

# Man's Never Dying Soul?

*"Your never dying soul"* is a term we frequently hear used by preachers of the gospel, but do we ever stop to think about where it comes from, or whether in fact it has any scriptural basis?

The Hebrew word "nephesh", translated "living soul" in Genesis ch 2 v 7, appears in Genesis ch. 1 four times before it is used of man. There the animal creation is in view (see ch. 1 v 20, 21, 24, 30). It also appears in ch. 2 v 19 where it is translated "living creature". The word appears 754 times in the O.T. In both the A.V. and the R.V. it is translated "soul" 472 times, and in the other 282 places where it occurs it is represented by 44 different words and phrases. In only 53 of these places is there a marginal reference showing the word "nephesh" has been used, while in the other 229 passages the English reader is left in absolute ignorance to the fact. It is used several times as a dead soul, though the translators inserted the word "body" here (see Numbers ch. 6 v 6, Leviticus ch. 21 v 11 etc.). In none of the 472 occurrences where it is translated "soul" is it ever preceded by the words "never dying", "eternal" or "immortal". These are words that men have added, but not the words which the Holy Ghost speaketh.

We have been led to believe that God put into Adam something called an "immortal soul", but if we say that then we must be consistent and say the same of the animal creation, because the exact same Hebrew word is used of them. How badly informed we have been. Imagine after Adam sinned God only mentioning what would happen to his body and never bothering to mention his "never dying soul." The truth is that the only thing God put into Adam was the breath of life, and by so doing man BECAME a living soul or a living being. This is what Paul says in I Corinthians ch. 15 v 45 - "The first man Adam was MADE a living soul". Notice it does not say GIVEN a soul. Adam became alive by the infusion of the breath of life. This is what made him live as it does every other living thing.

The process was like this:

As Adam lay formed on the ground he was a lifeless being.

When the breath of life was infused into him he became a living being.

When the breath of life was removed he became a dead being.

At Christ's return he will become a resurrected being.

It was the Greek philosopher Plato who taught about humans having souls which were trapped in bodies of flesh, and although Socrates his tutor did not believe that souls were immortal, it was Plato who popularised the theory. Eventually it found its way into Jewish tradition and thinking, and worse still into Christianity. What is being taught today from most of our platforms is not scriptural truth but pagan philosophy.

What separates man from the lower creation is that he was made in the likeness of God, making him a rational responsible creature. At death therefore there is nothing to float away mysteriously. We do not have an entity called a soul that leaves the body at death. We *are* living souls and when we die we are dead souls which will not live again until resurrection. Once we sort this out in our heads, everything else becomes clear.

This is not "soul sleep". The whole doctrine of soul sleep is totally unscriptural. The scriptures are clear - "the dead know not anything" (Ecclesiastes ch 9 v 5) and as the Psalmist said "The dead cannot praise thee" (Psalm 115 v 17). Please do not insert the word body in either of these passages. That would be an unwarranted liberty, as we must not add words that the Holy Spirit does not use.

We believers will not receive immortality until Christ returns (I Corinthians ch. 15 v 53). At this moment we have the hope and promise of eternal life given by a God who cannot lie. On these great matters we must "let God be true and every man a liar".