

Do You Have An Immortal Soul?

Churchianity in general teaches that the real you, the real person, is living in a fleshly, temporal body. Our fleshly body is likened to a container of sorts that is embalmed at death and buried in the ground while the real person, the real you, is invisible, is wafted off to heaven – or maybe to an ever-burning hellfire. This ethereal something is referred to as the “soul.”

"His soul has departed from the body and is now in heaven with the Lord" is a popular summation of death at many funerals. Often the eulogy alludes to whatever attributes of the deceased are suitable, and concludes by noting that the dead person is actually more alive than ever without the body. The person's body is about to be put in the ground to await the resurrection to heaven, but the soul is already there according to the popular belief.

No Immortal Soul in Scripture

Yahweh's Word presents an entirely different picture of the "soul." Try to find the expression "immortal soul" anywhere in the Bible. It is not there! Nowhere does the Bible declare that the soul or body is naturally immortal. In fact, the opposite is true. Souls can be destroyed. The body is not the soul, because Yahshua said Yahweh is able to destroy both body AND soul:

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell, Matthew 10:28.

"Hell" here is the Greek *gehenna*, which is also known as the Tophet or the destroying fires that burned garbage in Jerusalem's Valley of Hinnom. *Gehenna* depicts the destroying "lake of fire" that will annihilate the wicked in the second death following judgment (Rev. 20:14). To arrive at the truth of Yahweh's Word, we must set aside opinions and beliefs that are not in accord with the Scriptures. This is especially true of the English word "soul." The Bible teaches that the soul is not part of man, but is the living person, the life that makes up the whole man.

Man is From the Earth

Adam was created from the elements of the earth by the Master Potter. Then he was given life: *And Yahweh Elohim formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul, Genesis 2:7.*

Yahweh blew into Adam's lungs the breath (Hebrew = *neshamah* No. 5397, wind, vital breath) of life and Adam "became" a living soul (Hebrew = *nehfesh* No.5315). Man does not possess a soul; he IS a soul, a living, sentient being.

The Hebrew *nehfesh*, is translated “soul” in our English, and *nehfesh* is a breathing creature, i.e. animal or (abstr.) vitality; used very widely in a literal, accommodated or figurative sense. The corresponding word in the Greek is *psuche*, translated heart, mind, life and soul; and is the direct counterpart of the Hebrew *nehfesh*. *Nehfesh* occurs 752 times in the Old Testament and is translated 44 different ways. Our English words translated from *nehfesh* carry the primary meaning of creature, man, life, and person.

The Greek *psuche* is found 105 times in the New Testament. It is translated "soul" 58 times; "life" and "lives" 40 times; and "mind" 3 times; once each it refers to "you," "us," "heart," "heartily." That *psuche*, the direct counterpart to *nehfesh*, can be found by comparing Matthew 20:28 and Isaiah 53:10, where Matthew reads "life," and Isaiah has "soul." Other verses are Acts

2:27 and Psalm 16:10, Romans 11:3 and 1Kings 19:10. Nowhere in the Bible does either word connote immortality.

Adam was to care for the garden of Eden. He could eat of any fruit except for the one tree, lest he die. Had he not eaten of that tree, Adam apparently could have lived forever. He had everlasting life in the physical plane.

Adam, Noah, Methuselah all lived almost a full Millennium, a thousand years. Mankind will again live long in the physical plane in the millennial Kingdom (Isa. 65:20). After this we are told: *The last enemy to be destroyed is death*, 1 Corinthians 15:26.

Soul Means Life

In contrast with the erroneous and pagan teaching of the soul (*nehfesh; psuche*) as being something immaterial, intangible, invisible, and immortal, the Scriptures show that both *psuche* and *nehfesh*, in reference to physical creatures, refer to that which is material, tangible, visible and mortal. It is life itself.

When Yahweh destroyed the earth with a flood, Noah took air-breathing animals with him: *And they went in unto Noah into the ark, two and two of all flesh, wherein is the breath of life*, Genesis 7:15.

All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died, Genesis 7:22. This is in full accord with King Solomon's statement that man and beast all breathe the same air, have "one breath" [Hebrew *ruach*, spirit of life] and "as one dies, so dies the other," Eccl. 3:19.

Ecclesiastes also tells us that man and beast are composed of the earth, and upon death both go back to the earth again:

All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. Who knows the spirit of man that goes upward, and the spirit of the beast that goes downward to the earth? Ecclesiastes 3:20- 21.

Animals are sentient beings, creatures of lower intelligence. Although driven by natural instinct, animals can also see, hear, smell, taste, and learn. They are on a lower plane than are humans, but come from the same fountain of physical life (our Creator), having blood, muscles, and bones according to kind. Animals sustain themselves even as mankind.

Humans Can Reason

The most obvious difference is in mental quality and the human's moral sense. Aside from that, both man and beast are a life, a soul. Neither has an immortal soul.

This great difference between man and beast is that man is created in the image of his Creator. Yahweh has made provision for man to rise above the carnal state. Man has the innate ability to envision a higher morality, deeper emotions of love and compassion, as well as hatred and anger.

Each page of the Bible is like a "love letter to the bride." Upon reading the Bible we find our invitation to the wedding and the promise of glory to all who attend the wedding supper. Brute beasts are not able to comprehend such spiritual promises.

As we have seen above, King Solomon refutes the pagan speculation that mankind possesses some inherent, eternal quality that allows him to continue living in an unseen world even after death. The lie told from the beginning by the serpent, that mankind does not really die but has an immortal soul that lives on after death, is widely believed even today. The lie told Eve in the garden was that man lives forever like Yahweh Who is Spirit, not flesh and bone.

Yahshua Himself said the devil did not stay in the truth, but lied from the beginning and the first lie was told to Eve:

He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it, John 8:44.

Nehfesh and Psuche Mean "Life"

If we realize that "*nehfesh*" and "*psuche*" mean "life" that is mortal, we are in harmony with the Bible. Both Old and New Testaments teach that souls can die:

And whatsoever soul it be that does any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people, Leviticus 23:30.

And they took it on that day, and smote it with the edge of the sword, and all the souls that were therein he utterly destroyed that day, according to all that he had done to Lachish, Joshua 10:35.

He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul from death, but gave their life over to the pestilence, Psalms 78:50.

Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sins, it shall die, Ezekiel 18:4.

And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea, Revelation 16:3.

And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell, Matthew 10:28.

From the above we learn the word "soul" carries the basic meaning of "life." Our news media may report a disaster such as a tornado or that a ship went down where a number of souls were lost or died. "Keeping body and soul together" simply means to exist, to continue living.

We must remember that the word "hell" in Matthew 10:28 is from the Greek *gehenna*, meaning a garbage dump, and is explained in our booklet *Understanding Hellfire*. Request your copy today!

Destroying both soul (life) and body can also be done by simply abandoning them in the grave. The lifeless body left in the grave and not resurrected with the spirit of life is assuredly dead. If Yahweh does not infuse life again into that body and raise it from the dead, in a short time corruption sets in and the body turns to dust. We can say that body and soul (*psuche*, life) do not exist anymore and are dead or destroyed. This is what the Savior had reference to. Only through Yahshua do we have the promise of a resurrection to life (John 11:25).

Man was not created having an immortal soul, or having immortal life, but was made in the image of his Creator. Man's future lies not in himself, but in the provision that Yahweh has made for mankind to become His sons and daughters through the redemption that is in Yahshua.

He is the way, the truth and the life (John 14:6).

The Source of All Life

The Bible clearly states that there is life after death, but only in the resurrection promised us through the Redeemer of Israel. There is only one Source of life beyond the grave, the great Sustainer and Giver of life from the beginning:

[Yahweh] Who only has immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; Whom no man has seen, nor can see: to Whom be honor and power everlasting, 1 Timothy 6:16.

We do not now have immortality. Only through Yahshua does Yahweh impart everlasting or immortal life. When we die, we are like the beasts that perish. However, if during our earthly sojourn we have kept our hearts and minds attuned to the high calling we have from Yahweh and patiently seek Him, we will be rewarded with the immortality we lack now but continue to seek:

But after your hardness and impenitent heart treasure up unto yourself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of Yahweh, Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life, Romans 2:5-7.

If we already have an immortal soul, why would we need to seek immortality, eternal life? Immortality is something we do not now have, but are now in pursuit of. We are promised that if we seek Yahweh's Kingdom on earth, He will reveal this to us. He will help us overcome and be worthy to stand before the Son of man Who will reward the faithful with immortality in the Kingdom.

Those in the first resurrection will be raised spirit beings to live forever and be priests and kings in the Kingdom under Yahshua. That first resurrection is to immortality! It is then we will be made immortal:

Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of Yahweh and of Messiah, and shall reign with him a thousand years, Revelation 20:6.

The second death mentioned here is the "lake of fire" which will burn up the dross and all that is wicked (v. 10). The earth is to undergo a cleansing fire, which will destroy the adversaries. Those in the first resurrection will not be harmed by the fire, for they are then made immortal by their change to spirit. On them the searing fire has no power, Rev. 20:6. Paul describes the change which then takes place when Yahshua returns at the last trumpet. Both the living and the dead saints will be changed from physical matter to spirit:

In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory, 1 Corinthians 15:52-54.

Death Described as "Asleep"

Instead of an "immortal soul" flitting off to heaven, the Bible teaches that those who die are in a state of "sleep," and are awakened back to life by Yahshua. He said of Lazarus' death, *Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; I go that I may awake him out of sleep*, John 11:11. Luke says of Stephen, the martyr, he fell asleep (Acts 7:60); and David fell asleep (Acts 13:36). Paul uses the same expression many times: *Messiah is risen from the dead and has become the firstfruits of them that slept*, 1 Corinthians 15:20.

We do not have an immortal soul, but will be made immortal by Yahshua. Those saints who are asleep in death and those who are alive at His coming will enter into the spirit realm and have

a body like Yahshua (1 John 3:2; Rom. 6:5). We are to strive to be in that first resurrection and enjoy the blessings in being the firstfruits (James 1:18).

The Apostle Paul is very clear in describing that Yahshua returns and both living and dead will be changed to spirit beings; they will have put on immortality (1 Cor. 15:50-54). Our being made immortal depends upon our obedience to Yahweh and Yahshua by which we demonstrate our love. *For this is the love of Yahweh, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous*, 1 John 5:3.

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