

**“Now the Lord is the Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.” (2 Cor 3:17)**

**✠ Lecture II: The Deity of the Holy Spirit ✠**

The debate over the Divinity of the Holy Spirit initially centered upon a group of writers known as the *pneumatomachoi* or “opponents of the Spirit,” led by Eustathius of Sebaste. These heretics argued that neither the person nor the works of the Spirit were to be regarded as having the status or nature of a Divine Person. In response to this, theologians such as St. Athanasius and St. Basil of Caesarea made an appeal to the formula, which had by then become universally accepted for baptism. Since the time of the apostles (**Mt 28: 18-20**), Christians were baptized in the name of “The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” In his *letter to Serapion*, St. Athanasius declared that the baptismal formula clearly pointed to the Spirit sharing the same Divinity as the Father and the Son.

In what follows, we shall, by the grace of God, examine some Holy Scriptural evidence of the Deity of the Holy Spirit:

1. He is Eternal: “Christ, who through the **eternal** Spirit offered Himself” (**Heb 9:14**) - This is the same word which is used of the Self-Existence from everlasting to everlasting of God (**Rom 16:26**)
2. He is Omnipresent (All-Present): “Where can I go from Your Spirit? And where can I flee from Your presence?” (**Ps 139:7**)
3. He is Omniscient (All-Knowing): “God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God...Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God” (**1 Cor 2:10,11**) – The word *search*, as used in Holy Scripture, does not necessarily imply that successive acquisition of knowledge which belongs to a finite being, for God says, “I, the Lord, search the heart” (**Jer 17:10**) – and the Spirit here is not a mere quality of Divine Nature, as consciousness is of the human mind, appears from the first clause, “God has revealed them to us through His Spirit,” which clearly implies a Personal distinction; for it could not be said that a man makes anything known to others by his consciousness.
4. He is Prescient (knows the future) and unveils it: “It had been revealed to him (St. Simeon) by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ” (**Lk 2:26**) – “He will tell you things to come.” (**Jn 16:13**) – and St. John was “in the Spirit” when he was enabled to cast his eyes across the chart of providence (**Rev 1:10**).
5. He is absolutely Free and Independent: “The wind blows where it wishes” (**Jn 3:8**) – “distributing to each one individually as He wills” (**1 Cor 12:11**) – “Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty” (**2 Cor 3:17**).
6. He is Infinitely Good and Holy: He is called in the Old Testament, emphatically, the Holy Spirit of God. He is repeatedly styled by our Lord, the Holy Spirit. And this is His distinctive designation by the apostles throughout the New Testament. He is likewise called, “The Spirit of Truth and The Spirit of Holiness” (**Jn 14:17; Rom 1:4**) as the fountain of verity and goodness.
7. He is The Almighty Creator of all things: “The Spirit of God has made me, and the breath of the Almighty gives me life” (**Job 33:4**) – “By the word of the Lord the heavens were made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth” (**Ps 33:6**) – “You send forth Your Spirit, they are created” (**Ps 104:30**).

→ Since Divine attributes are ascribed to the Holy Spirit and by Him, Divine offices are exercised toward us, therefore, we conclude and confess that The Holy Spirit is one with God, and is Himself God. This is further established by the fact that **the Holy Spirit is revealed in Holy Scripture as the object of religious worship in parity with the Father and the Son:**

1. St. John said about Lord Jesus Christ, “These things Isaiah said when he saw His glory and spoke of Him” (**Jn 12:41**) – Here St. John is referring to the vision mentioned in chapter six of the Holy Book of Isaiah. God manifested Himself to the prophet Isaiah by the express image of His Person, His Only Begotten Son. The voice that spoke is distinctly said to be the voice of God. But the same message then sent is again recorded by St. Paul and is prefaced with this remarkable introduction: “The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet” (**Acts 28:25**). Therefore Lord Jesus Christ revealed the glory of God to Isaiah the prophet, and the voice of God was the utterance of the Holy Spirit. Now we understand the true significance of the threefold adoration of the Seraphim, “Holy, holy, holy, Lord of hosts” (**Is 6:3**) and dimly apprehend why it was asked, “Who will go for us” (**Is 6:8**). The angels of light, therefore, worship the Holy Spirit with the Father and the Son.

2. **If we compare** → “Oh come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker. For He is our God, and we are the people of His Pasture, and the sheep of His hand. Today, if you will hear His voice do not harden your hearts, as in the rebellion, as in the day of trial in the wilderness, when your fathers *tested Me*; they *tried Me*, though they saw My work.” (**Ps 95:6-9**)

**To** → “Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says, Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion, in the day of trial in the wilderness, where your fathers *tested Me*, *tried Me*, and saw My works forty years.” (**Heb 3:7-9**) – “They rebelled and grieved His Holy Spirit” (**Is 63:10**) – “You always resist the Holy Spirit; as your fathers did, so do you.” (**Acts 7:51**)

**We may fairly conclude** → that the One Whom the psalmist calls upon us to worship is the same One Whom the Israelites provoked. The parallel passages assure us that this One was the Holy Spirit.

3. **Compare** → “Pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest.” (**Mt 9:38**)

**To** → “The Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul...’ ....So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit ...” (**Acts 13:2-4**)

**Here** → Lord Jesus Christ Himself is asking us to pray to The Holy Spirit.

4. Bearing in mind that “the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit” (**Rom 5:5**), this being His peculiar office, let us ponder the following prayers:

a) “May the Lord make you increase and abound in love to one another and to all, just as we do to you, so that He may establish your hearts blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints” (**1 Thess 3:12,13**)

b) “May the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patience of Christ” (**2 Thess 3:5**)

→ In both these supplications we have the Father and Lord Jesus Christ named besides the One to Whom the prayer is addressed; may we not be assured that this One is especially the Blessed Spirit of love?

#### ✧ **Holy Verses Proving The Divinity of The Holy Spirit:**

1. “The Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit; and these three are one.” (**1 Jn 5:7**)

2. “God is Spirit” (**Jn 4:24**)

3. “The Lord is the Spirit” (**2 Cor 3:17**)

4. **Compare** → “The Spirit of the Lord spoke by me, and His word was on my tongue” (**2 Sam 23:2**)

**To** → “The God of Israel said, The Rock of Israel spoke to me” (**2 Sam 23: 3**)

5. **Compare** → “Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit” (**2 Pet 1:21**)

**To** → “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God” (**2 Tim 3:16**)

6. **Compare** → “Your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit” (**1 Cor 6:19**)

**To** → “You are the temple of the living God” (**2 Cor 6:16**)

7. **Compare** → “Why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit...?” (**Acts 5:3**)

**To** → “You have not lied to men but to God” (**Acts 5:4**)

8. **Compare** → “Walking in the comfort of the Holy Spirit” (**Acts 9:31**)

**To** → “God of all comfort, who comforts us” (**2 Cor 1:3,4**)

9. **Compare** → “The Comforter the Holy Spirit” (**Jn 14:6**)

**To** → “I, even I, am who comforts you” (**Is 51:12**)

10. **Compare** → “The Holy Spirit spoke rightly through Isaiah the prophet” (**Acts 28:26**)

**To** → “The Lord God of Israel ...spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets” (**Lk 1:68-70**)

✧ These passages might be greatly multiplied; but from this brief comparison, observing the way in which the names and offices of God and the Holy Spirit are interchanged, we conclude that this same Eternal Spirit is the God of Israel, the Lord God, the Lord of lords, the God of gods, the living God, the Divine Being – in one word, **He is God.**

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\* This lecture is adapted from “*The Trinity*” by Edward Henry Bickersteth.