

THE SPIRIT WORLD

Introduction

“God is **spirit**, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth” (**John 4:24**). Jesus spoke those words when explaining the essence and being of God to a Samaritan woman he met at a watering hole. These words are crucial to understanding God and the universe in which we live. And they lay the foundation for understanding what is important to know about the existence of other spirits that exist but cannot be seen. They are the starting point to understanding *The Spirit World*.

Everything shared in this article is based on what the Bible says about spiritual beings. Many make claims about spirits, but not all the claims are biblically based. Many claims are conjecture-based, and some are based on a false understanding that some of the creatures mentioned in the Bible are actual beings when, in fact, they symbolically represent something else. This article is based on what is found *only* in Scripture and, accordingly, known to be part of the universe God created.

The subject of spirit beings is most challenging because, like our belief and embrace of God, it is based on faith. We cannot see God but believe He exists. We cannot see many of the other spirits that exist but believe they do, since the Word of God declares it.

Other Beings of the Universe

Scripture indicates that there have been and are more beings or creatures in the universe than God, human beings, and animals. God exists. Humans exist because God created them. Countless genres and species of animals, many mentioned in the Bible, exist. Beyond all these, other beings mentioned in the Bible include angels, cherubim, seraphim, and different kinds of spirits. Before defining spirits and sharing what we believe is their reason for existence, following is information about a few interesting beings mentioned or alluded to in the Bible, all referenced in the Old Testament.

Giants (Nephilim)

Genesis 6:4, KJV, says “There were *giants in the earth* in those days; and also, after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they

bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.”

Giants in the earth (**Genesis 6:4, KJV**) also translates *Nephilim* in the NIV, RSV and other translations and paraphrases. These giants were human beings born of union between the *sons of God* and human *women*, and are called **heroes of old, men of renown (NIV)**. There is only speculation as to the identity of the *sons of God*. Since Scripture does not state explicitly who they were, we will only say they are said to be creatures of God who bred with some of the women of the earth.

The next verse indicates that “**the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually**” (**Genesis 6:5, KJV**). The giants were part of that wickedness. The great flood of Noah’s day eliminated the wickedness for a season, leaving Noah and his family to repopulate the earth. After the flood, we do not know whether God continued to allow *the sons of God* to procreate with women. We do know that giants are mentioned later in the Old Testament.

When the Israelites were about to enter the Promised Land, their spies reported seeing *giants* in the land (**Numbers 13:33**). Many of them were slain when the Israelites possessed the land (**Joshua 11:21-22**). Later still, Goliath the Philistine (**1 Samuel 17**), a giant over six cubits tall (more than 9 feet) was certainly a *man of renown*. The young shepherd David, well before he became king of Israel, dispatched Goliath. After that, mention of giants (Nephilim) in Scripture fades away.

We do know that God allowed certain of His created beings to procreate with humans. We simply do not know the disposition of giants following their Old Testament references, only that there are no similar populations of *giants in the earth* today.

Behemoths

Behemoth is only mentioned once in Scripture – “**Look at the behemoth**” (**Job 40:15**). The Hebrew word from which the word *behemoth* derives means a *dumb beast* and, specifically, a Nile horse or hippopotamus. Thus, this creature is merely one of the many animals of the earth given life by God.

Leviathans

Leviathan appears in five places in Scripture (**Job 41:1-34; Psalm 74:14; 104:26; Isaiah 27:1**) and appears to be one of God's large sea creatures, "the leviathan, which you formed to frolic there" (**Psalm 104:26**). Job cites Leviathan's size and strength. Isaiah mentions Leviathan twice in **Isaiah 27:1**. Only speculation exists beyond these references.

Nephilim, behemoths, and leviathans are all beings that God created or allowed to come into existence. To recap, the Bible reveals these beings of the universe:

God

Humans (including the giants of **Genesis 6:4**)

Animals (countless types including strange ones like leviathans and behemoths)

Angels

Cherubim (though never stated, some believe these to be angels)

Seraphim (though never stated, some believe these to be angels)

Spirits (most mentioned here and in the Bible)

Other beings may exist or may have existed. We simply do not know, but someday may. If other created beings of God exist, they **1**) exist somewhere else in the universe, unseen by human eyes, and/or **2**) they are spiritual in nature and, like God, may be all around us, but are unseen.

Other 'creatures' or beings are mentioned in the Bible, but they are not God-created; they are not physically real. These are 'creatures' referenced metaphorically, symbolically, or seen in a vision as representing something else. Some good examples are the unnamed creatures in Ezekiel's vision (**Ezekiel 1:4-28**), the dragon of **Revelation 12**, the beasts of **Revelation 13**, and others. These and other such 'creatures' are misunderstood by many unbelievers and skeptics to be mythical creatures that believers embrace, when they are actually 'creatures' cited in visions or dreams to symbolically represent spiritual truths.

Understanding the different types of known beings cited in scripture leads us to a discussion on spirits.

What Is a Spirit?

The Hebrew word *ruach* and the Greek word *pneuma*, used frequently in the Old and New Testaments, respectively, translate to the English word *spirit*. A spirit being is commonly understood to be invisible. Except where a spirit is supernaturally revealed

to the human eye, a spirit is never seen. We can only observe what a spirit causes, e.g., material matter brought into existence by God, actions prompted by the human spirit, physical results, or outcomes of angelic effort.

God is Spirit (**John 4:24**) and cannot be seen, but we can clearly observe the majesty of the universe God created or set in motion (the physical matter of planets (like the earth and its inhabitants), moons, stars, solar systems, galaxies, comets, asteroids, and other celestial bodies) and we can observe what God wills and causes to happen in our lives.

Humans are spirits. We are created in God's image (**Genesis 1:27**) and, accordingly, have a spirit component that cannot be seen. We are spirit beings facilitated by fleshly vessels that can be seen. Your spirit is your true self. Apart from the spirit that is you, you do not have life (**James 2:26**). Most of our actions are audible and visible to others, though our actual spirit cannot be seen.

Angels are spirits. Unless supernaturally revealed, they are unseen. What can be seen are what angels cause or facilitate in the lives of human beings.

Other created beings of God are spirits, including cherubim, seraphim, and many others, about which we know little, except what is revealed in Scripture.

By faith, humans understand the existence of spirits, including God's existence, because Scripture has indicated they exist and by what they have caused to happen in the life of humanity here on earth.

The fact that we live in a spirit world should not be surprising since there are things we experience every day that cannot be seen. We breathe air (oxygen, one of many gases) but we cannot see it. We feel the wind, but we cannot see it. However, we do observe the *results* of air (expanding torsos, condensation on a window when we breathe on it), and wind (swaying tree branches or moving clouds).

Scientists who study the cosmos know that black holes and 'dark' matter exist, but they cannot see them. They observe what they cause – matter being drawn into black holes by gravity and celestial bodies in motion by the force of unseen energy.

We live in a spiritual universe and world because God made it that way and inhabits them. Spirits are the true essence or life of beings, whether they be God, humans, angels, other beings mentioned in the Bible or other beings of which we are yet unaware.

Spirits are also known correctly as *ghosts*. God's Holy Spirit is frequently called the Holy *Ghost*. Another definition of *ghost* that raises concern for some is 'a dead person whose spirit appears in faint bodily form for some purpose, including haunting.' A well-known example is Casper the friendly ghost, a fictitious cartoon character. Though we believe spirits or ghosts may, on occasion, be seen in bodily form, there is no biblical pattern of this occurring on a repeated basis. Be cautious about seeking the presence of ghosts or spirits of departed loved ones via seances and other practices associated with the **Occult**. If you and deceased loved ones are in Christ Jesus, you will see each other again in the heavenly places when you are given new heavenly bodies **(2 Corinthians 5:1-10)**.

One final thought – there is no conclusive statement or proof in Scripture that animals have spirits or souls, or whether they will exist in heaven. While humans **(Genesis 2:7)** and animals **(Genesis 1:30, 6:17; 7:15, 22)** were created by God, having the *breath of life* blown into them, humans were created in the likeness of God **(Genesis 1:26-27)** while no similar statement about animals is made. Also, there are no statements that animals, including pets, will not be part of the new heaven and earth. With no biblical pronouncements, it is entirely in the hands of God.

Why Do They Exist?

We believe that all spirit beings created by God were brought into existence and have a purpose. Here are three biblical reasons God made them:

Desire

God *desired* them in His perfect will. Scripture reveals this, “for you created *all things, and by your will they were created and have their being*” **(Revelation 4:11, NIV)**. If God did not desire the other created things, they would not have come into being. But God did desire them and created them.

Pleasure

God created for His own *pleasure*. “for thou hast created all things, and for thy *pleasure they are and were created*” **(Revelation 4:11, KJV)**.

Worship and Service

God deserves the worship of those He created (**John 4:23**). Because God is spirit, the human spirit and other spirit beings are to worship The Spirit who made everything possible.

With these reasons for God's creation as the backdrop, consider the purposes for which God created the two prominent spirit beings mentioned most in Scripture, humans and angels:

Humans

Humans were made by God to have fellowship with Him and have dominion over the earth (**Genesis 1:26**). This is known by what is recorded in the creation story. Adam and Eve continually sensed God's presence. They talked and walked with Him (**Genesis 3:8**). The Bible does not say that God was lonely, necessitating the need to create humans. It appears however, as shared in the foundational reasons above, that God created humanity to have a close relationship – so much so that, when that fellowship was broken by sin and repeated rejection, God made a Way through Jesus Christ to nullify the sin and restore the relationship (**John 3:16**). God is still looking to establish a relationship with everyone who has yet to embrace Him through faith in Jesus Christ. If you have not yet done that, you can invite God into your heart at this very moment. [Getting Started](#)

There is much involved in our relationship with God but nothing more important than worship. Those who have found salvation through our loving Savior and God are asked to worship Him. Jesus made it clear, “. . . true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth” (**John 4:23-24**). This kind of worship is one-on-one *spirit* worship, human spirit to Spirit God. This makes complete sense in a spirit world.

Angels

Angels were created by God to serve Him. We do not know all the ways angel spirits serve, but we do know from the Bible that the primary way angels serve God is ministering in the lives of humans. “Are not all angels ministering *spirits* sent to serve those who will inherit salvation?” (**Hebrews 1:14**). In Scripture, we discover angels serving in many ways:

Conveying messages to us. The word ‘angel’ derives from Latin and Greek words meaning *messenger*, so this form of service for angels must be high

on the list. Angelic messages in the Bible can be encouragement or news, or they can convey warning and alarm. Good biblical examples include the warning to Lot about the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (**Genesis 19**), the announcement to Mary that she would conceive Jesus (**Luke 1:26-38**), and the messages of the three angels in John's vision (**Revelation 14:6-13**).

Protecting us. “For He will command His angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways. On their hands they will bear you up, lest you strike your foot against a stone” (**Psalm 91:11-12**). A good example of angelic protection is Daniel being saved from lions who would have killed him (**Daniel 6:22**).

Caring for us at death. Jesus said, “. . . the beggar died, and the angels carried him to Abraham's side,” (**Luke 16:22**) referring to heaven. The beggar was escorted to heaven, *carried* by angels to heaven. How special is that!

Facilitating action when needed. At the resurrection of Jesus, an angel was involved, “And behold, there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven and came and rolled back the stone from the door and sat upon it” (**Matthew 28:2**).

Good and Evil Spirits

God is *holy* (**Psalm 99:9**). Merriam-Webster defines *holy* as – exalted or worthy of complete devotion as one perfect in goodness and righteousness. With God, the Spirit Creator, there is no sin or corruption (**Psalm 16:10**). God is loving and kind in every respect and, because of that, is good and just to all His creation. That is why we call God, *Holy Spirit*.

Many of the spirit beings God made have served Him faithfully for their created purposes. These could be called *good spirits* and would include many of the angelic realm, faithful humans, like Abraham, who have trusted God across history, and others. This good, however, cannot be said of all spirits in the universe.

Some of God's created beings either abandoned their purposes, rejected our Holy God, and/or worked against the intents of the Creator of the universe. In the Bible, these are termed *evil spirits* and are called by various names – unclean spirits, impure spirits, deceiving spirits, lying spirits, demonic spirits, and demons. In all cases, these are

supernatural beings devoted to rebellion against God and enticing others, especially humans, to join them.

The origin of evil spirits is not known, though fallen angels are referenced in the Bible in numerous places (**Matthew 24:41; Revelation 12:7-9, and many more**). The fallen angel we hear about most in Scripture is Satan, the leader of rebellion against God (**Matthew 12:24**). But Satan and other evil spirits have no power over God; God still rules over them and will forever. In His sovereignty God has, however, used evil spirits to accomplish divine purposes. Often those purposes centered on punishing those working against God's plans (**1 Kings 22:20-23; Judges 9:23**). God even allowed an evil spirit to trouble King Saul when David was chosen as his replacement (**1 Samuel 16:14-15**).

Evil spirits have the opposite character of God's loving and righteous nature. Rather than showing love and working to promote peace, they attempt to wreak havoc. They attempt to inflict the body with ailments and disease (**Luke 13:11; Matthew 12:22, and many others**). They seduce people with lies and false doctrines (**1 Timothy 4:1**). As seen in what they are called, they deceive and lie, spirit to spirit. They attempt to plant thoughts and ideas into the minds of even the strongest children of God, trying to entice them into sin and away from God (**Acts 5:3-9**). Jesus, himself, faced this onslaught when tempted in the wilderness (**Luke 4:1-13**).

Here is the good news – evil spirits, especially Satan, not only have no power over God, **but they also have no power over you as a child of God!** Their sphere of influence is controlled by God and, if you are in a relationship with God through Jesus Christ, **evil spirits can do you no harm!** Followers of Jesus Christ who have been born again of God's Spirit have been given the tools to overcome the evil that exists in the universe (**Matthew 10:1 is but one example**).

Interaction With the Spirit World

We live our lives surrounded by what we can see and by what we cannot see. **Hebrews 12:1** says it this way, “**we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses.** .” The surrounding cloud of witnesses includes Jesus, the Holy Spirit, God the Father, perfected spirits of the saints who have gone before us, millions of joyful angels, and other unknown creations of God (**Hebrews 12:22-24**).

Embrace the goodness and righteousness of our loving God. Sense the cheering of victorious saints. Be blessed by the knowledge that joyous angels are serving you by serving God.

Draw close to God and claim victory over all evil. Born again believers filled with God's Holy Spirit are not under constant attack from evil spirits. Walking with God *repels* all evil and sends it fleeing. **James 4:7-10** should be read and practiced, "submit yourselves, then, to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Come near to God and he will come near to you . . . humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up."

But evil spirits do exist, and they should not be taken lightly. They will only bring trouble into your life if you give them a place. But they will only enter your reality if you let them. If you embrace sin, start believing lies and deception, fail to forgive others, or dabble in the **Occult**, you open the door to attack (**Matthew 12:43-45**). Draw close to God and worship Him. Resist the evil. For more on spiritual warfare, go to [3 Ways to Win at Spiritual Warfare - Dr. Roger Barrier \(crosswalk.com\)](http://www.crosswalk.com)

Closing thoughts

If you now have a better understanding of the depth of the spiritual nature of our universe and world, do not be alarmed. It is God's creation and Jesus, the Son of God, has been made Lord of it all (**Colossians 1:15-20**).

Do not obsess over evil that Jesus already overcame at the Cross. Do not look under every rock or around every corner for an evil spirit. You are a victorious child of God! Live in the reality that you can observe. And, by all means, do not elevate Satan by overstating his name. The one name we should say most often is Jesus. He deserves our adoration and praise!

Do not obsess over good spirits, like angels, as some do. Angels are created beings, servants of God, and should not be worshiped (**Revelation 22:8-9**). Just be confident that God utilizes them for your good.

Live your life joyously in the Lord and let the darkness of evil never shine in the glorious Light Jesus has brought into your life!

This is an introduction on the subject of **The Spirit World**. Here are a few other resources you may wish to explore:

[14 Bible verses about Spirit Beings \(knowing-jesus.com\)](http://www.knowing-jesus.com)

[What the Bible says about Spirit Beings \(bibletools.org\)](http://bibletools.org)

[What are evil spirits? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

[Evil spirits hierarchy | Spiritual Warfare \(gladiatorsforgod.com\)](http://gladiatorsforgod.com)

[How Evil Spirits get In | Jake Kail](#)

[Who / what were the Nephilim? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

[3 Ways to Win at Spiritual Warfare - Dr. Roger Barrier \(crosswalk.com\)](http://crosswalk.com)

[Do pets / animals go to Heaven? Do pets / animals have souls / spirits? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org)

[Do Animals Go to Heaven? Animal Souls Pets Miracles \(learnreligions.com\)](http://learnreligions.com)