

Digging in Rom 8:8-11

An Introduction

Rom 8:8-11 is a small part of a much grander picture, but it is necessary that we understand these verses before the grander picture can even begin to come into view. Rom 8:8-9 starts with talking about being *in flesh* and then being *in spirit*, but what is meant by these phrases, *in flesh* and *in spirit*? Let's read the whole passage first.

Rom. 8:8-11 ...**8** Now those who are in flesh are not able to please God. **9** However you are not in flesh, but in spirit, if so be that God's spirit is making its home in you. But if anyone has not Christ's spirit, this one is not His. **10** Now if Christ is in you, the body, indeed, is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is life because of righteousness. **11** Now if the spirit of Him Who rouses Jesus from among the dead is dwelling in you, He Who rouses Christ Jesus from among the dead will also will be making alive your mortal bodies through the indwelling spirit of Him in you. (CPC version in part)

Some of you may have already noticed that the words of verses 8 and 9 are different to what is in most of the English translations we read. In fact, nearly all translations have the words, **in the flesh** and **in the Spirit** instead of **in flesh** and **in spirit**. Such translations which add the "the", do not reflect what is in the Greek. Therefore, if we wish to be accurate, we need to change our English translations to reflect what the Greek actually says before we can begin to consider the passage.

To study **Rom 8:8-11**, it is best to break these words into its 5 natural parts:

1. **Rom 8:8**
2. **Rom 8:9a – The First Half**
3. **Rom 8:9b – The Last Half**
4. **Rom 8:10**
5. **Rom 8:11**

1. Rom 8:8

...*Now those who are in flesh are not able to please God.* Here we are introduced to this idea of being *in flesh*. Note, it does not say *in the flesh* in the Greek. What **in flesh** really means, according to scripture, will not be discussed in this article lest the article become too long. Sufficient to say, the Deity by His Spirit writes what He writes and such differences to the Greek in our translations should be a flag which attracts our attention to translate correctly. In any case, whatever being *in flesh* really means in scripture, if we are *in flesh* **we are not able to please God**. We must note at this point, that according to **Heb. 11:5**¹, Enoch pleased God and, because he did, he was not acquainted with death. He did not die physically. We also know that Elijah did not die and so we might suppose that he too pleased God. Can we extend this thinking even further and wonder if those who are caught up to be with Christ in **1Th. 4:17**² might also have pleased God. We are not told whether they die or not, but we are told they are changed in a twinkling of an eye. If this is all true, then obviously all these people were

1. **Heb. 11:5**...*By faith Enoch was transferred, so as not to be acquainted with death, and was not found, because the God transfers him. For before his transference he is attested to have pleased God well.*

2. **1Th. 4:17** ...*Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.*

NOT *in flesh*.

An understanding of what being *in flesh* might mean, can be seen more clearly by comparing it to its counterpart, *in spirit*, in the next verse heading.

2. Rom 8:9a – The First Half of the Verse

Verse 9a mentions this counterpart phrase, *in spirit*, so let's begin with this verse and what we can discover is meant by being "*in spirit*". **Rom 8 :9a** says ...
However, you are not in flesh, but in spirit, if so be that God's spirit is dwelling in you.
The phrase, *in spirit*, as a stand alone phrase (i.e. without any qualification), occurs 16 times in the Greek New Testament. A full list of these 16 occurrences of *in spirit* can be found in [Appendix 1](#).

Unfortunately, the phrase is lost to all readers of our English bibles, because the translators make two changes to the phrase which are not supported by the Greek text. Firstly they add the definite article, *the*, to the phrase, and secondly, as a consequence of adding the article, they capitalise the *s* to give us ***in the Spirit***. These changes bias us away from the real meaning of the phrase *in spirit* and hence also for *in flesh*. It should however be mentioned, that we do also find the phrase, ***in the spirit***, some 6 times in the Greek New Testament, and one can only presume that the Author of scripture, (The Spirit of the Living God), knew what He was doing when He put a "the" in here and left it out there. The capitalisation of the *s* is a change which some pastors love to quote as having special meaning but to try to argue that the capitalising of the *S*, or any such letters, has some significance is always irrelevant since the original Greek text is all in uncial³ script and shows no distinction of upper and lower case lettering. Because the vast majority of our English bibles translate the *in spirit* phrase incorrectly, all scripture quotes in this article will be taken from the CPC⁴ version of the New Testament since the CPC version translates the phrase, *in spirit*, exactly as it is in the Greek.

In the list in [Appendix 1](#), there are a few scriptures which fairly clearly demonstrate that being *in spirit* is some kind of different "state of existence" or "state of being". A good example, with which most are familiar, is John's words in **Rev 1:10** ...*I came to be, in spirit, in the Lord's⁵ day, and I hear behind me a voice, loud as a trumpet...* This verse tells us that John experienced some sort of change of state which enabled him to see into the spiritual realm. Three other passages, **Rev 4:2, 17:3 and 21:10** also use the same phrase, *in spirit*, in exactly the same way as **Rev 1:10**. These three also clearly imply a changed state, since John, *in spirit*, is reporting more of what he is seeing in the spiritual realm which is not visible to those who are in the state called, ***in flesh***.

These situations are reminiscent of Elisha being able to see God's protective army round about him when his servant could not, until his servant's eyes were opened by Yehovah. **2Kings 6:17** says: ...*And Elisha prayed, and said, Yehovah, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And Yehovah opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha...* It is interesting that Elisha, who had Yehovah's Spirit upon him (see **2Kings 2**),

3. Uncial script has no differentiation into what we call upper and lower case. In essence, we would say, it is all upper case.

4. CPC, Concordant Publishing Concern.

5. The word 'Lord's' here is also an incorrect translation. Read <https://the-logos.net/resources/PDF's/The-Phrase-on-the-Lord's-Day.pdf>

was in a similar state of existence as John was in Revelation, and so was able to see God's army in the spiritual realm. We surely would not be wrong in describing Elisha as being **in spirit**, since Yehovah's Spirit, (God's Spirit in Rom 8:9), was in him.

Another verse in scripture refers to King David being, *in spirit*. It occurs in **Matt. 22:43-44** where Jesus quotes the OT *...He is saying to them, "How, then, is David, in spirit, calling Him Lord, saying, 44 'Yehovah said to my Lord, 'Sit at My right, Till I should be placing Thine enemies underneath Thy feet!'"* David was telling us what Yehovah was saying to David's Lord (i.e. to Christ) in Psalm 110:1. When David wrote this in **Ps 110:1**, he was certainly seeing in the spiritual realm, as he was looking ahead about three thousand years. Being **in spirit** allows a person to be able to see into the spiritual realm at whatever the Father wants to show us.

Let's now return to the passage given at the beginning of this heading which gives us even greater insight into what the phrase *in spirit* (and therefore *in flesh*) might mean.

Rom 8:9a says: *"Yet you are not in flesh, but in spirit, if so be that God's spirit is dwelling in you...."*

We should note a few things on first reading the whole of this verse. Firstly, we should note that two spirits are mentioned, God's spirit and Christ's spirit, that is, the Father's spirit and the Son's spirit. Looking further at the detail, we should note it clearly implies that the state of being called, **in spirit**, is different to the other state of existence mentioned, namely **in flesh**. And finally we should notice that the **Rom 8:9** verse tells us whose Spirit is responsible for achieving this change of state from being *in flesh* to being *in spirit*. As it says *...you are not in flesh, but in spirit, if so be that **God's spirit** is dwelling in you....* It is God's spirit not Christ's spirit which brings about this change. We are left in no doubt that if we have God's Spirit dwelling in us, we are no longer *in flesh* but *in spirit*. Quite how we might describe the differences between being *in flesh* and being *in spirit* from scripture's perspective, is a separate and important study for another time. Sufficient here that we recognise that they are two different states of existence.

Jesus experienced this change of state at His water baptism since **Matt. 3:16** tells us: *...and look! were opened up the heavens and he saw **God's spirit** descending as if a dove coming upon him.* God's Spirit residing in Christ changes Him from being **in flesh** to being **in spirit** and accounts for such abilities as Christ being able to see things in the spirit realm. For example Jesus said in **John 1:47-48**, *"Lo! truly an Israelite in whom there is no guile!"....."Before Philip summons you, when you are under the fig tree, I perceived you."* In fact, this Spirit of God accounts for all the abilities which Jesus demonstrated, from knowing the thoughts of people to the many miracles He did. From this point on, Jesus was **in spirit** right up to Gethsemane. Why till Gethsemane? If you wish, you can find the reason by reading *Something Extraordinary Happened in Gethsemane* at <http://the-logos.net/resources/PDF's/Something-Extraordinary-Happened-in-Gethsemane.pdf>

All of the above mentioned people, Enoch, Elijah, Elisha and Jesus came to be **in spirit** and continued to work here on earth in this state.

[A Side Thought: God's Spirit in Christ at His baptism enabled Him to do miracles etc. Could it be that the ones in **Matt. 7:22** who said: *...Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?*, did these things by God's Spirit but that these ones did not have Christ's spirit, for **Rom 8:9** tells us both spirits are required if we are to be His. In other words these people were in spirit but did not have Christ's spirit and therefore were not in truth, the other requirement necessary to worship the Father properly. We know that Satan is going to be allowed to do many miracles in the last days but we also know that there is no truth in Satan whatsoever, just as Jesus tells us in **John 8:44** *...He was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand in the truth because there is **no truth in him**....]*

3. Rom 8:9b – The Last Half of the Verse

Turning now to the last half of **Rom. 8:9b** *... Now if anyone has not Christ's spirit, this one is not His.* Rom 8:9 finishes with the mention of Christ's spirit, without which we don't belong to God. So we see we need God's spirit to be changed from being **in flesh** to being **in spirit**, without which we can not please God, **and** we need Christ's spirit to belong to God. The way the whole verse is written indicates a clear distinction between God's Spirit and Christ's Spirit. Both spirits are required for entry of humans into the Kingdom of the God. Many, who are bound by a certain doctrine, argue that the two spirits are the same spirit and this despite the clear distinction made by the wording of verse 9, and despite the fact that verses 10 and 11 go on to tell us the difference things each spirit brings. These differences will now be discussed under the next two headings.

4. Rom 8:10

The next two verses, 10 and 11, tell us what of each of these two spirits, God's Spirit and Christ's Spirit, do in us. Firstly, **Rom 8:10** says: *...Now if Christ is in you, the body, indeed, is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is life because of righteousness.* The only way Christ comes into us is via His spirit, called Christ's spirit earlier in verse 9. As a result, I see that my own spirit is given life when Christ comes into me, but note that verse 10 also tells me that my **body** is still dead (has no life) because of sin. This is clearly what Paul expresses in **Rom. 7:22-23** *...For I concur with the law of the God as to the inner man, **23** yet I am observing a different law in my members, warring with the law of my mind, and leading me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.* It would seem that Paul was describing Christ's spirit in Him giving life to his inner man, i.e. his spirit, but that his physical body was still dead because of sin in his members. So we see that Christ's spirit in me does a marvellous work in my spirit but does nothing for my body. When Christ comes in, my flesh is not changed and so I acknowledge that I am still **in flesh** even with Christ in me. **Col. 1:27** reminds us that we fall short for *...Christ in you, is not the glory but rather **the hope of glory**.* The glory comes after Christ in you. I suspect that the glory being spoken about here is the change we see in our bodies when we fulfill **Rom 8:11**. In my view, this next change (in our bodies) brings with it the excessively abundant life.

5. Rom 8:11

Rom 8:11 goes on to record a different spirit, (the Spirit of Him who raises Christ from the dead), which then makes changes not to my spirit but to my body. Listen to verse 11: *...Now if the spirit of Him Who rouses Jesus from among the dead is dwelling in you, He Who rouses Christ Jesus from among the dead will also be making alive your mortal bodies because of His spirit dwelling in you.*

Firstly, we need to know for certain who is the one who raises Jesus from the dead before we can know whose Spirit it is that raised Him from the dead. Scripture is very clear that the God, the Father, raised Christ from the dead. [Appendix 2](#) lists the 22 occurrences in New Testament scripture which leave us in no doubt as to who raised Christ. Read this short list before continuing. Some people think that Christ raised Himself from the dead, and some books print this, but this is error. If the God, the Father, raised Christ from the dead then *the spirit of Him Who rouses Jesus from among the dead* has to be the Father's Spirit, i.e. God's spirit, mentioned in Rom 8:9. When God's spirit dwells in me, my own body is given life and is no longer dead because of sin and I come to be ***in spirit***.

If I am to be an **anointed** follower of Christ, I require both Christ's Spirit and God's Spirit dwelling in me. One does a work in my spirit, the other a work in my body.

Some people have relegated verse 11 to after the return of Christ since they can not see how their bodies can have God's life this side of physical death. However scripture does not agree with this thinking. **1Cor. 6:20** literally says: *...by all means glorify ye the God in the body of ye.* In this verse, the God was already in the body of this person. Paul refers to a similar situation in relation to himself in a literally correct translation of **Gal. 1:24** *...and they-were-glorifying the God in me.* **2Cor. 4:10-11** is even more specific saying: *...always bearing-about in the body the dying-of-the Jesus, in-order-that also the life-of-the Jesus might-be-manifested in the body-of-us.* These verses make it very clear that this life in the body is to happen this side of physical death and not post resurrection. **1Cor. 6:19** goes on to tell us that this Spirit is "The Holy Spirit", for it says: *...Or not have-YOU-perceived that the body-of-YE is a temple-of-The Holy Spirit in YOU, which YOU-are-having from God (Yehovah)....* If you are not sure that God here is Yehovah then read this article: <https://the-logos.net/resources/PDF's/Yehovah-in-the-NT.pdf>

Before finishing this article I need to go back to something mentioned at the beginning of this article. I said that Rom 8:8-11 is part of a much grander picture. A glimpse of this grander picture can be seen in the article found at <https://www.the-logos.net/resources/PDF's/The-Father-and-the-Son-An-Observation.pdf>

Be filled with joy.

Appendix 1

Occurrences of *In Spirit*

The following verses are a literal translation of the Greek and therefore the word order is as it is in the Greek. Nevertheless, the sense of the sentences can be gleaned. Remember too the Greek has no indefinite article and therefore an "a" or an "an" may need to be added to make sense in English. e.g. in John 4:23 we would write "an hour". As well, the sentence connectors like "but" are usually second in the sentence as in Rom 8:9 below.

Matt. 22:43 He-is-saying to-them how therefore David *in spirit* is-calling lord him saying

John 4:23 rather ^is-coming hour and now is, when the true worshipers will-be-paying-homage to-the Father *in spirit* and truth, and for/since the Father such-(ones) is-seeking the-(ones) paying-homage him.

John 4:24 spirit the God, and the-(ones) paying-homage to-him *in spirit* and truth it-is-binding to-be-paying-homage.

Rom. 8:9 ye but not are in flesh rather *in spirit*, if-indeed spirit of-God is-dwelling in ye. if but what/any/any/some-(thing) spirit of-Christ not is-having, this-(one) not is of-him.

1Cor. 14:16 since if-ever you-may-be-eulogising *in spirit*, the-(one) filling-up the place of-the ordinary-person how will-he-be-declaring the amen upon the your thanksgiving? since what/any you-are-saying not he-has-discerned:

Eph. 2:22 in whom and ye ^are-being-built-together into dwelling-down of-the God *in spirit*.

Eph. 3:5 which to-different-(one) generations not is-made-known to-the sons of-the menkind as now it-was-revealed to-the holy-(ones) ones-sent-away/apostles of-him and to-prophets *in spirit*,

Eph. 5:18 and not ^be-ye-being-drunk to-wine, in which is unsaving, rather ^be-ye-being-filled-full *in spirit*,

Eph. 6:18 through all/every prayer and beseeching praying in all/every season *in spirit*, and into same being-vigilant in all/every close-adherence and beseeching concerning all/every the holy-(ones),

Col. 1:8 the-(one) and making-evident/manifesting to-us the of-ye love *in spirit*.

1Tim. 3:16 and avowedly great is the of-the goodly-reverence secret: Who was-manifested in flesh, was-made-right *in spirit*, was-seen messengers, was-proclaimed in nations, was-believed in cosmos, was-taken-up in glory.

Rev. 1:10 ^I-came-to-be *in spirit* in the lording day, and I-hear behind me voice great as of-trumpet

Rom. 2:29 rather the-(one) in the hidden-(place) Judean, and circumcision of-heart *in spirit* not to-writing, of-whom the praise-upon not out-of menkind rather out-of the God.

Rev. 4:2 after these straightaway ^I-came-to-be *in spirit*: and behold! throne ^was-laid in the heaven, and upon the throne sitting,

Rev. 17:3 and he-carries-away me into desolate-(place) *in spirit*: and I-saw/perceived woman sitting upon wild-beast scarlet, being-filled-full names of-blasphemy, having heads seven and horns ten.

Rev. 21:10 and he-carries-away me *in spirit* upon mountain great and high, and he-shows to-me the city the holy Jerusalem descending out-of the heaven from the God,

Appendix 2

22 Verses Telling who Raised Jesus from the Dead.

In the following ASV verses you will notice bracketed words which are the literal translation of the preceding underlined words.

- **Acts 2:32** ... This Jesus did God (the Deity) raise up, whereof we all are witnesses.

- **Acts 3:15** ... and killed the Prince of life; whom God (the Deity) raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses.

- **Acts 3:26** ... Unto you first God (the Deity), having raised up his Servant (the child of Him), sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from your iniquities.

- **Acts 4:10** ... be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God (the Deity) raised from the dead, even in him doth this man stand here before you whole.

- **Acts 5:30** ... The Deity of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew, hanging him on a tree.

- **Acts 10:40** ... Him God (the Deity) raised up the third day, and gave him to be made manifest,

- **Acts 13:30** ... But God (the Deity) raised him from the dead:

- **Acts 13:33** ... that God (the Deity) hath fulfilled the same unto our children, in that he raised up Jesus; as also it is written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.

- **Acts 13:34** ... And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he hath spoken on this wise, I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David. (The Deity in verse 33, raised Jesus.)

- **Acts 13:37** ... but he whom God (the Deity) raised up saw no corruption.

- **Acts 17:30-31** ... The times of ignorance therefore God (the Deity) overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent: **31** inasmuch as he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead.

- **Rom. 4:24** ... but for our sake also, unto whom it shall be reckoned, who believe on him that raised Jesus our Lord from the dead,

- **Rom. 6:4** ... We were buried therefore with him through baptism unto death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life.

- **Rom. 10:9** ... because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God (the Deity) raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved:

- **1Cor. 6:14** ... and God (the Deity) both raised the Lord, and will raise up us through his power.

- **1Cor. 15:15** ... Yea, we are found false witnesses of God; because we witnessed of God (testified of the Deity) that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not

up, if so be that the dead are not raised.

- **Gal. 1:1** ... Paul, an apostle not from men, neither through man, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised (and Father Deity, the *one* having raised) him from the dead,

- **Eph. 1:20** ... which he wrought in Christ (in the Christ), when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly *places*. (“He” here in verse 20 refers back to “the Deity” in verse 17.)

- **Col. 2:12** ... having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of of God (of-the Deity), who raised him from the dead.

- **1Th. 1:9-10** ... For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how ye turned unto God (unto the Deity) from idols, to serve a living and true God, **10** and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivereth us from the wrath to come.

- **Heb. 13:20** ... Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep with the blood of an eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus (the Lord of us, Jesus)

- **1Pet. 1:21** ... who through him are believers in God, that raised (unto God, the *one* having raised) him from the dead, and gave him glory; so that your faith and hope might be in God.