



### LESSON 19

# SPIRIT vs. SPIRITISM

## PART 2

### INTRODUCTION

We learned in the last lesson that **Spiritism** (the belief in “spirit beings” and a “spirit realm”) is a product of superstition. The roots of this belief are in the spurious “immortal soul doctrine.” We discovered that this non-Biblical concept is popular among the world religions, including churches that call themselves “Christian.” The belief hails mostly from eastern philosophy. Yet, this destructive teaching has proliferated and been accepted by most religions, and it is being used to control people through fear of “spirits.”

From part one of this study, we learned that the Hebrew word “**ruwach**” – the primary word from which “spirit” was translated in the *KJV Old Testament* – refers not to “spirit beings” but rather to the influence or force which animates (i.e. causes movement). Thus, a “spirit” is a motivation, a disposition, or an animating influence that produces action. The Old Testament passages we examined illustrated how individuals were moved to action by dispositions or motives. In none of these examples did the Hebrew word “ruwach” refer to a “supernatural spirit being.”

In this second part of our study on “spirit,” we will see what the New Testament says about this subject.

## PNEUMA

In the *KJV New Testament* the word “spirit(s)” is translated from the Greek word “**pneuma**” (#4151 in Strong’s). The chart below summarizes how the *King James* translators rendered this word.

*Strong’s Concordance* defines “pneuma” as “a current of air, i.e. breath (blast) or a breeze” and figuratively as “vital principle; mental disposition.” Unfortunately, *Strong’s* also adds the erroneous pagan idea of a supernatural entity (so-called invisible spirit being, etc.), reflecting the typical “church” myth.

### KJV NEW TESTAMENT RENDERING OF THE GREEK “PNEUMA”

spirit(s) 289 times	ghost 92 times	spiritual 1 time	spiritually 1 time	wind 1 time	life 1 time
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(“**pneuma**” appears a total of 385 times in the Greek New Testament)

## GREEK “PNEUMA” CORRESPONDS TO HEBREW “RUWACH”

The Greek word “pneuma” shares a common meaning with the Hebrew word “ruwach.” When quoting the Old Testament, the Greek writers of the New Testament used the Greek word “pneuma” to render the Hebrew word “ruwach.”

### FIND THE ANSWERS

1. In Isaiah 42:1 the word spirit is translated from what Hebrew word? \_\_\_\_\_
2. In Matthew 12:18 the word spirit is translated from what Greek word? \_\_\_\_\_  
(Note: Matthew 12:18 is quoting Isaiah 42:1)
3. In Isaiah 61:1 the word spirit is translated from what Hebrew word? \_\_\_\_\_
4. In Luke 4:18 the word spirit is translated from what Greek word? \_\_\_\_\_  
(Note: In Luke 4:18 Jesus is reading Isaiah 61:1)
5. In Joel 2:28 the Hebrew word “ruwach” is translated into what English word? \_\_\_\_\_
6. In Acts 2:17 the Greek word “pneuma” is translated into what English word? \_\_\_\_\_  
(Note: Acts 2:17 is quoting Joel 2:28)

The above examples show that the Greek “pneuma” corresponds to the Hebrew “ruwach.” The two words mean approximately the same thing. The Hebrew “ruwach” refers to “breath movement,” “animating influence” (i.e. that which produces movement, indicating life). By the same token, the Greek “pneuma” indicates movement/life by motivation or disposition. It is important to note that none of the above verses use “ruwach” and “pneuma” to mean a so-called “spirit being.”

## “PNEUMA” AND “RUWACH” = WIND

### FIND THE ANSWERS

7. According to Genesis 8:1, God made a \_\_\_\_\_ to pass over the earth.
8. The above answer is translated from what Hebrew word? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Jesus states in John 3:8, “The \_\_\_\_\_ bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the \_\_\_\_\_.”
10. The above two answers are translated from what Greek word? \_\_\_\_\_

The Greek “pneuma” and the Hebrew “ruwach” can mean “wind” or “breeze”: that invisible influence that causes objects to move (like a leaf, or a sail boat). Both words are used similarly to mean air in motion. The preceding passages illustrate this common meaning. Neither of these passages are referring to “invisible entities” (spirits are motivations – not invisible entities).

Notice that in John 3:8 the *KJV* translates the Greek word “pneuma” into two different English words. The first “pneuma” reflects the literal meaning, while the second “pneuma” refers to the figurative meaning (motivation, animation). Neither can be seen, but their effect upon things is observable.

## “PNEUMA” AND “RUWACH” = BREATH

### FIND THE ANSWERS

1. Concerning the vision of dry bones, Ezekiel 37:10 states, “So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the \_\_\_\_\_ came into them and they lived, ...”
2. The above answer is translated from what Hebrew word? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Regarding the afflicted maiden, Luke 8:55 states, “And her \_\_\_\_\_ came again, and she arose straightway: ...”
4. The above answer is translated from what Greek word? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Genesis 6:17 states, “And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the \_\_\_\_\_ of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die.”
6. The above answer is translated from what Hebrew word? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Referring to Jesus’ death, John 19:30 says, “...and he bowed his head, and gave up the \_\_\_\_\_.”
8. The above answer is translated from what Greek word? \_\_\_\_\_

The passages above are referring to the breath of life which gives motivation and movement to a body. Breathing is essential to mortal life. The chest expands and contracts. The breath (air in motion) is moving in and out. This animation (i.e. movement) is the prime indication of “life.”

“Ruwach” and “pneuma” in these verses do not refer to invisible entities entering and exiting human bodies. The unfortunate use of the word “ghost” in John 19:30 adds confusion, since “ghost” suggests the pagan myth of “disembodied, invisible entities.” Most other translations and versions, other than the *KJV*, use the correct term: “spirit.” The John 19:30 phrase simply means “losing the breath of life.”

Some insist that a spirit is a supernatural creature because it is invisible and therefore must be part of some unseen spirit realm. However, invisibility does not indicate a world of invisible entities. Wind, breath, air, electricity, magnetic fields, sound waves, thoughts, feelings, and emotions are but a few examples of invisible spirits in the natural world. These natural things are invisible, but they can cause visible or audible reactions in things. Just as wind can move (motivate) a sail boat across the water, spirit can move (motivate) a person to action.

## KINDS OF SPIRITS MENTIONED IN THE NEW COVENANT

As was the case in the Old Testament, spirits are mentioned in the New Testament as well. These “spirits” refer to mental dispositions, states of mind, or motives – as the following examples illustrate. Applying the pagan concept of so-called “invisible entities” in these examples will show it to be nonsense.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

For each reference below, identify the type of spirit mentioned.

1. Romans 8:15                      spirit of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
2. Romans 11:8                      spirit of \_\_\_\_\_
3. 1 Corinthians 4:21                      spirit of \_\_\_\_\_
4. 2 Corinthians 4:13                      spirit of \_\_\_\_\_
5. Galatians 6:1                      spirit of \_\_\_\_\_
6. 1 Peter 4:14                      spirit of \_\_\_\_\_
7. 1 John 4:6                      spirit of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
8. Revelation 19:10                      spirit of \_\_\_\_\_
9. Luke 13:11                      spirit of \_\_\_\_\_
10. Acts 16:16                      spirit of \_\_\_\_\_

Each of the above references refers to a particular mental disposition or frame of mind which influences the way people behave and think. Romans 8:15 contrasts those who are mentally bound with fear (slavery) with those who live in the freedom of sonship (liberty). Those with a “spirit of slumber” are individuals who lack understanding and the desire to seek out truth. Those with a “spirit of meekness” practice humility rather than being high and mighty. Those who have the “spirit of faith” act upon their belief in God and live according to His Word. 1 John 4:6 contrasts those who live according to what is true (spirit of truth) with those who live according to falsehood (spirit of error). A spirit of prophesy motivates one to discern God’s Word. A spirit of infirmity is the result of a person who is ill, while a spirit of divination indicates a person who seeks occult activities. None of these examples have anything to do with so-called supernatural spirit beings possessing people and controlling their behavior.

Spirits are not life forms. They are moods, attitudes, dispositions, motivations. Nonetheless, sometimes people are called “spirits.” For example, in our own vernacular, a person who acts freely is called a “free spirit.”

## SPIRIT OF HOLINESS

Another type of spirit mentioned in the New Testament is the “spirit of holiness.”

### FIND THE ANSWERS

1. Speaking of Jesus Christ, Romans 1:4 states, “And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the \_\_\_\_\_ of holiness ....”

This verse is not referring to an “invisible entity.” It is referring to Jesus’ motivation to be “holy” – i.e. “separate” or “special” – a motivation that came from God. A person who has the spirit of holiness is one who is oriented toward separation from worldly things and is moved by God to live a godly life.

## HOLY SPIRIT = SPIRIT OF HOLINESS

“Holy” (Gk. “hagios”) means “separate.” The phrase “spirit of holiness” and the term “holy spirit” are two ways of saying the same thing. A person who is moved by “holy spirit” is one who has been given the “spirit of holiness”: i.e., a spirit of being separate from the sins of the world.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

2. Jesus states in Luke 11:13, “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the \_\_\_\_\_ spirit [pneuma] to them that ask him?”
3. Peter states in Acts 15:8, “And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the holy \_\_\_\_\_ [pneuma], even as he did unto us.”
4. Paul states in 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8, “For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto \_\_\_\_\_. He therefore that despiseth, despiseth not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his \_\_\_\_\_ spirit [pneuma].”

These verses indicate that holy spirit (the spirit of separation) is given to man, and that the source of that disposition or motivation is YAHWEH, God the Father. These passages are not suggesting that God puts some kind of “invisible entities” into people. However, God does give individuals a godly disposition – i.e. He motivates them to think and conduct themselves in a godly manner.

The *KJV* word “ghost” in Acts 15:8 is, again, a deceptive church word. Other translations and versions use the correct term: “spirit.” The word “ghost” is derived from the old German word “geist.” As already noted, the common usage of “ghost” infers an invisible entity. This is part of the reason some people like the term “holy ghost” because they believe in a realm of both good and bad invisible entities that can incarnate into people and control them. However, even the German “geist” has been corrupted. It originally meant “air in motion” – as in “gust” (“geist”) of wind.

## PEOPLE WITH HOLY SPIRIT

### FIND THE ANSWERS

1. Speaking of John the Baptist, Luke 1:15 declares, "...and he shall be filled with the holy \_\_\_\_\_, even from his mother's womb."
2. Luke 1:41 states, "...and \_\_\_\_\_ was filled with the holy spirit [not "ghost"]."
3. According to Luke 1:67, who was filled with holy spirit? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Luke 2:25 states that the holy spirit was upon \_\_\_\_\_
5. Who does Luke 4:1 say was full of holy spirit? \_\_\_\_\_
6. According to Acts 2:4, the disciples were all \_\_\_\_\_ with holy spirit.
7. Acts 4:8 says that \_\_\_\_\_ was filled with holy spirit.
8. In Acts 7:55, who was full of holy spirit? \_\_\_\_\_
9. According to Acts 10:44, who did holy spirit fall upon? \_\_\_\_\_
10. In Acts 11:22-24, who was a good man and full of holy spirit? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Who does Acts 13:9 say was filled with holy spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

The above verses obviously do not refer to people who were invaded by so-called "spirit beings." These individuals were driven by holy motivation or disposition.

## HOLY SPIRIT MOTIVATES PEOPLE TO ACTION

Let's now see the effects of holy spirit upon those who receive it.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read Luke 1:67-79.**

12. According to Luke 1:67, what did Zechariah do after being filled with holy spirit? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## FIND THE ANSWERS

### Read Luke 2:25-35.

1. What did Simeon do after holy spirit came upon him? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read Luke 4:1-13.

2. According to verse 1, what did the spirit lead Jesus to do? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read Acts 2:1-4.

3. According to verse 4, what did holy spirit cause the disciples to do? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read Acts 4:1-12.

4. What did the spirit move Peter to do (see verse 8)? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read Acts 4:23-31.

5. In verse 31, what happened to those who were filled with holy spirit? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read Acts 10:44-46.

6. What were those who received the gift of holy spirit doing, according to verse 46? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read Acts 11:1-18.

7. According to verse 12, what did the spirit cause Peter to do? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read Acts 13:1-5.

8. What does Acts 13:4 indicate that the spirit caused Barnabas and Saul to do? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read Acts 16:5-10.

9. According to verse 6, what did the spirit do to Paul and Timothy? \_\_\_\_\_

### Read Acts 19:1-7.

10. According to verse 6, what happened when holy spirit came to those upon who Paul laid his hands? \_\_\_\_\_

All of the examples above illustrate the motivating power of spirit. God moved or caused these individuals to act in obedience to His will. None of these people were incarnated by so-called invisible beings that controlled them like marionettes.

## HOLY SPIRIT = MOTIVATION TO FOLLOW CHRIST

The phrases “the holy spirit,” “the spirit of God” and “the spirit of Christ” are used interchangeably in the New Testament to express the concept of motivation. Consider the following examples.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

1. Romans 5:5 states, “...because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the holy spirit which is \_\_\_\_\_ unto us.”
2. Romans 8:9 says, “But ye are not in the \_\_\_\_\_, but in the \_\_\_\_\_, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”
3. Romans 8:14 declares, “For as many as are \_\_\_\_\_ by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God.”

The above verses refer to those who have Christ-driven motives – i.e. holy spirit. The holy spirit is not an invisible “spirit entity” that incarnates a person’s body. Rather, it is godly or Christian motive which moves them to think and act in a godly manner separate from the world around them.

## HOLY SPIRIT IS NOT A PERSON

Many folks are under the delusion that the phrase “the Holy Spirit” refers to a “supernatural being,” which they typically describe as “one of the three persons of the Godhead.” This erroneous concept is partly caused by the translators’ use of capital letters for the words “holy” and “spirit.” Since these words are capitalized in nearly all bibles, and since capitalization denotes a proper noun representing a person’s name, most readers automatically assume these words refer to an actual person. It must be remembered that this was not the grammatical rule in the Greek. In fact, most Greek manuscripts from which the Greek texts came were written in all capital letters without punctuation. As a result, the English translators supplied capitals where they wanted them to be, following the official “church” position and doctrine. That, alone, should cause us to question the common usage by the churches.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

4. Acts 2:4 states that the disciples were all \_\_\_\_\_ with “the Holy Ghost [spirit].”

Another reason the phrase “the holy spirit” is thought to represent a person or being is the translators’ overuse of the article “the.” An examination of a Greek interlinear will reveal that the article “the” in the above passage is not there in the Greek text. It was added by the translators. The same is true of many other verses containing the words “holy spirit.” Actually, the above verse should be rendered, “*they were all filled with holy spirit.*” In other words, they received motivation to act in a different way – i.e. God motivated them. When the translators arbitrarily injected the article “the,” along with the capital letters, readers automatically assume the verse is talking about a person or being.



The false idea that the “holy spirit” refers to a living being is exacerbated by still another factor: the translators consistently ignore the fact that in the Greek “the holy spirit” was written in the **neuter gender**. That makes the holy spirit an “it” rather than a “he.”

### FIND THE ANSWERS

1. In Luke 4:1 it says, “And Jesus being full of the \_\_\_\_\_ returned from the Jordon, and was led by the \_\_\_\_\_ into the wilderness,”

Both the words “holy ghost” and “spirit” were written in the Greek **neuter gender** (not male or female) clearly referring to an inanimate thing rather than to an actual being. In the Greek syntax this distinction is unmistakable. But again, the translators ignored Greek rules of grammar and instead used their own prejudice in translating according to church doctrine rather than according to correct Greek.

The motivating influence from Christ actually works through a person’s mental disposition and drives (compels) that person to do whatever he does.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

2. Jesus states in John 6:63, “It is the spirit [pneuma] that \_\_\_\_\_ ; ...”

The word “quickeneth” means “to vitalize; to make alive” (#2227 in *Strong’s*). The spirit motivates or animates ... causes a person or a thing to move or act. In other words, God’s motivating power causes one to react and to think and move accordingly.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

3. Acts 10:19 states, “While Peter thought on the vision, the spirit [pneuma] \_\_\_\_\_ unto him, Behold, three men seek thee.”

Someone might argue that only a person could speak to Peter. However, this expression simply indicates that Peter had a feeling that these men were seeking him.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

4. Acts 16:6 states that Paul and Timothy were \_\_\_\_\_ of the holy spirit [pneuma] to preach the word in Asia.

Again, some might say that only a person could forbid Paul and Timothy from preaching in Asia. In reality, Paul and Timothy thought about it and they were simply impressed to not go to Asia.

In all of these examples, it was God’s motivating influence that affected these men. When churches teach that a mystical type of invisible “supernatural being” was entering into and controlling people, they are simply repeating pagan myth.

## GOD IS SPIRIT

Churchgoers think that God is a “spirit being.” They refer to John 4:24 and claim that is what it says. On this basis they claim “spirit beings” must exist because God is one of them. However, let’s examine this passage and see what it really says.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

#### Read John 4:23-24.

1. Jesus states in verse 23, “But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in \_\_\_\_\_ and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him.”
2. Jesus continues in verse 24, “\_\_\_\_\_ is a spirit [pneuma]: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit [pneuma] and in truth.”

Concerning verse 24 above, the Greek text does not say “God is **a** spirit.” In the original Greek text there is no article “**a**” included. It says “**God is spirit**” (not “**a** spirit”). The article “**a**” was added by the translators. The phrase, properly translated, should read “**God is spirit**.” When the translators inserted the article “**a**” they made it appear to be talking about an entity rather than motivation. But the Greek word “pneuma” means “air” (as in “pneumatic”). The phrase “**God is spirit**” means one of God’s attributes is that He motivates men.

The difficulty is compounded by the fact that the translators capitalized the word “spirit.” As we have noted, capitalization denotes a proper noun in English. The intention of the translators was to make the word “spirit” appear to be a person, ignoring the fact that the Greek manuscripts did not differentiate between uppercase and lowercase letters. Therefore, the English translators were the ones who decided what should be capitalized. They obviously followed the accepted tradition of the “church” of their day without regard for correct Greek syntax.

Most Bible scholars and students will admit that the word “spirit” (pneuma) in John 4:23 refers to motivation rather than a so-called “invisible being.” However, when it comes to the very next verse, they interpret the same word (pneuma) in the phrase “God is a spirit” as a “being.” In other words, in one verse they have “spirit” as a motivation while in the next they have it as an invisible being. This is inconsistent and deceptive. Using this verse to prove that God is a “spirit being” (ghost) misses the true meaning of what is being said, and is an attempt, by man, to change the essence of God.

## ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Saying that “God is spirit” is merely identifying one of God’s attributes. Scripture also says that “God is light” (1 John 1:5), but that doesn’t mean He is a beam of light. Hebrews 12:29 states that “God is a consuming fire,” but that doesn’t make Him a furnace. 1 John 4:8 declares “God is love.” What, then, is He? Is He spirit? A light? A fire? Love? They only describe individual facets or characteristics of God’s essence.

## SUMMARY

So far in our study of “spirit” in the New Testament, we have found that it carries much the same meaning as it does in the Old Testament: **motivation or disposition**. There is no evidence that “spirit” refers to so-called “spirit beings.” But what about the mention of “unclean spirits” and “evil spirits,” and what about the instances in which they were “cast out” of people? This will be the subject of the next lesson.



### LESSON 19

# SPIRIT vs. SPIRITISM

## PART 2

### Page 182

1. ruwach (#7307)
2. pneuma (#4151)
3. ruwach (#7307)
4. pneuma (#4151)
5. spirit
6. spirit
7. wind
8. ruwach (#7307)
9. wind; spirit
10. pneuma (#4151)

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1. breath
2. ruwach
3. spirit
4. pneuma
5. breath
6. ruwach
7. ghost
8. pneuma

### Page 184

1. bondage; adoption
2. slumber
3. meekness
4. faith
5. meekness
6. glory
7. truth; error
8. prophesy
9. infirmity

### Page 184 (continued)

10. divination

### Page 185

1. spirit
2. holy
3. spirit (mistranslated as "ghost")
4. holiness; holy

### Page 186

1. spirit (mistranslation as "ghost")
2. Elisabeth
3. Zecharias
4. Simeon
5. Jesus
6. filled
7. Peter
8. Stephen
9. all those which heard the word
10. Barnabas
11. Paul (Saul)
12. He prophesied that God had visited and redeemed His people.

### Page 187

1. He went to the temple to see Jesus and praised God.
2. The spirit led Him into the wilderness.
3. The spirit caused them to speak with other tongues (languages).
4. The spirit moved him to preach.

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5. They spoke the word of God with boldness.
6. They were hearing in their own tongues (languages) and magnified God.
7. The spirit bade Peter to go with the men.
8. The spirit moved them to leave Antioch and go to Cyprus to preach the word.
9. The spirit convicted them to not preach the word in Asia.
10. They spoke with tongues (dialects) and prophesied.

**Page 188**

1. given
2. flesh; spirit
3. led
4. filled

**Page 189**

1. holy ghost (spirit); spirit
2. quickeneth
3. said
4. forbidden

**Page 190**

1. spirit
2. God

**NOTES**

Note from Ben:

The *King James* translators sometimes capitalized the word "spirit" and sometimes they didn't. When I've quoted from the *KJV* in this lesson I did not capitalize "spirit" because it is never a proper noun. It refers to a motivation, not to a person.