

God Breathed - Part One

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BIG IDEA - God breathed creation, order and peace into our world and lives.

scripture focus - Genesis 1:1-2 NLT

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. **And the Spirit [ruach] of God** was hovering over the surface of the waters.”

In our world and in our lives, we feel the constant uneasiness of chaos and disorder. Inevitable change, either through progress or disruption gets harder to understand and deal with in our lives. What if I told you that God is the author of order, of restoration and peace?

In this series we will look at what happens when God **breathes** on us and His creation. We will look at the specific characteristics of the Holy Spirit, as the third person of the “trinity,” of which there is Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We have been sensing for a long time now that it is **extremely important to not just know God, or know of God, but to experience God in the every-days of life**. In the ups, the downs, sideways and even upside downs of life can bring. And, even though life is precious and being alive is the most amazing gift God has given us, it can be hard and absolutely unpredictable as well.

In a series of my favorite scenes out of Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade included the first of three challenges or “Three devices of such lethal cunning.”



The **Breath of God** - "Only the penitent man will pass." The object of the first challenge was to kneel before the breath of God. At the start, a person would feel the wind (the Breath) blow through the chamber's thick cobwebs. He would then have to kneel quickly in order to avoid being decapitated by two huge circular saws. The writers picked up the challenge and solution to the riddles from Grail Lore.

This month we are going to learn about the things of God, but hopefully experience them together as well. The Spirit of God, the breath of God brings creation, order, and peace.

When Moses wrote the first five books of the Bible, (Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy), he did so through three means. All of which were overseen and directed by the Holy Spirit. Moses used previously written texts passed down through the generations (especially genealogical records), oral tradition from his ancestors and divine revelation.

Our Call to Worship introduces the God and how the Holy Spirit written as the "wind or breath" of God is present.

God breathed creation

Genesis 1:2 reminds us that there was not only NOTHING, but that that in that nothingness it was without form, empty, and dark. It was a desolate space and place.

And God spoke everything into existence. "Then God said, "Let there be." Genesis 1:3 NLT and it became, it now existed.

Light, space, ground, vegetation, lights in the sky, fish, birds, and animals.

Then our big entrance in vs 26 & 27, "Then God said, "Let us make human beings in our image, to be like us." Note, using the plural pronouns "us," and "our."

God spoke and everything He said obeyed His command, His word. With us God specifically used His own artistic flare and created us, He crafted and shaped us.

But In Genesis 2:7 God gives some very us some very interesting details as to exactly what made us different from all other creation. Not just that he created us in their likeness (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), but how He transformed our physical bodies into some far more, far above all creation.

Genesis 2:7 NLT "Then the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground. **He breathed [naphach] the breath [neshamah] of life** into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person."

God fashioned us from dry, dusty dirt and breathed on us and into us himself. He put in us not just life where we exist as a living being, a creature on the planet earth, but God uniquely gave us a soul and a spirit (nephesh: a soul, living being, life, self, person, desire, passion, appetite, emotion).

God did not create man using only **created substance** (thing) but also of **divine substance**. In the New Testament, the breath of God that made the body alive was actually called spirit. This spirit in man is the life of his body or rather, it is what animates his body. Without the spirit, the body is dead.*

Chaim Bentorah

"In the initial gasp God placed His Spirit within humanity. Once it was there it changes from "Gasp of Life" (nishmat chayim) to "Breath/Spirit of Life" (ruakh chayim). Life, from this point forward, would be embedded with the Ruakh (Spirit) of God."

God breathed order

It's important to not that the Holy Spirit BRINGS order and peace - NOT chaos and confusion.

This idea of God ordering our world and our lives should be portrayed in how we look at the person of the Holy Spirit operating in the church. With God turning our world right side up, **what we might see as the Holy Spirit's apparent "disruption" has to be seen as an intervention of peace and ordering our chaotic culture and lives.**

God put mankind right to work tending and watching over creation. Then he gave man the job of naming the animals, again creating, and maintaining order.

God breathed peace

And began the work of restoration. The Holy Spirit is vividly depicted as the Spirit of redemption showing up as wind and blowing on, breathing on people helping accomplish the plans of God.

- In Exodus 15, by the רוּחַ (ruach) of the Lord, He accomplishes the decisive deliverance of Israel from slavery and the fatal destruction of the pursuing Egyptians. In verse 8, "By the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up. The surging waters stood up like a wall; the deep waters congealed in the heart of the sea" (Exod 15:8 NIV).
- The Spirit of God empowers the leaders of Israel in various ways. That is to say, the Holy Spirit gives the leaders of Israel extraordinary authority, governmental administration, military capacity, artful craft, and other abilities.
 - Moses and Joshua, for instance, are deeply dependent on the leadership of the Spirit of God (Num 11:16; 27:18; Deut 34:9). So are the judges (Judg 3:7-11; 6:1-8:35; 10:6-18; 13-16).
- The Spirit of God endows supernatural ability and mysterious intelligence, accomplishing the divine will in the government and conduct of Israel.

- The craftsman Bezalel, son of Uri also exhibits a unique ability for workmanship and skill enabled by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in constructing the tabernacle (Exod 31:1-18).
 - Samuel prophesies that the Spirit of Yahweh will come into Saul "in power," and as a result he will "be changed into a different person." With such empowerment, Saul "assumed rule over Israel, he fought against their enemies on every side: Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines.... He fought valiantly and defeated the Amalekites, delivering Israel from the hands of those who had plundered them" (1 Samuel 10:6, 1 Sam 14:47-48).
 - David deliberately reiterates the same three crucial elements: the outpouring of the Spirit (1 Sam 10; 16), the extraordinary military exploits (1 Sam 11; 17), and the conquering of Israel's enemies (1 Sam 14; 2 Sam 8; 12). Empowered by the Spirit of God, Saul and then David bring peace and security to Israelite society.
- The ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit presides over the mysterious process of the prophet's ability to understand and communicate divine revelation. In the Old Testament world, prophets are Spirit-inspired agents who receive the words of God and deliver them to the people.
 - Eventually, the ministry of the Holy Spirit would introduce the new covenant relationship between God and new Israel as well as creating the new way of life.

God breathed through the Holy Spirit to create, bring order and peace to our world and our lives.

The same Holy Spirit that did all that wants to still move in and among us today. Our world needs order and peace. Our lives need the creative, ordered, peaceful move of God!

If you need to experience the presence of the Holy Spirit as we gather today, I'm asking that you not only come, but you come hungry and thirsty for God. God is the same yesterday, today and forever, and wants to move among us, just like He has done all throughout history, restoring, redeeming humans to himself.

There has not been one time that I purposely met with God, setting aside everything to focus on him, listen to his voice and let him restore my soul that He did not show up and forgive me, heal me, and comfort me.

Be desperate for God and let the Holy Spirit breath on you.

NOTES

Creation
Order
Peace

Scriptures

Genesis 1:1-2 NLT

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the **Spirit [ruach] of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.**"

Genesis 2:7 NLT

"Then the Lord God formed the man from the dust of the ground. **He breathed [naphach] the breath [neshamah] of life** into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person."

Genesis 2:15, 19 NLT

"The Lord God placed the man in the Garden of Eden to tend and watch over it. So the Lord God formed from the ground all the wild animals and all the birds of the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would call them, and the man chose a name for each one."

Genesis 6:3 NLT

"Then the Lord said, "My Spirit [ruach] will not put up [**din: to judge, strive**] with humans for such a long time, for they are only mortal flesh. In the future, their normal lifespan will be no more than 120 years."

Exodus 15:8 NLT

"At the blast of your breath, the waters piled up! The surging waters stood straight like a wall; in the heart of the sea the deep waters became hard."

Questions

- Q: Have you sensed an uneasiness or chaos in the world around us this?
- Q: What is the comparison and contrast between chaos and order?
- Q: How does disorder make you feel? How about order, how's that feel?
- Q: Can you put some words to express each one?
- Q: Describe a time when you felt at peace. What was it like?
- Q: How has the Holy Spirit showed up in disorder to bring you a sense of peace?
- Q: What do you think about the idea of God breathing on you, like He did creation?

COMMENTARY REFERENCES

Strong's Concordance - Strong's Hebrew: 7307. רוּחַ (ruach) — 377 Occurrences

ruach: breath, wind, spirit
naphach: to breathe, blow
neshamah: breath

Breath - Ruach

<https://biblehub.com/hebrew/7307.htm>

Breathe - naphach

<https://biblehub.com/hebrew/5301.htm>

Chaim Bentorah

BREATH OF LIFE - <https://hebrewwordlessons.com/2018/01/28/spirit-breath-is-your-ruach-activated/>

Ruakh is God in action. When you breathe on the palm of your hand you can feel it. You can't see the breath, but it touches your skin. Breath is a strange thing. It is both tangible and intangible. You can sense it and feel it. It touches you, but you cannot grab it. You cannot completely control it but it completely controls you. Without it your life is snuffed out. There is a power connected to wind and breath. A strong wind can tear down a city, and breath taken away ends a human of life.

Ruakh is essential to human existence, however it is interesting to note the first description of human creation did not use the word *ruakh*:

Genesis 2:7

Then YHWH God formed man of dust from the ground and **breathed [eepokh]** into his nostrils the **breath of life [nishmat chayim]**; and man became a living being. This first breath is not written as *ruakh*. Instead the word for “breathed into” is *eepoch* which actually means “blew”... So YHWH breathed life (*nishmat chayim*) and the human took a gasp to begin life. It might better be translated like this:

Genesis 2:7

Then YHWH God formed man of dust from the ground, and blew into his nostrils the **gasp of life [nishmat chayim]**; and man became a living being.

So this initial intake of breath was a gasp for air and a beginning of life.

Human’s first “Breath of Life” started with a gasp, but all further uses of the phrase “Breath of Life” (Genesis 6:17 and Genesis 7:15), used the term *ruakh chayim* (Spirit/Breath of Life). Why?

In the initial gasp God placed His Spirit within humanity. Once it was there it changes from “Gasp of Life” (*nishmat chayim*) to “Breath/Spirit of Life” (*ruakh chayim*). Life, from this point forward, would be embedded with the *Ruakh (Spirit) of God*.

Lexham Bible Commentary

The Function of the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament

The contexts in which the Holy Spirit is mentioned in the Old Testament are very broad. They include:

- the **creation of the world**;
- the **redemption and formation of the people of God**;
- the **divine empowerment of Israel’s leadership** (king, prophet, judge, and social worker);
- the **ethics of the people of God**.

The specific term “Holy Spirit” appears only three times (Psa 51:11; Isa 63:10, 11).

However, in many cases, the word Spirit occurs in combination with the divine name—the Spirit of God (Gen 1:2; 1 Sam 11:6) and the Spirit of Yahweh/the Lord (Judg 11:29; 14:6; 15:14; 1 Sam 10:6; Isa 11:2).

In the Torah

The Spirit is powerfully present in the process of the creation of the world as a whole.

Genesis reports, “Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters” (Gen 1:2 NIV).

Cassuto and Gunkel interpret it as the creative “Spirit of God” (Cassuto, *Genesis*, 21–25; Gunkel, *Genesis*, 105–06). Based on the close semantic connection between רוח (*ruach*) as wind/breath and רוח (*ruach*) as the Spirit of God in the Old Testament, Averbeck argues that רוח (*ruach*) in Gen 1:2 is a double entendre, referring to both a

wind in a watery environment (compare Gen 8:1; Exod 14:21-22; 15:8-10) as well as the Spirit of God who shapes the creation of the universe (Gen 1:3; Averbeck, "Breath, Wind, Spirit and the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament," 34). In the midst of chaos and formlessness, God proclaims the word of creation. **Consequently, the powerful and dynamic force of the Holy Spirit completes it in such a way that it demonstrates order and shalom.**

This leads to significant questions concerning the **character of this breath of life that effectively distinguishes humanity from everything else.** Westermann understands it to mean "simply being alive, and the breathing in of this breath, the giving of life to humans, nothing more" (Westermann, Genesis 1-11, 207). Wenham recognizes it as a "divine inbreathing" that transforms the man into a living creature.

For a full interpretation of this term, however, it may be useful to call attention to the relationship of the semantic pair **רוח** (ruach, "spirit") and **נְשָׁמָה** (neshamah, "breath") in the Bible. According to Daniel I. Block, "the close semantic relationship between the [two] terms is demonstrated by their frequent conjunction in construct associations and as a coordinate and parallel pair (Job 27:3; 32:8; 33:4; 34:14; Isa 42:5)" (Block, "The Prophet of the Spirit," 35). For instance, in Job 33:4, an explicit parallelism exists between the two words: "The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life" (Job 33:4 ESV). In Hebrew poetry, parallel clauses often express the same thought in different ways, and it is clear here that "the breath" parallels "the Spirit." **There is little doubt that "the breath of life" from the mouth of God in Gen 2:7 corresponds with "the Spirit of God" who animates humanity** (Kuyper, Work of the Holy Spirit, 27, 33).

In the Torah, finally, the Holy Spirit is vividly depicted as the Spirit of redemption. Throughout the history of Israel, "the establishment of Israel as a nation by Yahweh is brought about by the intervention of the **רוח** (ruach) [Spirit] in the exodus event" (Hildebrandt, The Spirit of God, 66).

In Exodus 15, by the **רוח** (ruach) of the Lord, He accomplishes the **decisive deliverance** of Israel from slavery and the fatal destruction of the pursuing Egyptians. In verse 8, "By the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up. The surging waters stood up like a wall; the deep waters congealed in the heart of the sea" (Exod 15:8 NIV). Here the **רוח** (ruach) of the **Lord's nostrils moves the water aside to make a dry path in the middle of the Red Sea.** While most English translations—e.g., NIV, KJV, and NASB—translate **רוח** (ruach) as the "blast" of God's nostrils, the phrase "by the **רוח** (ruach) of the Lord" might be the Spirit of the Lord who manipulates the sea for the sake of Israel's salvation. The prophet Isaiah frequently reiterates this paradigmatic event (Isa 11:15-16; 51:9-11; 62:10-12; 63:10-14) while highlighting the divine agent who accomplishes salvation. The prophet asks rhetorically, "Where is he who set his Holy Spirit among them, who sent his glorious arm of power to be at Moses' right hand, who divided the waters

before them, to gain for himself everlasting renown, who led them through the depths?" (Isa 63:11-12 NIV). In the prophet's retrospection, it is possible that the **רוח** (ruach) of the Lord's nostrils indicates the Spirit of the Lord in the midst of the Israelites in the Red Sea.

In the Historical Books

In the historical books, the Spirit of God empowers the leaders of Israel in various ways. That is to say, the Holy Spirit gives the leaders of Israel extraordinary authority, governmental administration, military capacity, artful craft, and other abilities. These were special provisions from God that ordinary people did not receive. **Moses and Joshua, for instance, are deeply dependent on the leadership of the Spirit of God** (Num 11:16; 27:18; Deut 34:9). So are the judges (Judg 3:7-11; 6:1-8:35; 10:6-18; 13-16). **"As the creative power of life or a life-giving power" the Spirit of God endows supernatural ability and mysterious intelligence, accomplishing the divine will in the government and conduct of Israel** (Wolff, Anthropology of the Old Testament, 34). In addition, the craftsman Bezalel, son of Uri also exhibits a unique ability for **workmanship and skill enabled by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in constructing the tabernacle** (Exod 31:1-18). Just as the Spirit of God causes the universe to become the dwelling place of God in the cosmos, so the Spirit deliberately fills this divinely selected craftsman to empower him to construct the dwelling place of God on earth. The divine manifestation of the Holy Spirit in Israelite leadership is strongly present in the narrative of the first two kings of Israel. In 1 Samuel 10:6, **Samuel prophesies that the Spirit of Yahweh will come into Saul "in power," and as a result he will "be changed into a different person."** With such empowerment, Saul "assumed rule over Israel, he fought against their enemies on every side: Moab, the Ammonites, Edom, the kings of Zobah, and the Philistines.... He fought valiantly and defeated the Amalekites, delivering Israel from the hands of those who had plundered them" (1 Sam 14:47-48).

Not surprisingly, the cycle is similar for the second king of Israel, **David. The author of the books of Samuel deliberately reiterates the same three crucial elements: the outpouring of the Spirit** (1 Sam 10; 16), the extraordinary military exploits (1 Sam 11; 17), and the conquering of Israel's enemies (1 Sam 14; 2 Sam 8; 12). Empowered by the Spirit of God, Saul and then David bring peace and security to Israelite society. As Hildebrandt states: "The manifestation of the Spirit of Yahweh at this important transition period to the monarchy is consistent with the Old Testament emphasis that all leadership must be Spirit-endowed" (Hildebrandt, Old Testament Theology, 121).

In the Prophetic Books

There are at least two main aspects of the Holy Spirit's work described in the Prophetic Books:

1. the manifested ministry of the Holy Spirit;
2. the anticipated (eschatological) ministry of the Holy Spirit.

The Manifested Ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit presides over the mysterious process of the **prophet's ability to understand and communicate divine revelation.** In the Old Testament world, prophets are Spirit-inspired agents who receive the words of God and deliver them to the people.

The Anticipated Ministry of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit's anticipated ministry facilitates the ethical life of the people of God. Most of the ethical ministry of the Holy Spirit belongs to an eschatological time frame. In particular, **the Holy Spirit's ethical ministry tends to be presented as creating the new covenant relationship between God and new Israel as well as creating the new way of life.**

Elliot's Commentary for the English Reader

God put a cap on how long he would work to convince humans of their need for salvation, for redemption for restoration - human life maximizes to 120.

Genesis 6:3 My spirit shall not always strive with man.—The meaning of this much-contested clause is really settled by the main purpose and context of the verse, which is the Divine determination to shorten human life. Whether, then, God's spirit be the animating breath spoken of in Genesis 2:7; Genesis 7:22, whereby human life is sustained, or the spiritual part of man, his conscience and moral sense—God's best gift to him—in opposition to his flesh, the struggle henceforward is not to be indefinitely prolonged. In the first case, the struggle spoken of is that between the elements of life and death in the body; in the second, it refers to the moral probation to which man is subject. The versions generally take the former meaning, and translate "shall not dwell," or "abide "; but there is much in favour of the rendering "shall strive," though the verb more exactly means to rule, preside over, sit as judge. Literally, then, it signifies that the Divine gift of life shall not rule in man "for ever;" that is, for a period so protracted as was antediluvian life. (Comp. Deuteronomy 15:17, &c.)

Internet Links

<https://hermeneutics.stackexchange.com/questions/40358/is-the-spirit-of-man-a-created-thing>

God did not create man using only created substance (thing) but also of divine substance. In the New Testament, the breath of God that made the body alive was actually called spirit. This spirit in man is the life of his body or rather, it is what animates his body. Without the spirit, the body is dead. ""But it is the spirit inside man, the breath of the Almighty, that makes him understand." Job 32:8

Interesting [podcast about the Myth of the Holy Grail](#) - Jesus cup at the last supper.

Summary of Messages - God Breathed:

- Part One: God breathed creation, order and peace into our world and lives.