

# Moving of the Spirit in Messianic Jewish Context

by Michael Rudolph

Delivered to Ohev Yisrael on June 6, 2009

We have just returned from the Tikkun conference where many of us were impacted or saw others impacted by a mighty move of the *Ruach Hakodesh*. One of the things by which I was most impressed was how many of our Ohev youth were affected, and how they, along with a few of our leaders, caucused in a corner and sensitively ministered to one another. All those who participated are to be commended.

Another thing that impressed me was the way Asher Intrater shared his pulpit time with a young man from Israel, and how he later organized volunteer youths to position themselves in front of established leaders and released them to minister to individuals, young and old, who came forward to be prayed for. It demonstrated to me that we have underestimated the spiritual and ministry abilities of our youths and young adults, and it signaled to me a call to change our attitudes about whom in our midst we call on and trust to minister.

One of the youths who spoke briefly at the conference was our own Michael Eadie. I was taken by his fervor and his understanding and ability to express what he had received from the Holy Spirit, and so I have invited him to share my pulpit time here today in the same way as Asher shared his at the conference.

Please welcome Michael Eadie.

<Michael Eadie shared his experience at the conference.>

Thank you Michael.

I will be brief in my own comments, but I want to speak to you a bit about emotion and Holy Spirit ministry. As I looked over the hundreds of people at the conference, I noted three kinds of demeanors among the worshipers. There were those who were in quiet meditative worship, those who were exhibiting great emotion and excitement, and those who were looking around trying to figure out what to make of it all. I have just admitted that I was among the latter, and that is characteristic of me because I am usually among those leaders charged with making sure that things are in right order.

Years ago, when I was not yet a leader, I was among those who were easily distracted and annoyed by exhibitions of emotion and strangeness during Holy Spirit ministry. I suspected that it was of the flesh, and it sure didn't look Jewish. I was right about some of it; in fact I documented, with proof through what some people admitted to me, that some of the behavior I observed was falsified because of pressures to comply with cultural expectations. However, I observed another thing over time, and that was that some of the folks whom I saw acting strangely seemed to accelerate in their spiritual development soon after the events. Some received spiritual gifts they did not have previously, and many matured in the fruit of the Spirit listed in [Galatians 5:22-23](#):

*“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control.”*

It’s interesting how the last of the fruit listed is self-control, and I am telling you that it resulted from exhibitions that appeared to lack self-control. Now, I have always believed the biblical proverb that says “the proof of the pudding is in the eating” (well, if it isn’t in the Bible, something like it no doubt is). Anyway, I began to see good fruit come from those Holy Spirit ministries and, though I didn’t understand it, I had to admit that God was using it. For myself, I was pretty conservative but, over time, I have become more comfortable with emotional ministry, and even developed a theory of why Holy Spirit ministry and emotion so often went together. Here is my latest thinking on it:

First, the God who created the entire world and maintains it is so powerful that we humans cannot even stand up in the shadow of His presence. Although we ought not to intentionally lose control of ourselves, it is awfully easy to do, and it is understandable when we are in the presence of such power. That accounts for part of the emotion. The other part is that many of us are so self-controlled in our way of being and our daily walk, that without meaning to, we refuse to release control to God even when we should. In order to break through that, God meets us with power during times of ministry when we are willing to open ourselves to him, and one way many of us open ourselves to Him is by letting go of our conventional behaviors. When we do that, God can get inside us without forcing Himself on us, and the combination of God’s power and our openness to Him, produces the great emotional release that we often see and experience. So what I am saying is that regardless of how unconventional, how strange, or how loud our behavior is during times of Holy Spirit ministry, we should count it as good if we are genuinely opening ourselves to God through it, but worthless if we are not.

One more thing: It is important that we do not judge God’s presence or the fruit of His ministry by the emotion we observe or experience. As I have said, the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and it may take days or weeks to finish the pudding. In those days and weeks following what appears to be a powerful move of the Spirit, we should ask ourselves:

- Have we repented of any life-dominating sins to which we were previously in bondage? Only time can tell that.
- Have we let go of some of our flesh, put off our old man and put on the new man of the Spirit? Only time can tell.
- Have we received Holy Spirit gifts that we did not previously have? Discerning of Spirits? Healing? Prophecy? Only time can tell that.
- Have we acquired more of the “Fruit of the Spirit?” Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control? Only time can tell.

There is a bottom-line lesson here, and it is this: When we are in a properly-led meeting where ministry of the Holy Spirit is being conducted, we should not be put off by emotions we see displayed by others, and we should not fear and try to quash emotions we may experience

ourselves. On the other hand, we should not act falsely and feel pressured to copy behaviors we see in others; we will work against the Spirit if we do that. Also, let's come to ministry meetings with repentant attitudes, expecting to be touched – expecting to be changed in some way by the Holy Spirit. Finally, regardless of what we may feel or experience, let's not judge a ministry's spiritual value until we allow some time to go by, to determine whether permanent godly changes have resulted; that – not emotion – is the proof of the pudding.

We will be coming together as a joint *chavurah* right in this room next Tuesday evening. At that time, those of you – especially the youth of Ohev – who wish to, may share your experiences at the Conference. After that, we are going to open ourselves to the Holy Spirit and ask Him to move among us once again. So let's expect a spiritually exciting time together on Tuesday, but let's remember that it is the substance we will retain from it, and not the excitement and emotion that will be its lasting value. Amen?