

Bonus: Wind, breath, spirit

The film, word for word, about 9 min. Hebrew words said aloud are given in Hebrew script, then as they sound.

0:00 The hook

The second verse of the Bible. **וְרוּחַ אֱלֹהִים מְרַחֶפֶת עַל פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם Ve-ruach Elohim merachefet al penei ha-mayim.** The King James writes: and the Spirit of God, moved upon the face of the waters. Other Bibles write: a wind from God. Both are translating the same Hebrew word.

רוּחַ Ruach. It stands three hundred and seventy-eight times in the Bible. And no English word covers what it covers. Today: one word; and everywhere it goes.

0:35 Welcome

שָׁלוֹם Shalom. I am Moreh Ezra; and this is a bonus. Shorter than a lesson; free; and with no new rules. You learned this word in Lesson six, with three meanings on one line: spirit, wind, breath. In Lesson thirteen, I said: the spirit of God; and moved on quickly.

I owe you the long answer. You have the participle now; and the stems. Today, they go to work on one word.

1:06 Genesis 1:2, word by word

Take the line apart. You can do every piece yourself. **וְרוּחַ Ve-ruach.** And; from Lesson five. Then the word.

Hear its last sound: **רוּחַ ruach.** The little a slips in before the throat letter; Lesson four. **רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים Ruach Elohim.** Two nouns; the first leaning on the second. The **רוּחַ ruach**, of God.

Lesson six.

Now the verb. **מְרַחֶפֶת Merachefet.** A participle: something going on. It begins with an m; and its middle letter is one that refuses the dot. A **פִּעֵל Piel**; you heard that last time.

And look at its ending. A t. That is the ending of a she. So our word is a she. In Hebrew, the **רוּחַ ruach** is feminine.

עַל פְּנֵי הַמָּיִם Al penei ha-mayim: over the face of the waters.

So far, the grammar. It tells you this. A **רוּחַ ruach** that belongs to God, or comes from God; was doing something over the water; and went on doing it. It does not tell you whether to write wind; breath; or Spirit.

The verb helps; a little. Its root stands three times in the whole Bible. In this stem, only twice. The other time; it is a bird. **כְּנֶשֶׁר יָעִיר קִנּוֹ עַל גּוֹזָלָיו יְרַחֵף Ke-nesher ya'ir qinno al gozalav yerachef.**

Like an eagle that stirs up its nest; that hovers over its young. Whatever the **רוּחַ ruach** of the second verse is; it moves over the waters, the way a great bird moves over its nest.

2:44 Wind

The plainest meaning first. Air; that moves. The second **רוּחַ ruach** in the Bible, you met last time. The garden: **לְרוּחַ הַיּוֹם le-ruach ha-yom.** At the **רוּחַ ruach** of the day.

The King James: in the cool of the day. It is the breeze.

After the flood. **וַיַּעֲבֵר אֱלֹהִים רוּחַ עַל הָאָרֶץ Va-ya'aver Elohim ruach al ha-arets.** And God made a **רוּחַ ruach** pass over the earth; and the waters went down. Hardly any Bible writes, Spirit, there. But listen.

A **רוּחַ ruach**; from God; over the waters. Whoever wrote that, had the second verse of the Bible in his ear.

At the sea. The story says: **בְּרוּחַ קָדִים עַזָּה be-ruach qadim azzah.** With a strong east **רוּחַ ruach**; all night. One chapter later, the song tells the same night. **וּבְרוּחַ אַפֶּיךָ נֶעֶרְמוּ מָיִם U-ve-ruach appekha ne'ermu mayim.**

And by the **רוּחַ ruach** of your nostrils; the waters piled up. The east wind of the story; is the breath of God's nose, in the poem. In Hebrew, that is not a change of word.

Winds come from four directions. So the word can simply mean: a side. And the wind is what you cannot catch. The Preacher looks at everything done under the sun; and calls it: **וּרְעוּת רוּחַ u-re'ut ruach.** The King James: vexation of spirit.

Bibles today: chasing after wind.

4:12 Breath

Wind, inside a living body; is breath. When the flood is announced, it is to destroy **כָּל בָּשָׂר אֲשֶׁר בּוֹ רוּחַ חַיִּים kol basar asher bo ruach chayyim.** All flesh, in which is the **רוּחַ ruach** of life. That was the verse of Lesson thirteen. The animals walk into the ark, with the same words.

This is not something only people have. Whatever breathes; has **רוּחַ ruach.**

One psalm has the word twice, in two lines. **תֹּסֵף רוּחָם יִגְוָעוּן Tosef rucham yigva'un.** You take away their **רוּחַ ruach**; they die. **תְּשַׁלַּח רוּחֲךָ יִבָּרֵאוּן Teshallach ruchakha yibbare'un.** You send out your **רוּחַ ruach**; they are created.

The King James: their breath; and then: thy spirit. The Hebrew word has not moved. And look at the two verbs; you can name them now. תְּשַׁלַּח **Teshallach**: the פִּעֵל **Piel**, send out; from last time. יִבָּרֵאוּן **Yibbare'un**: a נִפְעַל **Niphal**; they are created.

And Ezekiel, in the valley of the dry bones. In fourteen verses, the word stands ten times; and the King James needs three English words for it. One sentence has them all. מֵאַרְבַּע רוּחוֹת בֹּאִי הָרוּחַ **Me-arba ruchot bo'i ha-ruach**. Come from the four winds; O breath.

In Hebrew: One word; twice. And the command, בֹּאִי **bo'i**, ends in the sound that speaks to a woman; Lesson eleven. The prophet calls the רוּחַ **ruach**; as you would call a she.

When the breath goes, you are finished. When it comes back; so do you. And when the Queen of Sheba has seen Solomon's house, his table, and his servants; the story says: וְלֹא הָיָה בָהּ עוֹד רוּחַ **ve-lo hayah vah od ruach**. There was no more רוּחַ **ruach** in her. We would say: it took her breath away.

6:05 Temper, mind, spirit

How you breathe; shows how you are. So the word is also what goes on inside a person. When Moses brings good news to the slaves in Egypt; they do not listen: מִקֹּצֶר רוּחַ **mi-qotser ruach**. From shortness of רוּחַ **ruach**. The King James: for anguish of spirit.

But hear the Hebrew. These are people working so hard, that they are out of breath.

Short and long then become two characters. וּקְצַר רוּחַ **U-qtsar ruach**: short of רוּחַ **ruach**. The quick-tempered man. אֶרֶךְ רוּחַ **Erekh ruach**: long of רוּחַ **ruach**. The patient one.

English says: short-tempered; and long-suffering; and never notices that it is counting breaths.

And then; the רוּחַ **ruach** that is God's. רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים **Ruach Elohim**. These two words stand together sixteen times in the Bible. The first is our verse. The second is spoken by an Egyptian king; about a Hebrew slave, who has just explained his dreams.

אִישׁ אֲשֶׁר רוּחַ אֱלֹהִים בּוֹ **Ish asher ruach Elohim bo**. A man, in whom is the רוּחַ **ruach** of God.

Here the language stops; and the reader's own understanding begins. But one thing, the language can still tell you. Hebrew has no capital letters. Every Spirit with a capital S in your Bible; and every spirit with a small one; is a decision that a translator made for you. In the second verse of the Bible; you have now seen what he had to decide.

7:38 One word

Everything, on one board. One word. רוּחַ **Ruach**. Air, that moves. Outside: wind.

In a living body: breath. Inside a person: temper; mind; spirit. And the רוּחַ **ruach** of God. Hebrew has one word for all of it; and it does not choose for you.

And one small surprise. The English word, spirit; is itself a word for breath. It is Latin. You can still hear the breathing in: respiration; and: expire. English forgot.

Hebrew never did.

8:18 Before next time

One thing to do before the next lesson; and this one needs Biblion. Biblionapp.com. Open Ezekiel thirty-seven; and in Options, switch to the Study Bible. Read verses one to fourteen in the King James line; and tap the small number after every spirit, breath, and wind. Ten times, it will show you the same word.

For each one, decide for yourself. Wind? Breath? Or spirit? In verse nine, you will decide four times in one sentence.

Next time: the last two stems; and the riddle I left you, on the first day. Keep this word close. You will meet it three hundred and seventy-eight times.

Until next time: לֵךְ לְשָׁלוֹם **lekh leshalom**. Go in peace.