



**ADULT LEVEL**

## LESSON 18

# SPIRIT vs. SPIRITISM

## PART 1

### INTRODUCTION

Closely aligned with the pagan doctrines of the “immortal soul” and “hell-fire” is the erroneous belief in the existence of wicked supernatural spirit-beings called “ghosts,” “demons,” and “spirits” that can circulate among us as well as in the supposed fires of hell where they also torment the souls of the wicked dead. According to this mythical superstition, these invisible “spirit beings” can also take possession of people living among us, tormenting them and causing them to behave in sinful, wicked ways.

Just as the “immortal soul” and “hell-fire” doctrines are products of pagan mysticism, so is the doctrine of Spiritism: the belief that there is a so-called “spirit world or realm” filled with diabolical “invisible living beings” labeled “spirits.”

Communication with the “spirits” of the dead is also part of this perverse concept. Many, if not most, world religions share some form of this belief. Churches are notable offenders promoting this Babylonian doctrine. Spiritism is alive and well in the churches along with their perverted “hell-fire” to control their members through fear.

However, Spiritism has no place in God’s Word and is totally contrary to what the Scriptures teach. Before we can deal with the use of the terms “ghosts,” “demons,” and “spirits” in the Scriptures, we must first understand the meaning and use of the word “spirit” as found in the Bible. Beginning with this lesson, we will see how church definition and usage are corrupted. Churches have redefined “spirit” and turned it into “ghost,” “demon,” and “devil.” This corruption in meaning has misled millions of gullible churchgoers to believe non-Biblical, pagan concepts.

“The wicked flee  
when no man  
pursueth ...”  
(Proverbs 28:1)



## SPIRIT — OLD TESTAMENT USAGE

In the *King James* version of the Old Testament the word “spirit(s)” is translated primarily from the Hebrew word “**ruwach**” (Strong’s #7307) which literally means “**breath**” or “**wind**” (air in motion) and refers to force or animation (the cause of motion). “**Ruwach**” motivates a thing to move or act, as breathing causes the chest of a person to move. Spirit, then, is that which compels action and generates movement; it evidences life or living things as opposed to inanimate (non-moving) objects.

Spirit is not the object itself. Rather, it is the cause (motive) that generates action. Thus, spirit is not “a being.” Rather it is that which compels a being to act. Therefore, the term “spirit-being” is a misnomer. You will recall, from our study of “soul,” that the animating force that gives life to a soul (i.e., a being) was called “spirit.” (lesson 13).

### FIND THE ANSWERS

1. According to Genesis 1:2, the **spirit (ruwach)** of God \_\_\_\_\_ upon the face of the waters.

#### Read Judges 13:24-25.

2. According to verse 25, the **spirit (ruwach)** of the LORD began to \_\_\_\_\_ Samson at times ....

The passages above perfectly illustrate the principle of spirit motivating or causing action. God was motivated to create the universe and everything in it. God also moved or motivated Samson to act.

## GOD MOTIVATES MEN

The examples below show how spirit moved and motivated men into action. When the “spirit of God” (motivation caused by God) comes upon a person, it causes that individual to act in a particular manner. It does **not** mean that God puts an “invisible being” inside the person that then takes control over him.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

#### Read Judges 3:7-11.

3. According to verse 10, the **spirit (ruwach)** of the LORD came upon Othniel and he \_\_\_\_\_ Israel and went out to \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Read 2 Chronicles 15:1-2.

4. Verse 1 states, “And the \_\_\_\_\_ of God came upon Azariah...”
5. Verse 2 explains that Azariah then went out to \_\_\_\_\_ Asa and spoke to him.
6. 2 Chronicles 24:20 indicates that the **spirit (ruwach)** of God came upon \_\_\_\_\_ and caused him to \_\_\_\_\_ to the people.

## SPIRIT = DISPOSTION

Biblically speaking, “spirit” is animating influence. The term “a spirit” or “the spirit” refers to a desire, feeling, attitude or disposition which compels a person to think, move, or act. Spirit is that which spurs one into action. It is thought, or one’s mental disposition.

The examples below illustrate different kinds of spirits or mental dispositions. These are mental influences or attitudes that motivate people into action. They are not invisible “**beings**” that live inside (possess) people and control them like a driver steers a car.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

1. In Exodus 28:3 God refers to men He had filled with the **spirit** of \_\_\_\_\_.
2. Numbers 5:14 addresses the **spirit** of \_\_\_\_\_ that comes upon a husband.
3. Isaiah 11:2 speaks of the **spirit** of wisdom and \_\_\_\_\_, the **spirit** of \_\_\_\_\_ and might, and the **spirit** of knowledge and of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the LORD.

## SPIRIT = COURAGE

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read Joshua 2:1-11.**

4. In verse 11 Rahab tells the spies, “And as soon as we had heard these things, our hearts did melt, neither did there remain any more \_\_\_\_\_ in any man ...”
5. The above answer is translated from what Hebrew word? \_\_\_\_\_

Rahab was obviously not describing an invisible “spirit being” leaving from inside a man. She was simply explaining how men lost their courage and were overcome with fear.

## SPIRIT = ANGER

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read Judges 8:1-3.**

6. After Gideon spoke to the men of Ephraim who were chiding him, verse 3 indicates that their \_\_\_\_\_ was abated toward him.

In the preceding example the word “anger” is translated from the Hebrew word “**ruwach**” – usually translated “spirit” by the KJV translators in other Bible verses. The men were motivated by feelings of anger – i.e., they were moved by anger toward Gideon. Later, their angry dispositions subsided.

## **SPIRIT OF SADNESS**

### **FIND THE ANSWERS**

**Read 1 Kings 21:1-6.**

1. After Naboth refused King Ahab’s request, verse 4 indicates Ahab was heavy and \_\_\_\_\_.
2. In verse 5 Jezebel asked Ahab why his **spirit** was so \_\_\_\_\_.

The verses above describe Ahab’s mental disposition or state of mind due to his not getting what he desired. He was **not** incarnated by an evil “spirit-being.” He was merely experiencing sadness.

## **SPIRIT OF ANGUISH**

### **FIND THE ANSWERS**

**Read Job Chapter 7.**

3. Job complains in verse 11, “Therefore I will not refrain my mouth; I will speak in the \_\_\_\_\_ of my **spirit**; I will complain in the \_\_\_\_\_ of my soul.”

Here Job is describing his mental disposition (spirit of anguish and bitterness) which caused or motivated him to complain about his deplorable condition. He was referring to his mental disposition ... not to invisible beings possessing his body.

## **GODLY SPIRIT**

### **FIND THE ANSWERS**

4. Psalms 32:2 states, “Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose **spirit** there is no \_\_\_\_\_.”

### FIND THE ANSWERS

1. Psalms 34:18 declares, "The LORD is nigh unto them that are of a \_\_\_\_\_ heart; and saveth such as be of a \_\_\_\_\_ **spirit**."

#### Read Psalms Chapter 51.

2. In verse 10 the psalmist prays, "Create in me a \_\_\_\_\_ heart, O God; and renew a \_\_\_\_\_ **spirit** within me."
3. Verse 11 continues, "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy \_\_\_\_\_ **spirit** from me."
4. Verse 12 asks to be upheld by God's \_\_\_\_\_ **spirit**.

These passages in Psalms speak of a godly disposition – i.e. a repentant and godly state of mind – that would lead one to follow, obey, and praise God. They are **not** a request to be inhabited by so-called invisible "spirit beings."

## SPIRIT OF FAITHFULNESS

### FIND THE ANSWERS

5. Proverbs 11:13 states, "A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a \_\_\_\_\_ **spirit** concealeth the matter."

This passage contrasts two opposing dispositions or attitudes: one of faithfulness and the other of betrayal. The one disposition causes one to reveal what should not be disclosed while the other moves one to discreet trust to keep a matter quiet. This does not refer to invisible beings.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

#### Read Proverbs 16:18-19.

6. Verse 18 states, "\_\_\_\_\_ goeth before destruction, and a \_\_\_\_\_ **spirit** before a fall."
7. Verse 19 says, "Better it is to be of an \_\_\_\_\_ **spirit** with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the \_\_\_\_\_."

In the preceding verses, a prideful disposition or attitude is contrasted with one of humility. These opposite dispositions, or “spirits” cause people to act and behave in different ways. Again, so-called “spirit-entities” are **not** the subject of these verses.

## **SPIRIT SHOULD BE CONTROLLED**

### **FIND THE ANSWERS**

1. Proverbs 16:32 declares, “He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty; and he that \_\_\_\_\_ his **spirit** than he that taketh a city.”

It is obvious from this verse that a spirit is a man’s disposition – that which disposes one toward an action. If we can control our dispositions, then we can control ourselves. If we cannot control them, we are headed for trouble because we will move (dispose) ourselves to do destructive things.

## **SPIRIT OF BLINDNESS**

### **FIND THE ANSWERS**

**Read Isaiah 29:9-14.**

2. Speaking of spiritual blindness, verse 10 states that the LORD poured out upon Israel the **spirit** of deep \_\_\_\_\_ and had closed her \_\_\_\_\_ .

The above passage accurately describes the mental state or disposition of the majority of Israel today. Most are blinded to the wisdom and truth of the Scriptures – they lack the motivation (i.e., spirit) to search out the truth of God’s Word. So they do not understand it. Such is the state of those who believe there are “supernatural spirit beings.” They actually live in fear of these imagined mythical creatures.

## **HOLY SPIRIT**

### **FIND THE ANSWERS**

3. Psalms 51:11 is a prayer that God would not take away His \_\_\_\_\_ **spirit**.

Due to their misguided belief in spiritism, churchgoers usually have an incorrect concept of the term “holy spirit.” Many believe “holy spirit” is a supernatural being – one-third part of what they call “God.” It is even capitalized as a proper name in most Bibles. However, this idea is contrary to what we have seen concerning the meaning of “spirit.” Since spirit is disposition or motivation, and since “holy” means “separate,” the term “holy spirit” refers to a disposition or attitude to be separate from the masses who follow the Beast System. One who has holy spirit has godly motives and is disposed to act accordingly.

## EVIL SPIRIT

Many world religions teach their followers there are supernatural, often invisible, “spirit-beings”: ghost-like creatures. To those folks the term “evil spirit” conjures up images of evil, mythical, mystical creatures. However, the Biblical use of the term “spirit” means something quite different.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read Judges 9:22-24.**

1. According to verse 23, God sent an \_\_\_\_\_ **spirit** between Abimelech and the men of Shechem which caused them to deal \_\_\_\_\_ with him.

From our understanding of the correct meaning of “spirit” we can conclude from the passage above that God caused the men of Shechem to have an evil, vindictive attitude toward Abimelech. That attitude moved them to act treacherously. It was God who caused the men of Shechem to have the attitude (spirit). But religions oriented toward Babylonianism teach their followers that God sent an evil spirit-being to possess the physical bodies of the men of Shechem and turn them against Abimelech.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read 1 Samuel 16:14-23.**

2. Verse 14 states that the **spirit** of the LORD \_\_\_\_\_ from Saul, and an \_\_\_\_\_ **spirit** from the LORD troubled him.
3. Verse 23 indicates that when David played the harp, Saul was \_\_\_\_\_ and was \_\_\_\_\_ and the evil spirit departed from him.

Those who believe in wicked “spirit beings” may think this passage indicates that God infected Saul with a wicked ghostlike creature and that David was able to cast it out. However, applying the correct meaning to the word “spirit” produces the correct understanding. In the same way that God caused Nebuchadnezzar (Daniel 4:33) to lose his sanity, God caused Saul to have a troubled mind. David’s harp music was refreshing to him and soothed his agitated state of mind (i.e., his evil spirit). In this manner, God brought Saul and David together. Again, the evil spirit was from God.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read 1 Samuel 18:6-16.**

4. Verse 8 indicates that Saul was very \_\_\_\_\_ and that what he heard \_\_\_\_\_ him.
5. According to verse 10, the next day the \_\_\_\_\_ spirit from God came upon Saul.
6. What does verse 11 say Saul tried to do to David? \_\_\_\_\_

In the preceding passage, we saw another example of the effect of spirit. Saul's mind was obsessed with envy, guilt, or anger that moved him to try to kill David. It is also noteworthy that the word "evil" comes from the Hebrew "ra" which means "adverse" or "destructive." It doesn't mean "wicked." So Saul felt adverse to David, and thus was jealous of him.

## UNCLEAN SPIRIT

### FIND THE ANSWERS

**Read Zechariah 13:1-5.**

1. Verse 1 states, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for \_\_\_\_\_ and for \_\_\_\_\_."
2. According to verse 2, God will cut off the names of the \_\_\_\_\_ out of the land and will cause the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_ **spirit** to pass out of the land.

Few serious Bible students would claim that this prophecy speaks of God chasing some kind of "wicked supernatural being" out of the land. Israel had acquired an unclean spirit – i.e. a bad disposition of rebellion against God. The Hebrew word "niddah" (translated "unclean" by the KJV translators) correctly means "impure" or "abhorrent." By purging their bad attitude, God was going to change Israel's spirit. He was going to cause them to reconsider his ways and look to his ways rather than their own.

## FAMILIAR SPIRITS

The unfortunate term "familiar spirit(s)," used a number of times by the *King James* translators, has contributed to the misguided belief in spiritism.

### FIND THE ANSWERS

3. Leviticus 19:31 states, "Regard not them that have \_\_\_\_\_ spirits, neither seek after \_\_\_\_\_, to be defiled by them: I am the LORD your God."
4. Leviticus 20:6 states, "And the soul that turneth after such as have familiar spirits, and after wizards, to go a \_\_\_\_\_ after them, I will even set my face against that soul, and will \_\_\_\_\_ him off from among the people."
5. According to Leviticus 20:27, what is to happen to any person having a familiar spirit or who is a wizard? \_\_\_\_\_

In the *KJV*, the Hebrew word "ob" is wrongly translated "familiar spirit." It literally means "a bottle" and likely infers that a voice came from inside it (probably by a ventriloquist). And the *KJV* word "wizard" comes from the Hebrew word "yiddeoni" and means "one who knows." Thus, this "wizard" would know how make it sound as if a voice was coming from the bottle. It was a trick to bamboozle people. God viewed it as a heathen practice of sorcery and divination. The modern term for such an individual is "a medium." God forbade such evil practice as "Spiritism" because it was dishonest, trickery, idolatrous and turned people away from Him. It claimed to communicate with a "spirit world." The penalty for this dishonest trickery was death by stoning (Leviticus 20:27).

## WIZARD

The *KJV* word “wizards” is translated from the Hebrew word “**yiddeoni**” (#3049 in *Strong’s*) meaning “knowing ones”; specifically Spiritists – those who claim to learn secrets by talking with “spirits.” The Oracle at Delphi claimed this. The lexicon states that this Hebrew word is always used in a bad sense of false prophets. It was also “a spirit of divination; a “spirit of Python.” In Greek mythology, “Python” was a dragon or serpent believed to be a tutelary (instructing) spirit used by the oracle’s cult at Delphi. Myth has it that Python was killed and expropriated by Apollo, the Sun god of the Greeks and Romans.

## FAMILIAR SPIRIT

The words “familiar spirit(s)” in the *KJV* are translated from the single Hebrew word **ob** (#178 in *Strong’s*). It means simply “a bottle.” From the bottle necromancers claimed to hear voices of so-called “spirits.” These necromancers were likely ventriloquists. They claimed to evoke the manes [spirits] of the dead by incantations and magical songs, who would then answer questions as to future or doubtful things. Trickery and deception were the marks of their trade. Belief in “talking spirits” and the fake practice of “calling them up” was dishonest and ungodly. God forbade Israel from such pagan practices.

Wizards and those with “familiar spirits” were **not** empowered by so-called invisible “supernatural beings.” Neither did they communicate with invisible “spirits.” They were con artists (like preachers), cunning individuals who used trickery and deception (magic) to delude superstitious people who believed in Spiritism. The same thing still occurs today.

## FIND THE ANSWERS

### Read Deuteronomy 18:9-14.

1. In verse 9 Israel was commanded to not do after the \_\_\_\_\_ of those nations that the Lord gave them to possess.
2. In verse 10-11 Israel was told that none of them were to use \_\_\_\_\_, observe times (divining by watching clouds), be an \_\_\_\_\_, or a \_\_\_\_\_, or a \_\_\_\_\_, or a \_\_\_\_\_ with familiar spirits, or a \_\_\_\_\_, or a necromancer.

The passage above lists the practices heathen cultures like Egypt and Babylon as the sources of deception, cheating, and trickery. Claiming association with a so-called “spirit realm,” and “supernatural spirit beings” (i.e., Spiritism) equates to mysticism, dishonesty, and belief in sorcery. God’s people are **not** to be involved in such superstition, because it is not only false, **it is idolatry**. Such idolatry leads people to stop honoring truth, and to start seeking heathen practices of deception.

## FIND THE ANSWERS

### Read 1 Samuel 28:3-25.

3. According to verse 7, Saul sought out a woman who supposedly had a \_\_\_\_\_ spirit.
4. Verse 8 indicates that Saul asked her to \_\_\_\_\_ unto him.

Obviously, Saul believed in Spiritism as evidenced by his seeking out a woman with a “familiar spirit” (a sorceress) for consultation. The KJV word “divine” in verse 8 is translated from a Hebrew word “**qacam**” (#7080), a verb which means to determine by sorcery.” She used trickery and deception to convince folks, including Saul, that she was actually talking to Samuel (refer back to Lesson 12 for a detailed explanation of this account).

This woman was **not** possessed by a so-called “spirit being,” nor did Samuel actually appear as a so-called “spirit being.” Samuel’s appearance was an illusion (a strong delusion – 2 Thessalonians 2:11) sent by God. The delusion surprised and scared the woman sorcerer as much as it surprised Saul.

## USE OF THE WORD “GHOST”

The use of the word “ghost” by the *King James* translators has also added to the delusion of Spiritism. Although the Hebrew word “ruwach” was never translated “ghost” in the *KJV* Old Testament, the word “ghost” does appear there translated from the Hebrew word “**gava**” (#1478 in *Strong’s Concordance*). It means to expel breath, to die, expire, “give up the spirit.” When a person “gives up the ghost,” they give up breath (life). The most common rendering of this Hebrew word by English translators is “die,” “died,” or “dead.” “Giving up the ghost” has nothing to do with a so-called invisible “spirit-being” leaving a person’s body. Yet, that is what followers of Spiritism tend to believe and promote.

When most churchgoers see or hear the word “ghost” they think of a disembodied dead person imagined to be still alive in an invisible state ... wandering among, or haunting, living persons.

## CONCLUSION

In this lesson, we have studied the use of the word “spirit(s)” as found in the *King James* version of the Old Testament by examining the primary Hebrew word “**ruwach**” from which it was translated: In doing so, we have found no evidence of the existence of so-called “spirit beings” who supposedly invade and possess people. We have seen that such superstition is the product of pagan cultures and is considered an abomination and idolatry by God.

In the next lesson, we will examine the use of the word “spirit(s)” in the Greek New Testament. May King Jesus help us to see the truth of God’s Word and be free of pagan superstition and fear. “*And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.*” (John 8:32)



### LESSON 18

# SPIRIT vs. SPIRITISM

## PART 1

#### Page 172

1. moved
2. move
3. judged; war
4. spirit
5. meet
6. Zechariah; speak

#### Page 173

1. wisdom
2. jealousy
3. understanding; counsel; fear
4. courage
5. ruwach
6. anger

#### Page 174

1. displeased
2. sad
3. anguish; bitterness
4. guile

#### Page 175

1. broken; contrite
2. clean; right
3. holy
4. free
5. faithful
6. Pride; haughty
7. humble; proud

#### Page 176

1. ruleth
2. sleep; eyes
3. holy

#### Page 177

1. evil; treacherously
2. departed; evil
3. refreshed; well
4. wrath; displeased
5. evil
6. kill him with a javelin

#### Page 178

1. sin; uncleanness
2. idols; prophets; unclean
3. familiar; wizards
4. whoring; cut
5. they should be put to death

#### Page 179

1. abominations
2. divination; enchanter; witch; charmer; consulter; wizard
3. familiar
4. divine

## NOTES