

[D-4] Do Animals Have Souls?

{www.TheWordNotes.com}{update 12/15/21}

Most of us have heard all our lives that animals do not have souls. Yet the first chapter of Genesis indisputably contradicts that position. The Hebrew word for soul is "nephish" {נפש} and refers to the part of our being which lives on after physical death. The first and ninth chapters of Genesis not only prove that animals have a soul, but also suggests that plant life does not since the word "nephish" is never used with regard to plant life!

Here are the verses:

Genesis 1:20 And God said, Let the waters swarm with swarmers {fish} having a living soul {שׂרץ נפש חיה} and let the birds fly over the earth, on the face of the expanse of the heavens. [Hebrew]

(20) And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl <i>that</i> may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. KJV	(20) <u>And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creatures that have life {souls},^j and birds that may fly above the earth in the open firmament {crystal dome; sky}^k of heaven.</u> {01} Gen. 1:20 KJP
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1:20,21,24j - life - living creatures -- nephish {נפש} -- literally 'living soul' See Gen. 2:7; Rev. 16:3. See article: "Do Animals Have Souls" at www.TheWordNotes.com - see Gen. 9:10

[Note: Hebrew is read from right to left]

חיה	נפש	שׂרץ	המים	ישרצו	אלהים	ויאמר
life	souls	swarm	the	let swarm	God	and
		{abundantly} waters				said

Genesis 1:21 And God created the great sea animals and the creeping things all having a living soul {נפש החיה}[Hebrew]...

(21) And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that <i>it was</i> good. KJV	(21) <u>And God created great whales, and every living creature {soul}^j that moves, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kinds,^h and every winged bird after its kind: and God saw that <i>it was</i> good.</u> {01} Gen. 1:21 KJP
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ויברא	אלהים	את־התנינים	הגדלים	ואת	כל־נפש	החיה
and	God	the whales	the great	with	all	the
created					living	souls

Genesis 1:24 And God said, Let the earth bring forth souls of life {נפש חיה} according to its kind, the cattle, the beasts of the field, and creeping things according to its kind.[Hebrew]

(24) And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. KJV	(24) <u>And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creatures {souls} after their kinds, cattle, and crawling things, and beasts of the earth after their kinds: and it was so.</u> {01} Gen. 1:24 KJP
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ויאמר	אלהים	תוצא	הארץ	נפש	חיה	למינה
and	God	let bring	the	soul	living	after its
said		forth	earth		kind	kind

Genesis 1:30 To every animal of the earth, and to every bird of the heavens and to every creeping thing on the earth, in which is a living soul {נפש}, every green plant is given for food.[Hebrew]

(30) And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein <i>there is</i> life, <i>I have given</i> every green herb for meat: and it was so. KJV	(30) <u>And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that crawls upon the earth, in which there is life {soul}, I have given every green herb for food:</u> ^o and it was so. {01} Gen. 1:30 KJP
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ולכל־חיה	הארץ	ולכל־עוף	השמים	ולכל	רומש	על־הארץ	אשר־בו	נפש	חיה
to every	the	to every	of the	to every	crawler	upon	which in	living	soul
beast	earth	bird	heavens			the earth	it has		

In all four of the above verses the Hebrew word 'nephish' {נפש} is used **which is the exact same word used** of man in Genesis 2:7. Most modern translations give no hint that this is in fact the case, but most older King James bibles do give a footnote:

(12) And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: Gen. 9:12 KJV	(12) And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make <u>between Me and you and every living creature {soul}</u>^c that is with you, for perpetual generations: {01} Gen. 9:12 KJP
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אתכם	אשר	חיה	כל־נפש	ובין	וביניכם	ביני
with	which	living	every	and	and	between
you	is		soul		you	Me

(15) And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. Gen. 9:15 KJV	(15) And I will remember My covenant, which is <u>between Me and you and every living creature {soul}</u>^c of all flesh; and the waters will no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. {01} Gen. 9:15 KJP
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בכל־בשר	חיה	כל־נפש	ובין	וביניכם	ביני
in all	living	every	and	and	between
flesh		soul		you	Me

(16) And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. Gen. 9:16 KJV	(16) And the rainbow will be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember <u>the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature {soul}</u>^c of all flesh that is upon the earth. {01} Gen. 9:16 KJP
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על־הארץ	אשר	בכל־בשר	חיה	כל־נפש	ובין	אלהים	בין	עולם	ברית
upon the	which	in all	living	every	and	God	between	everlasting	the
earth	is	flesh		soul					covenant

See also Rev. 8:9 and Rev. 16:3. Rev. 16:3 in the King James and in Greek both clearly refer to the animal life in the ocean as 'living souls'.

Are there animals in heaven?

Rev. 19:11 I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True.

Is. 11: 6-8 The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, and the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest.

{We believe this refers to the millennium, but could also refer to the new heavens and new earth.}

Zech. 14:20 On that day "Holy to the Lord" will be inscribed on the bells of the horses...

Note: The Revelation shows that presently there are horses in heaven as well as other creatures. The passages in Isaiah and Zechariah show that there will be animals in the millennium kingdom on earth.

The present violence in the animal world is a result of the curse in the garden of Eden pronounced by God due to man's sin.

Rom. 8:19 -22 The creation {this includes animals} waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time...

The Lord put all things in the oceans, in the air, and on earth under man's subjection in Genesis 1:26.

What makes man different from the animals is not that he has a soul, but that he is made in the image of God {Gen. 1:26-27}.

The words "let us make" uses the same Hebrew word for "make" found in Ex. 20:4 in which God commands us to "not make" any graven image. It is because we are made in the image of God that murder is forbidden {Gen. 9:6} Also, God breathed His Spirit into Adam Gen. 2:7. This Spirit no longer resided inside of mankind after the fall in the garden of Eden. If it is the Spirit of God that makes us different, then those who have not accepted Jesus as Lord would be no different than animals, but this is not the case! We know it is not the case, because Gen. 9:6 was written after the fall of man.

I do not pretend to understand what all "made in the image of God" means, but there are some things I know it does not mean:

It does not mean that animals do not have souls, Genesis chapter 1 proves that.

It does not mean animals cannot reason-- anyone who has ever raised pets of any kind know that animals do reason quite well. At times you can almost read their thoughts as they make decisions about which food to eat, which food not to eat, how to get out of a pen, how to sneak away from you when they know they are in trouble, etc..

From Numbers 22:21-34 {about Balaam and his donkey}

it is quite obvious that at times animals are much more spiritual discerning than people are!

(11) He came unto his own, and his own received him not. John 1:11 KJV	(11) He came to His own {creation}, ^a but His own {people} ^b did not receive Him. {43} John 1:11 KJP
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1:11a – His own { ἰδία } – His own creation

1:11b – His own { ἰδιοί } – His own people

All of creation recognizes its Creator, except man!!!

As for the animals, however, we know that animals do have souls based on the Hebrew text of the Old Testament and Rev. 16:3 in the New Testament [both in the English King James as well as the Greek]. We know that the soul lives on after the body has died. We know that there are presently animals in heaven. We know that there will be animals upon the earth in the millennium kingdom. We also know that God himself watches over even the birds of the air {Matt. 6:26} and takes care of them.

While we may not be able to fully prove Biblically that our pets go to heaven when they die, we can prove Biblically that animals have souls and there are animals in heaven.

(4) Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out <i>the corn</i> . Deut. 25:4 KJV	(4) You shall not muzzle the ox when he treads out <i>the corn</i> . ^a {05} Deut. 25:4 KJP
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25:4a – not muzzle the ox – if an animal is doing work – let it eat all it wants

- see I Cor, 9:9 and I Tim. 5:18

(10) A righteous <i>man</i> regardeth the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked <i>are</i> cruel. Prov. 12:10 KJV	(10) A righteous <i>man</i> regards the life of his beast : but the tender mercies of the wicked <i>are</i> cruel. {20} Prov. 12:10 KJP
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