

## Bible Study Outline – Spiritual Understanding

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The burden of this study is for the Lord in His mercy to enlighten us on the nature of things from the view point of the spiritual realm, so that in the fight of faith to lay hold on eternal life (1 Timothy 6:12), we would not be as one that beats the air (1 Corinthians 9:26), but will be well equipped to war a good warfare (1 Timothy 1:18), and be counted among them that overcome (Revelation 21:7) – them that shall be beneficiaries of the seven promises in the letters to the seven churches (Revelation 2 & 3).

By God's grace, we'll progress through this study under different subheadings (viewing from the spiritual lens) and trust the Lord to shine His light upon us.

### **The spirituality of The World:**

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In order to war a good warfare, we need to understand the framework of the spiritual realm.

- There is a spiritual realm (the realm of spirits). God is a Spirit (the Father of spirits), angels are spirits, demons (fallen angels) are spirits. They are in the spiritual realm.
- Genesis 2:4-5 shows that everything that is physical is first spiritual, because the spiritual realm is the real realm. Daniel 4:26 says "... the heavens do rule" – Daniel 4:31-33a
- The spiritual realm has different regions in it. Paul makes mention of the third heaven (2 Corinthians 12:2). It is one of the regions in the spiritual realm. Paul called it Paradise, and our Lord Jesus mentions that the tree of life is in this Paradise (Revelation 2:7). Being the place of the tree of life, it is the highest region in the spiritual realm – highest meaning, it is the region with the greatest expression of the glory of God.
- The second and first heaven are two other spiritual regions, and they are the spiritual side of this physical world. Scripture makes reference to a spiritual realm called "the air" (Ephesians 2:2, 1 Thessalonians 4:17, Revelation 16:17). This realm is the first heaven. It is the spiritual equivalent of the physical part of this world filled with air – the space from the ground up to the clouds (above which you need oxygen mask to breath). This is the realm where majority of human life (physical and spiritual) takes place. This first heaven is the earth realm of this world we live in, while the second heaven is the heaven of this world. As God put the sun, moon, and stars in the physical heaven of this world to rule the earth, it indicates that the spiritual heaven of this world (the second heaven, when listed along with Paradise) is the realm of spiritual authority over this world. The name second heaven comes in simply to show rank in the level of God's glory expressed in it, compared to the Paradise (the third heaven).

- These two (the first and second heaven) are the spiritual realm of this world we live in. They are the heavenly places mentioned by Paul in Ephesians 6:12 where principalities and powers of darkness operate in. Satan was called the prince of the power of the air (Ephesians 2:2), which means the chief with the power to rule the realm of the air. This was an authority God gave to Adam in Genesis 1:28. The physical realm of the air is where all living things are. By ordaining Adam to rule all living things, God established Adam as the prince of the power of the air, but he lost it to Satan when he obeyed the counsel of Satan. Satan and his fallen angels had since then been using the authority to turn this world into a kingdom of darkness. **Some rule territorially from the second heaven while some roam around the first heaven to possess men and to make them carry out the works of the flesh.** But that would end (Rev. 12:7-9, 1 Thess. 4:17, Rev. 16:17).

### The spirituality of Man:

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In order to war a good warfare, we need to understand how the spiritual realm affects us by understanding the spiritual components of man by which we can perceive or receive things spiritually (good or bad).

- **The spirit:** Man is a spirit. Meaning, he is made up of a spiritual substance (or spiritual matter). He is breathed out (brought forth) into conscious existence from the loins of God who is a Spirit (Psalm 90:1-2, Heb. 12:9).
- **The soul:** Man's personality is called soul. The soul is the description of who man (the spirit) is based on the choices he makes. Genesis 2:7. Man (the spirit) became a living soul means when God breathed out Adam from His loins, he was no longer a dormant spirit inside of God, but now had the opportunity to live out an observable personality. It is based on this lived out personality that man will be judged (Ezekiel 18:20).
- **The body:** Man has a physical body which is made of physical substance. Romans 1:20 reveals to us that (along with other aspects of physical creation) God created man's physical body in a way that gives man a clue to man's spiritual make-up (that he cannot see) which is a clue to God's make-up. Meaning, the senses in man's physical body are a clue to spiritual senses.
- **The senses:** Physically, the five senses (see, hear, smell, taste, touch/feel) are a means for collecting different kinds of information from our physical environment, and each sense has its organ (eyes for seeing, nose for smelling, ears for hearing, tongue for tasting, skin for feeling touch).
- **See:** Physically, a man sees when his eyes pick up the reflection of light on an object. That is, for a person to pick up any information by seeing, light has to shine on the object first. This is the case spiritually. You see spiritually when God gives light (illumination) on something. Light is knowledge, wisdom, understanding (comprehension) of something: 2 Corinthians 4:4-6, Ephesians 1:18, Romans 3:18, 11:8-10, 1 John 2:11, James 1:25. To see spiritually means to receive knowledge, wisdom and understanding about a matter after God gives illumination. Ability to do this means your spiritual eyes are open.

- **Hear:** Physically, you hear something when a person speaks. Spiritually, you hear when a spirit (Holy Spirit or evil spirits) speaks. 2 Corinthians 10:5 speaks of “imagination”. The word “imagination” is from a Greek word which refers to “thoughts”, and the root Greek word refers to “something said”. That is, the imaginations spoken of in 2 Corinthians 10:5 refer to thoughts generated by words spoken. These are not words spoken by humans, but words spoken by evil spirits. Meaning, when a spirit speaks, you hear it as thoughts. The prophets in the Old Testament are clear examples of hearing the voice of God. 1 Kings 19:11-13 and more. As it is physically, that you need to be in the presence of the person speaking (or be connected to the person by some technology) for you to hear what the person is saying, so also it is spiritually, you need to be in the presence of God to hear the voice of God. But many times we instead hear the voice of devils [speaking accusation, condemnation, suggesting dark or lustful things, etc.] because we do not discern that they are in our spiritual vicinity and as such are not conscious to rebuke them.
- **Smell:** Physically, you smell something when you are in the environment of that thing it gives off a scent or an odour. In the spiritual realm, different activities or spirits give off different smells (for good or for bad). Philippians 4:18, Genesis 8:21. A deed pleasing to God gives off a pleasant spiritual smell and a deed displeasing to God (of sin or darkness) gives off a foul spiritual smell. When God has accomplished dealings in your life your life would emit sweet odours to Him (Songs of Solomon 4:10-15 is a symbolic example of how the Bridegroom, Jesus Christ, would see us when His dealings have made us ready). It is with this sense that when you hear of something or see something physically, you are able to pick up the spiritual smell it gives off and discern whether it is pleasant or foul, even if it looks or sounds innocent physically. Overtime, after smelling different things spiritually and seeing what they turned out to be, you will be able to accurately determine the nature of what you smell spiritually. Or if your spiritual hearing is active, after you smell something the Holy Spirit can tell you what it is and you learn different smells that way. But before then, you may just be able to tell that it is either good or bad. This sense is helpful when evaluating people that come around you or judging situations you see or hear that may seem innocent on the physical surface.
- **Feel:** The physical organ for feeling is your skin. It is with your skin that you feel disturbances in the air (e.g. when something moves). It is with your skin that you feel temperature (and the weather effects). It is with your skin that you feel touch. Spiritually, your feeling sense is how you can sense spiritual activity in a place (the moving of winds) be it good (John 3:8) or bad (Daniel 7:2). It is with your spiritual feel sense that you can sense the spiritual temperature of a place. Matthew 24:12, 20-21. Jesus described a cold and winter climate as when iniquity abounds. An example is you enter into a place, an institution, or a city, and are able to feel the spiritual temperature of the place (even without observing anything physically). It is with this sense (by paying attention to how you feel) that you can determine the dimension in the spiritual realm you are in at any point in time (or if you are under attack by spirits whose presence is a foul atmosphere of cold

temperature; a cold temperature that could be manifest as inaudible feelings: fear, depression, lustful inclinations, etc.). The absence of this sense is that a person can be in a demonic environment and not know.

- **Taste:** You taste something spiritually when you experience it. Psalm 34:8, Matthew 16:28, Hebrews 6:4-5, 1 Peter 2:3. The accuracy of your tasting sense is your ability to properly interpret the different elements of an experience to know its nature, just as physically, your tasting accuracy depends on your ability to pick out the different elements contained in the substance you taste (e.g. food or drink). In scriptures, words (of God or of the enemy) are symbolized as water (Ephesians 5:26, Revelation 12:15). It is with your spiritual tasting sense that you can determine the nature of certain words spoken into your heart (by God or by unclean spirits) after experiencing its effect on you. Sometimes the enemy tries to speak like God, but when you “taste” the word (its effect on you, e.g. being downcast) you can determine that it is not a flavour from God.
- **The Mind:** In addition to the senses, as we consider the spirituality of man, it is important to take note of the heart and mind. The physical equivalent of the mind is the brain (the place for coordinating all the information received from the different senses and controlling the operations of the different systems in the body). This is a role the mind plays in your spirit. It serves as your spiritual brain to compute courses of action to take based on information received from your spiritual and physical senses. An example of an ideal course of action is to obey God. The summary of the courses of action that your mind concludes on (in different situations) is your personality (your soul). And the ability of your mind (your spiritual brain) to conclude on a decision to take is your will. Romans 12:2 says we should be renewed in our minds. This means to flush our spiritual brain of all it has known before and learn [a new way of interpreting information and taking decisions] from the Holy Spirit (our ever-present Teacher). Romans 8:6. To be spiritually minded means to reason things and reach the same conclusion (course of action) that the Holy Spirit will.
- **The Heart:** Physically speaking, the heart is the core of the body. It is the place from where blood is pumped to all parts of the body. Leviticus 17:11 says the life of the flesh (the body) is the blood. Thus the heart (the organ for pumping blood) is the life organ of the body (when it stops working the person dies). The beating of the heart is the sign of life. This gives us understanding of our spiritual heart. It is the organ of the life of your spirit. The beating of your spiritual heart is the sign of spiritual life. What is the beating of your spiritual heart? It is the means by which life is spread in your spirit. What is life? John 17:3. To know God (mentally and experientially) is life. But to know God, one must believe Him (Hebrews 11:6), and every higher dimension of the revelation of God is from one level of faith to another level of faith (Romans 1:17). Meaning faith is the means by which life (the knowledge of God) is obtained. Thus, the heart being the organ of life means that the heart is the organ of faith (Romans 10:10). Proverbs 4:23 says guard your heart with all diligence. Meaning, something unwanted can enter into your heart (into your blood system). Physically, for something to enter your blood system you need to first eat it and digest it and then it will be absorbed into

your blood and pumped around the body by the heart. Likewise, for something to enter your heart (your spiritual life (blood) system) you need to eat it and digest it with your mind. When you digest it and accept it then it is absorbed into your heart (and becomes part of who you are). Physically, the quality of what you eat determines the health of your blood and your heart. Likewise, spiritually what you take in with your mind affects the health of your heart (and its ability to function as your organ of faith towards God). Proverbs 4:23 says guard it with all diligence because out of it are the issues of life. Physically, the blood is pumped from the heart to all parts of the body—life (the blood) issues out of the heart to other parts of the body. Spiritually, the state of your heart determines what is issued into all your spirit being. That is, what you believe is what you are (and shall be). Proverbs 23:7. But it all begins with what you eat (consider in your mind). Knowing this, we better appreciate the warfare Paul mentioned in 2 Corinthians 10:4-5; casting down strongholds of thoughts spoken into the mind by evil spirits, because the end of those thoughts is to distill into your heart and determine who you are (different from God’s intention for your life).

### **The spirituality of The Fall:**

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In order to understand why the spiritual environment of this world is so occupied by spirits of darkness, or why this world seems to lie in wickedness, we need to understand the fall.

- Romans 7:14, Psalm 51:5. Sold under sin means we were slaves to sin. In sin did my mother conceive me means right from when I was conceived I was already in bondage to sin (because my parents were also in bondage to sin, all the way back to Adam and Eve). Sin is not just an act, it is another name for satan and his fallen angels. Just as God is love, so also satan is sin. Genesis 4:7. Sin is a person, and that person is satan. Sold under sin means being a slave to satan. Colossians 1:13. Satan and his fallen angels are called **the power of darkness**. Meaning, their ability is to cause darkness in the people that are their slaves.
- Humanity became slaves to sin according to the law in Romans 6:16. Adam and Eve yielded themselves to obey satan, and then they became his slaves (as well as all humanity that came from them). Being slaves to satan he had access to “bind men with chains” and make them do what he wants them to do (which is to rebel against God by doing all the things He doesn’t like, so that God would destroy man).
- Colossians 1:13. But thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord who has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us to His Kingdom. Being in His Kingdom means we are now under **the Power of Light** that is able to accomplish holiness in us and conformance to His image (Eph. 1:19, Rom. 1:4).

### **The spirituality of sin (the works of the flesh):**

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In the fight of faith, and the battle to emerge as an overcomer, it helps to understand the power driving the acts of sin, so as to focus prayer efforts in a targeted manner to obtain the necessary victory, especially in cases where the sin is an oppression.

- Galatians 5:19-22a. The fruit of the Spirit is the result of the Holy Spirit's labour (influence) in our lives. But what are the works of the flesh? It is the doings of the flesh. But Romans 7:17-18-20 shows that sin is in the flesh, and sin is a spirit (satan and his fallen angels). Thus, the works of the flesh are the fruits of spirits of darkness. That is, the results of the influence of spirits of darkness on a person. Therefore the works of the flesh (e.g. fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, hatred, strife, envying, etc.) **are not just actions** but are fruits (results of the labour of) spirits of darkness (eg. spirit of fornication, spirit of uncleanness, spirit of lasciviousness, spirit of idolatry, spirit of hatred, spirit of strife, spirit of envying, etc. Every manifestation of sin has a spirit causing it. Including things that do not necessarily look like sin but are oppression, e.g. fear, depression, anxiety, worthlessness, suicide, etc, they are all fruits of spirits (spirit of fear, spirit of depression, spirit of anxiety, spirit of worthlessness, spirit of suicide, etc.). Thus, if you have immoral thoughts or feel like committing fornication then you are under attack by the spirit of fornication. If you find yourself in depression, then you are under attack by the spirit of depression. Many times we make the mistake of thinking these things are ourselves. That is, we take ownership of it and say things like "I am depressed", or "I want to commit suicide" or "I have anxiety". But the reality is that it is the fruit of the influence of a spirit. Knowing that it is a spirit attacking you helps you to know how to deal with the issue. **Rebuke the spirit (and ask for support from your brethren to pray with you where necessary).**
- **Gateways of sin:** A gateway is the means by which someone gains entrance into a place. A man is referred to as a house in scriptures (1 Corinthians 3:16-17, Matthew 12:44), or a city (Proverbs 25:28). A child of God is a spiritual place that belongs to God—a spiritual house (or city) for God, and the man is also the priest of God over that house (or city) that he is. But sadly, it is possible for spirits of darkness to find their way into a person that belongs to God, through what we can call gateways of sin (entrances for unclean spirits). The mind (earlier mentioned) is the entrance into man and it is there that spirits speak thoughts into. Some thoughts are self generated (like you talking to yourself). Some thoughts are spoken by other spirits into your mind. Sometimes physical mediums are employed to have an easier access into your mind: these include worldly music, worldly films, worldly conversations, worldly books, worldly online content, etc. When a movie, song, or content is created under the inspiration of an unclean spirit (e.g. the spirit of immorality). When a believer exposes himself to that content to listen to it or to read it, the mind is set to absorb the content, and that is an open door for the spirit to enter. Each act of watching or listening to such content is like a vote, and at some point, the spirit gains full entrance and begins to control the person

beyond what the person even wants to do. This has become an oppression, and some are oppressed without knowing.

### **The spirituality of holiness (the effect of the Holy Spirit):**

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Colossians 1:13 helps us understand that being free from the power of darkness, we are now under the Power of Light in the Kingdom of God. To overcome, we need to understand this power and how to experience it.

- Galatians 5:22-23. Unlike the power of darkness that is carried out by many spirits who work out the different works of the flesh, the manifestations of the fruit of the Spirit are administered by one Savior (the Holy Spirit). 2 Timothy 1:7. He is the Spirit of Power. He is the Spirit of Love. He is the Spirit of a Sound Mind (the Mind of Christ). These expressions (power, love, sound mind are examples of His offices). So, as listed in Galatians 5:22-23, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of love; He is the Spirit of joy; He is the spirit of peace; He is the spirit of longsuffering; He is the spirit of gentleness; He is the spirit of meekness; He is the spirit of temperance. He is the Spirit of Faith (2 Corinthians 4:13). He is the Spirit of Prayer and Supplication (Romans 8:26, Ephesians 6:18). He is the Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9, 1 Peter 1:11). It is important to understand that the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of the virtues we are to develop as children of God. Prayer is not just prayer. Love is not just an act of love, etc. They are outflows from Him. Meaning, it is wrong to try to develop these virtues without drawing it from Him. When we see ourselves lacking in any of these virtues, we should be as the woman with the issue of blood—we should reach out to Him and touch Him in faith, and the category of life related to the office you touched will flow to you. If you are struggling with prayer. Reach out and touch Him in His office as the Spirit of Prayer and His power will flow into you to establish you as a person of prayer. Same for love. Same for full conformance to the image of Christ. When you wait in the place of touching Him by faith in His office as the Spirit of Christ, then power flow into you to transform you into Christ (in character and anointing).
- **Consecration:** Isaiah 40:31. The word “wait” means to bind together (to be intertwined). It is a devoted life of constantly staying “in touch” with Him so that His power can continue to flow into you to make you like Him. Romans 1:4. Our Lord Jesus exemplified this. To Him, His Father was the Spirit that indwelt Him as the Spirit of Holiness. And staying in constant touch (being intertwined) with His Father allowed the power of God to constantly flow into Him and furnish Him with the attributes of a Son of God (a supernatural being born of God who also has victory over sin and death).