

GOD SPIRIT IS ONLY A BREATH AWAY

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God's Spirit is only a breath away and death is only God's withdrawal of that breath. The breath of life is the created spirit which God gives all living creatures so that they can live. According to Scripture, anything which breathes has the breath of life. Yes, not only do humans have spirits, but so do animals. Genesis 7:21-22 tells us that "every living thing" has "the breath of the spirit of life". Again in Ecclesiastes 3:21 it mentions the spirits of animals, thus the teaching that only humans have spirits is an error. Humans and animals alike have a soul, which is simply a mind, and also a spirit, which is needed to live.

The Bible says that God "breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" Genesis 2:7. Now in James 2:26 we read that "the body without the spirit is dead." So when did Adam receive a human spirit which is needed for the body to live? Obviously, he received it when he received the breath of life from God. The breath of life is the human spirit, which animates the body so that we can live and breathe. The spirit is essentially a "battery" in the body, making it come to life. It is God's gift of life to us, our spirit in us came from God, it was God-breathed into us, and is described as God's breath inside of us. It is as Job 33:4 says, "The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life."

In Job 27:3 we read, "as long as my breath is in me, and the spirit of God is in my nostrils." Some Bibles translate it as "the breath of God is in my nostrils." Although that may be tempting, it is inaccurate because the Hebrew word "ruach" primarily means spirit. This Scripture may sound a little odd, but it's referring to the human spirit that God breathed into man, enabling him to live. It is as simple as God breathed a human spirit into man's nostrils.

It's important we clarify that the Holy Spirit is NOT the breath of life. Everyone has the breath of life, but the unsaved do not have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, obviously. The breath of life is our God-breathed human spirit.

The breath of God

Now the "breath of God" mentioned in Scripture can actually refer to different things depending on context. Sometimes the breath of God is a metaphor for the will and activity of God, sometimes it refers to the human spirit, and sometimes it refers to the Holy Spirit.

Job 4:9 tells us, "By the breath of God they, evildoers perish. By the blast of his anger are they consumed." Here, the "breath of God" and "blast of his anger" are metaphors for the judgment and wrath of God. In Job 37:10 we read, "By the breath of God ice is given, and the broad waters are frozen fast." Here, the

“breath of God” is a metaphor for God’s activity in creation, reminding us that God is sovereign over all activity in nature. In 2 Thess. 2:8 we read, “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming:” The Antichrist isn’t going to be killed by literal breath, as if Jesus is going to breathe on him. Here “breath” refers to God’s command.

Job 34:14-15 says, “If He gather to himself his breath and spirit, all flesh would perish together, and man would turn again to dust.” Here, God’s breath is again talking about the spirit He gives all creatures that they may live. Since the breath of life comes from God, it is referred to as His spirit and breath. If God were to take away the breath of life from us, we would all die.

Finally, the breath of God is sometimes a powerful symbol of the Holy Spirit! In both Hebrew and Greek, the words for “spirit” also mean “breath”! We’ve already learned that the human spirit can be described as God’s breath inside of us, which does not refer to the Holy Spirit. But now we can see that any time you read the word “Spirit” (capitalized) in Scripture, referring to the Holy Spirit, it also means “Breath”. The Holy Spirit, the Holy Breath, it is the same thing in the Hebrew and Greek. The third Person of the Trinity is the Holy Spirit/Breath of God. Job 32:8 says, “But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty gives them understanding.” The breath of the Almighty here is undoubtedly the Holy Spirit, who breathes divine inspiration into God’s people. Again in 2 Timothy 3:16 we read that, “all Scripture is God-breathed” referring again to the Holy Spirit breathing inspiration into man. 2 Peter 1:21 says, “no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke, being moved by the Holy Spirit.” Since the Holy Spirit also means the Holy Breath, God moving on the prophets to speak His words is akin to the Holy Spirit breathing on them.

The Word of God and the Breath of God

Jesus is described in the Bible as “the Word of God” John 1:1, Rev. 6:9, Rev. 19:13. Now Jesus is not the Word of God in a hyper-literal sense; He is not an actual word on a page and He is not the Bible either. Jesus is the Word of God in the sense that He is the Person of the Godhead who has the divine reasoning and understanding of the Father and explains and reveals Him to us. When the Bible talks about the “the word of God”, context determines if it means either a spoken word from God, the Bible, or Jesus. Likewise, when the context is appropriate, the Holy Spirit is the Breath of God. This isn’t hyper-literal, as if when the Father breathes that very air is the Holy Spirit. No, it is simply symbolism for the life-giving power of the Holy Spirit.

Breathing is equated to living. Just as the body needs breath to live, so our spirit needs the Breath of God to live. We need the Breath of God, the Holy Spirit, to impart to us the spiritual life of God. The Bible says that in the day that Adam and Eve ate the fruit, they died that very day. They did not die physically that day, but they died spiritually. God is Life John 1:4, John 11:25, 1 John 1:1-2 and to

know Him is life. Jesus said, "this is eternal life: to know you the only true God, and the One whom you sent, Jesus the Messiah" John 17:3.

Eternal life is not living forever, because everyone already has an immortal soul that will be in Heaven or Hell forever. Eternal life is the restored eternal relationship with God, knowing God who is Life. To not know God and to be separated from Him is true death, albeit a spiritual death.

Just as the body is dead without the spirit, our spirit is dead without the Holy Spirit. Just as the body needs breath to live, our spirit needs the Holy Breath of God to live. In Genesis, God breathed the breath of life into Adam to animate his body. But in John 20:22 we read that, Jesus "breathed on them, His disciples and said, 'Receive the Holy Spirit.'" Again, the Greek word also means "breath"; Jesus breathed the Holy Breath of God into His disciples. God breathes the Holy Spirit into us, who is the Breath of God, that we Christians may have the life-giving power of God inside of us. The Breath of God, the Holy Spirit, entered the disciples and spiritually quickened them. Your body needs the breath of life, the human spirit, to live. But your spirit needs the Breath of God, the Holy Spirit, to live. Whenever the Bible speaks of being filled with God's Holy Spirit Eph. 5:18, Acts 2:4, Acts 4:31, etc., it is truly the same as being filled with God's Holy Breath. As we are indwelt by, baptized in, and filled with the Holy Spirit, it is like the Breath of God, the spiritual Life of God, being breathed into us. Believe me, God never breathes His life into anyone that tampers with or makes light of the free sovereign grace bought for us by His Son, Jesus Christ.