word for wind and breath, and the analogies arising from these created realities, would engender in the minds of the ancients theories about God’s activity rather than the idea of an independent substance. To the recipient, and to those who observed him, God’s נух and his empowering gifts were the presence of God.

On most of these occasions the empowerment is for a particular purpose: to fight battles, to enable one to rule, to act as a prophet, to speak as an oracle, to interpret dreams, and in post-exilic literature to be wise, to be a craftsman, and to live a morally upright life. Many, but not all, of the so-called major judges are empowered with נух in order to do certain military tasks. The pattern in the Book of Judges is well known: the people did what

42. Not all these references are to exilic or post-exilic literature, but most of them are. The seeds of later development with respect to aspects of will, feelings, etc., and the ‘Messianic’ references, did occur in the pre-exilic literature, but were not fully utilized until the exilic period.

43. Note for these and many of the references there are more than three occurrences, but I have linked such examples to three because of space. The examples chosen are such to show the distribution of such uses. Verbs used are נעה ‘rest on’ (70 elders, Nu.11:15; Elisha, 2Kg.2:15; Ideal king, Isa.11:2), הַעַד ‘came to be on’ Balaam. Nu. 24:2; messengers of Saul, 1Sa.19:20; Azariah, 2Ch.15:1; יָנָה ‘rush on’ (Samson, Jdg.14:6; Saul, 1Sa.10:6; David, 1Sa.16:13), מַלֶּה ‘fill’ (Micah, Mic.3:8; cultic craftsmen, Ex.31:3; spirit of wisdom on Joshua, Dt.34:9); לָכָּא ‘enclothe’ (Gideon, Jdg.6:34; Amasai, 1Ch.12:19; Zechariah, 2Ch.24:20); נָתָן ‘put on’ (70 elders, Nu.11:25; Servant, Isa.42:1; New Israel, Ezek.37:14); סָמ ‘set on’ (70 elders, Nu.11:17; the refugees from Egypt, Isa.63:11); פָּעָמ ‘impel’ (Samson, Jdg.13:25), ‘אֵל ‘(be) upon’ (Moses, Nu.11:25; Servant, Isa.59:21; Messiah, Isa.61:1), בֵּ ‘(be) in’ (Joseph, Gn.41:38; Joshua, Nu.27:18; Daniel, Dan.4:5–6); and in exilic and post-exilic literature, נָפָל ‘fall on’ (Ezekiel, Ezek.11:5); בּו ‘come’ (Ezekiel, Ezek.2:2; 3:24); נָעָה ‘sent (me)’ (Deutero-Isaiah, Isa.48:16); נֵּהֵר ‘unfurl’ (all creation, Isa.32:15); סָפָק ‘pour’ (New Israel, Ezek.39:29; all people, Joel 3:1–2); נְבָה ‘flow’ (pupil, Prov.1:23); יוֹסָא ‘pour’ (New Israel, Isa.44:3); ‘אָמָא ‘stand among’ (post-exilic community, Hg.2:5). The נух was able to leave a person (1Sa.16:14, 23), lift upon a prophet (1Kg.18:12; Ezek.3:12, 14), carry a prophet (Ezek.3:14), bring a prophet from one place to another (Ezek.8:3; 11:1; 43:5), cross over from one prophet to another (1Kg.22:24), be replaced by another (evil) spirit (1Sa.16:14), and speak through David (2Sa.23:2).
was evil in the sight of Yahweh; a description of what they did follows; then
the theological comment that the anger of Yahweh was kindled; he punished,
normally through a foreign army; the people then cried to Yahweh, who
heedled them and raised up a ‘deliverer’, who being empowered by the \( r\text{̄}u\text{̄}h \)
of Yahweh, fought and won; the land had rest until the death of the
‘deliverer’. This is the idealized pattern and is illustrated by the first
deliverer, Othniel.\(^{44}\)

The date of elements of these stories, in particular the passages which
refer to the \( r\text{̄}u\text{̄}h \) of Yahweh, is the subject of much debate. Some would see
parts of some of the stories as pre-Deuteronomic sources\(^{45}\) and others as exilic,
post-Deuteronomic editing, and reflecting a strong anti-monarchical
feeling.\(^{46}\)

Others see elements of these stories as early, and Max Weber for in­
stance, argues that the ‘charismatic’ element is integral to the stories in their
portrayal of the servants of the war-god: ‘The savage charismatic warrior
heroes of the Israelite tribes, berserks like Samson, Nazarites and ecstatic
Nebiim, know themselves to be seized by this force’, ‘this force’ being the
\( r\text{̄}u\text{̄}h \) of Yahweh which ‘is neither an ethical power nor a religious state of
habituation, but an acute demonic-superhuman power of varying, and fre­
quently frightful, character’.\(^{47}\) These judges are not ‘elected’,\(^{48}\) but their
power and authority are said to stem from what Albrecht Alt calls ‘an unex­
pected personal gift and inspiration which in Israel could be regarded only
as a charisma, a free gift of Yahweh to the individual, and which therefore
carried the folk along’.\(^{49}\)

44. The spirit of Yahweh came upon Othniel and Jephthah (\( h\text{̄}a\text{̄}y\text{̄}a, \ 3:10; \ 11:29 \)), enclothed
Gideon (\( l\text{̄}b\text{̄}a\text{̄}s, \ 6:34 \)), impelled Samson (\( p\text{̄}a\text{̄}u\text{̄}m, \ 13:25 \)), rushed on Samson and Saul
(\( s\text{̄}a\text{̄}l\text{̄}h, \ 14:6, \ 19; \ 15:14; \ 1\text{Sa}.11:6 \)). Deborah was a ‘prophetess’ which suggests some association
with the \( r\text{̄}u\text{̄}h \) of Yahweh (\( Jdg.4:6 \)). No association with \( r\text{̄}u\text{̄}h \) is mentioned with
respect to Ehud, Shamgar, and Barak. Othniel, Gideon and Jephthah and indirectly Saul
(\( 1\text{Sa}.10:1-13 \)), were all given strength to lead the people into battles in order to secure the
deliverance of their people. Samson was not a leader of the people, but worked heroic
feats through the strengthening of the spirit of Yahweh (\( Jdg.14:6,19; \ 15:14 \); and cf. \(13:25 \)).
Even with Samson, the association with the \( r\text{̄}u\text{̄}h \) is still connected with ‘more-than-
human-process’ without which he would not be able to do such feats.

45. R. G. Boling, Judges: The Anchor Bible, (Garden City 1975) pp.30, 81, sees the stories of
Othniel, Deborah, Gideon, as belonging to phase one, before the 8th century, as was also
phase two which includes the stories of Jephthah and Samson.

pp.5-6.


48. But of Jephthah (\( Jdg.11:5-11 \)) and the request to Gideon (\( Jdg.8:22-24 \)); and Samuel’s
hope that his sons would succeed him (\( 1\text{Sa}.8:1 \)).

49. A. Alt, ‘Die Staatenbildung de Israeliten in Palastina’ in A. Alt, Kleine Schriften zur
Geschichte des Volkes Israel, vol.2 (München 1959) p.6. M. Noth, The History of Israel,
P. R. Ackroyd tr. (London 1965) pp.101, 107 has a similar position.
Boling, with others, argues that the Yahwistic spirit in Judges ‘is an abstraction referring to a quality or force which can infiltrate or be absorbed into human beings and exert great power’. Whilst Boling rejects the use of רוח as ‘wind’ here and the idea of an individual functionary of the heavenly court, to go as far as to say רוח is here an ‘abstraction’ or ‘an impersonal power or force’ is possibly giving a wrong emphasis. Patterned on רוח as the wind, especially the sudden winds of the sirocco, and also the sudden violence of storms (which Boling denies), it would be possible to talk about impersonal forces. But as shown above, the source of this רוח when linked with a specific purpose is very important. The force is not ‘impersonal’, but comes from Yahweh, it is his רוח, his ‘breath’, his life-giving power. If Weber is correct there may also be in the Judges the empowering רוח of ‘warrior asceticism’ which in turn was taken over from animistic ideas, and then linked with the concept of רוח as ‘wind’, ‘divine breath’, etc.

The connection of the spirit stories of Judges with the stories of the prophetic groups in 1 Samuel and also with Elijah and Elisha, especially with respect to the prophetic association with the spirit, is open to debate. On the other hand, Martin Buber sees that the judges must first become prophets: ‘the tradition of the pre-Davidic period . . . knows no other reception of the charisma than the prophetic. . . . We may here, . . . see an indication that the primary historical consideration . . . of charismatic vocations between Joshua and David was founded in the prophetic experience’. M. Weber argues that the early prophetic groups were war prophets whose task was to ‘acquire magical force’ and to empower the leaders with the same spirit that they had, namely, Yahweh’s. They were ‘military dervishes . . . ecstatic therapeutics and rainmakers’. Though there is no actual connection made between the prophetic ecstatic groups and the early charismatic judges, the links are there, particularly in Saul, who was caught up in these groups, via Samuel (ISa. 10 and 19). David in turn was also influenced by Samuel.

With David, the situation is different. David, like Saul, is anointed, and רוח of Yahweh came mightily upon him from that day onward (ISa. 16:13). The same verb שלח is used as of Saul, but now the prophetic groups do not play a role, and further the spirit is a permanent endowment. A consequence of this was the spirit of Yahweh leaving Saul and being replaced by

50. R. G. Boling, op.cit., p.25.
51. idem., p.81
an evil spirit from Yahweh (Isa. 16:14-23; 18:10; 19:9). David did portray
some of the characteristics of the charismatic warrior-judge, such as being a
great warrior and also his behaviour of dancing before the ark as it returned
in triumph.

Post-Davidic Evolution of Rūḥ

But on the death of David, this is the end of the ‘charismatic’ influence on
kingship. This role was taken over by the prophets, the kings carrying out
the administrative and warrior roles. In the northern kingdom the designa-
tion of the king was often the task of the prophets, in contrast to the
southern which was dynastic. But even in the northern kingdom, where this
designation did occur, the king himself was no longer a ‘charismatic’. The
spirit was always mediated by a prophet such as Elijah and Elisha, who
spoke on behalf of the God, who advises, cajoles, and displays the frenzied
aspects of the previous charism of the judges.

The authors of the Book of Kings, though making several references to
prophets, outside the Elijah-Elisha stories and 1 Kg.22 (the Michaiah
episode), make no reference to the endowment of prophets as having the
spirit of Yahweh. This is in contrast to the post-exilic Chronicler who in-
troduces prophets Amasai (lābaš, 1Ch.17:19), Azariah (hāyā ‘al, 2Ch.
15:1), Jahaziel (hāyā ‘al 2Ch.20:14; 1Ch.12:18) and Zechariah (lābaš 2Ch.
24:20), none of whom are known in the Book of Kings.

The pre-exilic writing prophets were also not overtly concerned with the
spirit. Only two prophets make a possible reference to a special endowment,
Isaiah (30:1) and Micah (3:8). This lack of references to rūḥ as ‘spirit’ in
the writing-prophets could result from attempts by those prophets to
dissociate themselves from the other more frenzied groups, who were the
professional prophets, but under the power and authority of the king (see
e.g. 1 Kg. 22).

Ezekiel marks the beginning of a significant resurgence of the concept of
the rūḥ of Yahweh as being associated with the prophetic experience,
evident in the exilic additions to Isaiah, and then in the post-exilic prophets.
We have discussed above the use of ‘spirit’ in the dry-bones passage of
Ezekiel 37 where the rūḥ is summoned from the four ‘winds’ and in turn
this is associated with the breath of life, which in v.14 is interpreted as ‘my
spirit I will put in you, and you shall live’. This concept is extended to the
prophet as the recipient of the word. The spirit of Yahweh fell on Ezekiel
and Yahweh spoke to Ezekiel (11:5), in the same way as the ‘hand of
Yahweh’ fell upon him (8:1) and in both cases Ezekiel saw a vision (cf. also
3:22; 40:1; 33:22). Both figures of the spirit and of the hand are combined
in the introduction to the Valley of Dry Bones ‘vision’ (37:1; cf. 3:14; 8:3).
The hand of Yahweh was upon me, and brought me out by the *rūaḥ* of Yahweh, and set me down in the midst of the valley.

Compare also 3:14 and 8:3. The idea of Ezekiel being moved by the spirit occurs some six times (3:14; 8:3; 11:1; 11:24; 37:1; 43:5 cf. 1 Kg. 18:12, 45 (hand); 2 Kg. 2:16), and lifts him to his feet three times (2:2; 3:12; 24).

In Ezekiel the hand of Yahweh and the spirit of Yahweh are both referred to as the source of visions which introduce commands to speak: hand, (3:22; 33:22 no vision); vision, (11:1); or the source of visions simply: hand, (1:3; 8:1). They both move Ezekiel in the context of a vision:

hand (3:14; 8:3; 37:1; 40:1),
spirit (2:2; 3:12, 14, 24; 8:3; 11:1; 24; 37:1; 43:5),
hand and spirit (3:14; 8:3; 37:1).

Compare also 1 Kg. 18:12, 45 where both the spirit and hand of Yahweh move Elijah. The terms ‘hand of Yahweh’ and ‘spirit of Yahweh’ thus describe Ezekiel’s religious justification for his visions and his proclamation of the word. It is tempting to see in the concept of spirit here little more than that which is meant by hand, viz an anthropomorphic way of talking about God’s guidance, but the use of *rūaḥ* in the very word itself would suggest a more active connotation. What we have in 11:5 is certainly a development which clarifies the nature of his prophetic inspiration.

And the *rūaḥ* of Yahweh fell upon me, and he said to me; “Say, thus says Yahweh . . .”

Most of the modern critical scholars see this verse as a post-exilic addition, partly because of its specific link of the word and the spirit,35 and also an attempt to bring Ezekiel’s experiences in line with the inrush of the spirit of Yahweh in the earlier prophets. But the response is different. In Ezekiel it is not the ‘ecstasy’ of the earlier prophets which is at issue, it is the reception of the word, and its delivery. In both cases there is the source concept of a spirit or vital force from the divine taking possession of the man. For Ezekiel the message, its reception and deliverance, are the significant aspects.

In the exilic work of Deutero-Isaiah, the Servant will have the spirit of Yahweh put on him (*nāṭan* Isa. 42:1) and ‘he will bring forth justice to the gentiles’.

A similar idea is expressed by Trito-Isaiah who saw himself as fulfilling

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the mission of the Servant of Deutero-Isaiah. We reach the peak of identification of spirit — inspiration — word proclamation:

The spirit of the Yahweh God is upon me, because Yahweh has anointed me,
to preach good tidings to the afflicted. . . . (Isa. 61:1).56

This passage can be compared to Mic. 3:8 and Ezekiel 11:5. Westermann argues that such passages may go back to the older prophets of salvation (as distinct from the prophets of judgement) and through them to the seers of old (Nu. 24:2; 2 Sa. 23:2).57 Anointing is associated with the spirit in 1 Sa. 16:13 and 2 Sa. 23:1-3 where it is used of David. The first reference to his being chosen king, and the second to his role as ‘prophet’:

The spirit of Yahweh speaks through me,
his word is upon my tongue.

These references lead to the suggestion that Trito-Isaiah has full power to act as a ruler, and further he has full authorization to announce the tidings of God, and that he has the empowerment that goes with the giving of the spirit.

In the exilic and post-exilic literature, the spirit, the life-giving breath given to man and animals at creation, will come again. This return will take place only after the people had been punished and cleansed. The people will travel a New Exodus, across the symbolic wilderness and will be given new life, new breath, new power, a new rûah (Ezek. 11:19; 18:36; 36:26). The whole story of the Valley of Bones symbolizes this. A later redactor expanded this so he could say: ‘I will pour out my rûah’ on all Israel (Ezek. 39:29). A rûah of grace and supplication will be poured on the people of Jerusalem (Zech. 12:10) and in the latter days the rûah will be poured on all flesh (Joel 2:28-29), and all shall prophesy, dream dreams and see visions, reminding one of the hope of Moses that all God’s people would be prophets (Nu. 11:29). Just as water is poured out on the dry ground, so God:

will pour out my rûah upon thy seed,
and my blessing upon thy offspring. (Isa. 44:3).

In this passage, the desert is normally understood in a metaphorical manner, being applied to the people of Israel. It is a symbol of lifelessness, chaos, and barrenness. The pouring out of the creative rûah is a conferring of blessing. It is significant that the use of the two verbs ‘to pour’ occurs only in the contexts of the restored community. Like life-giving streams of water in the dessicated desert, the divine rûah will give life to the redeemed com-

munity. The spirit is like water to the desert, a life-giving fluid or substance.

Finally, one of the most significant passages for the discussion of the
divine spirit occurs in part of the historical prologue of the Psalm of lament
over the destruction of Jerusalem in Isa. 63:7 — 64:11. The purpose of the
historical prologue (63:7-14) is to recount the past blessings of Yahweh,
that, in spite of all, the steadfast love of God remained. The act of rebellion
is interpreted as: 'they grievèd his holy spirit'. Though the act of rebellion is
set in the wilderness story of the Exodus, its occurrence here is of general
significance. But two significant points are worth noting. Firstly, the phrase
'the holy spirit' is used as a metaphor of God's presence, guiding the people
through the wilderness (v. 11). In verse fourteen the writer refers to the 'rûah
of Yahweh' leading the people into the promised land. In the Exodus tradi­
tions the presence of God is realized in several symbols, in particular the
angel of Yahweh, the pillar of cloud and fire, the presence (literally the
'face') of Yahweh, or the ark, the glory, or the back of God. In the
historical prologue of the Isa. 63 passage we read:

There was no messenger, nor angel,
but his presence which saved them. (Isa. 63:9).

It is this 'presence' which is equated with the 'holy spirit of Yahweh' in
verses ten and eleven and the 'spirit of Yahweh' in verse fourteen. In other
words 'the spirit' here is not so much the infusive power given to the judges
and others, but is the abiding, real, presence of God.

The second point is that the 'holy spirit' of God was able to be grieved by
the rebellious Israelites, an idea which is developed further in the New
Testament (Acts 7.51; Eph. 4:30). This is the first step in the distinct
hypostatization of the spirit in both Jewish and Christian thought. The
Spirit of Yahweh now is Yahweh. It is partly because of the increasing,
post-exilic tendency to not speak about God, but to speak of the voice of
God, hand of God, glory of God, face of God, etc., all of which not only
stand for God himself, but is linked with the hiding God and the revealing
God reveals himself in terms of his attributes, rather than by his ap­
pearance. So the figure of the rûah as the wind, breath, spirit, is signifi­
cant in itself.

Further, just as the 'angel of Yahweh' is Yahweh himself, and yet
distinct from him, so also the Spirit of Yahweh can be seen as Yahweh
himself, but also as an entity distinct from him. This can be seen in passages
like Isa. 32:5 where the promise is for 'the spirit' to be poured out on high

58. The author discusses this passage in some detail in the forthcoming paper referred to in
note 20 above.

59. The author has discussed this further in 'The Concept of Mystery in the Hebrew Bible: An
Example of the Via Negativa', in D. W. Dockrill and R. Mortley, eds. The Via Negativa,
and Isa. 34:16 where the Spirit of Yahweh is paralleled with the mouth of Yahweh. A development occurs in Ezekiel where it is often a spirit which acts on Ezekiel (3:12, 14, 24; 8:3; 11:1, 24; 43:5). This spirit acts almost independently, but in such contexts behind it all is the God himself.

**Conclusion**

The diachronic history of *ruah* is fraught with problems because of the poverty of sources and the language *in articulo mortis*. This paper has shown from an etymological understanding of *ruah* as ‘air in motion’ that the word takes its meaning from the subsistent entities, wind and breath. The wind in the Palestinian world can be very destructive, particularly the hot eastern wind. Such a destructive, desiccative wind was a ready model to describe God’s judging of Israel. Just as the sirocco destroys all before it, so will God destroy the people and reap havoc and desolation. In some passages this model is worked out through the agent of foreign armies. With this development the Israelite God is Lord of universal history. In other passages, the theological roles of creator and sustainer are implied where God is said to use the destructive wind to carry out his very purposes. But there are other winds which are not destructive, but cooling, rain-bearing, productive. Such winds gave rise to a differing image. So the *ruah* expresses the very mode of creation in the mythopoeic story of Genesis. It is the *ruah* in man which ultimately comes from God, that gives man life.

The other basic meaning of *ruah* is that of breath. The breath in man is linked with the theological idea of God as creator. It is God who gives man breath, and hence, life. When God is conceptualized in an anthropomorphic manner, then the Divine God breathes, and it is his own *ruah* which he gives to all living things, man, animals, and according to Genesis one, the world.

These anthropomorphic views of God together with the ready-made images of both the destructive and revivifying winds as well as certain other mythopoeic and animistic theories of the divine and natural orders enabled the writers of the Old Testament to develop over time the concept of *ruah* which is normally translated into English as ‘spirit’. This is the concept, in Ian Ramsey’s words, of ‘God’s initiating activity and our responsive activities’. The spirit of God, which is in some sense God himself, is the spirit sent from God which enters into man, not only in life-giving aspects but in empowering for specific tasks.

The writers of the Old Testament were not giving ‘descriptions of some heavenly going-on which could be discerned through the long-range theological telescope’. All came from God, be it good or evil. Picking up

the symbol (or model as Ramsey would call it) of 'air in motion', and ally­
ing this with experiences they wish to make sense of theologically, the
writers of the Old Testament used this model or symbol to show God in
action. Further, they have used this model or symbol to express the hope
that in the Servant, in the Messiah, and in all flesh, this symbol would point
the way forward for all mankind, his responsive activity to God's initiating
activity.