



LESSON 11

THE “IMMORTAL SOUL” DOCTRINE

Key Deception In The Churches

The doctrine of the “immortal soul” is one of the most central, and most damaging, taught in the churches. Not only is it a central teaching of most churches, but it also serves as the basis for key pagan concepts like the so-called triune nature of man (“body, soul, and spirit”), the so-called “rapture” theory, spiritism, spirits dwelling in outer space, a “hell” for punishing disembodied spirits of deceased persons, supernatural spirit beings called “ghosts,” “demons,” and “devils,” pre-existence, reincarnation, astral (out-of-the-body) travel, communications with the dead, exorcism, and a number of others.

The concept of a non-material intelligent entity with never-ending consciousness that incarnates man’s biological body at birth and then vacates it at death is totally contrary to Scripture. This spurious doctrine has corrupted the minds of churchgoers, blinding them to the simple truth of eonian life and the Gospel of the present reign of King Jesus. Our hope and freedom are in Christ and the life we receive from his spirit – not in a so-called “immortal soul.”

In this lesson and following lessons we will expose this doctrine for what it really is – **a lie**. We will also reveal the correct meaning of the word “**soul**” as used in the Scriptures. We will begin by examining the meaning and use of the Hebrew word **nephesh** from which the English word “**soul**” is translated.

KJV TRANSLATIONS OF “NEPESH”

(Rendered into 44 different English words)

Number of times used:

soul (475)	him (4)	herself (2)	her (1)
life/lives (120)	any (3)	lust (2)	men (1)
person (30)	man (3)	thee (2)	mortally (1)
heart (15)	me (3)	thing (2)	myself (1)
mind (15)	pleasure (3)	breath (1)	one (1)
creature (9)	themselves (3)	deadly (1)	own (1)
himself (8)	will (3)	discontented (1)	she will (1)
body (7)	appetite (2)	fellow (1)	tablets (1)
yourselves (6)	beast (2)	fish (1)	they (1)
dead (5)	ghost (2)	greedy (1)	thymself (1)
desire (5)	he (2)	hearty (1)	we (1)

“Nephesh” appears a total of 751 times in the Hebrew text.

SOUL – OLD TESTAMENT USAGE

The English “soul” is translated from the Hebrew word **nephesh**. The chart on the preceding page illustrates the variety of ways **nephesh** was translated in the *KJV* in its 751 occurrences. The number of times each particular rendering is used is also listed. Thus, we shall examine this Hebrew word as well as the English word **soul**.

The most basic meaning of “**nephesh**” infers breath, breathing, and movement (i.e., a living being).

SOUL (NEPHESH) = ANIMALS

FIND THE ANSWERS

1. Genesis 1:21 states, “And God created great whales, and every living _____ **[nephesh]** that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind ...”
2. According to Genesis 1:24 God said, “Let the earth bring forth the living _____ **[nephesh]** after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so.”
3. Genesis 2:19 states, “And out of the ground the LORD God formed every _____ of the field, and every _____ of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living _____ **[nephesh]**, that was the name thereof.”

Read Genesis 9:8-17.

4. In verse 10, 12, 15, and 16, in each verse the word **creature** is translated from what Hebrew word?

5. According to verse 10, which of the following are included as **creatures** (nephesh/souls)?
A. fowl B. cattle C. every beast of the earth D. all three

Read Leviticus, Chapter 11.

6. In verse 10 what word is translated from nephesh (#5315)? _____
7. Pertaining to the clean and unclean, verse 46 states, “This is the law of the beasts, and of the fowl, and of every living _____ that moveth in the waters, and of every _____ that creepeth upon the earth ...”
8. Leviticus 24:18 states, “And he that killest a _____ **[nephesh]** shall make it good; beast for beast.”

The above verses clearly show that the Hebrew word nephesh (the word translated “soul”) is used to refer to animals – those in the water, in the air, and upon the land. Note that none of these verses indicate these animals (creatures) had souls inside them. Rather, the whole creatures themselves WERE souls (nephesh). From this alone you can see that church doctrine about “immortality of the soul” has been derived from non-Biblical sources.

SOUL (NEPHESH) = PERSONS

Not only is the Hebrew word **nephesh** used for animals, it is also used to refer to people (individually or in groups). Both animals and people are “souls.” It isn’t that they “have souls.” Rather, they “are souls.”

FIND THE ANSWERS

1. Concerning the people and goods captured, the king of Sodom told Abram in Genesis 14:21, “Give me the _____ [souls], and take the goods to thyself.”
2. Reference is made in Genesis 36:6 to Esau moving his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and “all the _____ [souls] of his house.”
3. According to Exodus 16:15-16, what did Moses tell the Israelites to gather according to the number of their “**persons**” [souls]?
A. water B. grain C. manna D. sheep
4. In Numbers 5:6 both a “man” and a “woman” are called a “ _____ ” [nephesh/soul].

Read Numbers 31:21-54.

5. Numbers 31:35 refers to 32,000 _____ [nephesh/souls].
6. Verse 40 states, “And the **persons** [nephesh/souls] were sixteen thousand; of which the LORD’S _____ was thirty and two persons [nephesh/souls] ...”
7. Concerning Israel, Deuteronomy 10:22 states, “Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten _____; ...”

Read Jeremiah 52:24-34.

8. Verse 29 indicates Nebuchadrezzar “carried away captive” 832 _____ from Jerusalem.
9. Verse 30 states that a total of _____ **persons** [souls] were carried away captive.
10. According to Ezekiel 27:13 the merchants Javan, Tubal, and Meshech “traded (i.e., sold) the _____ of men and vessels of brass ...”

The basis of the Hebrew word **nephesh** (soul) refers to breath, breathing, movement (life, animation). But it also often refers to the whole entity (human or animal) as a breathing, moving life form. In fact, some Bible translations correctly use the word **soul** in these passages. In the above verses, souls (nephesh) are captured in war, moved from one land to another, used for determining the amount of manna to be gathered, guilty of committing sin, carried away into captivity, and traded (sold) by merchants. If “souls” were immortal spirit entities, the above verses would be absurd and illogical. It is obvious that church-hired translators have been deceiving English readers for hundreds of years.

SOUL (NEPHESH) = MAN/MEN

FIND THE ANSWERS

1. Concerning the days of unleavened bread, Exodus 12:16 states that no manner of work shall be done on the first and seventh days, “ ... save that which every _____ [soul] must eat ...”
 2. Concerning the money of the dedicated things brought into the house of the LORD, 2 Kings 12:4 says, “ ... the money that every _____ [soul] is set at ...” (this could be an animal).
 3. Isaiah 49:7 states, “Thus saith the LORD, the Redeemer of Israel, and his Holy One, to him whom _____ [soul] despiseth ...”
- Read 1 Chronicles 5:18-22.**
4. According to verse 21, how many men [souls] were taken away in war? _____

The above verses clearly indicate that the Hebrew word **nephesh** [soul] is used to refer to people or animals; ... in 1 Chronicles 5:21 it refers to “Adam”- i.e, families of Adam.

SOUL (NEPHESH) = TRANSLATED AS PRONOUNS

FIND THE ANSWERS

5. Leviticus 11:43 states, “Ye shall not make _____ [your souls] abominable ...”
6. Job 18:4 declares, “He teareth _____ [his soul] in his anger ...”
7. Psalm 35:25 says, “... Ah, so would _____ [our soul] have it: ...”
8. Psalm 105:18 says, “Whose feet they hurt with fetters: _____ [his soul] was laid in iron.”
9. Psalm 131:2 states, “Surely I have behaved and quieted _____ [my soul] ...”
10. Jeremiah 3:11 declares, “And the LORD said unto me, The backsliding Israel hath justified _____ [her soul] more than treacherous Judah.”
11. Isaiah 46:2 states, “They stoop, they bow down together; they could not deliver the burden, but _____ [their souls] are gone into captivity.”

FIND THE ANSWERS

1. Leviticus 4:27 states, "And if any _____ [soul] of the common people sin through ignorance ..."
2. Leviticus 2:1 says, "And when _____ [soul] will offer a meat offering unto the LORD, his offering shall be of fine flour ..."

The preceding verses are just a few examples of how the Hebrew word **nephesh** (soul) was translated deceptively to keep the English reader ignorant of its meaning. In each case, the word refers to people – not an invisible, immortal entity within a body.

MORE PROOF THAT SOUL = PEOPLE

FIND THE ANSWERS

3. Genesis 2:7 states that man became a living _____ [nephesh].

In the above verse God clearly says that the man (Adam) became "a living **soul**." It does not say that God gave the man a soul or that a soul "went into" the man. The "man" was the "soul." There is no indication in this verse that the man and the soul were two entities joined together. Yet, that non-Biblical doctrine is held and taught by many.

FIND THE ANSWERS

Read Genesis 11:31-12:5.

4. In Genesis 12:5, Abram moved to Canaan and took with him Sarai, Lot, " ... all their substance that they had gathered, and the _____ [nephesh] that they had gotten in Haran; ..."
5. According to Genesis 46:15, Jacob's family were how many **souls** [nephesh]? _____
(See verses 18 and 22 that refer to souls [nephesh] i.e., more sons and daughters.)
6. Exodus 1:5 indicates that 70 _____ [nephesh] came out of the loins of Jacob.

In the above verses, the word **soul** plainly refers to people, not parts inside of people. There is no indication that Scripture ever refers to immaterial, immortal parts of people as God created them. Churches which teach that men have immortal souls are teaching false doctrine.

FIND THE ANSWERS

1. According to Leviticus 5:2, "... if a **soul** [nephesh] _____ any unclean thing ..." he also becomes unclean.
2. Leviticus 7:15-20 explains that the **soul** [nephesh] that _____ of the flesh of the sacrifice of a peace offering after the third day shall be cut off from his people.
3. Leviticus 17:12 states, "No **soul** [nephesh] of you shall eat _____ ..."
4. In Numbers 21:5 the people said to God and Moses, "Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our **soul** [nephesh] _____ this light bread."

These are just a few of the many verses which equate **soul** with living people. None of these passages suggest that "soul" is an entity apart from the body. How could "spirit entities" touch something and become unclean? How could they eat flesh?

CAN A SOUL (NEPHESE) BE DEAD?

Those who advocate the immortal soul doctrine not only believe a soul is an immaterial spirit entity separate from the body, they also believe that this entity is "immortal," i.e., it cannot die, and it continues to live on after the physical body dies. The Old Scriptures clearly contradict this pagan idea.

FIND THE ANSWERS

5. Speaking of the high priest, Leviticus 21:11 states, "Neither shall he go in to any dead _____ [nephesh] ..."

The above verse clearly makes reference to a "dead" **nephesh** (a dead soul – a dead person). Logic dictates that if a soul is "dead" it cannot be "immortal."

FIND THE ANSWERS

Read Numbers 6:1-12.

6. Concerning a Nazarite, verse 6 states, "All the days that he separateth himself unto the LORD he shall come at no _____ body [nephesh/soul]"

While the Hebrew term, "**nephesh**," connotes a breathing, moving entity, the term also has a secondary meaning similar to the Greek "**psuche**" (soul): the essential part or fundamental nature of anything. Thus, the essential nature of a dead person is a mortal physical body.

The preceding verses clearly point out that the Hebrew “**nephesh**” can refer to dead people. In fact, people, whether alive or dead, are nephesh – **souls**.

FIND THE ANSWERS

1. Numbers 19:13 states, “Whosoever toucheth the dead **body** [nephesh] of any man that is dead, and purifieth not himself, defileth the tabernacle of the LORD: and that _____ [nephesh] shall be cut off from Israel: ...”

Any nephesh [soul] that defiles himself by touching a dead nephesh [soul] was to be cut off from Israel. Notice, again, how a soul [nephesh] can be alive or dead. A dead soul cannot be immortal.

CAN A SOUL (NEPHESEH) BE KILLED?

FIND THE ANSWERS

2. According to Genesis 37:21 Reuben delivered Joseph from his brothers and told them, “Let us not _____ **him** [his soul].”
 3. In Numbers 23:10 Balaam told Balak, “Let me [a soul] _____ the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his.”
 4. Numbers 31:19 says, “... whosoever hath _____ any **person** [soul] ...”
- Read Numbers 35:9-34.**
5. Verse 11 states, “Then ye shall appoint you cities to be cities of refuge for you, that the slayer may flee thither, which _____ any **person** [nephesh/soul] at unawares.”
 6. According to verse 30, “Whoso killeth any person [nephesh/soul], the murderer shall be put to _____ by the mouth of witnesses: but one witness shall not testify against any **person** [soul] to cause him to _____ .”
 7. Deuteronomy 22:26 states, “. . . for as when a man riseth against his neighbour, and _____ **him** [his soul] ...”
 8. Deuteronomy 27:25 declares, “Cursed be he that taketh reward to slay an _____ **person** [soul] ...”
 9. Samson says in Judges 16:30, “Let **me** [my soul] _____ with the Philistines.”
 10. In 1 Samuel 22:22 David says, “I have occasioned the _____ of all the **persons** [souls] of thy father’s house.”
 11. Proverbs 28:17 states, “A man that doeth violence to the _____ of any person [nephesh/soul] shall flee to the pit; let no man stay him.”

FIND THE ANSWERS

1. Jeremiah 40:14 states, "Dost thou certainly know that Baalis the king of the Ammonites hath sent Ishmael the son of Nethaniah to slay _____ [your soul]?"
2. Ezekiel 33:6 declares, "But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any _____ [soul] from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand."
3. Job 36:14 states, "**They** [souls] _____ in youth, and their life is among the unclean."

All of the preceding verses expressly indicate that the nephesh (soul) can die. There is no indication whatsoever in any of these verses that the body dies while the nephesh (soul) lives on.

However, at this point someone may argue that the word soul was not specifically used by the translators in the passages cited. Are there any passages then, in the *King James Version* that use the word soul in relation to death?

EVEN KING JAMES ADMITTED THE SOUL CAN DIE

FIND THE ANSWERS

4. In Ezekiel 18:4 God says, "Behold, all **souls** [nephesh] are mine; as the **soul** [nephesh] of the father, so also the **soul** [nephesh] of the son is mine: the soul [nephesh] that sinneth, it shall _____."
5. Verse 20 repeats that "The soul that sinneth, it shall _____."

Note in the above verses that Ezekiel plainly says that "the soul" dies. He does not say that the body dies and the soul keeps on living. It is obvious that the "person" and the "soul" are the same. Whether a person is alive or dead, the person IS the soul (nephesh) – soul is NOT something separate from the person.

FIND THE ANSWERS

6. Speaking of a day of atonement, God says in Leviticus 23:30, "And whatsoever soul [nephesh] it be that doeth any work in that same day, the same soul [nephesh] will I _____ from among his people."

Moses said that a soul can be destroyed. If a soul were "immortal," it could not be destroyed.

FIND THE ANSWERS

Read Joshua 10:28-43.

1. According to verses 28, 30, 32, 35, 37, and 39, Joshua smote and destroyed “all the _____ [nephesh] that were therein.”
2. Joshua 11:11 states, “And they smote all the **souls** [nephesh] that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly _____ them: there was not any left to breathe ...”

The verses above plainly indicate that Joshua killed “souls” (people). Obviously these “souls” were not immortal.

FIND THE ANSWERS

3. Speaking of Saul’s desire to kill him, David says to Saul in 1 Samuel 24:11 “ ... yet thou hunteth my _____ [nephesh] to take it.”

In the verse above, David certainly wasn’t talking about Saul taking some invisible spirit entity away from him. Even if such a thing existed, how could Saul possibly take it? No, David was referring to Saul’s attempt to take his life – to kill him.

FIND THE ANSWERS

4. Job says in Job 7:15, “So that my **soul** [nephesh] chooseth _____ , and _____ rather than my life.”
5. Job 33:22 states, “Yea, his **soul** [nephesh] draweth near unto the _____ , and his life to the destroyers.”

If Job’s soul was an immaterial, immortal entity residing in him, how could it choose to die? If such an immortal entity existed, how could it “draw near unto the grave”? Such statements are completely meaningless if souls cannot die. No, these verses show that “soul” refers to the person.

FIND THE ANSWERS

6. Proverbs 6:32 states, “But whoso committeth adultery with a woman lacketh understanding: he that doeth it _____ his own **soul** [nephesh].”

How could a person destroy their own soul if it was immortal and couldn’t die? However, if a soul is a person, it makes logical sense.

FIND THE ANSWERS

Read Ezekiel 22:25-31.

1. Concerning the abominations of Jerusalem, verse 25 states, “There is a conspiracy of her prophets in the midst thereof, like a roaring lion ravening the prey: they have _____ **souls** [nephesh] ...”
2. Verse 27 says, “Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravening the prey, to shed blood, and to _____ **souls** [nephesh], to get dishonest gain.”

Ezekiel describes the destruction of souls (people) by wicked leaders and rulers in government. Souls can be “devoured” and “destroyed.”

FIND THE ANSWERS

3. The writer of Psalm 22:20 says, “Deliver my soul [nephesh] from the _____ .”
4. Psalms 22:29 states, “... and none can keep _____ his own soul [nephesh].”
5. Psalm 33:18-19 declares, “Behold, the eye of the LORD is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; To deliver their soul [nephesh] from _____ ...”
6. Psalm 49:15 says, “But God will redeem my soul [nephesh] from the power of the _____ : for he shall receive me.”
7. Psalms 78:50 states, “He made a way to his anger; he spared not their soul [nephesh] from _____ , but gave their life over to the pestilence.”

From the above verses, it is obvious that the writers of the Psalms did not believe souls were immortal. They knew full well that souls could perish.

In this lesson we have seen that the English word soul was one of many that were translated from the Hebrew word **nephesh**. We learned that this Hebrew word was used to refer to both animals and people. It was used for living persons as well as those dead. We examined some Old Testament passages that clearly stated that souls were people and that souls (people) die. None of these passages support the false doctrine of an “immortal soul.” Souls do not exist separate from the person. Souls do not continue living after the person dies. We will continue to study and expose this false doctrine in the next lesson.



LESSON 11

THE “IMMORTAL SOUL” DOCTRINE

Key Deception In The Churches

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1. creature (nephesh/soul)
2. creature (“nephesh”)
3. beast; fowl; creature (nephesh/soul)
4. nephesh (#5315)
5. D (all three)
6. thing (water-dwelling nephesh/soul)
7. creature; creature (nephesh/soul)
8. beast (nephesh/soul)

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1. persons (nephesh/soul)
2. persons (nephesh/souls)
3. C (manna)
4. person (nephesh/soul)
5. persons (nephesh/souls)
6. tribute
7. persons (nephesh/souls)
8. persons (nephesh/souls)
9. 4,600
10. persons (nephesh/souls)

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1. man (nephesh/soul)
2. man (nephesh/soul)
3. man (nephesh/soul)
4. 100,000 [“souls of Adam”]
5. yourselves
6. himself
7. we
8. he
9. myself

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10. herself
11. themselves

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1. one (nephesh/soul)
2. any (nephesh/soul)
3. soul (nephesh)
4. souls (people)
5. 33
6. souls

Page 106

1. touch
2. eats
3. blood
4. loatheth
5. body
6. dead

Page 107

1. soul
2. kill
3. die
4. killed
5. killeth
6. death; die
7. slayeth
8. innocent
9. die

Page 107 (continued)

10. death
11. blood

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1. thee (your nephesh/soul)
2. person (nephesh/soul)
3. die
4. die
5. die
6. destroy

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1. souls
2. destroying

Page 109 (continued)

3. soul (nephesh)
4. strangling; death
5. grave
6. destroyeth

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1. devoured
2. destroy
3. sword
4. alive
5. death
6. grave
7. death

NOTES