

The Spirit and the Breath of Life

SUMMARY

What is the spirit, and what part of us returns to God when we die? This study follows the Hebrew word ruach (spirit, breath and wind) from Genesis 1 to Ecclesiastes 12:7, and finds that the spirit is God's own breath of life: given at the start of life and returned to Him at death. It contrasts this with the Greek idea of an immortal, pre-existing soul, and traces the Holy Spirit's work from Samson and David to the royal priesthood of believers after Christ's ascension.

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How I study, what is a foundation of truth, how to approach the Word

The fundamentals of this study are steps in answering “What is the Mind, Body, Soul, and Spirit.” There is a mystery of where we go when we die. What part of “us” goes to be with the Lord?

ACTS 7:59

And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

Q What was Stephen saying here about his “spirit”?

Q What is the function of the spirit?

HYPOTHESIS

The Spirit is from God, not created, but existing in Genesis 1:1-2. It is the “Breath of Life”, and is what gives life to all creatures on the earth. It is given from God at the start of life, and returns to God upon death. There is no life without it.

WARNING

In Greek philosophy, the concept of an immortal soul was a central idea, reinforced by philosophers like Plato and Pythagoras. They believed the soul, the essence of a person, was incorporeal and eternal, existing independently of the physical body. This belief influenced many other aspects of Greek thought, including their understanding of life, death, and the afterlife.

The Greek understanding of this eternal thinking entity living before birth, during life, and after death, and is not a Biblical concept. We come into being at conception, we live in a body only, and upon death die, to be resurrected in our bodies by Christ upon his return, or in Judgment.

In Hebrew, "ruach" (רוח) is a versatile word meaning spirit, breath, or wind. It's used in the Hebrew Bible to describe both the human spirit and the Holy Spirit of God, as well as natural wind.

Reh (ר): Represents a guttural sound, often transliterated as "r" or "rh".

Vav (ו): Can act as a vowel (often an "o" or "u") and also as a consonant (a "v").

Heth (ה): Represents a guttural sound, often transliterated as "h".

רוח

The nikkudot (vowel markings) were not present in the original Hebrew texts. They were invented around 1000 years ago by the Masoretes, a group of Jewish scholars, to standardize reading and pronunciation, per sources on Ancient Hebrew. The Masoretes added these dots and dashes to the text to indicate how to read the words, as the Hebrew language was becoming less spoken and the oral tradition of pronunciation was fading.

The nikkudot can CHANGE meanings of words. This addition can sway a reader to the understandings of the writer who adds them. For purposes of the evaluation of meaning, we will not use anything added after the original text, considering the access to the original texts, and avoiding influence of non-believers adding their influences to scripture.

The noted uses of “ruach” are in italics, these are all the same word:

GENESIS 1:1-2

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ² The earth was without form, and void; and darkness was on the face of the deep. And *the Spirit* of God was hovering over the face of the waters.

God's ruach is pre-existing and NOT created. It dwells above all creation.

GENESIS 6:3

³ And the Lord said, “*My Spirit* shall not strive (travel/journey) with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.”

Our ruach is from God, It gives life and we possess it temporarily because of our flesh. His spirit will dwell with man, but return to God.

GENESIS 6:17

¹⁷ And behold, I Myself am bringing flood waters on the earth, to destroy from under heaven all flesh in which *is the breath* of life; everything that is on the earth shall die.

The judgment of the flood was intended to judge everything with a living spirit or ruach.

GENESIS 7:22

²² All in whose nostrils was the breath of the *spirit of life*, all that was on the dry land, died.

The presence of ruach brings life to the being. The body is dead without it. Every single person who breathes has the Spirit of God in them.

GENESIS 2:77

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the *breath of life*; and man became a living being.

Man was the only creation described as having this ruach.

ECCLESIASTES 12:7

⁷ Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And *the spirit* will return to God who gave it.

Our ruach is from God, and returns to God who gave it. Repetition of Gen 6:3

It is God's spirit that makes our body living. The ruach was not created, and exists before man was formed, is God, and returns to God. To “return” to God, would mean it started with God in heaven.

If anyone claims that our identity is spirit and we are eternal, that would by proxy mean we were alive with God PRIOR to creation, living forever. This concept is not biblical, but Greek. Portions of this belief were adopted into Roman Catholic dogma, regarding life after death even apart from the body. This eternal existence is PAGAN, non-Biblical teaching in its origins.

The Bible says “we” began our existence with our body, and apart from the ruach we are dead or asleep, awaiting a resurrection. We have a part of God within us, His Spirit.

EZEKIEL 36:26-27

²⁶ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. ²⁷ I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

Notice this is in the Old Testament. The Holy Spirit was present and in their hearts even then.

MATTHEW 1:18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit.

Jesus was born with the Holy Spirit, just as Adam was created with the Holy Spirit.

ROMANS 8:11

¹¹ But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

Paul states that it is the Holy Spirit Himself that gives life to our mortal bodies, and not a mechanic of wind or power of the “breath of life” that animates us to “life”, but God's presence Himself as the Spirit.

I CORINTHIANS 3:9,16-17

⁹ For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building.

¹⁶⁻¹⁷ Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are.

This was written to the church, yet Paul states the spirit dwells in “you” the temple. The Spirit is God's spirit, the vessel is “you”, and if you defile it, your flesh will be destroyed.

“WE” are not the Spirit, we are the temple. Christ was the temple that became sin and was destroyed for three days, yet he was “rebuilt” on the third day after His death. He was not yet “returned to the Father”, when he met the disciples. He was not considered ascended until his new physical form returned.

BONUS

What are some implications of God's Spirit within us?

- 1. God is “Omnipresent”, as He is within all things that have breath as a witness to our life, making him a perfect judge.
- 2. The angels are a second witness. And are the accusers of the brethren. Always two witnesses.

Old Testament Spirit pre-ascension

Sampson

JUDGES 15:14 When he came to Lehi, the Philistines came shouting against him. Then the Spirit of the Lord came mightily upon him; and the ropes that were on his arms became like flax that is burned with fire, and his bonds broke loose from his hands.

DAVID

PSALMS 51:10-13

Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.

Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You.

Q Knowing that the spirit of God has given all men life, what was unique about the presence of the Spirit in David and in Sampson?

A These men were gifted access to the Spirit, perceived as clean priests to hear God.

Access to the Spirit post ascension.

1 CORINTHIANS 2:12

“Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.”

Q If the spirit is within us from the beginning of time, why did Christ say

JOHN 16:7

"But I tell you the truth: It is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper (the Holy Spirit) will not come to you. But if I do go, I will send him to you."

The Priests requirements were now fulfilled:

- 1. The payment of a blood sacrifice for sin.
- 2. Need for a clean High Priest.

READ

HEBREWS 9:22

And according to the law, almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.

1 PETER 2:9

⁹ But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.

REVELATION 1:5-6

^{5b} To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and made us a kingdom, priests to his God and Father, to him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Q Knowledge of this new role of the Spirit and our link to God the Father, how does our perception of the need for an external priest change? Do these differ from Catholic versus Protestant.

SUMMARY

HYPOTHESIS

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TAKE AWAY

GENESIS 6:3

³ And the Lord said, “*My Spirit* shall not strive with man forever, for he is indeed flesh; yet his days shall be one hundred and twenty years.”

The HOLY SPIRIT was in men in the Old Testament.

ECCLESIASTES 12:7

⁷ Then the dust will return to the earth as it was, And *the spirit* will return to God who gave it.

Q According to Ecclesiastes 12:7 and Genesis 6:3, what part of “us” ascends to the Father?

What is the function of the Spirit?

A Genesis 2:77

GENESIS 2:77

And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the *breath of life*; and man became a living being.

After Christs ascension, we now have communion through the veil that was removed, as we are a royal priesthood, and have the Holy Spirit in not only life, but now in fellowship and open communication.

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER BEFORE NEXT LESSON

What part of of the Body, Soul or Spirit is “us”?

If the Spirit is what returns to heaven when we die, when do we “go to heaven”?

Where are “we” at death, if the Spirit is what returns to God?

NEXT LESSON

PART 2 AND 3

The Soul.

Who are “we”. What happens when we die? Who goes to Hell (KJV)? Who goes to heaven?

PART 4

Hebrew word “Olam”

A look at eternity and forever, as taught by scripture.

PART 5

Understanding Creation. Genesis 1