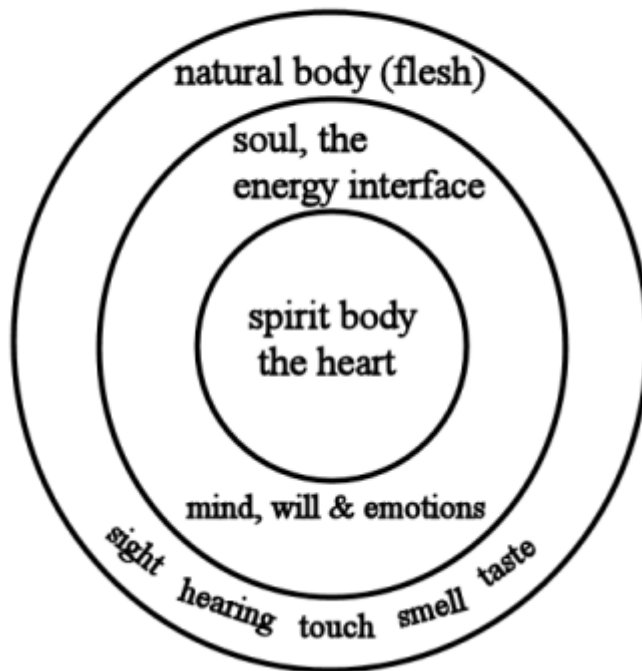


THE NATURE OF MAN: PART 2 COUNTER-ARGUMENTS

Tripartite nature of man spirit and soul and body



In part 1, we saw the evidence for a clear distinction between soul and spirit—the two unseen parts of man. Man has a natural body of flesh, and an eternal spirit body that inhabits the fleshly body during our life on earth. The soul is the energy interface between the body of flesh and the spirit body; and the soul dies when the fleshly body dies. The soul has mind, will and emotions; and it processes the 5 physical senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell.

In summary, the oft-repeated mantra about an “eternal soul” is incorrect. To be generous to those in error, they may recognize that man DOES have an eternal part of them. However, they've used the wrong terminology to name that eternal part of us—that eternal part is the spirit.

What About Counter-Arguments on the Soul in the Bible?

Walter York reviewed the first draft of part 1 for me; and he suggested that someone who is fluent in Hebrew might see counter-arguments in the Torah (1st 5 books of the Bible) on my presentation and definition of the soul. He suggested that in various places (initially 7 candidates, but really only 1 verse as you will shortly see), those who are ritually clean are prohibited from coming into contact with a dead body; and that the literal Hebrew in the text is 'dead soul' (using the word nefesh). Therefore, it is a concept well worth investigating—whether nefesh can infer or directly mean the fleshly body in some instances?

First, a comment about proper exegesis of the scriptures. Martin Luther enunciated a methodology or exegetical method for proper interpretation of the Bible that is taught in every Seminary. He said that we gain doctrines from **clear verses** in the Bible; and that we interpret **unclear or troublesome verses** by means of the clear verses. **We do not dream up new doctrines from an unclear verse while ignoring the clear verses.** Many cult-like teachings have arisen through the centuries solely because of poor exegesis—an emphasis on an unclear verse to form a new doctrine while ignoring the clear verses that would dispel the new cult teaching. An unlearned person may latch onto one unclear verse and ignore the 20 clear verses that explains that unclear verse. It seems to be a problem for those whose favorite method of study is Reduction—Reductivists dissemble a verse in excruciating detail to the exclusion of all other views. Reductive study of the scriptures is beneficial, as long as one then comes up for air and cross-checks the results using an Integrative or big-picture approach. Without the checks and balances of the Integrative study approach, the Reductivist can go off on a tangent and begin to believe new cult-like doctrines. That's how cults evolve. All of these supposed counter-argument verses fall into that category—they can be explained by the myriad of clear scripture verses. Now, let's go on to a few of the 'supposed' counter-argument scripture verses:

Exodus 12:15 Seven days shall you eat unleavened bread, but on the first day you shall put away leaven out of your houses; for whoever eats leavened bread from the first day until the seventh day, **that person (nefesh, soul) shall be cut off from Israel.**

Exodus 12:16 And on the first day you shall have a holy assembly, and another holy assembly on the seventh day; no work at all shall be done on them, except what must be **eaten by every person (nefesh, soul),** that alone may be prepared by you.

Exodus 31:14 You shall keep the sabbath, for it is holy to you. All who profane it shall

surely **be put to death**; for whoever does any work on it, **that person (nefesh, soul) shall be cut off from among his people**.

There are more verses with a similar message to those above, that at first glance it appears that a nefesh (soul) can be cut off from Israel, that a nefesh (soul) eats, and that a nefesh (soul) is put to death. If the soul is not the body and not the spirit, then what's the answer?

Leviticus 17:11 For **the soul (nefesh) of the flesh, it is in the blood**;...

Leviticus 17:14 For **the soul (nefesh) of all flesh is its blood, it is in its soul (nefesh)**.

Man is a unity; and the soul energy is nourished by eating food, where the energy is carried to cells throughout the body by the blood. Without food the mind does not work at peak efficiency; and the will and emotions are likewise weakened when a person is starving. So while the body actually chews the food, it is the soul which processes the information of the senses; and the soul—intimately tied to the body by the blood—derives the energy from the food. Exodus 12:16 is talking about a Feast established by God to be celebrated annually, and that observance has more to it than just eating food as one does every day. It also involves making a spirit connection with the Creator by observance of the Feast day.

The soul enjoys the benefit of eating and restoring strength. Additionally, the soul can gain energy from the spirit, when the spirit is robust; since the soul is the energy interface between the body and spirit. The spirit is strengthened from God, when there is a relationship with Him. Therefore, since man is a unity—even though in this article we are drawing distinctions between the parts of man—nonetheless, the soul does partake in eating by processing the senses' inputs and partaking of the food's energy.

Likewise, a literal reading above (Exodus 12:15 and 31:14) says that the soul (person) is to be cut off from the congregation of Israel if they violate certain ordinances. Isn't it the physical body that is cut off? Yes, but you who are parents know that punishment for your children has the intention of changing the mind, will and emotions of the child. When a small child is made to sit in a corner or face a wall for a very short period of time, it is a “time out” that removes visual stimuli and forces the child to think about what they did wrong. Even the infrequent mild spanking for a small child can be a means to jerk their awareness of mind, will and emotions (their soul) from what they were doing in order to bring about a need for change. It is not the physical punishment that is desired, but a change in mind, will and emotions of the child.

Parents with teenagers may use “grounding” for a time for rule infractions; which is not primarily to physically punish, but to redirect their thoughts and intentions to not disobey the rules of family or society. Even though in these cases there is a physical aspect to the punishment; yet the intent is a

changing or redirecting of the mind, will and emotions in the child or teenager being punished. That's what brings about the desired future behavior. In the same way, the Bible verses above involve the soul (the “us” or observer as the philosophers called it) being cut off from the group as a means to change future decision-making—from breaking the rules to following the rules. And the direct application is that just as punishment can alter the behavior of other children who see the child being punished, so likewise with adults they see the consequences of being “cut off” and are deterred from following a similar rules-breaking course of action too. These are desired changes brought about in the soul—comprised of mind, will and emotions.

In part 1, we also showed that soul dies when the body dies—it is the spirit that does not die. Therefore, when Exodus 31:14 states that those who profane the Sabbath shall be put to death, it means **the death of the fleshly body and soul, but not the spirit**. We can confidently conclude that these three supposed counter-argument verses above are fully explained away in light of the more clear verses.

There was a deliberate delineation of body, soul and spirit in part 1, in order to highlight the differences between them. Yet, man is a unity; and there is always an interrelationship between spirit, soul and body in our actions. An action for good or for evil involves the body doing something physically; but it is the soul and sometimes the spirit through the soul which directs those actions. We cannot divorce our oneness from our actions.

Man is spirit, soul and body; and yet is one, a unity in our actions

Now, we can go on to instances where it appears that a ritually clean person is prohibited from touching a dead body; where the word actually used is nefesh (soul).

Numbers 5:1-2 And YHVH (the Lord) spoke to Moses saying, Command the children of Israel that they put out of the camp everyone with zara'at (leprosy), and everyone that has an issue, and **whoever is defiled by the dead...** (literally: **and all ritually unclean ones of the soul**, using the words: vecol tame lanafesh).

Numbers 5:6 Speak to the sons of Israel, **'When any man or woman commits any of the sins of mankind, acting unfaithfully against YHVH, and that person is guilty,...** (literally: **and that soul be guilty**, using the words: ve'ashmah hanefesh hahee).

The seeming problem we have with the above verses (and some others) is that the English translation is often found wanting (it sometimes eliminates nuances of meaning). It's only when we literally translate it, and ignore what others have imposed upon the literal text, that these problem areas disappear. Is sin of the body, or is sin of the soul? The soul through the mind, will and emotions directs

the body; and that's why it is written, “the soul that sins, it shall die.”

Sin is of the soul; the soul is guilty of sin.

In Numbers 5:1-2, translators have imposed a new meaning from the literal text by translating it as dead body/person, when it is literally 'and all ritually unclean ones of the soul.' Yes, touching a dead body does make one unclean, but there are many other things that makes one unclean as enunciated in these chapters in Numbers. At the time, people didn't know about viruses, bacteria, and contagious diseases, as we do today. While some might view those rules in the Torah as restrictive, they do in fact act to keep disease from spreading (putting the diseased one outside the camp), washing clothes and utensils handled by the infected, prohibiting adultery which keeps down sexually transmitted diseases, etc. I think the literal meaning is more appropriate and is the general case, rather than to impose the meaning of 'dead body' even though it does not say that. Besides that, we know from Leviticus 17:11 and 17:14 that the life of the soul is in the blood, so touching blood (with the soul-life in it) is touching the soul energy.

Our second verse (Numbers 5:6) states clearly that any person who commits sin is “guilty of soul,” that is, their soul is guilty of the sin even though the body may show the consequences of the sin. For example, a young child decides to put their hand on a hot burner on a stove. It is their soul (mind, will and emotions) that motivates the hand to touch the hot burner by decision due to curiosity, by carelessness, or other reasons. The hand (physical body) bears the consequences by experiencing pain and a burn and the soul also bears the consequences of their emotions being jolted by the physical pain. However, the physical hand did not decide to touch the hot burner by itself, it was directed to do so by the person's soul. That's the reason that committing sin is of the soul and makes the soul guilty of the infraction.

The following are two new counter-argument verses:

Numbers 6:6 (to a Nazirite) All the days of his separation to YHVH, **he shall not come near a dead person.** [some translations say, near to a dead body] (literally: **upon a dead soul he shall not come (near)**, using the words: al-nefesh met lo yavo).

Numbers 6:11 (concerning the Nazirite) And the priest shall offer one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering, and make atonement for him concerning his sin **because of the dead person.** And that same day he shall consecrate his head. (literally: **from that sin upon the soul**, using words: me'asher khata al-hanefesh)

The above two verses go together; since Numbers 6:11 tells what must be done by the Nazirite to purify the sin of the soul. Again, verse 11 literally translated says that the sin is upon the soul (not

because of the dead person), and the sacrifices specified ritually purify the soul of the sinner. In context, it is much clearer when translated **'and make atonement for him concerning his sin from that sin upon the soul.'** Meanwhile, **Numbers 6:6 DOES say not to come near a dead soul; and it does mean not to come near a dead body.**

Remember, we are a unity and the life of the soul is in the blood; therefore to come near a dead body means to come near a dead soul too. Many talented theologians have speculated on: “whether the soul energy persists for a short time after the fleshly body processes have stopped?” Some have even written about it and stated that soul energy hangs around the dead body for “so many hours.” The fact is that we don't know for sure. However, in light of Leviticus 17:11 and 17:14 (the life of the soul is in the blood), we do know that to touch a dead body means to touch a dead soul at the same time.

In the end, there is really only one verse (Numbers 6:6) that is troublesome or unclear. It may help to look again at a clear verse to clarify it.

Numbers 31:19 And you, abide outside of the camp seven days; **everyone who has killed a soul (nefesh)**, and all who have touched any slain (bodies), purify both yourselves and your captives on the third day and on the seventh day.

The clear verse (Numbers 31:19) clarifies the point by showing that killing a soul (nefesh) happens when a person is slain. Further, a person can become ritually unclean by either killing a soul (killing the person), or by touching the body of the dead person that was slain. That ritual uncleanness becomes sin of the soul and needs to be ritually cleansed according to the Torah. Also, when you kill the fleshly body you are killing the soul; because the life of the soul is in the blood. Therefore, to have one troublesome verse in the Bible in Numbers 6:6 is not really a problem. Where the dead body is located, there also collocated is the dead soul. **So whether you call it touching a dead body or touching a dead soul, it is the same thing because they are collocated.**

Some might think that the message changed in the New Testament versus the Tanach (Old Testament; but it did not change.

1 John 3:4 Every one who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and **sin is lawlessness.**

1 John 5:3 For **this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments;** and His commandments are not burdensome.

Romans 6:12 Therefore **do not let sin reign in your mortal body** that you should obey its lusts. (we have a free will choice in our soul over the sense inputs of the body)

Human beings have **free will to choose** what they will do every day. They can choose to do good

and obey the commandments of God; or they can choose to disobey. Therefore they have responsibility for their actions—a responsibility they cannot blame on others. A student can choose not to do their homework; a businessperson can choose to act ethically or unethically; and a husband or wife can choose to remain faithful (or not) to their marriage.

The decisions of life by a free will choice determine whether the student does their homework; whether the spouse is faithful; and whether the businessperson acts ethically. That free will decision originates in the soul—the mind, will and emotions. How many spouses would believe an excuse for cheating where the guilty party said, “I didn't want to do it, but my body made me do it?” How many teachers would buy the argument for a homework assignment left undone as, “I wanted to do my homework; but my body made me watch TV all night; so I never got to the homework?” How many shareholders would buy the argument of top management in a company, “I didn't want to cook the books; but my body did that on its own, writing in false accounting entries?”

Where it started...

That **man became a soul**—when the eternal spirit of man was placed in the body—is seen first in the following verse:

Genesis 2:7 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the **breath of life** (nishmat khayyim); and man **became a living soul** (le'nefesh khayyah).

In part 1, I spent some time showing that in all cases nishmat (breath of) means spirit breath and not of the soul (neshama or nishmat could also be breath of the flesh). Here in Genesis 2:7 we see that God breathed the spirit of man into the body made of the dust of the ground; and **man became a living soul**. The soul exists because of the body and did not exist before the body. The reason is that the soul—although unseen—is not eternal; but it exists as the interface between the eternal spirit body of man and the temporal fleshly body of man.

Quandary at the beginning?...

Many have commented on the seeming quandary in Genesis concerning the creation of man. In Genesis 1, we see a slightly different picture than in Genesis 2:7.

Genesis 1:27 So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created him; **male and female He created them**.

The quandary is that people have noticed that Genesis 1:27 says that God created male and female at the same time; but didn't yet say that He created their bodies. If you've grasped the concept that

mankind has an eternal spirit body, then the “why” for Genesis 1:27 becomes clear. God created male and female at the beginning in their spirit body before they were in their fleshly body.

Some might disagree with the premise that Genesis 1:27 is about the creation of males and females as spirits; and Genesis 2:7 is about the creation of the body of man and the spirit breathed into the body with the result that man became a soul. After all, Genesis 1:28 delineates a command from God to the created males and females to be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth. If they were spirits at that point, how could they be fruitful and multiply? The answer lies in the following:

Genesis 2:4-5 These are the generations of the heaven and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens. And **no plant of the field was yet in the earth**, and **no herb of the field had yet grown**: for the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth, and there was **not a man to till the ground**.

In other words, in Genesis 1 God had commanded the creation—the archetypes—and the plants and herbs and the flesh of man were still potential. The creation had taken place; but the flourishing was another step. At that point God caused the misting (Genesis 2:6) to water the earth and the plants to grow; and then he created the fleshly body of man with the resulting soul interface. Therefore, the command to be fruitful and multiply was real, but was potential at that point. Just as the plants flourished after the misting of the earth began, so the body and soul of man became present when God created them in Genesis 2. That doesn't negate that Genesis 1:27 shows that God created male and female spirits at the same time before they incarnated in the body.

Jeremiah 1:5 (to Jeremiah) **Before I formed you in the womb I knew you**; and before you were born I consecrated you;...(God knew Jeremiah as a spirit before he was in the womb).

Please feel free to contribute any additional scriptures by e-mail that you feel should be addressed as counter-arguments to the presented nature of man as a tripartite being made up of spirit, soul and body. Send your inputs to Roy A. Reinhold at prophecy04@comcast.net .