

# ONE TORAH FOR ALL

Zerubbabel ben Emunah  
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## The Breath of YHWH

### *B'reshit (Genesis) 2:7*

***And YHWH Elohim formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.***

In the west it is generally understood that this verse is teaching us that YHWH made man from the dust of the ground, breathed His Ruach (Spirit) into him, and then man became a living soul (nephesh). We see in the verse below that YHWH does indeed give a ruach (spirit) to man.

### *Yeshayah (Isaiah) 42:5*

***Thus says Elohim YHWH, "He that created the heavens, and stretched them forth; He that spread abroad the earth and that which comes out of it; He that gives breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein;"***

In the above passage we see that YHWH gives both breath (neshamah) and spirit (ruach) to His creation, man.

However, as we are about to discover, the verse in B'reshit 2:7 does not actually teach us about YHWH giving a ruach (spirit) to man. The verse actually uses the word נשמה – “neshamah” – “breath”, not the word “ruach”. But just exactly what is “neshamah” and what does this word mean? Let us carefully and prayerfully examine this word from the Hebrew and allow YHWH to expand our understanding of whom and what He created us to be.

Here is the above verse B'reshit 2:7 in Hebrew.

וַיִּצְרֶה יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים אֶת הָאָדָם עָפָר מִן הָאֲדָמָה וַיִּפֹּחַ בְּאַפָּיו נְשָׁמַת חַיִּים | וַיְהִי הָאָדָם לְנֶפֶשׁ חַיָּה :

For now we are interested in the phrase נְשָׁמַת חַיִּים – “nish-maht chay-yim”, which is translated in the verse above as “the breath of life”. In particular we are interested in the word נְשָׁמַת. This particular word is in the construct form coming from the word נשמה – “neshamah”, which means “breath”.

The formation of this word comes from several other words or combination of words. It is important and instructive for us to examine each one of these in turn. To begin with, the primary root word is נשם – “nasham” which means “to breathe or move air”. The Hebrew letter ה on the end of the word signifies the feminine form. This teaches us that mankind was created to be the bride of our Creator. We find many supporting verses in Scripture that teach us the very same thing.

The next possible root word is שמה – “shamah” which means “to identify”. This is highly significant to us as humans as His breath in us identifies us with our Creator. The Hebrew letter נ at the beginning of this word could signify two separate yet important aspects. The first thing this indicates to us is that a word which begins with the letter נ (‘nun’) is often indicative of the niphil stem. When a word is in the niphil stem the word becomes passive or reflexive in nature. In this case where שמה is a directive to identify, נשמה would simply mean that “he was identified” with his Creator. We find this to be the case here.

Secondly, when two Hebrew words are brought together to form a single word often letters are dropped. In Hebrew the word נא – “na” means “to pray now”. This word is an incitement to pray and to do it quickly. So, to join נא and שמה one would drop the ending aleph of the word נא thus giving us נשמה; which would be an incitement to pray that one be identified with the Creator. Not every human which is born does this, thus indicating to us that his neshamah is not made living. Remember that the word “life” is part of the phrase that we began with in the verse above.

We find one additional possible root word in שמע – “shama” which is the root word for “shema” which means “to hear and obey”. This root שמע means “to listen; pay attention”. This is a possible root word because it is phonetically identical with שמה and is therefore implied as a possible root. Again, with the beginning נ we have two truths to understand. The first is that if it is in the niphil stem, it indicates to us that one who is living has paid attention to and listened to His Nashamah. Also, with regards to the word נא it is an incitement to listen to and to pay attention to the leading and direction of His Neshamah!

Then there is also the symbolic meaning of the letters of the word נשמה that gives us additional information concerning the word “neshamah”.

נ – nun: symbolic meaning is endurance, soul, faithfulness, constancy

ש – shin: symbolic meaning is peace, falsehood, corruption, sharpen

מ – mem: symbolic meaning is maturing, chaos, the revealed and the hidden

ה – hey: symbolic meaning is creation, divinity, free choice, mercy

The combination of the letters in this word “neshamah” gives us both an admonition and a warning. The admonition is for us to be faithful, which brings peace and sharpens us, maturing us in the inner man, revealing that which YHWH has hidden in us, if we choose to walk in His mercy. The warning is for us to guard our soul carefully, as falsehood brings chaos into our lives when we do not seek Him according to His ways.

The neshamah within us then is that inner life which one nourishes. One can nourish and feed it good things from above. Or, one can feed it earthly and demonic things from below. It is one's own free choice. But whatever one feeds himself, it is what he will become. Not understanding this concerning one's neshamah will surely result in destruction.

It is from the neshamah that one finds and receives the power to do that which he does. This is where the רוּחַ – "ruach" enters into the picture. Typically, this word is understood as "spirit", "wind" or "breath". However, it is best understood as simply "wind", then by extension, "spirit". "Ruach" is to "neshamah" as a wind is to a breeze. But when does a breeze become a wind? How much power and force must be present in order for a breeze to no longer be a breeze but a wind? YHWH knows, even if man does not know this.

***Ma'aseh (Acts) 2:2***

***And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting.***

The word "wind" in the above passage is the Hebrew word רוּחַ – "ruach". Please note that this wind is a strong wind. It is much more than just a breath. It is the Ruach of YHWH our Elohim which empowers one's neshamah for service and the ability to live a victorious life in Mashiach Yeshua.

In the world of those who have faith in Mashiach Yeshua there is not yet a general consensus concerning the name of our Creator and how it is properly spoken aloud. At some point He shall reveal this to His people. In fact, He has already begun to do this very thing. As we move in that direction there will be much said and "taught" that is right and much that will simply miss the mark as it will be done in the flesh rather than done in His Spirit.

This is the challenge of each and every one of us, not to walk in the flesh, but rather to walk in His Spirit. There is victory in His Spirit. There is defeat and heartache in one's flesh. This defeat will come not only to one who walks after the flesh, but to many others around such a person. Likewise, victory not only comes to an individual who walks in His Spirit, but to many others around him as well.

In the interest of furthering our understanding of how His name is said, let us consider some things from Scripture that are not often considered in this matter. As we consider these things, please understand that we are not declaring definitively that we know without any doubts how His name is to be properly uttered by His people. In fact, we are not even suggesting a possible pronunciation in this study. What we are putting forth in this study are some points from Scripture that should help us to move further along in that direction. But each one of us must put aside any and all pride in this matter. We must be ready and willing to admit that up to now we may have been wrong. If we are not willing to do these things, then I dare say that we will be left behind in the dark. If one is not willing to do this, then it is highly probable that he will miss the mark. May we be open and pliable in His hands!

**Amos 4:13**

***For behold, He that forms the mountains, and creates the wind, and declares to man what is his thought; that makes the morning darkness, and treads upon the high places of the Earth - YHWH, the Elohei Tzava'ot, is His name.***

In the realm of this physical world, at least as we can currently understand it, without the movement of air there cannot be the transmission of sound. So, in order for a name to be uttered, there must be breath or wind. There must be neshamah or ruach involved if words are to be spoken.

Please notice in the verse above that YHWH creates the wind (ruach) before the declaration is made, before words are spoken to man. One of the declarations of YHWH to man is His name.

***B'reshit (Genesis) 3:8***

***And they heard the Voice of YHWH Elohim walking in the garden in the cool of the day; and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of YHWH Elohim amongst the trees of the garden.***

In the above verse the phrase "in the cool of the day" is from the Hebrew phrase לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם – "l'ruach hayom", which literally means *to the wind of the day*. Once again we see that YHWH's Voice is associated with "ruach" or "wind". It is this close association of ruach with His name in which we are interested and must come to understand.

YHWH commanded that His name be spoken over His people, in this way placing His name upon them.

***B'midbar (Numbers) 6:22-27***

***22 And YHWH spoke to Moshe, saying,***

***23 "Speak to Aharon and to his sons, saying, 'In this way you shall bless the children of Israel; you shall say to them,***

***24 "YHWH bless you, and keep you;***

***25 YHWH make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious to you;***

***26 YHWH lift up His countenance upon you, and give you shalom."***

***27 so shall they put My name upon the children of Israel; and I will bless them."***

There is power in the spoken word. In the west we often do not see or understand this in its fullness. Many years ago I had an incident happen to me which perfectly illustrates the power of words; not just the power of words, but the meaning of words both in this realm and in the spiritual realm as well.

Not too long after YHWH took me into deliverance ministry He brought about an incident that I shall never forget. I was taking a man through a deliverance and at one point the Ruach Qodesh was having me say some words and then having this man repeat them to help in his

deliverance. For example, I was having him say, "I renounce ...." However, this man was having great difficulty saying the word "renounce", as it would come out of his mouth as "reannounce." No matter how hard he tried, he simply could not say "renounce". In order to overcome this after praying and seeking YHWH, He had me change and use the word "denounce" instead of "renounce" which solved the dilemma. Later, after the deliverance was complete I did some research as to what was happening in this instance. What I found was astonishing and taught me a very valuable lesson.

I like dictionaries and have a number of them from different time periods. In a 1908 dictionary I found that the word "renounce" and "reannounce" were, in fact, the same word. And if one just thinks about it for just a moment he will see this. Originally, to renounce something meant to announce it again.

The significance of this in the spiritual realm is far reaching. Demonic beings are, among other things, very legalistic. If a person opens a door, even unknowingly, they will seek to enter in and cause problems. This is why we are to walk in His Spirit, rather than in the flesh. Walking in the flesh will always open doors that one will not be aware of until problems begin to develop. However, walking in His Spirit will never open those doors for the enemy to come in. So, when a person "renounces" some sin or demon, the demons simply laugh and continue on, for in the spiritual realm "renouncing" a demon actually gives him permission to act in that person's life. In essence it is reannouncing the demon even though in one's mind he does not believe he is doing this, but believes he is doing the opposite. This happens, because technically speaking to renounce something is by definition reannouncing it. The demons know this and use it to their own advantage. Often a demonic being will feign leaving upon being "renounced" in order to deceive the person. Then when one is not expecting it, this demonic being will then attempt to deceive the person into believing that he is hearing His Voice, when in fact it is the voice of this deceiving spirit.

This incident illustrates the power of spoken words. It illustrates the power not only in the spoken word, but it also demonstrates the importance of knowing and understanding the meaning of what is being spoken. No wonder Yeshua Mashiach taught us to be wise as serpents in our dealings in this world. The principle of the spoken word and its respective meaning certainly has an application to speaking His name.

So, we must ask ourselves this question: Whose name has been placed upon me?

Now obviously the correct pronunciation of YHWH would be the absolute best choice. But at present the proper understanding of how correctly to say His name has not risen to prominence. Does anyone know how properly to pronounce His name today? Perhaps, given the vast variations of pronunciations currently known, it is possible that someone somewhere is saying it correctly.

It is preferable to do one's best in saying His name rather than to substitute some other name or title in place of His name. For substituting another word, title, or name in place of His

revealed name is breaking the third commandment. In speaking another name or title in place of His name one is placing all that has come before concerning that name or title. Simply using the current meaning of a name or title simply is not understanding how the spiritual realm functions and most likely will open doors for problems to enter into one's life. This we simply do not need! However, if one is open and honest before YHWH and does His very best to hear His Voice in this matter and acts in accordance to what he hears from Him, then those doors will remain closed and YHWH will protect us as we work to come to the proper understanding in His time. However, if one becomes closed minded and not open to His Spirit in this matter, then a stumbling block has already arisen in one's life and most likely will become a stumbling block in the lives of others as well.

It is important that we as His people seek His face. It is important that we seek to know how properly to speak His name. One of the problems in this is that we must be careful, oh so careful, not to be condemning of others who are in a different place in their understanding of how to say His name. Each person has different things in his life which are not pleasing to YHWH. Those things that are not pleasing to YHWH influence us in our daily walk. Those things also influence us in our understanding of His truth, and in particular how to say His name. No one is immune to these unclean influences in his life. It is for this very reason we need each other. It is for this very reason we need to dialog in a healthy way about this very emotionally charged topic. It is for this very reason we need to be careful to stay humble as we seek out His truth in this matter. But seek it out we must!

If one simply assumes the attitude and mindset that no one knows how to say His name in these days, then this is a cop out and this is shirking one's responsibility before YHWH to seek His face in this matter. In short, it is simply being spiritually lazy.

***Yechezqel (Ezekiel) 3:12***

***Then the Spirit lifted me up, and I heard behind me the voice of a great rushing, saying, "Blessed be the glory of YHWH from His place."***

Please note the association between the wind and the utterance of His name. This great rushing wind in this verse reminds us of what happened on Shavuot in Acts 2. Simply put, the sound of His name is in the wind.

Now let us consider one other aspect of this important yet elusive truth.

***Malakim (1<sup>st</sup> Kings) 19:11-12***

***11 And he said, "Go forth, and stand upon the mount before YHWH." And, behold, YHWH passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before YHWH; but YHWH was not in the wind; and after the wind an earthquake; but YHWH was not in the earthquake;***

***12 and after the earthquake a fire; but YHWH was not in the fire; and after the fire a still small Voice.***

Even though we have seen in previous passages of Scripture the close association between the wind (ruach) and YHWH's name, we find something quite revealing in this passage. In this passage it teaches us that YHWH was not in the wind, but rather He is a still small Voice, a breath or whisper. It is in this whisper that His true name is heard so clearly. When the sound of His name is elevated above a whisper then His name becomes harder to hear and to understand clearly. But in the whisper of a breath, His name is heard clearly.

Let us prayerfully consider the breath of YHWH as He whispers His name into our being. Let us be still before Him that we may hear His still small Voice. Let us quiet our inner being and put aside all the noise and racket of this world that we may hear Him.

ABBA YHWH, teach us to hear your still small Voice; in the name of Yeshua our Mashiach. Amein.

Shabbat Shalom

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