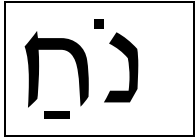


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Noach

(Noah)

B'reshit 6:9-11:32

After the flood had receded and Noach came forth from the ark, and worshipped YHWH with sacrifices, YHWH commanded him concerning blood; and stated that the blood contains the life of man. In this parasha we are going to examine this aspect of our created beings and see how Scripture can enlighten us in this matter.

The Soul of Man

B'reshit (Genesis) 2:7

Then YHWH Elohim formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life; and man became a living being.

The three distinct yet integral parts of man listed in this passage that are pertinent to our discussion are: "formed man of the dust of the ground" (physical body); "breath of life" (spirit of man, but not the word *ruach*); and "man became a living being" (commonly referred to as "soul").

The Hebrew word "nephesh" (נפש) is translated into the English as "soul," or "being." Sometimes it is also translated as "life," or "creature".

The word "nephesh" (נפש) literally means "a breathing creature." The word "nephesh" is intimately linked to the physical life of a creature. As will be illustrated from Scripture, this is true of all creatures that draw a breath. In the Hebrew text there is no distinction between the

“nephesh” of an animal and the “nephesh” of a man, indicating to us that they are essentially the same thing.

B'reshit (Genesis) 1:24

Then Elohim said, "Let the Earth bring forth living nephesh (creature[s]) after their kind: cattle and creeping things and beasts of the Earth after their kind"; and it was so.

In this passage, these creatures that Elohim created each had a nephesh. The nephesh of these creatures of the animal world is of the same 'kind' as that of mankind. In other words, both beast and man are living, breathing creatures. They both have a nephesh.

B'reshit (Genesis) 1:30

"And to every beast of the earth and to every bird of the sky and to everything that moves on the earth which has nephesh [life], every green plant for food;" and it was so.

Notice that all things that have a nephesh (the beasts, the birds, and everything that moves), were given the plants to eat as food.

B'reshit 2:7

Then YHWH Elohim formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into him the breath of life; and man became a living being (nephesh - soul).

In each of these passages, the word "nephesh" is translated into English differently. In B'reshit 1:24 it is translated as "creature"; in B'reshit 1:30 it is translated as "life"; and in B'reshit 2:7 it is translated as "being" or "soul". But why?

What is a Nephesh?

If this Hebrew word does not translate into English directly, then what is a proper understanding of the concept of a soul, or *nephesh*?

B'reshit 9:4-6

4 "Only, you shall not eat flesh with its nephesh [life], its blood.

5 And surely I will require the blood of your nephesh [life]; from every beast I will require it! And from man, from every man's brother I will require the nephesh [life] of man.

6 Whoever sheds man's blood, by man his blood shall be shed, for in the image of Elohim He made man."

Note the very close and intimate tie between the blood and the nephesh (soul/life). If another living creature, be it man or beast, kills a person, then man is to kill that creature. It is nephesh-for-nephesh: a life for a life.

Note that YHWH does not speak of anything eternal in the text. What YHWH is speaking of in each of the foregoing texts with this word "nephesh", is the physical life of the creature. Please keep this very important aspect in mind as we proceed.

The Soul is Mortal

Scripture tells us the *soul* is mortal. Concerning the nephesh of every living creature (be it bird, beast, or man), all have one thing in common: they all will die.

Yechezqel (Ezekiel) 18:4, 20

4 "Behold, all nepheshot (souls or beings) are Mine.

The nephesh (soul) of the father as well as the nephesh (soul) of the son is Mine.

The nephesh (soul) who sins will die.

20 "The nephesh (person) that sins will die.

The son will not bear the punishment for the father's iniquity, nor will the father bear the punishment for the son's iniquity.

The righteousness of the righteous will be upon himself, and the wickedness of the wicked will be upon himself.

The person who sins shall die. And that part of the person that will die is his nephesh, or soul or being along with his body; that part of himself that makes him physically alive. The body and the soul (nephesh) share this common characteristic: they are both mortal, that is, they both will die or cease to be.

So what we have seen is that the soul/nephesh is mortal, and it will die. It will not live forever.

Soul and Spirit are Different Things

Aren't the words "soul" and the "spirit" different words for the same thing? No!

In understanding where a person's mindset is, it is paramount to have a proper understanding of the difference between the soul and the spirit.

We have already illustrated that the soul is mortal. We will now examine Scriptures showing that the spirit is immortal.

The Spirit of Man

While soul and spirit have similarities, there are also some very marked differences.

Ivrim [Hebrews] 4:12

For the word of YHWH is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing as far as the division of the soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

This passage tells us that there is a division of the soul and the spirit. The soul and the spirit of man can (and will) be separated by the Word of YHWH.

Since we have already demonstrated that the soul will die, we see that the thoughts and intentions of the heart are correlated to the spirit (not the soul).

YHWH will not judge the soul, because it will die (and then return to the dust of the ground). What YHWH will judge, then, are the thoughts and intentions of the heart (which correlate to a person's immortal spirit).

We can see this from King Solomon's writing as well.

Kohelet [Ecclesiastes] 12:5-7

5 Furthermore, men are afraid of a high place and of terrors on the road; the almond tree blossoms, the grasshopper drags himself along, and the caperberry is ineffective.

For man goes to his eternal home while mourners go about in the street,

6 before the silver cord is broken and the golden bowl is crushed, the pitcher by the well is shattered and the wheel at the cistern is crushed;

7 then the dust will return to the earth as it was, and the spirit (ruach) will return to Elohim who gave it.

Notice that the body of man will return to dust, but the spirit of man will return to Elohim.

Notice that it is the ruach (spirit), not the soul, which has its connections with eternity.

Heart and Spirit

Tehillim [Psalm] 51:10-13

10 Create in me a clean heart, Elohim, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.

11 Do not cast me away from Your Presence, and do not take Your Set-Apart Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and sustain me with a willing spirit.

13 I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners will turn back to You.

Melek (King) David wrote this after his sin with Bat Sheva (Bathsheba). Notice that he is pleading with YHWH to cleanse his heart, and restore his ruach (spirit).

It is the heart and the spirit that are immortal; and not the soul.

Similarities/Differences between the Soul and the Spirit of Man

Each person has within his being, a mind that gives him the capacity to think and to reason. Along with that capacity, there is also the capacity to feel emotions. Then, beyond that, there is the volition (or the free will of man), which gives him the ability to desire things, and to choose.

Both the soul and the spirit share these characteristics. However, there is a very important distinction between the way the soul and the spirit uses these characteristics.

The characteristics of the spirit (the mind, the emotions and the individual will), all deal with the rightness or wrongness of any given situation. Morals and ethics are involved.

In contrast, the characteristics of the soul (the mind, the emotions and the individual will), all deal solely with the flesh. They deal intrinsically with those things we think about, feel, and choose. It is important to note that our thoughts, feelings, and choices do not necessarily have anything to do with the rightness or wrongness of our spiritual existence. Sometimes our choices can be spiritually neutral.

What do we mean? Let us illustrate.

Nephesh (Fleshly life) Choices

When you get up in the morning and get dressed, you look in your closet and think about what you will wear. Then you will choose something. If it may be a special day, there may even be emotions involved in your choice. However, no matter what you choose to wear, your choice does not deal with right or wrong. It is not a matter of sin or righteousness, whether you choose to wear green, red, purple, black, or blue.

Spiritual Choices

When you read Scripture (or something dealing with spiritual matters, such as this article), you will often experience some very strong emotions. Hopefully, you will also analyze what you are reading; and even if you are not fully aware of it, you will usually make a choice either to agree with or to disagree with what you have read. Furthermore, you will then either make a choice to submit to the leading of the Set-apart Spirit, or to harden your heart against its leading.

These things are all matters dealing with rightness and wrongness, with eternal matters. It is either righteousness or sin to you. These matters are all done in the spirit of man.

The Difference between Spirit and Soul

The difficulty many people have in living a victorious life for YHWH is making this distinction between the spirit and the soul.

When this understanding is not present, a person will often confuse the issues of the soul with the issues of the spirit, thereby making those things that are not sin, to be as sin. They will also make those things that are sin, not to be sins, leading to a life of defeat (and frustration).

If you want to live the life of an overcomer, then you must understand the difference between the soul and the spirit. You must also be able to recognize right and wrong, so you can choose righteousness over wrongness (sin).

Another prevalent aspect in understanding these differences comes into focus when looking at the doctrine of what is commonly known as “soul sleep”. The basis of this doctrine is fairly accurate. The only problem is that it is incomplete; i.e., it uses the terms “soul” and “spirit” interchangeably when Scripture does not do this, but instead, Scripture makes a sharp distinction between them. When we do understand the difference between the soul and the spirit, then we can see errors in doctrines like soul sleep much more clearly.

Operating in the Flesh

It is very easy to operate in the power of the soul because that is what we grow up doing. We first learn to think in the soul. We first learn to feel in the soul. We first learn to make choices in the soul. We grow up learning and knowing our own soul’s power. However, if we are to have a mindset focused on eternal life, then we must learn to grow beyond this initial fleshly mindset, and develop a mind that sets itself upon spiritual matters.

Romiyah [Romans] 8:6

For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace.

As we have already shown, the body and the soul are closely linked, in that they both will die. They both share this characteristic.

So where is your mindset? Do you operate in the power of the soul? That is to say, do you operate under your own power? Or do you operate in the power of His Spirit?

Please answer this question carefully, and honestly. If you are operating in the power of the soul, then you are not building His kingdom. If you are operating in the power of the soul, then your mind is set on the flesh.

If you are operating in the power of the soul, then you are, for all intents and purposes, dead in your sins (perhaps without even knowing it).

Building with the Power of the Soul

If you are operating in the power of the soul, then the things of the flesh appeal to you. You may even do 'good works;' but because these come from your own imaginations (rather than from the Spirit), they do not build His Kingdom.

Qorintyah [Corinthians] 3:11-13

11 For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Yeshua HaMashiach.

12 Now if any man builds upon the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw,

13 each man's work will become evident; for the day will show it, because it is to be revealed with fire; and the fire itself will test the quality of each man's work.

If a person is a charismatic person who draws many people to himself through the power of his personality, that person will find it difficult to operate in the power of the Spirit, making it difficult for him to do any true work in building His Kingdom.

Working in the power of the soul is something that will have to be guarded against at all times; for working in the power of the soul will only build with wood, hay and straw: things that will not last.

Miraculous Works in the Soul

So again, where is your mindset? On the flesh? Or on the Spirit? Are you sure?

Ma'aseh [Acts] 8:9-11

9 Now there was a certain man named Shimon, who formerly was practicing magic in the city, and astonishing the people of Samaria, claiming to be someone great;

10 and they all, from smallest to greatest, were giving attention to him, saying, "This man is what is called the Great Power of Elohim."

11 And they were giving him attention because he had for a long time astonished them with his magic arts.

Make no mistake about it, there is power in the soul. It is oftentimes augmented by the power of a demonic being. As appealing and as *charismatic* as this kind of power may be, it can never build the Kingdom of YHWH.

In fact, this kind of power leads to death, not life.

Building with the Power of the Spirit

It is easy, by tickling the ears, to fill up a building and call it a "church". However, it is quite another thing altogether, to actively listen for His Voice, and to walk in obedience to His Spirit.

Listening for His Voice and walking in His Spirit is a very difficult process, requiring much effort, energy, and patience. However, this is the only means by which His Kingdom is honestly (actually) built.

Qorintyah Aleph [1 Corinthians] 2:1-3:1

1 And when I came to you, brethren, I did not come with superiority of speech or of wisdom, proclaiming to you the testimony of YHWH.

2 For I determined to know nothing among you except Yeshua Mashiach, and Him crucified.

Notice in this verse the distinction made between operating in the power of the soul (man's wisdom) and operating in the power of the Spirit.

3 And I was with you in weakness and in fear and in much trembling.

4 And my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power,

Again, consider carefully the contrast being drawn between the power of the soul and the power of the Spirit.

5 that your faith should not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power of YHWH.

Notice "the wisdom of men", which is from the soul, is the opposite of the "power of YHWH", which is of the Spirit and resides in a truly Spirit-filled person.

The Christian Church misconstrues the Apostle Shaul's letters as saying, "Just love." However, this is not the extent of his message at all. His message goes far deeper than that.

The Apostle Shaul attempts to lovingly discipline us to do the hard work it takes to actually listen for, and walk in, His Spirit.

6 Yet we do speak wisdom among those who are mature; a wisdom, however, not of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are passing away;

7 but we speak YHWH's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden, which YHWH predestined before the ages to our glory;

The wisdom of the Spirit is not of this age, which is going to be done away with.

The wisdom of the Spirit is not passing away, as it is eternal (as the Spirit is eternal).

Here is a clear indication of the importance of building in the power of the Spirit, rather than in the power of the soul.

8 which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Master of glory;

Why did the rulers of this age not understand this wisdom? It was because this wisdom is spiritual, and they had no spiritual life. They operated in the wisdom of their own souls, which only brought death.

9 but just as it is written, "Things which eye has not seen and ear has not heard, and have not entered the heart of man, all that YHWH has prepared for those who love Him."

10 For to us YHWH revealed through the Spirit; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of YHWH.

Again it is time for brutal honesty: Being a disciple takes discipline.

Do you honestly live up to everything that you understand in your Scriptures? If not, then perhaps a day of reckoning is at hand.

When you read Scripture, does it seem foreign to you, like you just don't connect as well as you would like to? If your understanding of Scripture is not where you would like for it to be, then you need to search your inner being to see if you are truly filled with His Spirit.

If you are not filled with His Spirit, then how can you expect to understand those things that are spiritual?

Do you understand? Do you truly understand? This is a hard question I ask, but it is for your benefit to answer it honestly.

11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man, except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so, the thoughts of YHWH no one knows, except the Spirit of YHWH.

12 Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from YHWH, that we might know the things freely given to us by YHWH,

Have you prepared your heart to receive His Spirit?

Have you failed to prepare your heart to receive Him; and thus have only the spirit of the world, which leads inexorably to death?

Or have you undergone the long, difficult struggle to prepare your heart to receive the Spirit of YHWH, which leads to understanding, and to Life?

13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words.

Is it not His Spirit that is our Teacher in all matters?

In order to truly grasp what a true teacher of the Word is declaring unto you, you must have His Spirit.

So, have you prepared your heart to be taught by Him, moment by moment, listening for the sound of His Voice? Or do you still lean upon your own human wisdom, in a pathetic human attempt to do His Will?

14 But a natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of YHWH, for they are foolishness to him; and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

These may be difficult words to hear, but eternal Salvation is not a matter to be taken lightly.

Do you truly understand the things of the Spirit of YHWH? Or are you having trouble understanding the need for the Laws of Niddah (family purity), and for modesty? Or, perhaps some other aspect of His eternal Torah is giving you difficulty.

What about the observance of New Moons, and the search for the Aviv? Do you receive these things? Or are they foolishness to you?

15 But he who is spiritual discerns all things, yet he himself is discerned by no man.

16 For who has known the mind of YHWH, that he should instruct Him?

But we have the mind of Mashiach.

Do you truly have the mind of Mashiach? Or, do strong words such as these upset you?

Are there commandments in the Torah of YHWH, which you understand, but rebel against?

Do you still need to turn your life over to Him, in order to understand the things of His Spirit, and not to be upset by strong words of truth, such as these?

3:1 And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Mashiach.

So, do you truly have the Mind of Mashiach in you? Can you be spoken to as a spiritual man? Or must you be spoken to as a babe in Mashiach?

Whose Power?

The purpose of this article is not to upset you. The purpose of this article is to show you the difference between the spirit and the soul. This is necessary, so that you might come to know if you are truly operating in the Spirit of YHWH (and are thus) building the things of His Kingdom.

Qorintyah Aleph [1 Corinthians] 3:10

According to the grace of YHWH which was given to me, as a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But let each man be careful how he builds upon it.

Are you a wise master builder, building in the power of the Spirit? Or are you making a feeble attempt to build His Spiritual Kingdom with the mind, emotions, and will of your soul?

Are you willing to develop the discipline that it takes to be a true disciple? Or do you want to continue to play at the worshipping of the One True Living Elohim, seeing as your eternal reward hangs in the balance?

Submit to His Leading

Can you now tell the difference between operating in His Power, and operating under your own power?

Will you be honest with yourself, and with YHWH, and submit to the promptings of His Spirit, whenever you feel them? And will you actively seek them as you seek His Face from moment to moment, so as to be a better servant for His Son?

Whether you choose your flesh or choose His Spirit is your choice.

May your mind be set on the things of His Kingdom, so that you might have life and shalom; and may YHWH fill you with His Spirit, so that you might have an inheritance in His Kingdom.

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