

## “Spirit” Or “Wind”

No. 260

### Introduction.

I. I would like to invite your attention to the reading of the first three verses of Genesis the 1<sup>st</sup> chapter.

**GEN 1:1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. 2 And the earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. 3 Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.**

II. Moses here gives us some information about the beginning of creation. He affirms that God created “the heavens and the earth.”

A. He also affirms that “the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.”

B. This verse recognizes **the presence and work** of the Holy Spirit at creation.

Distributed As Outline

### Controversy Over Genesis 1:2

1. There is a great controversy over Genesis 1:2.
2. This controversy pertains to whether the Hebrew word “ruach” [roo’-akh) should be rendered “Spirit” or “wind.”
3. The majority of translations have translated the word “ruach” “Spirit.” **KJV, NKJV, ASV, NASB, RSV, NIV, Living Bible, YLB, Darby’s, Amp. Bible**
4. In 1962 the **New Jewish Version** changed the phrase “the Spirit of God” to “a wind from God.”
  - This was not done because the Jewish scholars thought Moses’ words “ruach elohim” are inaccurately translated as “the Spirit of God.”
  - This was done because most Jews and some non-Jews do not believe: (1) in the existence of a Holy Spirit (2) the Holy Spirit is a Divine Person (3) the Holy Spirit had a part in creation.
  - **Harry M. Orlinsky**, editor-in-chief of the **New Jewish Version**, said the word “Spirit” was rejected because it is a “Christian interpretation.”

### Purpose

The purpose of this lesson is to show that the **New Jewish Version** is wrong: (1) that the Holy Spirit exists (2) The Holy Spirit is a divine Person (3) He was part of creation.

### The Old Testament

1. The Old Testament is God’s inspired, infallible word. (2 Sam. 23:2; Jere. 1:9; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; 2 Pet. 1:20, 21).

2. The Old Testament speaks of the existence of the Spirit long before there were any Christians.

3. God was not talking to Himself when He said in Genesis 6:3.

**GEN 6:3** Then **the LORD** said, "**My Spirit** will not contend with man forever, for he is mortal; his days will be a hundred and twenty years."

- The word "Spirit" is not a reference to the Lord Himself.
  - It points to a Being who contends with man by presenting truth and exposing sin.
4. God was speaking of the Holy Spirit when He said to Bezaleel who was to oversee the building of the tabernacle, 3 "**And I have filled him with the Spirit of God** in wisdom, in understanding, in knowledge, and in all kinds of craftsmanship, 4 to make artistic designs for work in gold, in silver, and in bronze, (Exod. 31:3,4).

5. Neither was God talking to Himself when He said in **Joel 2:27, 28**.

27 Then you will know that I am in Israel, that I am the LORD your God, and that there is no other; never again will my people be shamed. 28 And afterward, **I will pour out my Spirit on all people**. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

6. That the Spirit is a Being distinct from God the Father is seen by this statement made in **Numbers 11:25**

**NUM 11:25** Then the LORD came down in the cloud and spoke with him, **and he took of the Spirit that was on him and put the Spirit on the seventy elders. When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied**, but they did not do so again.

- Moses tells us that the "LORD" or "Jehovah" came down in a cloud and spoke with him.
- He took "of the Spirit that was on" Moses "and put the Spirit on the seventy elders."
- "When the Spirit rested on them, they prophesied."

**NUM 27:18** So the Lord said to Moses, "Take Joshua the son of Nun, **a man in whom is the Spirit**, and lay your hand on him;

7. That the Holy Spirit is a Being distinct from Jehovah is also seen in the fact that the Spirit is under the control of God.

- David cried out to God after his sin with Bathsheba saying,

**PSA 51:10** Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

**PSA 51:11** Do not cast me from your presence **or take your Holy Spirit from me**.

- David does not want to be expelled from God's presence nor does He want God to take His Holy Spirit away from him.

8. That the Holy Spirit is a Being distinct from Jehovah is manifested by the words of the Psalmist and by the words of Elihu.

- The **Psalms** declared, “**Thou dost send forth Thy Spirit**, they are created; And Thou dost renew the face of the ground. (Psa. 104:30).
- **Elihu** exclaimed. “**The Spirit of God has made me**, And the breath of the Almighty gives me life. (Job 33:4). It is clear from Elihu that the Holy Spirit had a part in creation.
- **That Elihu was correct is seen by a conversation God had with someone with creative ability.** (Gen. 1:26). Observe, at the time of man’s creation, God says “Let us make man in our image.” It is apparent that the Holy Spirit was an agent in creating Adam and Eve.

9. Several newer translations have made the mistake of the **New Jewish Version**

- The RSV of 1952 correctly rendered “ruach” Spirit.”
- It is regrettable that the NRSV of 1989 changed “the Spirit of God” to “a wind from God.”

**GEN 1:2** the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, **while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.**

- **The New Jerusalem Bible** of 1971 changed “the Spirit of God” to “a divine wind.”

10. To make this change is not only to **ignore the Old Testament passages** we studied, but it is to **ignore the verb Moses used** in Genesis 1:2.

- Moses used the Hebrew word “rachaph” [raw-khaf] which means “to hover, to brood” as an eagle fluttering “over her young.” (Deut. 32:11).

**DEU 32:11** “Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, **That hovers over its young**, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions.

- The **Benjamin Davidson** lexicon after giving “rachaph” to mean “to brood or hover over” says that the word is used

“of the divine Spirit as creatively acting on primeval chaos” and “of the eagle protectively fluttering over its young.”

- **Gesenius Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon** defines “rachaph” “to brood over young one, to cherish young (as an eagle), Deuteronomy 32:11,” and says it is : “figuratively use of the Spirit of God, who brooded over the shapeless mass of the earth, cherishing and vivifying.” Vivifying means “to endue with life, quicken, animate.”

- **It is noticeable** that Gesenius capitalized “Spirit” and used the pronoun “who,” not “which,” in reference to the Spirit of God.

- The **NASB** has, “the Spirit of God was moving (or hovering in the footnote) over the surface of the waters.”
- **The Amplified Bible** says, “The Spirit of God was moving (hovering, brooding) over the face of the water.”
- The **NIV** has “the Spirit of God was hovering over the water.”
- The verb of Genesis 1:2 shows the Hebrew word “ruach” should be rendered “Spirit” - not wind.

11. It is also important to mention that though the Hebrew word “ruach” can mean “wind” as in Genesis 8:1 this translation does not fit in Genesis 1:2.

- **The wind blows**, but it does not hover or brood.
- Those rendering “ruach” “wind” in Genesis 1:2 have ignored or overlooked this fact.

### **Conclusion From Old Testament**

- We see from these Old Testament scriptures, **none written by Christians**, that the Holy Spirit is a distinct Person and He had a part in creation.
- This dispels the idea that the words “the Spirit of God” are a mere “Christian interpretation.”

III. **New Testament** - The New Testament also confirms that the Holy Spirit is a distinct Person.

A. It teaches the **Holy Spirit is a Person**. (Lk. 1; Matt. 1; Matt. 3:16, 17; 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14; Mk. 12:36).

1. The Holy Spirit **speaks and hears**. (Jn. 16:13).
2. He has a **mind**. (Rom. 8:27).
3. He knows **the deep things of God**. (1 Cor. 2:11).
4. The Holy Spirit can be **grieved**. (Isa. 63:10; Eph. 4:30).
5. The Holy Spirit can be **lied to**. (Acts 5:3, 4). Matt. 12:31
6. The Holy Spirit **loves**. (Rom. 15:30).

B **It is interesting that all three members of the Godhead were present before creation and at creation.**

1. **All 3 members of the Godhead are eternal**. (Deut. 33:27; 1 Jn. 1:2; Heb. 9:14).
2. Genesis 1:26 says “Let us make man in our likeness and image.”
3. Genesis 1:2 shows the Holy Spirit was included in the “us.”
4. The New Testament reveals Jesus was included in the “us.” (Jn. 1:1-3; Col. 1:15-17; Heb. 1:2).

End of Distributed Outline

### **Conclusion.**

- I. Yes, all three members of the Godhead were present at creation.
- II. We are to be baptized in the name of all three members of the Godhead. (Matt. 28:19, 20).
- III. All three members of the Godhead love us and invite us to partake of salvation.
  - A. **God** calls out to us. (Isa. 1:18).
  - B. **Jesus** calls out to us. (Matt. 11:28).

C. **The Holy Spirit** calls out to us. (Rev. 22:17).

III. I pray that those outside of Christ will hearken to the call of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit. All three want you to be saved. All three want you to confess your faith in Christ, turn from your sins, and be baptized for the remission of your sins. Come to Him now as we stand and sing.

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