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A Study of Genesis 3:16 — "And he shall rule over you."

Thomas Schuetze

"Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So the evening and the morning were the sixth day" (Gen. 1:31). That is the simple yet beautiful description which the Bible gives of the universe after God brought His grand creative work to completion. Light, the sky, land and sea, vegetation, the heavenly bodies, aquatic life, the birds of the air, land animals, and man—everything that God brought into existence by His creative power during the six day creation—was pronounced "good." It was free of every defect and flaw.

In Genesis 2 we learn additional details concerning God's creative work on day six. Here God's creation of the first woman from a rib of the first man is recorded. This was God's institution of the estate of marriage and it too was "good." The first ever married couple enjoyed a relationship of mutual love and admiration, respect and trust, which was perfect in every way. It was a natural outgrowth and by-product of the love they had for their Creator-God in whose holy image they had been fashioned.

The story of the fall into sin, as recorded by Moses in the next chapter, is well known. Satan, in the form of a serpent, tempted Eve to sin against God and take of the forbidden fruit. She in turn gave to Adam and he ate. From that time forward they and the whole creation fell under the curse of sin. The perfection and beauty of the world God had made was marred miserably. The disastrous effects of sin could also be seen in Adam and Eve's marriage relationship. Adam no longer was capable of loving his wife perfectly, as he had done before the fall. Eve no longer was capable of loving her husband perfectly, as she had done.

The passage we are considering in this paper, Genesis 3:16, is found in that portion of Scripture which follows immediately upon the account of our first parents' ruinous fall. Our purpose is to consider the Spirit-intended meaning of this verse—or to be more specific—the meaning of the phrase at the end of the verse, which reads: *"And he shall rule over you."* What thought(s) is the Lord seeking to convey here? Was He *prescribing* for Eve what her God-given role in the marriage relationship would be after the fall (namely, that she was to continue to be Adam's helpmate and he was to continue to be her head), in effect, validating and reaffirming for them and all married couples of the future the order He had established in the beginning within the marriage

relationship? Or was He *describing* for Eve the unfortunate situation that would prevail from now on within her and Adam's marriage relationship, letting her know that, as a consequence of her sin, she would have to bear the painful cross of being lorded over by her now-sinful husband? "Adam (and all husbands after him) will be inclined on account of their flesh to rule over their wives in a selfish, loveless, and dictatorial fashion." Or are both ideas set forth in this verse?¹

The Context of Genesis 3:16

A good place to start our study is by taking a look at the context of our verse. As noted above, the story of the fall is related in the preceding verses (1-13). There we hear about the devil's temptation of Eve, her and Adam's disobedience, the shame and fear they felt in consequence of it, and their futile attempt to blame-shift. Next comes God's pronouncement of the curse upon the serpent (v.14) and His prediction that a Descendant of Eve would arise in the future to crush the serpent's head (v. 15). We have recognized this as the first gospel promise of a Savior. Despite our first parents' disobedience of God's commandment, He did not turn His back on them or withhold His love. In His grace and mercy He promised to send a Savior to undo the damage caused by their sin so that His holy image might be restored in them and they might live with Him in heaven.

In the verses following our passage (vv. 17-19) we hear God's words to Adam in which He informs him of the fateful consequences of his sin that would become evident in his day-to-day life. From now on Adam's work (which before sin's entrance into the world had been nothing but pure joy and pleasure) would be difficult, stressful, and burdensome. The ground would bring forth noxious weeds. He would have to eat his bread in the sweat of his face till the day he would die, at which time he would return to the dust from whence he came. The chapter closes with Moses' report of how Adam and Eve—again, as a consequence of sin—were banished from the garden and prevented by cherubim and a flaming sword from entering it and gaining access to the tree of life (vv. 22-24).

Our Passage

Having examined the context, let us focus our attention on our passage. It reads as follows: *"To the woman He said: 'I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.'*" The first half of the verse is pretty straight-forward and presents no problems for the interpreter. The Lord is telling Eve that—as a consequence of her sin—she will experience many trials and tribulations in life. She who had sought sweet delights in the eating of the forbidden fruit, would not find delights but pain, not joy but sorrow. Especially would the consequences of sin be seen in the fact that she would be made to endure the pains of pregnancy and childbirth (which, if sin had not entered the world, would have been easy and pain-free).

The latter part of the verse is where questions of interpretation arise. What did the Lord mean when He told Eve that her "desire" would be for her husband and that he would "rule" over her? In view of the context which, as noted, speaks of the consequences of sin (the abject fear of our first parents, their feelings of guilt, their vain attempt to blame-shift, the serpent from henceforth crawling on his belly, Adam having to toil hard to make a living, the growth of weeds, the return of Adam to dust at death, the banishment of man from paradise), it would seem that God's primary intent in this passage is to describe consequences of sin that would affect Eve: "Before you disobeyed Me and took of the forbidden fruit, you enjoyed pure happiness in the married state. You lived in perfect harmony with your husband. But no more! From now on you'll find that Adam will be less than what he should be, less than what you would like him to be. He won't be the model husband that he once was, but will be inclined to rule over you in a loveless way."²

A Look at the Hebrew

A look at the Hebrew of this verse may be helpful at this point. The entire passage in the original reads as follows:

אל- האשה אמר הרבה ארבה עצבונך
 pain-of-you I-will-increase to-increase he-said the-woman to
 והרנך בעצב תלדי בנים ואל- אישך
 husband-of-you and-to children you-will-bear in-pain and-childbearing-of-you
 תשוקתך והוא ימשל- בך :
 over-you he-will-rule and-he desire-of-you

First, let's consider the phrase "your desire shall be for your husband" since it is closely linked to that part of the passage with which we are chiefly concerned in this paper. The Hebrew word that is translated "desire" is תשוקתך.³ Gesenius offers these two renderings: desire, longing. תשוקתך comes from the root שיק, to run; to run after, desire, long for. It is a cognate to שקק, 1. to run up and down, run about; 2. to be eager, greedy, thirsty. So a literal rendering of the phrase might be: *"And to the husband of you the desire of you."* So what does that mean? Since God is speaking in this section of Holy Writ about what the consequences of sin would be, it would seem that He is speaking to Eve about how the fall would negatively impact her life as a woman and the wife of Adam. She had acted independently of her husband, wrongly assuming the position of headship in opposition to God's will (supposing this to be a good thing, something that would bring her freedom and happiness). But she would find that the opposite would be true. She would always feel an aching need inside of her to be near her husband. She would discover that apart

from him she could find no genuine happiness. But even then, with Adam at her side, she would never be *completely* happy as she had once been in the garden of Eden, because she was living with a man who (as a result of *her* disobedience) was a sinner.

At this point permit me to share what others have written in this connection, explanations that have been set forth in regard to the meaning of this particular phrase. Leupold writes:

Teshuqah might be rendered "desire" or even better "yearning." This yearning is morbid. It is not merely sexual yearning. It includes the attraction that woman experiences for man which she cannot root from her nature. Independent feminists may seek to banish it, but it persists in cropping out...She who sought to strive apart from man and to act independently of him in the temptation finds a continual attraction for him to be her unavoidable lot.⁴

Werner Franzmann:

Yes, for a brief time she had gained control over the man by inducing him to repeat her terrible sin of unbelief and disobedience. But what did it get her? Joy and satisfaction? No, sorrow and distress. Now God told her that his original order, established at creation would stand: she, the woman, was to be the companion and helper for man. Her desires would be directed toward her husband. This fact would be a constant reminder of that sad hour when she took the lead in sinning against a loving Father.⁵

Gini Andrews:

I'm wondering if this immense, clinging, psychological dependence on man which is part of us women is not something we should face as part of our fallenness.... We'll jettison any plans, rearrange our lives or our hair-dos; we'll work our fingers to the first joint, throw up a promising career, and too often even undercut our best friend -- all for some one we find compellingly attractive.⁶

Now let us look at the phrase "he shall rule over you." What should we make of it? The key word here is the verb *יָמַשׁ* (qal impf. 3 sg. masc. from *מָשַׁל*). Definitions from Gesenius: 1. to make like, assimilate; 2. to rule, have dominion, reign.

מָשַׁל is used a total of 37 times in the Old Testament. Here's a smattering of examples: In Genesis 1 the sun and moon are said to "RULE over the day and the night" (v.18). ... In Genesis 4 (the chapter following our verse) God admonished Cain, who was angry with his brother Abel, to RULE over sin (v.7). ... In the book of Psalms the Lord's almighty power manifest in His control over the forces of nature is spoken of as a RULING of the raging sea (Ps. 89:9). ... In Proverbs the rich are said to "RULE over the poor" (22:7). ... Isaiah, in his proclamation against Egypt, foretold that it would be destroyed and RULED by a cruel and fierce king (19:4). ... Later in the same book Isaiah prophesied that "the Lord God would come with a strong hand, and His arm shall RULE for Him" (40:10).

From these examples it is evident that this verb *מָשַׁל* can take on both a positive and negative connotation. The context will have to determine what kind of "ruling" is being referred to, whether good/loving/wise or bad/self-serving/cruel. In our passage the context indicates that a negative kind of ruling is meant...the heavy-handed, loveless kind which Adam would be prone to do in his marriage to Eve, as a consequence of the fall. Let it be emphasized again: God isn't teaching that it is His will for this to happen. No husband may claim a divine right to treat his wife harshly as one would a slave by appealing to Genesis 3:16. God is simply affirming (according to our view) that because of the curse of sin which fell upon the creation "this is the way it's going to be."

Putting these two phrases together what thought, then, is being presented? Here is my conclusion: God is teaching, on the one hand, that Eve would continue to feel the great need (desire) to be with Adam ("I can't live without him!"), but on the other hand, that she would be kept from experiencing the perfect happiness which she longs for because her Adam would be inclined, on account of his old Adam, to exercise headship (rule) over her in an unloving way ("I can't live with him!"). All this as a chastening reminder from the Lord that she and her husband were sinners, ruined by the fall, and in desperate need of a Savior.

Conclusion

The beautiful world that once existed in the beginning of time and which was pronounced "good" by the Lord was ruined permanently by sin six millennia ago. Because of this the whole creation has continued to groan and labor with birth pangs until now. It will continue to do so till the end. Not until God ushers us for Jesus' sake into the "new heavens and new earth in which righteousness dwells" will we know what it's like to live in a beautiful garden paradise and enjoy perfect fellowship with our God and our fellow men.

The institution of marriage will also continue to be adversely affected. Though it may perhaps be said that "marriages are made in heaven" (in a certain sense), they must nonetheless be lived out in a sinful world. That's why even the most devout of Christian couples will experience, to a greater or lesser degree, stress and strain within their marriage relationship.

All this is not meant to paint a bleak picture of the lives as God's Christians living in an imperfect world, or to present a gloomy, pessimistic picture of wedded life. The same God who in love gave the first gospel promise of a Savior to our first parents in paradise and who in the fullness of time sent Him into the world to keep the law perfectly as our Substitute and to atone for our sins through His death on the cross...this God graciously brings lost sinners to faith in the Savior by the power of the gospel. For Jesus' sake He blots out our sins, dresses us in perfect robes of righteousness, and makes us heirs of heaven. By the same gospel He continues to work powerfully in the hearts of Christian spouses, enabling them, with the help of the Holy Spirit, to live together

in love, to forgive each other for wrongs committed, and to overcome—to the degree that this is possible on this side of heaven—their sinful tendencies. Christian wives are moved by the Holy Spirit to accept their husbands gladly as their God-given heads, to respect them, to obey them with cheerful hearts. Christian husbands are moved to use their headship in a God-pleasing way and to love their wives just as Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it, in an unselfish, self-sacrificing way. Many are the Bible passages through which the Lord provides Christian couples with helpful guidance in their marriage and by which He empowers them to carry out their God-given roles properly.⁷

So may the Lord continue to bless all Christian couples until the day when they, with all of God's believing saints, shall enter the wedding hall of heaven and serve Jesus their heavenly Bridegroom in perfect joy forever in the restored paradise of God.

Notes

¹ We may set aside immediately the notion that God is here teaching that husbands have the divine right to rule over their wives in a tyrannical way. This contradicts what is taught in other Scriptures.

² There is no question that the Lord *does* want husbands to rule over their wives in the sense of exercising headship over them in a loving way for Jesus' sake, taking His love as their pattern. The question is whether He is teaching that in *this* passage.

³ This word occurs in just two other places in the Old Testament: Genesis 4:7 ("And its [sin's] desire shall be for you, but you should rule over it") and the Song of Solomon 7:10 ("I am my beloved's, and his *desire* is toward me").

⁴ *Exposition of Genesis*, Vol.1, 172.

⁵ *Bible History Commentary*, Old Testament, Vol.1, 50.

⁶ *Your Half of the Apple: God and the Single Girl*, 51-52, quoted in *What the Old Testament Says About Women*, 68, by Susan T. Foh.

⁷ Eph. 5:22-33; 1 Cor. 7:3; 1 Pet. 3:1-7; Phil. 2:1-8; 1 Cor. 13:4-7, to name a few.

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The Reluctant Fool

An Exegesis of 2 Corinthians 12:11-21

Michael Sydow

Diving in toward the end of things begs at least a glimpse of the journey so far. The Apostle Paul visited Corinth during his

second missionary journey. Rebuffed by the Jews, he continued “preaching to the Gentiles,” using the house of Justus as his base. He brought the Word of God to the Corinthians for over a year and a half.

Paul spent the bulk of his third missionary journey in Ephesus. While he was there, word had come through Chloe’s household that contentions had risen in Corinth. A party spirit, focused on a favored preacher, was dividing the congregation. Members were suing one another. Questions existed about the status of left-over meat from pagan sacrifices. The distinction between the Agape meal and the Lord’s Supper was lost as was the pre-eminence of edification in a worship service where disorderly and disorganized confusions abounded. The possibility of resurrection was limited to Christ and in some peoples’ minds did not extend to anyone else.

In his first letter Paul was preparing the congregation for a visit by Timothy. He endeavored to “bring the Corinthians back from their flight out of Christian reality into an intoxicated and enthusiastic individualism, back to the cross” (Roehrs and Franzmann 160). Timothy’s stay in Corinth was evidently brief, and he returned to Ephesus to report the reaction to the apostle’s letter. Paul evidently interrupted his ministry in Ephesus to visit Corinth. This second visit is implied by mention of his intent to visit them a “third time” (13:1. Also 12:21, “when I come again.”). The influence of the superapostles was widespread and deeply infecting the congregation.

The visit did not completely eradicate the problem. The apostle expresses his type of inexhaustible love by writing what some have called the “severe letter” (2:4). And now in Second Corinthians he continues his defense of his apostolic ministry. Along the way he buoys up the congregation with a reminder of the completed restoration of the living God, who “was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them . . .” (5:19).

As part of his defense of his apostleship Paul slips into a stratagem for which he is personally uncomfortable. “Oh, that you would bear with me a little folly . . .” (11:1) His hope is that the Corinthians would not think him a fool if he should begin talking about himself so that, even to him, it seemed like boasting (11:16-18). Paul would not compete with those superlative apostles in rhetoric, but he would boast of his knowledge (11:5,6). He served without pay (11:7-15). He offers impeccable credentials as a servant of Christ (11:16-18) and as a Hebrew, an Israelite, the seed of Abraham, and a minister of Christ (11:22,23). There follows the catalog of injustices -- actually the badges of Christian witness -- all the grief and injury he had endured simply because he preached the gospel (11:23-28), always concerned about the spiritual care of the believers.

But his litany of troubles was not to solicit pity. What he would rather boast of was his weaknesses and infirmities. His pleas for elimination of the “messenger of Satan” received a firm answer. The Lord told him, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weaknesses” (2 Cor. 12:9).

Paul reacted to his own report:

2 Corinthians 12:11 -- I have become a fool in boasting; you have compelled me. For I ought to have been commended by you; for in nothing was I behind the most eminent apostles, though I am nothing.

2 Corinthians 12:11 -- Γεγονα αφρων καυχωμενος υμεις με ηναγκασατε εγω γαρ ωφειλον υφ υμων συνιστασθαι ουδεν γαρ υστερησα των υπερλιαν αποστολων ει και ουδεν ειμι.

The Corinthians had driven (ηναγκασατε -- from αναγκαζω -- force, compel, urge, insist) the apostle Paul to boasting (καυχωμενος). He had spent quite a few lines of his letter doing something which he really did not want to do. But he would play the fool (αφρων -- foolish, senseless, ignorant, unlearned) for the greater benefit of glorifying Christ and His redemptive sacrifice. He recognized that he was a fragile, weak instrument impelled solely by the power of Christ. Rather than his being compelled to boasting, he should have been commended (συνιστασθαι -- from συνιστημι -- recommend, give approval to; give approval to, show, prove) by them.

The effect of his ministry should rather have reflected the effect of the gospel as it turned hearts of stone to hearts of flesh. “Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or do we need, as some *others*, epistles of commendation to you or *letters* of commendation from you? You are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read by all men; clearly *you are* an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, *that is*, of the heart” (2 Corinthians 3:1-3).

Paul emphasizes, “I (εγω) ought to have been commended by you . . .” and so stresses his own relationship to those pseudo-apostles who were distressing the congregation. He was the one who was the genuine representative of the true gospel. The “eminent” (λιαν -- adv. exceedingly, greatly, very, quite) apostles had besmirched it. He says, “I was not inferior (υστερησα).” The construction is a litotes -- a negation of the contrary. He was way ahead of all those others -- in knowledge, in sufferings, in labors, and his visions and revelations (Meyer 299). And if Paul says he is nothing, where does that put those hyperlianic apostles who are below him?

2 Corinthians 12:12 -- Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

2 Corinthians 12:12 -- τα μεν σημεια του αποστολου κατειργασθη εν υμιν εν παση υπομονη εν σημειοις και τερασιν και δυναμεσιν.

Jesus gave the apostles an ability to perform signs (σημεια), “And through the hands of the apostles many **signs** and wonders

were done among the people” (Acts 5:12). This became an identifying feature of their office. “Therefore [the apostles and his companions] stayed there (Iconium) a long time, speaking boldly in the Lord, who was bearing witness to the word of His grace, granting **signs** and wonders to be done by their hands” (Acts 14:3). Here in 12:12 they are simply called *σημεία του αποστολου* -- signs of an apostle. We have a difficulty expressing the definite article in English.

Paul mentions three groups of signs which had been worked (*κατειργασθη*) among the Corinthians. This variety of miraculous events pointed beyond the acts themselves -- even beyond the apostolic agents who performed them. The credit and glory belong to the Lord Jesus who had given such extraordinary powers to men. These were *σημεία*, miracles, not mere stunts. “They were meaningful, significant deeds; *τερας* denotes that they were awe-inspiring; *δυναμις* that they gave evidence of supernatural power” (Meyer 299). *εν παση ύπομονη*, “in all steadfastness or perseverance,” suggests that the signs performed by Paul among the Corinthians were more than just isolated incidents now and then.

The hyperlianic apostles had come to the Corinthians without this unique ability. “. . . how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?” (Heb. 2:3,4).

2 Corinthians 12:13 -- For what is it in which you were inferior to other churches, except that I myself was not burdensome to you? Forgive me this wrong!

2 Corinthians 12:13 -- *τι γαρ εστιν ο ήττηθητε ύπερ τας λοιπας εκκλησιας ει μη οτι αυτος εγω ου καταναρκησα ύμων; χαρισασθε μοι την αδικιαν ταυτην.*

Was there something in which the Corinthian Christians were slighted more than other congregations? The *γαρ* explains what had been mentioned previously. Had the Corinthians been shortchanged when the apostle came to them? Was he behind in the signs which he had done among them? Was there anything in which they were accorded inferior treatment?

Paul admits that there was one area in which they did receive treatment which was different from other arenas of his missionary activity, *ει μη οτι αυτος εγω ου καταναρκησα ύμων. καταναρκησα* -- to be a (financial burden). He explained earlier, “Did I commit sin in humbling myself that you might be exalted, because I preached the gospel of God to you free of charge? I robbed other churches, taking wages *from them* to minister to you” (11:7,8). When he first arrived in Corinth, Paul stayed with Aquila and Priscilla and worked with them as tentmakers (Acts 18:3). Paul then asks the Corinthians to forgive him this injustice: *χαρισασθε μοι την αδικιαν ταυτην*. The figure is irony and continues the line of discussion begun in chapter eleven.

2 Corinthians 12:14 -- Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.

2 Corinthians 12:14 -- *Ιδου τριτον τουτο ετοιμωσ εχω ελθειν προς ύμας, και ου καταναρκησω ύμων· ου γαρ ζητω τα ύμων αλλα ύμας. ου γαρ οφειλει τα τεκνα τοις γονευσιν θησαυριζειν αλλα οί γονεις τοις τεκνοις.*

Now the foolish boasting discontinues. *Ιδου* indicates the change. Paul announces that he is ready to visit the Corinthians for the third time. The first visit is recorded in Acts 18 when he spent 18 months in the southern Achaian city. About a year previous to the second letter he had made a second visit in connection with the collection for the needy saints in Jerusalem. Paul’s refusal to be a financial burden to the Corinthians exposes the greed and falsity of the hyperlianic apostles. He was not seeking their possessions; he was seeking their souls for the Lord. To accomplish that He would come with the gospel of Jesus Christ.

But does receiving money for preaching the gospel automatically diminish the effectiveness of the message? The Philippians had supported him in his ministry in their city as well as others. “Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me concerning giving and receiving but you only. For even in Thessalonica you sent *aid* once and again for my necessities” (Phil. 4:15,16) Paul was concerned about the worship of giving for the Corinthian congregation, instructing them concerning their opportunity to help the saints in Jerusalem materially through their offerings. However, the pre-eminence of the success of gospel ministry precluded his personally accepting any money from the Corinthians even though he was entitled to it. He evidently didn’t want an interpretation of receiving money from them as being in the gospel ministry for the money. The hyperlianic apostles were! “But what I do, I will also continue to do, that I may cut off the opportunity from those who desire an opportunity to be regarded just as we are in the things of which they boast” (11:12). There was simply no way that he would *καταναρκησω*.

The Apostle Paul had a right to claim that he was the spiritual father of the Corinthian Christians, “ For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet *you do* not *have* many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel” (4:15). And in the context of the relationship of a pastor to his congregation the following principle applies: *ου γαρ οφειλει τα τεκνα τοις γονευσιν θησαυριζειν, αλλα οί γονεις τοις τεκνοις* -- “For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children.” He would extend and expend himself for the greater outcome that his spiritual children attain eternal salvation.

2 Corinthians 12:15 -- And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.

2 Corinthians 12:15 -- *εγω δε ηδιστα δαπανησω και εκδαπανηθησομαι ύπερ των ψυχων ύμων. ει περισσοτερωσ ύμας*

αγαπων ηττον αγαπωμαι.

Rather than the Corinthians paying for his services, Paul goes so far as to say he would pay the Corinthians' expenses. *δαπανησω* is spend, expend. Paul was advised by the elders of Jerusalem to "pay the expenses" of the four men who had taken a vow (Acts 21:24). The welfare of Corinthian souls as well as countless others is vital to him. He will not shrink from spending and expending himself -- giving everything he has for their spiritual life and salvation. *ψυχων* -- souls. Paul here speaks of the aspect of our being which is the object of God's soteriological designs. God has made human beings capable of having a relationship with Him and capable of contemplating the nature of that relationship. Since the fall this relationship is only possible through the new creation of the Spirit through the gospel.

Paul consistently eschews personal advantage, gain, and prestige when it comes to soul care issues.

For though I am free from all *men*, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more; and to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those *who are* under the law, as under the law, that I might win those *who are* under the law; to those *who are* without law, as without law (not being without law toward God, but under law toward Christ), that I might win those *who are* without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all *men*, **that I might by all means save some**. Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with *you* (1 Cor. 9:19-23; emphasis added).

Paul is ready to spend himself completely, an attitude which he expressed to the Philippians, "Yes, and if I am being poured out *as a drink offering* on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all" (2:17).

Paul has told of his complete devotion to the salvation of Corinthian souls. He muses now whether the increase of his love is inversely proportional to their appreciation of his efforts. ". . . though the more abundantly I love you, the less am I loved." He is not pleading for affection or personal recognition nor complaining about their lack. What he hopes for most of all is an understanding of the spiritual dynamics which are at work in the world and among them because of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. The diminished appreciation of the messenger reflects on their dwindling appreciation of the gospel itself.

2 Corinthians 12:16 -- But be that *as it may*, I did not burden you. Nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you by cunning!

2 Corinthians 12:16 -- εστω δε εγω ου κατεβαρησα υμας· αλλα υπαρχων πανουργος δολω υμας ελαβον.

What had happened that Paul feels he must now concede a point -- that his ardent devotion for gospel preaching was not matched by a respectful attitude toward this divine messenger? "But (*δε*) be (*εστω*). . ." Note how the English supplies the necessary words for our idiom. Paul uses *κατεβαρησα* (weighed down, heavy) now instead of *καταναρκησω* to describe the fact that he had not been a financial burden to the Corinthians. Evidently the intruders had put a different spin on Paul's choosing not to accept any pay while he labored in Corinth, perhaps asserting that his financial arrangement with Corinth didn't prove a thing about his devotion to his message or his selflessness. ". . . but being a (dyed-in-the-wool) trickster I took you by guile" (Meyer 305). This sarcastic representation of his critics hopes to achieve a different interpretation of events than they were asserting. They might be suggesting that his promotion of the Jerusalem collection was a ruse to gather a large sum of money which would never arrive in Jerusalem but end up in the apostle's money pouch. Paul needed to counter every slander which was undermining the gospel in Corinth and putting souls in jeopardy.

2 Corinthians 12:17 -- Did I take advantage of you by any of those whom I sent to you?

2 Corinthians 12:17 -- μη τινα ων απεσταλκα προς υμας δι αυτου επλεονεκτησα υμας;

μη with the indicative anticipates a negative answer. He knew he had not taken advantage of them. Nor had any of those whom he sent gained personally from being among the Corinthians. (*επλεονεκτησα* -- to have or claim more than one's due, to gain, to have an advantage). Was there any trace of shady dealings from Titus or Timothy or anyone else associated with him?

2 Corinthians 12:18 -- I urged Titus and sent our brother with *him*. Did Titus take advantage of you? Did we not walk in the same spirit? Did we not walk in the same steps?

2 Corinthians 12:18 -- παρεκαλεσα Τιτον και συναπεστειλα τον αδελφον· μη τι επλεονεκτησεν υμας Τιτος; ου τω αυτω πνευματι περιεπατησαμεν; ου τοις αυτοις ιχνεσιν;

Titus was the one who would carry the current letter to Corinth. He had been sent earlier to encourage the Corinthians in connection with the Jerusalem collection. There was no credible evidence that he, Paul, or Timothy had gone beyond the bounds of sincere gospel preaching by defrauding the congregation in any way. The Corinthians should have observed *τω αυτω πνευματι* both inwardly and outwardly. Here *πνευμα* is not the "Spirit," but the "spirit" or attitude which Paul asserts was identical in him, Titus, and the unnamed brother who was along with them. And they not only possessed the same spirit, they also walked (*περιεπατησαμεν*) in the same tracks (*ιχνεσιν* -- track or footstep) -- and both of them in the trace of the Shepherd.

One may not accuse Paul of using Titus as his explanation, or Titus of circling back to Paul, to substantiate his claim. The questions of the apostle are to challenge the Corinthians. Is there anyone in the congregation who has credible evidence that he or his helpers had been charlatans with the gospel -- in it for the money and any other personal advantage? There was none! Not one penny from any Corinthian member ended up in the pockets or pouches of Paul, Titus, or any other of the apostolic colleagues.

2 Corinthians 12:19 Again, do you think that we excuse ourselves to you? We speak before God in Christ. But we do all things, beloved, for your edification.

2 Corinthians 12:19 Παλιν δοκειτε οτι υμιν απολογουμεθα κατενωπιον του θεου εν Χριστω λαλουμεν τα δε παντα αγαπητοι υπερ της υμων οικοδομης.

Παλιν begins a new section in which Paul discusses his approaching visit to Corinth. The apostle anticipates a possible reaction in order to advance his evangelical cause. "Are you thinking that we are defending ourselves when we speak to you like this?" Even at that Paul is not offering a defense as if the Corinthians were a jury and the verdict could go either way. He simply asserts the truth that when he talked to them he did so κατενωπιον του θεου εν Χριστω -- before God in Christ. These words mirror exactly 2:17, "For we are not, as so many, peddling the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as from God, we speak **in the sight of God in Christ**" (emphasis added). When Paul exclaims the gospel, there is triumph. "Now thanks *be* to God **who always leads us in triumph in Christ**, and through us diffuses the fragrance of His knowledge in every place. For we are to God the fragrance of Christ among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing. To the one *we are* the aroma of death *leading* to death, and to the other the aroma of life *leading* to life. And who *is* sufficient for these things?" (2:14-16; emphasis added).

Paul's gospel interest seeks a specific outcome in the Corinthians congregation and anywhere else he brought the Word: οικοδομη -- building up; edification. δε does not have to be adversative. I believe that here the sense is more "indeed" or some similar coordinating conjunction. Edification is not in competition with speaking "before God in Christ." It simply states the purpose of their communication.

Edification has been a theme of his for the Corinthians -- including his advice to unravel the confusion which had developed in connection with their worship, "How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification" (1 Cor. 14:26). Also, "Even so you, since you are zealous for spiritual *gifts*, *let it be* for the edification of the church *that* you seek to excel" (1 Cor. 14:12). Edification was also a feature of his advice to other Christian groups in the empire, "Therefore let us pursue the things *which make* for peace and the things by which one may edify another" (Rom. 14:19). And he would justify an aggressive literary tone in this letter because of his interest in spiritual growth and maturity, "Therefore I write these things being absent, lest being present I should use sharpness, according to the authority which the Lord has given me for edification and not for destruction" (2 Cor. 13:10). These are the αγαπητοι. The spiritual father will use any personal sacrifice and any appropriate strategy to promote and assure the best spiritual outcome for his "beloved" children.

2 Corinthians 12:20 -- For I fear lest, when I come, I shall not find you such as I wish, and that I shall be found by you such as you do not wish; lest there be contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, backbitings, whisperings, conceits, tumults;

2 Corinthians 12:20 -- φοβουμαι γαρ μηπως ελθων ουχ οιους θελω ευρω υμας καγω ευρεθω υμιν οιον ου θελετε μηπως ερεις ζηλοι, θυμοι, εριθειαι, καταλαλαι, ψιθυρισμοι, φουσιωσεις, ακαταστασαι.

There are three things which the apostle fears (φοβουμαι), each of them introduced with μη. Twice the μη is qualified by πως (perhaps). Paul first of all expresses a concern that both they and he might (ευρω and ευρεθω are subjunctives) discover circumstances different from what each wishes. Many of the issues in Corinth had been faced and dealt with, either by epistle or personal visit. But there were still those who had not extricated themselves completely from the super-apostles or their destructive influence. Meyer sorts out the implications of the υμιν, a dative (of agent), with, "I may find you not exactly as I would like to see you; but you will find me as you definitely do not want me" (308).

μηπως -- Lest, when he comes, he discovers a variety of sins, all of which are concomitants of the factionalism which occupied the first section of the first epistle. The first two nouns on the list are in the singular, the rest are plural as in "acts of . . ."

ζηλοι -- from a verb which means to rival, vie with; to be jealous -- "rivalries."

θυμοι -- soul, mind, temper, will; the seat of anger; "jealousies" in many translations.

εριθειαι -- background -- "day laborer" -- in the negative sense here: an attitude of selfish ambition. (Cf. James 3:14,16 -- But if you have bitter envy and **self-seeking** (εριθειαν) in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. . . .For where envy and self-seeking (εριθεια) exist, confusion and every evil thing are there.)

καταλαλαι -- evil report, slander.

ψιθυρισμοι -- whispering; slanderous whispering.

φουσιωσεις -- inflation; being puffed up

ακαταστασαι -- instability, unrest; social unrest, tumult, rioting, disturbance.

If anything was going to improve in Corinth, it would begin with the realization that these behaviors are sinful, sorrow for these as well as all sins, and trust in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins.

2 Corinthians 12:21 -- lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and I shall mourn for many who

have sinned before and have not repented of the uncleanness, fornication, and lewdness which they have practiced.

2 Corinthians 12:21 -- μη παλιν ελθοντα με ταπεινωσει ο θεος μου προς υμας και πενηθσω πολλους των προημαρτηκοτων και μη μετανοησαντων επι τη ακαθαρσια και πορνεια και ασελγεια η επραξαν.

The third fear is longer and is not preceded by a qualifying and modifying πως. He fears that his God would humiliate (ταπεινωσει) him in their presence. Paul feels a responsibility for the members of the Corinthian congregation, even though they would be the ones on whom the humiliation would appear to fall. It would be a devastating sadness for the apostle if the Lord would cause his humiliation because things had fallen apart in Corinth.

Paul now is thinking of more than just the jealousies and bickering which characterized the pre-Christian circumstance in Corinth. He is thinking of the generally sexual laxness which tripped up their discipline of the incestuous man. He had already told them that Christians regard their bodies as temples of God and do not use them for sexual immorality (1 Cor. 6:18-20). They were in extreme spiritual jeopardy if in fact they had not repented (μετανοησαντων). Their impenitence then was compounded by their refusal to repent in the face of apostolic admonition.

Paul had already told them the devastating nature of unrepented sin. The solution lay alone in the gospel.

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God (1 Cor. 9:9-11).

Paul plans to visit Corinth a third time (2 Cor. 13:1). He hopes his letter brings about the requisite change of heart. If it doesn't Paul is prepared to speak sternly to the unrepentant. The goal is still the same: the salvation of immortal souls!

Conclusion

Along the way we gain once again some reminders of those attitudes and attributes of those who bring the gospel to others:

1. A genuine appreciation of the gospel and its importance for spiritual life and eternal salvation -- not only for one's self but for others.
2. A spirit of genuine humility.
3. An all consuming passion for the salvation of immortal souls.
4. A willingness to spend and expend oneself in the interest of gospel preaching.
5. A recognition of the need to preach the law when necessary.

I titled this, "The Reluctant Fool." Paul would dip to tactics which even seemed ingenuous to him. Along the way he re-established his apostolic credentials. He would do this, as the Holy Spirit guided him in this inspired text, so that Christ's name would be glorified and His redeeming sacrifice for the forgiveness of sins would be, continue to be, or become the personal possession of those whom the Spirit brought to repentance.

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A Word Study of נֶפֶשׁ (NEPHESH)

John K. Pfeiffer

INTRODUCTION

HOW SHOULD WE UNDERSTAND נֶפֶשׁ ?

The Hebrew word נֶפֶשׁ (nephesh) occurs over 780 times in the Old Testament. One might think that all these occurrences would lead to a rather detailed description of the נֶפֶשׁ. The result is the opposite. The lexicographers have created confusion and a multiplicity of definitions. Consider the following.

According to *Strong's Greek and Hebrew Dictionary*, the word נֶפֶשׁ is defined as follows:

“properly, a breathing creature, i.e. animal of (abstractly) vitality; used very widely in a literal, accommodated or figurative sense (bodily or mental): --any, appetite, beast, body, breath, creature, lust, man, me, mind, mortally, one, own, person, pleasure, (her-, him-, my-, thy-)self, them (your)-selves, + slay, soul, + tablet, they, thing”

According to the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*:

“נֶפֶשׁ (nephesh) **life, soul, creature, person, appetite, and mind** are the more common of the twenty-some varieties of meaning utilized in KJV.”

According to Whittaker's Revised *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew Lexicon*:

נֶפֶשׁ “n.f. **soul, living being, life, self, person, desire, appetite, emotion, and passion . . .**”

According to Davidson's *The Analytical Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon*:

נֶפֶשׁ - *breath; also odour, perfume . . . an animal . . . a person . . . soul . . . life . . . self . . . feelings, spirit . . . desire, inclination*

According to Harkavy's *Students' Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary to the Old Testament*:

נֶפֶשׁ - *breath . . . breath of life . . . odor . . . spirit, life, soul . . . person, living being, creature, body . . . self*

According to *Langenscheidt's Pocket Hebrew Dictionary to the Old Testament*:

נֶפֶשׁ - *breath, respiration, life; soul, spirit, mind; living being, creature, a person, self*

The argument presented in support of this multiplicity is one that is typical of linguistics: over a long period of time language changes and usage lends new meanings to words. One need not pursue much of a study of language to discover that this is true. For example, over the last 400 years, the word *prevent* has so changed in meaning that it has rendered a KJV passage obscure to the average reader: 1 Thess. 4:15 – “*For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not **prevent** them which are asleep.*” According to modern usage, this would mean that those who are alive will not *stop* or *hinder* those who are asleep. However, the original meaning was *go before* (as the Latin roots indicate) or *precede*. Thus, according to the Greek, Paul is saying that, on their way to *meet the Lord in the air*, those who are alive shall not *precede* those who are in the grave.

However, Biblical Hebrew is not a typical language. Consider the following:

- 1) God does not render His Word inscrutable. – The Old Testament was written for God's people, who spoke the Hebrew language over a period of about 2000 years. What He delivered to Moses needed to be understood and followed by His people from Moses until Christ (about 1500 years). If God allowed the Hebrew language to evolve (or *devolve*) as do other languages, Jeremiah probably would not have been able to read Moses (even as we have a very difficult time reading Chaucer, who wrote about 600 years ago). As it is, the language of Jeremiah is very similar to that of Moses.

– Thus, the need ruled the development. (-or- God controlled the development.)

- 2) The language of the revealed word was the language of life. The people of Israel lived by it. It spoke to them regarding their social life, their civic life, and their worship life. Day after day . . . week after week, the people heard the reading of the Scriptures (with periodic lapses in times of apostasy). Since this applied to almost all the people that spoke this language, it meant that the continuous hearing of the words of Moses had the effect of perpetuating the form and syntax used by Moses.

– Thus, use (i.e., the use of Mosaic Hebrew) ruled the development.

In this connection note S. R. Driver's comments on the imperfect with waw consecutive:

“Other Semitic languages (Arabic, Aramaic, Ethiopic, etc.), in cases where Hebrew uses regularly the imperfect with ו, employ what might seem to be the obvious and natural construction of the perfect and ו; but this is avoided, almost uniformly, by the purest Hebrew; and it is not till the later period of the language, and even then but partially, that it is able to gain an acknowledged footing . . .” (*A Treatise on the Use of the Tenses in Hebrew and Some Other Syntactical Questions*, 71, Eerdmans/Dove, 1998)

Note also L. Martin's observation:

“The Hebrew language has undergone relatively minor changes throughout history as compared to other languages. Nevertheless, four main phases of Hebrew may be proposed:

1. Biblical Hebrew, also known as classical Hebrew
2. Rabbinical Hebrew, or Mishnaic Hebrew
3. Medieval Hebrew, also called Rabbinic, the Hebrew of the Middle Ages
4. Modern Hebrew

The rabbinical stage of the Hebrew language was used in the composition of theological works after the close of the Old Testament canon. Rabbinical Hebrew was characteristic especially of the Mishna, as well as the Hebrew portions of the Talmud and Midrash.” (*Why Learn The Biblical Languages?* <http://earth.vol.com/~lmartin/INTRODUC.HTM>)

The many meanings that the lexicographers and translators give for נפש (nephesh) are helpful and their work is valuable. However, it is not the lexicographers and linguists who determine the meaning of Biblical terms. Rather it is the faithful, Christian exegete. Not all lexicographers and linguists are Christians. Without faith in Christ one can never come to a true understanding of the Bible. We examine the lexicons for guidance, but we look to the Scriptures for truth.

ROOT MEANING

In doing word studies in Hebrew, it is wise to find the root and its meaning. There may be times when this proves to be of no value in your study, but you will not know that unless you check. Frequently the root will yield insight into the meaning of the word, as well as the Hebrew way of thinking.

The *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* indicates that נפש is rooted in the verb נפש which means “take breath, refresh oneself. This denominative verb occurs only in the Niphal (Exo 23:12; 2 Sam 16:14; Exo 31:17).”

It is interesting to note that many of the terms used to refer to the spirit world are rooted in words which mean *breath* or *wind*. Perhaps the words of our Lord Jesus give us an insight into the reason for this: “The wind bloweth where it will, and thou hearest the voice thereof, but knowest not whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit” (John 3:8). Furthermore, just as physical life and physical breath are connected, so are spiritual life and spiritual breath.

When used with חיה the root meaning of נפש is retained, (“breath of life”):

- Genesis 1:20,21 *And God said, Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. And God created the great sea-monsters, and every living creature that moveth, wherewith the waters swarmed, after their kind, and every winged bird after its kind: and God saw that it was good.* (AS)
 - = 1. שרץ נפש חיה - *swarm of breath of life; a swarm of breathing life.*
 - 2. כל-נפש החיה - *every breath of the life; all breathing life*
- = Also Gen. 1:24,30; 9:10,12,15,16; Lev. 11:10,46
- Genesis 2:7 *And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed (blew) into his nostrils the breath (wind) of life; and man became a living soul.*
 - = וידי האדם לנפש חיה - *and was the man toward breath of life -or- and the man began to exist as breathing life -or- and the man had the breath of life.*
 - = Note here that the **source** of the נפש חיה is the breath of God. Animals became living, breathing beings also, but the source of their נפש חיה was not the breath of God. This distinction is essential in order for us to understand the nature of man's נפש.

To repeat: when used with חיה it retains this original sense. However, when נפש occurs without חיה it has an extended or derived meaning, referring to that which the breath accomplishes, namely *life* (more concrete than חיה), or better, that part of man in which possesses life, namely the *soul*. (At least half of the occurrences of נפש are translated with the word *soul* in the English translations.)

USE

The question that faces us, when we come across passages which contain the word נפש, is: “How shall I translate this? Which lexicographic choice shall I make?” Rather than playing “eeny-meeny-miny-mo,” wouldn’t it be better to settle on a basic meaning and regularly choose that meaning? Then the context can tell us if that meaning is not correct and lead us to a better translation.¹

In order to settle on a basic meaning, we need to consider how the term נפש is used in Scripture. The following passages give us some insight into the nature of the נפש. The words in bold type are represented by נפש in the original. (New Testament passages containing ψυχη are included, since ψυχη is repeatedly used in the LXX as a translation of נפש and since the New Testament accepts this translation as legitimate [cf. Gen. 2:7 and 1 Cor. 15:45; Ps. 16:10 and Acts 2:27].)

The נפש . . .

. . . Is made by God

Gen. 2:7 And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed (blew) into his nostrils the breath (wind) of life; and man became a living **soul**.

– The physical part of man has its origins in the dust of the ground; the spiritual part has its origins in God.

Jer. 38:16 So Zedekiah the king sware secretly unto Jeremiah, saying, As Jehovah liveth, that made us this **soul**, I will not put thee to death, neither will I give thee into the hand of these men that seek thy **life**. (cp. Isa. 57:16)

– *made* = עשה

. . . Is used in distinction from animals

1 Chron. 5:21 And they took away their cattle; of their camels fifty thousand, and of sheep two hundred and fifty thousand, and of asses two thousand, and of **men** (lit.: "and~soul of~man") a hundred thousand.

. . . Used of animals

Prov. 12:10 A righteous man regardeth the **life** of his beast; But the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.

– The נפש of the animal is different from that of man. The animal נפש was created by God. The human נפש came directly from the breath of God. Moreover, it is said of the animal that the נפש is in its blood (Lev. 17:11). This is not said of the נפש of man. (This would seem to imply that the animal-soul is biological.)

. . . Is distinguished from the spirit

1 Cor. 15:45. So also it is written, The first man Adam became a living **soul**. The last Adam became a life-giving spirit.

Heb. 4:12. For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of **soul** and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart.

. . . Is distinguished from the spirit and body

1 Thess. 5:23. And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and **soul** and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

. . . Is distinguished from the body

Ps. 6:2,3. Have mercy upon me, O Jehovah; for I am withered away: O Jehovah, heal me; for my bones are troubled. My **soul** also is sore troubled: And thou, O Jehovah, how long? (Note how *soul* in v. 3 is contrasted with *bones* in v. 2.)

Ps. 31:9. Have mercy upon me, O Jehovah, for I am in distress: Mine eye wasteth away with grief, yea, my **soul** and my body.

Isa. 10:18. And he will consume the glory of his forest, and of his fruitful field, both **soul** and body: and it shall be as when a standard-bearer fainteth. (The *forest* and the *fruitful field* are metonyms for Assyria.)

Mic. 6: 6-7. Wherewith shall I come before Jehovah, and bow myself before the high God? shall I come before him with burnt-offerings, with calves a year old? will Jehovah be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my

first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my **soul**?

Matt. 10: 28. And be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the **soul**: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell. (Man cannot kill the soul; the death of the soul takes place in hell.)

Acts 2: 25-31. For David saith concerning him, I beheld the Lord always before my face; For he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved: Therefore my heart was glad, and my tongue rejoiced; Moreover my flesh also shall dwell in hope: Because thou wilt not leave my **soul** unto Hades, Neither wilt thou give thy Holy One to see corruption. Thou madest known unto me the ways of life; Thou shalt make me full of gladness with thy countenance. Brethren, I may say unto you freely of the patriarch David, that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us unto this day. Being therefore a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne; he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was **he** left unto Hades, nor did his flesh see corruption.

– A distinction is made between the soul and the flesh, when Peter explains David's words to mean that the *soul*, which was not left in *hades*, was "He," i.e., Christ Himself, while that which was not left to corruption was "His flesh" (cf. underlined portions).

2 John 2-4. Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy **soul** prospereth. For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.

– Note that the health of the body and outward prosperity is distinguished from the prosperity of the soul. Moreover, the prosperity of the soul is directly connected to the *truth*.

While it is not the purpose of this essay to settle the dispute between the monists, the dichotomists and the trichotomists, I favor trichotomy. The Scriptures speak of body, soul, and spirit as if these were three separate "parts" of the human nature. "And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. 5:23)

Moreover, the Lord speaks of the possibility of soul and spirit being separated. *“For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart”* (Heb. 4:12). However, the very fact that He uses this example to display the transcendent power of the Word demonstrates that the soul and the spirit are normally inseparable. In addition, there appear to be times when the two words are almost synonymous.

Isa. 26:9. With my **soul** have I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me will I seek thee earnestly: for when thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world learn righteousness.

Luke 1: 46-47. And Mary said, My **soul** doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour.

It is my opinion that the arrangement of the three is as follows: the body is the habitation of the soul and the soul is the habitation of the spirit. When the Bible speaks of the departure of the soul or the departure of the spirit from the body, it is speaking of the same occurrence.

... Leaves the body in death

Gen. 35:18. And it came to pass, as her **soul** was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin.

2 Sam. 14:14. For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God take away **life** (וְלֹא-יִשָּׂא אֱלֹהִים נַפְשׁ), but deviseth means, that he that is banished be not an outcast from him.

1 Kings 17:21,22. And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto Jehovah, and said, O Jehovah my God, I pray thee, let this child's **soul** come into him again. And Jehovah hearkened unto the voice of Elijah; and the **soul** of the child came into him again, and he revived.

– lit.: "and returned ~נַפְשׁ of~the lad~upon~his midst~and he came alive"; note the possessive: not just abstract *life*, which would be the same in everyone, but a, unique personal *soul*).

Luke 12:19-20. And I will say to my **soul**, **Soul**, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry. But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night is thy **soul** required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?

Rev. 6: 9-11. And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the **souls** of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And there was given them to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course.

Rev. 20: 4. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the **souls** of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshiped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

– Since the book of Revelation is figurative, one cannot use these passages as proof passages. Yet, they do picture disembodied souls in heaven, which are able to think and speak.

Cf. also James 2:26 For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead.

Other passages speak of the departure of the soul as the onset of death. James speaks of the departure of the spirit as the onset. This would imply that the soul and the spirit are intimately joined together.

Where does the soul go upon death? One cannot invent places which are not found in the Scriptures, such as “limbo.” Rather, one needs to discover the locations of which the Scriptures do speak: earth, heaven, and hell. The spirits of those who died in the Flood were visited by Christ when He descended into hell. *“Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison”* (1 Pet. 3:18f.) — Scripture knows of no place where spirits of unbelievers go other than hell. While the use of “prison” is unique to this passage, there are other passages which speak of “chains” in connection with condemnation (e.g., Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4; Rev. 20:1). The parallel is significant.

... Is a part of oneself

Lev. 20:6,25. And the **soul** that turneth unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto the wizards, to play the harlot after them, I will even set my face against that **soul**, and will cut him off from among his people. ... Ye shall therefore make a distinction between the clean beast and the unclean, and between the unclean fowl and the clean: and ye shall not make your **souls** abominable by beast, or by bird, or by anything wherewith the ground teemeth, which I have separated from you as unclean.

Lev. 26:15-16,43. and if ye shall reject my statutes, and if your **soul** abhor mine ordinances, so that ye will not do all my commandments, but break my covenant; I also will do this unto you: I will appoint terror over you, even consumption and fever, that shall consume the eyes, and make the **soul** to pine away; and ye shall sow your seed in vain, for your enemies shall eat it. ... The land also shall be left by them, and shall enjoy its sabbaths, while it lieth desolate without them: and they shall accept of the punishment of their iniquity; because, even because they rejected mine ordinances, and their **soul** abhorred my statutes.

- The soul is credited with having a consciousness . . . an ability to perceive and to react. The soul is spoken of as a distinct part of *me* and yet not the totality that constitutes *me*. *Me* consists of body, soul, and spirit.

Num. 21:4. And they journeyed from mount Hor by the way to the Red Sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the **soul** of the people was much discouraged because of the way. (Singular *soul* because of singular *people*.)

- If the *soul* is equivalent to the person, then what does *the soul of the people* mean?

Ps. 3:2. Many there are that say of my **soul**, There is no help for him in God.

- Note that *soul* is feminine, while *him* is masculine. I wonder if לַנַּפְשִׁי should read *to my soul*. – *Many are saying to my soul: There is not salvation toward him in God.*

... Is addressed by the speaker as if it is a distinct part of himself

Gen. 49:6 (Jacob's prophecy) O my **soul**, come not thou into their council; Unto their assembly, my glory, be not thou united; For in their anger they slew a man, And in their self-will they hocked an ox. (also: Ps. 116:7,8; Luke 12:19)

Ps. 103: 1. Bless Jehovah, O my **soul**; And all that is within me, bless his holy name.

2. Bless Jehovah, O my **soul**, And forget not all his benefits:

3. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who healeth all thy diseases;

4. Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies;

5. Who satisfieth thy desire with good things, So that thy youth is renewed like the eagle.

... Is equated with the person

Gen. 12:5. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the **souls** that they had gotten in Haran. And they went forth to go into the land of Canaan. And into the land of Canaan they came. (Gen. 17:14; 36:6; Rom. 13:1; et multi)

... Is equated with life

Ps. 7:5. Let the enemy pursue my **soul**, and overtake it; Yea, let him tread my life down to the earth, And lay my glory in the dust. (*My soul . . . my life . . . my glory* appear to be parallel.) – (also: Ps. 26: 9; 30:3)

... Is capable of life

Gen. 12:13. Say, I pray thee, thou art my sister. That it may be well with me for thy sake, and that my **soul** may live because of thee.

- If the *soul* is the same as the *life*, then this passage would be saying, *that my life may live*. It stands to reason that, since the soul can live and can die, it is not the same as life. Rather it possesses life or it does not.

... Is guilty of sin

Num. 5: 6. Speak unto the children of Israel, When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit, so as to trespass against Jehovah, and that **soul** shall be guilty.

Ps. 103: 2-3. Bless Jehovah, O my **soul**, And forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all **thine** iniquities; Who healeth all **thy** diseases;

... Is affected by sin

Ps. 41:4. I said, O Jehovah, have mercy upon me: Heal my **soul**; For I have sinned against thee.

2 Pet. 2:7-8. And delivered righteous Lot, sore distressed by the lascivious life of the wicked (for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous **soul** from day to day with their lawless deeds):

... Is purified from sin

1 Pet. 1:22-23. Seeing ye have purified your **souls** in your obedience to the truth unto unfeigned love of the brethren, love one another from the heart fervently: having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth.

... Can be ransomed, redeemed, saved

Exod. 30:12,15. When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel, according to those that are numbered of them, then shall they give every man a ransom for his **soul** unto Jehovah, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest them. . . . The rich shall not give more, and the poor shall not give less, than the half shekel, when they give the offering of Jehovah, to make atonement for your **souls**.

Ps. 34:22. Jehovah redeemeth the **soul** of his servants; And none of them that take refuge in him shall be condemned.

Ps. 72:13-14. He will have pity on the poor and needy, And the **souls** of the needy he will save. He will redeem their **soul** from oppression and violence; And precious will their blood be in his sight:

Heb. 10:39. But we are not of them that shrink back unto perdition; but of them that have faith unto the saving of the **soul**.

Jas. 5:20. Let him know, that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a **soul** from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins.

1 Pet. 1:7-9. . . Jesus Christ: whom not having seen ye love; on whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your **souls**.

... Can receive the Word

Deut. 11: 18. Therefore shall ye lay up these my words in your heart and in your **soul**; and ye shall bind them for a sign upon your hand, and they shall be for frontlets between your eyes.

... Can be affected by the Word (faith)

Ps. 19: 7. The law of Jehovah is perfect, restoring the **soul**: The testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple.

Prov. 11:30. The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life; And he that is wise winneth **souls**.

Acts 14: 21,22. And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, and to Iconium, and to Antioch, confirming the **souls** of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God.

Jas. 1:21. Wherefore putting away all filthiness and overflowing of wickedness, receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your **souls**.

Heb. 6:17-20. Wherein God, being minded to show more abundantly unto the heirs of the promise the immutability of his counsel, interposed with an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it is impossible for God to lie, we may have a strong encouragement, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before us: which we have as an anchor of the **soul**, a hope both sure and stedfast and entering into that which is within the veil; whither as a forerunner Jesus entered for us, having become a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek.

... Can keep the Word

Ps. 119: 129. Thy testimonies are wonderful; Therefore doth my **soul** keep them.

Ps. 119: 167. My **soul** hath observed thy testimonies; And I love them exceedingly.

... Can confess the Word

Acts 4:32. And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and **soul**: and not one of them said that aught of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

Phil. 1: 27. Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ: that, whether I come and see you or be absent, I may hear of your state, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one **soul** striving for the faith of the gospel;

... Is guided (shepherded) by Christ

1 Pet. 2:25. For ye were going astray like sheep; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your **souls**.

... Is capable of love

Deut. 6:5 And thou shalt love Jehovah thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy **soul**, and with all thy might.

– *Might* is an abstract characteristic. Therefore, one might argue that *soul* is also abstract. By itself, this passage would not help us to understand the nature of the soul. However, elsewhere in Scripture the other objects (*heart* and *might*) are not addressed in the second person as personal entities (cf. above: "The soul is addressed as a part of oneself").

– Exception: *Psalms 59:17 O my Strength, I sing praise to you; you, O God, are my fortress, my loving God.* (NIV) However, here the word *Strength* is employed as a name for God.

... Is capable of desire

Gen. 34:3,8. And his **soul** clave unto Dinah the daughter of Jacob, and he loved the damsel, and spake kindly unto the damsel. ... And Hamor communed with them, saying, The **soul** of my son Shechem longeth for your daughter: I pray you, give her unto him to wife.

Ps. 33:20. Our **soul** hath waited for Jehovah: He is our help and our shield.

– The soul waits (consciously longs) for Jehovah.

Ps. 42:1,2 As the hart panteth after the water brooks, So panteth my **soul** after thee, O God. My **soul** thirsteth for God, for the living God: When shall I come and appear before God? (also: Ps. 57:1; 62:1; 63:1)

... Is capable of error

Acts 15:24. Forasmuch as we have heard that certain who went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your **souls**; to whom we gave no commandment.

... Is capable of distress (discouragement)

Gen. 42:21. And they said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the distress of his **soul**, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us.

Ps. 42:5,6. Why art thou cast down, O my **soul**? And why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him For the help of his countenance. O my God, my **soul** is cast down within me: Therefore do I remember thee from the land of the Jordan, And the Hermons, from the hill Mizar.

Matt. 26: 38. Then saith he unto them, My **soul** is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. . .

... Is capable of mental activity

Ps. 13: 2. How long shall I take counsel in my **soul**, Having sorrow in my heart all the day? How long shall mine enemy be exalted over me?

Ps. 139:14. I will give thanks unto thee; For I am fearfully and wonderfully made: Wonderful are thy works; And that my **soul** knoweth right well.

Prov. 19:2. Also, that the **soul** be without knowledge is not good; And he that hasteth with his feet sinneth.

... **Is capable of speaking**

Job 24:12 From out of the populous city men groan, And the **soul** of the wounded crieth out: Yet God regardeth not the folly.

Ps. 16:2. O my **soul**, thou hast said unto Jehovah, Thou art my Lord: I have no good beyond thee.

Ps. 34:2 My **soul** shall make her boast in Jehovah: The meek shall hear thereof, and be glad.

Ps. 119:175. Let my **soul** live, and it shall praise thee; And let thine ordinances help me.

... **Is the concern of pastors**

Heb. 13:17. Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit to them: for they watch in behalf of your **souls**, as they that shall give account; that they may do this with joy, and not with grief: for this were unprofitable for you.

... **Is attributed to God**

Lev. 26:11. And I will set my tabernacle among you: and my **soul** shall not abhor you. (also: Ps. 11:5)

– Just as anthropomorphic expressions (eyes, hand, etc.) are used of God, so is *soul*.

... **Is attributed to Christ: an offering**

Isa. 53:10-12. Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his **soul** an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his **soul**, and shall be satisfied: by the knowledge of himself shall my righteous servant justify many; and he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he poured out his **soul** unto death, and was numbered with the transgressors: yet he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

... **Can die**

Ezek. 18: 4. Behold, all **souls** are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the **soul** of the son is mine: the **soul** that sinneth, it shall die.

– What constitutes the death of the soul is not addressed here.

... **Can be found in *sheol***

Ps. 16:10. For thou wilt not leave my **soul** to Sheol; Neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption.

– *Sheol* is the realm of the dead . . . the abstract *locale* of all who are dead; sometimes *sheol* focuses on the grave, sometimes on hell, sometimes on no specific place.

... **Can be delivered from *sheol* and death**

Ps. 30:3. O Jehovah, thou hast brought up my **soul** from Sheol; Thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit.

Ps. 33:19. To deliver their **soul** from death, And to keep them alive in famine.

Ps. 86:13. For great is thy lovingkindness toward me; And thou hast delivered my **soul** from the lowest Sheol.

– The *lowest sheol* is hell. *Sheol* begins with the grave and proceeds downward. Both believers and unbelievers go to *sheol*, but only the unbeliever goes to *the lowest sheol*.

Preliminary Conclusion

As one considers the different attributes of the soul, he is struck by the many similarities between the נפש and the person himself. What other part of man possesses all these attributes? It has been proposed that נפש should be understood as *life force*. However, we are faced with considerable difficulty in attempting to connect these attributes to an abstract concept such as *life force*. In fact, can these attributes be connected with anything abstract?

The very manner in which the term is used indicates that the נפש is something concrete. It is a concrete creation of God, in which the very personality² is found. Life and death, sin and salvation are attributed to or experienced by the נפש. Much more than merely existing, the נפש is mentally active. It is capable of keeping God's Word or of falling into error. It is capable of love, desire, and distress.

The soul is also physically active, in so far as it operates in and through the body. The interaction of the נפש with the body is indicated by passages such as the following:

– Lev. 5:2 Or if **any one** (נפש) touch any unclean thing, whether it be the carcass of an unclean beast, or the carcass of unclean cattle, or the carcass of unclean creeping things, and it be hidden from him, and he be unclean, then he shall be guilty.

– Lev. 7:18 And if any of the flesh of the sacrifice of his peace-offerings be eaten on the third day, it shall not be accepted, neither shall it be imputed unto him that offereth it: it shall be an abomination, and the **soul** that eateth of it shall bear his iniquity.

– Exod. 12:16 And in the first day there shall be to you a holy convocation, and in the seventh day a holy convocation; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every **man** (נפש) must eat, that only may be done by you.

- In this context, using the word *soul* would not adversely affect the understanding. The Holy Spirit chose not to use אָדָם, but rather נֶפֶשׁ. If He meant for us to understand the mere physical side of man, אָדָם would have sufficed. However, since the activity addressed in this context involves the spiritual side of man, נֶפֶשׁ would seem to be a better choice. It is not just the body which is involved in this activity, but also the soul.
- In fact, each of the above three passages deals with matters that involve the spiritual as well as the physical side of man.

During our earthly life the soul functions in and through the body. Therefore, we can understand how it can be said that the נֶפֶשׁ eats or touches (activities usually connected with the body). When the נֶפֶשׁ thinks, it acts through the neural patterns within the brain. Likewise, when the נֶפֶשׁ acts, it does so through the various systems of the body. Without the נֶפֶשׁ, the body still has these systems (for a time), but they cannot function. Just as the נֶפֶשׁ activated the body of Adam, along with its systems, so the נֶפֶשׁ of each human being causes the chemical and electrical systems of the body to function. When the נֶפֶשׁ departs from the body, all functions cease.

Moreover, just as the soul functions in and through the body, so the body has an effect on the soul. For this reason, God urges us to subdue the desires of the body and bring it under control. Failure to do so can have a disastrous effect on the soul.

- Rom. 7:24 *Wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me out of the body of this death?*
- Rom. 8:13 *For if ye live after the flesh, ye must die; but if by the Spirit ye put to death the deeds of the body, ye shall live.*
- 1 Cor. 9:27 *But I buffet my body, and bring it into bondage: lest by any means, after that I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected.*

As for the spiritual side of man: it is difficult to find a connection between man's physical functions and the spiritual functions of the soul. Faith, for instance, is an attribute of the soul, for which there appears to be no corresponding physical or biological activity. To be sure, faith produces physical responses: a feeling of joy over salvation, of sorrow over sin, etc. However, it is doubtful that we can find some neurological connections or chemical reactions, which constitute faith.

Likewise, love, while producing biological responses, is not in itself a biological function. We could go on to speak of such things as peace, patience, longsuffering, meekness, etc. These fruits of the Holy Spirit are produced in the soul, not the body.

The Various Translations

The exegete will find that the translations of the Bible use a variety of English words as translations for נֶפֶשׁ. As we consider some of these, take note of the possibility of using the word *soul* instead of the word chosen by the translator. The following are from the ASV:

Life

- Gen. 9:5 *And surely your blood, the blood of your lives, will I require. At the hand of every beast will I require it. And at the hand of man, even at the hand of every man's brother, will I require the **life** of man.*

If we understand the נֶפֶשׁ of man to be *a created part of man that has a definite, individual, conscious existence*, then we can translate it with the word *soul*: *I will require the soul of man*. This soul, which was *blown* into him by God and which then animated the body, would be taken away from him. The body would then be as it was before God *blew* into it.

- Exod. 21:22-25. *And if men strive together, and hurt a woman with child, so that her fruit depart, and yet no harm follow; he shall be surely fined, according as the woman's husband shall lay upon him; and he shall pay as the judges determine. But if any harm follow, then thou shalt give **life for life**, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burning for burning, wound for wound, stripe for stripe.*

Instead of *life for life*, translate *soul for soul*. The significance of the passage expands: it is not only the physical life that God is concerned about, but the soul's existence in this world. The whole concept of the "time of grace" comes to the forefront in a far more forceful manner.

One might argue that the other items listed are physical in nature. Why not *nephesh*? The physical is not to be discounted. It is the taking of the physical life that results in the release of the soul. (The subject of the immortality of the soul will be considered later in the article.) The taking of human life is more than the cessation of biological processes. Therefore, the use of the word *soul* is to be preferred.

Man

- Exod. 12:16 *And in the first day there shall be to you a holy convocation, and in the seventh day a holy convocation; no manner of work shall be done in them, save that which every **man** must eat, that only may be done by you.*

Using the word *soul* would not adversely affect the understanding. The Holy Spirit chose not to use אָדָם, but rather נֶפֶשׁ. If He meant for us to understand that mere, physical side of man, אָדָם would have sufficed. However, since the activity addressed in this context involves the spiritual side of man, נֶפֶשׁ would seem to be a better choice. (cf. Lev. 4:27 *And if **any one** of the common people sin unwittingly, in doing any of the things which Jehovah hath commanded not to be done, and be guilty* – Frequently in the verses that follow, the Spirit speaks of the נֶפֶשׁ committing sins.)

Appetite.

- Prov. 16:26 *The **appetite** of the laboring man laboreth for him; For his mouth urgeth him thereto.*

Lit.: *The toiling soul toils for himself; for his mouth urges upon him.* – I fail to understand why the AS, NAS, and NIV translate this with *appetite*. Do they regard this as an idiomatic expression? If so, how do they come to this conclusion? If one considers the fact that the soul is influenced by the body, then the two sticks in this parallelism fit together. – The mouth urges the soul to labor for self.

– Prov. 23:2 *And put a knife to thy throat, If thou be a man given to appetite.*

Literally this reads: *if~master of~ נפש ~you*. If one understands that *nephesh* is a conscious entity, then a near-literal translation would be preferable.

– v.1) *When you sit to eat with a ruler, Consider diligently him that is before you;* v.2) *And put a knife to your throat, If you are master of your soul.* v.3) *Be not desirous of his dainties; Seeing they are deceitful food.* – Only he who is master of his soul will be able to resist the temptation.

Dead

– Lev. 19:28 *Ye shall not make any cuttings in your flesh for the dead, nor print any marks upon you: I am Jehovah.*

ושרט לא לנפש לתנו

you shall give~not~toward the soul~and cutting

בבשרכם וכתבת לא בקעקע אני יהוה

Jehovah~I~in you~not~tattoo~and inscription of~in your flesh~

The soul is the non-material part of man and would be beyond physical contact. Perhaps it was a custom of the heathen to make cuttings in their flesh, which were supposed to have an effect on their soul. This might explain why Moses stated that the cutting was *לנפש*: the cutting was *toward the soul, in reference to the soul, for the soul*.

There are Egyptian mummified remains which show clear evidence of tattooing. Some of the markings seem to be religious in nature; others are more sensual. However, considering the fact that many ancient religions incorporated sexual practices into their religion, these two uses of tattooing may be tied together.

If, on the other hand, *נפש* does convey the idea of death, what is found in the nature of *נפש* which would yield this concept? Consider the following passages:

– Lev. 21:1,2. *And Jehovah said unto Moses, Speak unto the priests, the sons of Aaron, and say unto them, There shall none defile himself for the dead (לנפש) among his people; except for his kin. . .*

– Lev. 22:4 *What man soever of the seed of Aaron is a leper, or hath an issue; he shall not eat of the holy things, until he be clean. And whoso toucheth anything that is unclean by the dead (נפש), or a man whose seed goeth from him.*

– Lev. 24:17 *And he that smiteth any man (כל-נפש אדם) mortally shall surely be put to death.*

If we understand *נפש* to be referring to the non-corporeal side of man, then this expression, *smiting the soul*, would be understood as *killing*, because the effect of the smiting reaches beyond the body. – The phrase *כל-נפש אדם* would seem to support this. The word *אדם* probably would have been left out if *נפש* was meant to be a synonym for *אדם*.

– Lev. 24:18 *And he that smiteth a beast mortally (נפש-בהמה) shall make it good, life (נפש) for life (נפש).*

– Num. 6:6 *All the days that he separateth himself unto Jehovah he shall not come near to a dead body (נפש מות).*

– Num. 9:6 *And there were certain men, who were unclean by reason of the dead body of a man (לנפש אדם), so that they could not keep the passover on that day: and they came before Moses and before Aaron on that day:*

The use of *נפש* in these contexts gives the impression that those who have died have gone into a *soul-existence*. They are no longer *in the flesh*. This usage with regard to animals does not negate this possibility. However, just as there are reasons to make a distinction between the nature of the human *soul* and the nature of the animal *soul*, so there are reasons to make a distinction between the *soul-existence* of man and the *soul-existence* of the animal.

Self

– Gen. 14: 21. *And the king of Sodom said unto Abram, Give me the persons, and take the goods to thyself.*

Just because English-speaking people do not use the word “soul” in a clause such as this, it does not mean that the soul-concept was uncommon for the people of Abraham’s time. Perhaps they (even the king of Sodom) had a better understanding of the true nature of man. There was another way of saying “to yourself” (לך) but this expression was not chosen. It is not beyond the realm of possibility that the king of Sodom might have been saying, “Take the goods to your soul,” implying something more than physical possession. After all the Sodomites were deeply devoted to the flesh. The riches of this world would have been grasped by more than the hands; they would have dedicated their souls to material goods.

– Lev.11: 43,44. *Ye shall not make yourselves abominable with any creeping thing that creepeth, neither shall ye make yourselves unclean with them, that ye should be defiled thereby. For I am Jehovah your God: sanctify yourselves therefore, and be ye holy; for I am holy: neither shall ye defile yourselves with any manner of creeping thing that moveth upon the earth.*

אל-תשקצו את-נפשתיכם בכל-השרץ השרץ ולא תטמאו בהם ונטמתם בהם:

כי אני יהוה אלהיכם והתקדשתם והייתם קדשים כי קדוש אני

ולא תטמאו את-נפשתיכם בכל-השרץ הרמש על-הארץ;

In this passage I see no reason for avoiding the use of *soul*.

43. *You shall not make your souls abominable with any teeming thing which is teeming, nor shall you make yourselves unclean with them, so that you have been unclean thereby.*

44. *For I (am) Jehovah your God, and you shall sanctified yourselves, and you shall be holy, for I (am) holy; and you shall not defile your souls with any teeming thing which is creeping on the earth.*

Anyone

– Lev. 4:2. *Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, If **any one** shall sin unwittingly, in any of the things which Jehovah hath commanded not to be done, and shall do any one of them.*

This could be translated, *If any soul shall sin . . .* (cf. comments on "Man" above)

Mind

– Gen. 23:8. *And he communed with them, saying, If it be your **mind** (אם-יש את-נפשכם) that I should bury my dead out of my sight, hear me, and entreat for me to Ephron the son of Zohar.*

Literally: *If it be with your soul to bury my dead . . .* – The Hebrew does not appear to have a separate word for *mind*, as the Greek does. Rather, it uses נפש, לב, and רוח. This is not a reason for using the word *mind* as a translation for נפש, even though our Western logic desires what we perceive to be greater precision of expression. Using the word *soul* maintains the truth that the soul governs the thought processes, a truth which is largely discarded by the modern world.

The Immortality of the נפש

Is the concept of “the immortality of the soul” one that developed among Plato and others, or is it a divine truth, which was recognized by Greek philosophers, albeit corruptly? Consider the following:

– Scripture teaches that the soul is distinct from the body.

Ps. 6:2,3; Ps. 31:9; Isa. 10: 18; Mic. 6: 6-7; Matt. 10: 28; Acts 2: 25-31; 2 John 2-4 (see all above)

– Scripture speaks of the soul (or spirit) departing from the body.

Gen. 35:18. *And it came to pass, as her **soul** was departing (for she died), that she called his name Ben-oni: but his father called him Benjamin.*

2 Sam. 14:14. *For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God take away **life** (ולא-ישא אלהים נפש), but deviseth means, that he that is banished be not an outcast from him.*

1 Kings 17:21. *And he stretched himself upon the child three times, and cried unto Jehovah, and said, O Jehovah my God, I pray thee, let this child's **soul** come into him again. 22. And Jehovah hearkened unto the voice of Elijah; and the **soul** of the child came into him again, and he revived*

Luke 8:54f. *But he, taking her (daughter of Jairus) by the hand, called, saying, Maiden, arise. And her spirit returned, and she rose up immediately: and he commanded that something be given her to eat*

Luke 12:19f. *And I will say to my **soul**, **Soul**, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, be merry. But God said unto him, Thou foolish one, this night is thy **soul** required of thee; and the things which thou hast prepared, whose shall they be?*

Acts 20:10. *And Paul went down, and fell on him, and embracing him said, Make ye no ado; for his **life** is in him.*

Jas. 2:26. *For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, even so faith apart from works is dead.*

1 Pet. 3:18ff. *Because Christ also suffered for sins once, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit; in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, that aforetime were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water:*

Rev. 6: 9-11. *And when he opened the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the **souls** of them that had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a great voice, saying, How long, O Master, the holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And there was given them to each one a white robe; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little time, until their fellow-servants also and their brethren, who should be killed even as they were, should have fulfilled their course.*

Rev. 20: 4. *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the **souls** of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of God, and such as worshiped not the beast, neither his image, and received not the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they lived, and reigned with Christ a thousand years.*

If these passages are taken in their simplest sense, the reader cannot but assume that the soul leaves the body upon death. In order for the body to return to life, the soul has to return to the body. Moreover, it is not just any soul that must return, but the specific soul of that person (i.e., “his soul” - cf. 1 Kings 17:21f.).

Since we understand that the spirit and the soul, while being distinct from each other, are virtually inseparable, except by God, we can take the following passages as being parallel to those above.

– The spirit of man is spoken of as departing from the body and going to be with God.

Eccl. 12:7. *And the dust returneth to the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God who gave it.*

Luke 23: 46. *And Jesus, crying with a loud voice, said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said this, he gave up the ghost.*

Acts 7: 59. *And they stoned Stephen, calling upon the Lord, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.*

What happens to the soul when it departs? The book of Revelation gives us a “picture” of the souls of believers in the presence of God. While we realize that Revelation is symbolic in nature, nevertheless, it does give this picture.

1 Pet. 3:19 speaks of the spirits of unbelievers as being in *prison*. (cf. earlier comments on 1 Pet. 3)

In His story about the rich man and Lazarus, Christ speaks of these two men as being in their eternal reward, one in heaven and the other in hell, while there are people still living on earth. (cf. Luke 16) While we realize that parables (I assume that this story is a parable) are meant to teach a single message and that we shouldn’t emphasize the details, nevertheless, Christ does give us this picture.

– Scripture speaks of a departure from the body.

2 Cor. 5:6-9. *Being therefore always of good courage, and knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord (for we walk by faith, not by sight); we are of good courage, I say, and are willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord. Wherefore also we make it our aim, whether at home or absent, to be well-pleasing unto him.*

Phil. 1: 21-24. *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if to live in the flesh,--if this shall bring fruit from my work, then what I shall choose I know not. But I am in a strait betwixt the two, having the desire to depart and be with Christ; for it is very far better: yet to abide in the flesh is more needful for your sake.*

Following the hermeneutical principle that the exegete should begin with the simplest understanding of a text, unless context (immediate or remote) dictates otherwise, we consider expressions such as *at home in the body* and *absent from the body* to mean exactly what they say. Likewise, *abide in the flesh*, *live in the flesh*, and *depart*. Perhaps we cannot determine from these texts alone exactly what it means to depart from the flesh or to be absent from the body. However, taking these passages together with those that precede, the logical conclusion is that the “we” of 2 Cor. 5 and the “I” of Phil. 1 are the soul~spirits of those physically dead. For the Spirit speaks of a personal נפש, which departs from the body and which (i.e., the very same נפש) returns to the body by the working of God’s power. – The Spirit speaks also of the רוח which leaves the body in order to return to God, who gave it. In the New Testament the Spirit speaks of the πνευμα being committed into the hands of God upon death.

Search the Scriptures, if you will, to find some other part of man, which might be that which departs to be with God. Scripture speaks only of body, soul, and spirit. Moreover, it very definitely speaks of spirit and soul as departing from the body.

Without this understanding, the reader cannot but be befuddled by the words of Christ to the penitent thief: *And he said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise* [παραδεισος]. (Luke 23:43)

– παραδεισος occurs two other times in the New Testament:

2 Cor. 12:2-4. *I know a man in Christ, fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I know not; or whether out of the body, I know not; God knoweth), such a one caught up even to the third heaven. And I know such a man (whether in the body, or apart from the body, I know not; God knoweth), how that he was caught up into **Paradise**, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter.*

Rev. 2:7. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the churches. To him that overcometh, to him will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the **Paradise** of God.*

In 2 Corinthians Paul equates paradise with the “third heaven.”²³ In Revelation John states that the paradise of God is the place where the tree of life is found. In Rev. 22, we are told that the tree of life is found in heaven.

In the Old Testament פֶּרֶדֶס is used three times: in each instance it could mean *forest*, *park*, *garden*, or *orchard*. (Eccl. 2:5; Song Sol. 4:13; Neh. 2:8) It appears that this term began to be used for heaven at some time after the conclusion of the Old Testament canon and before the coming of Christ.

Soul-sleep

What then is “soul-sleep”? Is there any Scriptural justification for teaching that the soul goes into a sleep during the time that the body is in the grave? Certainly the Scriptures speak of death as a sleep:

Matt. 9:24. *He said, Give place: for the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn.*

Matt. 27:52. *And the tombs were opened; and many bodies of the saints that had fallen asleep were raised;*

- John 11:11,13. *These things spake he: and after this he saith unto them, Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep. ... Now Jesus had spoken of his death: but they thought that he spake of taking rest in sleep.*
- Acts 13:36. *For David, after he had in his own generation served the counsel of God, fell asleep, and was laid unto his fathers, and saw corruption*
- 1 Cor. 15:6,18,20,51. *Then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep. ... Then they also that are fallen asleep in Christ have perished. ... But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of them that are asleep. ... Behold, I tell you a mystery: We all shall not sleep, but we shall all be changed*
- 1 Thess. 4:13-15. *But we would not have you ignorant, brethren, concerning them that fall asleep; that ye sorrow not, even as the rest, who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that are fallen asleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are alive, that are left unto the coming of the Lord, shall in no wise precede them that are fallen asleep.*
- 2 Pet .3:4. *And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for, from the day that the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.*
- Likewise the Old Testament (Gen. 47:30; Deut. 31:16; Ps. 13:3; etc.)

Are we to conclude from these passages that it is the soul which sleeps or is it the body or is it both?

Consider the words of our Savior. When offering to the Sadducees a Scriptural proof for the resurrection of the dead, Jesus quoted Exod. 3:6 – “*But as touching the resurrection of the dead, have ye not read that which was spoken unto you by God, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the living*” (Matt. 22:32). When God first spoke these words (to Moses), Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were dead and in their graves. Nevertheless, Jesus says that God is the God of the living, not of the dead. Moreover, He says that this proves the resurrection of the dead.

How can we make the reality of their deaths agree with the reality that they were alive in the days of Moses and also in the day of Christ? And how can we make this agreement a part of the doctrine of the resurrection? The agreement is wrapped up in the words of Christ: “*Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die. Believest thou this?*” (John 11:25f.). According to Jesus, the believer shall both die and live and shall never die. The simple understanding is this: *though he die, yet shall he live* refers to the death and resurrection of the body; *whosoever liveth and believeth on me shall never die* refers to the immortality of the soul. Although Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were dead in body, they were alive in soul.

How then can this passage refer to the resurrection of the dead? The answer is simply this that there is no such thing as a soul living forever without the body. Therefore, as surely as the soul is alive, so shall the body return to life. The Sadducees knew the import of what Christ was saying.

Likewise, the sleep spoken of in Scripture is the sleep of the body . . . a sleep from which it will awaken when the soul returns on Judgment Day. – In certain instances, God awakened some from their sleep before that day. No doubt they once again fell asleep and are now awaiting the day of resurrection.

Consider Isa. 57:1,2 “*The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come. He entereth into peace; they rest in their beds, each one that walketh in his uprightness.*” – יבוא שלום ינחמו על-משכבותם הלך נכחו: = “*He proceeds to enter into peace — they rest upon their couches — walking in his straightness.*” (The singular and plural alternate, matching the alternating singular and plural in verse one. The singular participle [הלך] should be tied to the third person singular Imperfect [יבוא]) In this passage also we see the truth that while the body rests in the tomb, the man himself *proceeds to enter* into peace, while at the same time *walking* in straightness (uprightness). (The Imperfect reveals the beginning of an activity with no view of the end; the participle reveals an activity which is on-going with no view of the beginning or the end.) — This would agree also with the words of Rev. 14:13 - “*And I heard the voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them.*”

Since the soul is not in some kind of sleep during the time between death and resurrection, but rather is enjoying the delights of heaven, why does Scripture emphasize the resurrection? Paul writes: *So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.* (1 Cor. 15:42ff.) And again: *For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For indeed we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; not for that we would be unclothed, but that we would be clothed upon, that what is mortal may be swallowed up of life.* (2 Cor. 5:2ff.) There are some aspects of glory which the bodiless soul cannot enjoy, but which God wants us to enjoy and which we want to enjoy. As Paul says, none of us has the desire to spend eternity without our bodies. – Moreover, just as the Lord describes Himself with anthropomorphism (e.g., eyes, hands, feet, etc.), so that we human beings can grasp His nature with our limited understanding, even so He holds before our eyes that life-after-death concept that is more understandable to us. However, even though those

passages which deal with the resurrection are more abundant than those dealing with the ascension of the soul, this does not in any way diminish or negate the reality of the immortality of the soul.

The Lutheran Confessions

No specific declaration on the doctrine of the soul can be found in the Lutheran Confessions. However, the combined testimonies of the confessors indicate that they believed that the soul is a real, personal entity which is united with the body of a man, yet is distinct from the body, and which possesses all that constitutes that man, except for the physical nature. And, whereas the body is subject to the physical effects of physical death, the soul is not. (cf. "Appendix")

Conclusion

The **נשמה** of man is that part of man given directly from God, which has a definite, individual, conscious existence. It functions in and through the body of man during his earthly life. Because of the presence of the spirit within the soul, the soul animates the body along with all its biological functions. When the soul is separated from the body, the body returns to its inanimate state and gradually becomes dust. As for the soul of the believer, it departs to another realm, namely into the glorious presence of God, where it enjoys the pleasures that are at the right hand of God and where it awaits the final reunion with its body. The soul of the unbeliever is separated from God and joins the "spirits in prison.." On Resurrection Day, the bodies of all the dead will be reanimated, when God returns their personal souls to their bodies. The unbelievers will then go to everlasting hellfire. The bodies of the believers will be changed into spiritual bodies and glorified. In this glorified state they will ascend from this earth to meet the Lord in the air. And so we shall be forever with the Lord. Praise be unto Him, who laid down His life, so that we might have life eternal.

Appendix – The Lutheran Confessions

Augsburg Confession

Art. XXVIII, ¶ 11

The civil rulers defend not minds (die Seelen), but bodies and bodily things against manifest injuries. . .

Smalcald Articles

Part II, Art. II, ¶ 12

First, purgatory. Here they carried their trade into purgatory by masses for souls, and vigils, and weekly, monthly, and yearly celebrations of obsequies, and finally by the Common Week and All Souls Day, by soul-baths so that the Mass is used almost alone for the dead, although Christ has instituted the Sacrament alone for the living. Therefore purgatory, and every solemnity, rite, and commerce connected with it, is to be regarded as nothing but a specter of the devil. For it conflicts with the chief article [which teaches] that only Christ, and not the works of men, are to help [set free] souls. Not to mention the fact that nothing has been [divinely] commanded or enjoined upon us concerning the dead. Therefore all this may be safely omitted, even if it were no error and idolatry.

Part III, Art. I, ¶ 11

Such and many similar things have arisen from want of understanding and ignorance as regards both this sin and Christ, our Savior and they are truly heathen dogmas, which we cannot endure. For if this teaching (i.e., work righteousness) were right [approved], then Christ has died in vain, since there is in man no defect nor sin for which he should have died; or He would have died only for the body, not for the soul, inasmuch as the soul is [entirely] sound, and the body only is subject to death.

The Small Catechism

Part II, ¶ 2

I believe that Jesus Christ is truly God, born of the Father in eternity and also truly man, born of the Virgin Mary. He is my Lord! He redeemed me, a lost and condemned person, bought and won me from all sins, death and the authority of the Devil. It did not cost Him gold or silver, but His holy, precious blood, His innocent body -- His death! Because of this, I am His very own, will live under Him in His kingdom and serve Him righteously, innocently and blessedly forever, just as He is risen from death, lives and reigns forever. Yes, this is true.

Part III, ¶ 20

We pray in this request, as a summary, that our Father in Heaven will save us from every kind of evil that threatens body, soul, property and honor. We pray that when at last our final hour has come, He will grant us a blessed death, and, in His grace, bring us to Himself from this valley of tears.

The Large Catechism

Part I, ¶ 161

Yet there is need that this also be urged upon the populace, that those who would be Christians are under obligation in the sight of God to esteem them worthy of double honor who minister to their souls, that they deal well with them and provide for them. For that, God is willing to add to you sufficient blessing and will not let you come to want. But in this matter every one refuses and resists, and all are afraid that they will perish from bodily want, and cannot now support one respectable preacher, where formerly they filled ten fat paunches. In this we also deserve that God deprive us of His Word and blessing, and again allow preachers of lies to arise to lead us to the devil, and, in addition, to drain our sweat and blood.

Part IV, ¶ 44-46

Thus we must regard Baptism and make it profitable to ourselves, that when our sins and conscience oppress us, we strengthen ourselves and take comfort and say: Nevertheless I am baptized; but if I am baptized, it is promised me that I shall be saved and have eternal life, both in soul and body. For that is the reason why these two things are done in Baptism namely, that the body, which can apprehend nothing but the water, is sprinkled, and, in addition, the word is spoken for the soul to apprehend. Now, since both, the water and the Word, are one Baptism, therefore body and soul must be saved and live forever: the soul through the Word which it believes, but the body because it is united with the soul and also apprehends Baptism as it is able to apprehend it. We have, therefore, no greater jewel in body and soul, for by it we are made holy and are saved, which no other kind of life, no work upon earth, can attain.

Part V, ¶ 68

For here He offers to us the entire treasure which He has brought for us from heaven, and to which He invites us also in other places with the greatest kindness, as when He says in St. Matthew 11, 28: Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Now it is surely a sin and a shame that He so cordially and faithfully summons and exhorts us to our highest and greatest good, and we act so distantly with regard to it, and permit so long a time to pass [without partaking of the Sacrament] that we grow quite cold and hardened, so that we have no inclination or love for it. We must never regard the Sacrament as something injurious from which we had better flee but as a pure wholesome, comforting remedy imparting salvation and comfort, which will cure you and give you life both in soul and body. For where the soul has recovered, the body also is relieved. Why, then, is it that we act as if it were a poison, the eating of which would bring death?

The Formula of Concord

Epitome

Part VIII, ¶ 9

5. As the two natures are united personally, i.e., in one person, we believe, teach, and confess that this union is not such a copulation and connection that neither nature has anything in common with the other personally, i.e. because of the personal union, as when two boards are glued together, where neither gives anything to the other or takes anything from the other. But here is the highest communion, which God truly has with the [assumed] man, from which personal union, and the highest and ineffable communion resulting therefrom, there flows everything human that is said and believed concerning God, and everything divine that is said and believed concerning the man Christ; as the ancient teachers of the Church explained this union and communion of the natures by the illustration of iron glowing with fire, and also by the union of body and soul in man.

Part IX, ¶ 1

It has also been disputed among some theologians who have subscribed to the Augsburg Confession concerning this article: When and in what manner the Lord Christ, according to our simple Christian faith, descended to hell: whether this was done before or after His death; also, whether it occurred according to the soul alone, or according to the divinity alone, or with body and soul, spiritually or bodily; also, whether this article belongs to the passion or to the glorious victory and triumph of Christ.

Thorough Declaration

Art.I, ¶ 1,2

And, to begin with, a controversy has occurred among some theologians of the Augsburg Confession concerning Original Sin, what it properly [and really] is. For one side contended that, since through the fall of Adam man's nature, substance, and essence of the corrupt, man, now, since the Fall, or, at any rate, the principal, highest part of his essence, namely, the rational soul in its highest state or principal powers is original sin itself, which has been called nature-sin or person-sin, for the reason that it is not a thought, word, or work, but the nature itself whence, as from a root, spring all other sins, and that on this account there is now, since the Fall, because the nature is corrupt through sin, no difference whatever between the nature and essence of man and original sin.

But the other side taught, in opposition, that original sin is not properly the nature, substance, or essence of man, that is, man's body or soul, which even now, since the Fall, are and remain the creation and creatures of God in us, but that it is something in the nature, body, and soul of man, and in all his powers, namely, a horrible, deep, inexpressible corruption of the same, so that man is destitute of the righteousness wherein he was originally created, and in spiritual things is dead to good and perverted to all evil; and that, because of this corruption and inborn sin, which inheres in the nature, all actual sins flow forth from the heart; and that hence a distinction must be maintained between the nature and essence of the corrupt man, or his body and soul, which are

the creation and creatures of God in us even since the Fall, and original sin, which is a work of the devil, by which the nature has become corrupt.

¶ 11,12

3. That original sin (in human nature) is not only this entire absence of all good in spiritual, divine things, but that, instead of the lost image of God in man, it is at the same time also a deep, wicked, horrible, fathomless, inscrutable, and unspeakable corruption of the entire nature and all its powers, especially of the highest, principal powers of the soul in the understanding, heart, and will, so that now, since the Fall, man inherits an inborn wicked disposition and inward impurity of heart, evil lust and propensity; 12] that we all by disposition and nature inherit from Adam such a heart, feeling, and thought as are, according to their highest powers and the light of reason, naturally inclined and disposed directly contrary to God and His chief commandments, yea, that they are enmity against God, especially as regards divine and spiritual things. For in other respects, as regards natural, external things which are subject to reason, man still has to a certain degree understanding, power, and ability, although very much weakened, all of which, however, has been so infected and contaminated by original sin that before God it is of no use.

¶ 67

Concerning what is needful furthermore for the proper explanation of this profound and chief article of justification before God, upon which depends the salvation of our souls, we direct, and for the sake of brevity herewith refer, everyone to Dr. Luther's beautiful and glorious exposition of the Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians.

Art. VIII, ¶ 17-19

Against this condemned Christian heritage the Christian Church always and at all times has simply believed and held that the divine and the human nature in the person of Christ are with one another, whereby the natures are not mingled on one essence, but, as Dr. Luther writes, in one person. Accordingly, on account of the personal union and communion, the ancient teachers of the Church, before and after the Council of Chalcedon, frequently employed the word *mixtio*, mixture, in a good sense and with discrimination. For proof of this, many testimonies of the Fathers, if necessary, could be adduced, which are to be found frequently also in the writings of our divines, and which explain the personal union and communion by the illustration *animae et corporis* and *ferri condentis*, that is, of the soul and body, and of glowing iron. For the body and soul, as also fire and iron, have communion with each other, not *per phrasin*, or *modum loquendi*, or *verbaliter* (by phrase or mode of speaking, or in mere words), that is, so that it is to be a mere form of speech and mere words, but *vere* and *realiter* (really and truly), that is, in deed and truth; and nevertheless, no *confusio* or *exaequatio naturarum*, that is, a mixing or equalizing of the natures, as when hydromel is made from honey and water, which is no longer pure water or pure honey, but a mixed drink. Now, in the union of the divine and the human nature in the person of Christ it is far different. For it is a far different, more sublime, and ineffable communion and union between the divine and the human nature in the person of Christ, on account of which union and communion God is man and man is God, yet neither the natures nor their properties are thereby intermingled, but each nature retains its essence and properties.

NOTES

¹ This is the appropriate procedure in the translation of any Biblical term.

² "3. a) habitual patterns and qualities of behavior of any individual as expressed by physical and mental activities and attributes" – *Webster's New World Dictionary*, Collins/World, Cleveland, 1974.

³ My opinion: first heaven = earth's atmosphere; second heaven = outer space; third heaven = that which is beyond the universe, i.e., the abode of God [Ps. 11:4].