

The Neshmat of the Breath of Lives: How humans differ from the lower animals

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whitefld@att.net

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Neshmat (נֶשֶׁמֶת) is a Hebrew word that has been missing in discussions of the origin and nature of **humankind** as told in Genesis. (תְּנֵשֶׁמֶת sounds like "nee-sh maat.") Understanding **נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat** is important because it first appears in the Bible in Gen. 2:7, a verse about the origin of mankind.

Background

When Christianity started, Christians adopted the Septuagint as their Old Testament. The Septuagint was a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into Greek dating from about 250 B.C. It used the Greek word **pneuma** (πνεῦμα) to translate the Hebrew word רֹאשׁת ruach meaning **spirit**, or wind. (**Pneuma** appears in the English word **pneumatic**.) In English Bibles רֹאשׁת ruach is translated **spirit** more than 200 times, but it is also translated **breath** up to 27 times.

The Septuagint used the Greek word **pnoee** (πνοή) to translate **נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat** (and its root word נֶשֶׁמֶת ne-sha-mah). In modern Greek πνοή sounds like "no-ee." **תְּנֵשֶׁמֶת neshmat** and **נֶשֶׁמֶת ne-sha-mah** appear in our Bible translated **breath** 17 times and **spirit** 2 times. The inconsistencies in translation noted above have impaired our understanding of: 1) How the Bible says **humankind** differs from the lower animals.

2) How the Bible describes the human soul, and our understanding of Gen. 2:7.

The inconsistencies resulted from Augustine's interpretation of Gen. 7:22, as we will now discuss.

The Septuagint translation of Gen. 7:22 had translated **תְּנֵשֶׁמֶת neshmat** as **pnoee** (πνοή) and had **not** translated the following word רֹאשׁת **spirit**. The Latin translations, on which Augustine relied, followed the Septuagint and also omitted the word רֹאשׁת **spirit**. A more correct translation of Gen. 7:22 has long been known as shown by the ASV below. (I have italicized the word *land*, a word that is **not** in the Hebrew text.)

ASV Gen. 7:22 All in whose nostrils was the **breath** of the **spirit** of life, (הַיּוֹם is a plural.) of all that was on the dry *land*, died.

In the above, **תְּנֵשֶׁמֶת neshmat** is translated **breath** and רֹאשׁת ruach is translated **spirit**. But many other English translations continue to omit "the **spirit** of" found in the Hebrew. And the plural **הַיּוֹם "lives"** continues to be translated life as in the **KJV Gen. 7:22** shown below: (The KJV had italicized the word *land*.)

KJV Gen. 7:22 All in whose nostrils was the **breath** of life, of all that was in the dry *land*, died.

Augustine's analysis of Gen. 7:22 allowed him to assert two things: (1) That the **תְּנֵשֶׁמֶת neshmat** in Gen. 7:22 included animals and (2) That **pnoee** (πνοή) and **pneuma** (πνεῦμα) meant the same thing and both could be translated **breath**.

Augustine's assertion (2) depended on his assertion (1). It introduced a confusion not found in the Hebrew text. Assertion (2) then became central in Augustine's understanding of the human soul, and his assertion that the **humankind** in Gen. 2:7 was the first human. That the **humankind** in Gen. 2:7 was the first human was contested at the time he made that claim, and continues to be contested today - a controversy which this paper intends to resolve.

Augustine's assertion (1), that the Greek word **pnoee** translating **תְּנֵשֶׁמֶת neshmat** in Gen. 7:22 included animals, flounders because **תְּנֵשֶׁמֶת neshmat**, and its root word **נֶשֶׁמֶת ne-sha-mah, are never used to refer to animals**. Victor P. Hamilton, in his commentary on Genesis, says: "Unlike *רַעַח rūach*, which is applied to God, man, animals, and even false gods, *נֶשֶׁמֶת n̄šamā* is applied only to Yahweh and to man."¹

Hamilton used "**נֶשֶׁמֶת n̄šamā**" as a reference to all words formed from that Hebrew root word; **neshmat** is a form of **נֶשֶׁמֶת ne-sha-mah**. In the verses we will consider, **רֹאשׁת ruach** is translated **breath** 2 times and **spirit** all the other times. Augustine knew that language confusion existed about the human soul, writing:

¹ Victor P. Hamilton, *The Book of Genesis 1-17*, (Grand Rapids, MI, William B. Eerdmans Pub., 1995), 159.

"... The best words to designate it are "soul" or "life-spirit." I add the word "life" because the air is also usually called "spirit." However, men have called this same air "soul" (*anima*), so that it is impossible to find a word by which we can precisely distinguish this thing . . ." ² But, Augustine seems unaware his equating of נֶשֶׁת neshmat and רוח spirit added to the confusion.

About Augustine's third assertion which concerns the human soul, Augustine later writes in *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*: ³ "... With regard to the soul, which God breathed into the face of man, I have no firm position except to say that it is from God in such a way that it is not the substance of God; that it is incorporeal, that is not a body but a spirit; . . ."

And subsequently: "... In view of the works finished, then, He (God) rests, and in view of the works begun He is working even until now. But if someone can find a better interpretation of these texts, I will not resist him, I will even support him . . ." We will find that the creation of **humankind** is a "work finished" in Gen 1:27-28, and that salvation is a "work begun."

And following that, he said: "... or if my way of investigation is not to his liking, he may see how I carried it on, and as a result I hope that if he can instruct me he will not refuse, and that if He cannot he will join me in searching for someone from whom both of us may learn . . ."

In the following study we will examine verses which show that the word נֶשֶׁת neshmat does not mean breath, i.e., inhaling and exhaling. From these verses we will determine that נֶשֶׁת neshmat is associated with judgment, understanding, discernment, and (by implication) moral awareness - attributes not well described by the word "breath" that appears in most English translations. We will find that נֶשֶׁת neshmat gives humans capabilities that distinguish them from the lower animals. נֶשֶׁת neshmat is not given to the lower animals.

How we will proceed

1) First we will review four verses that use נֶשֶׁת neshmat. This will be done to establish the meaning of נֶשֶׁת neshmat before we consider Gen. 2:7. Genesis chapter two is an ancient document written after the Exodus. Genesis tells of the Hebrew's ancestral history from their earliest ancestors up to the time they entered Egypt. Our knowledge of the meaning of the words used in Genesis chapter two comes from analysis of how these same words are used in Hebrew writings written after the Exodus.

נֶשֶׁת neshmat shares some similarities with the Hebrew word רוח ruach. רוח ruach, commonly translated **spirit** or wind, refers to things that are real but unseen. Wind is known by its effects - the wind force which we feel - and other effects of wind that are seen. נֶשֶׁת neshmat, commonly translated **breath**, is also unseen but known by its effect on human behavior and other effects with which it is associated. Breath is present in living humans and absent in dead humans. Augustine added confusion when he asserted that **pnoe** (πνοή) and **pneuma** (πνεῦμα) meant the same thing.

2) Then we will consider Gen. 2:7 and the words used in that verse. This will lead to a revised translation of Gen. 2:7 where words found to be plural are written as plurals. Support for those changes will be given. This section will result in understanding why the Hebrew of Gen. 2:7 does not allow the **בָּנָה humankind** in Gen. 2:7 to be the first human.

3) Then we will examine Augustine's *The City of God*, Book 13, Chapter 24, as preparation for an explanation of the interpretive consequences of Augustine equating נֶשֶׁת neshmat and רוח ruach (**spirit**).

4) Then I will comment on the "**The Two Part or Three Part Human Soul Controversy**." A controversy which resulted from Augustine equating the meanings of the Greek words πνοή **pnoe** and πνεῦμα **pneuma**, a controversy continuing to the present time.

5) Then I will suggest how the continuing misunderstanding of the meaning of verses which use the Hebrew word נֶשֶׁת neshmat (commonly translated **breath**) can be resolved.

²John H. Taylor (Trans.), *St. Augustine, Vol. 2: The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, (Paulist Press, Mahwah, NJ, 1982) 22.

³John H. Taylor (Trans.), *St. Augustine, Vol. 2: The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, (Paulist Press, Mahwah, NJ, 1982) 31, section 43. of book 7.

The meaning of נֶשֶׁת neshmat

We will now consider verses that show that נֶשֶׁת neshmat is associated with judgment, understanding, discernment, and (by implication) moral awareness. Following that preparation we will consider how that knowledge allows us to better understand Gen. 2:7.

In the study that follows, I will insert "הַנֶּשֶׁת neshmat" to replace words translating neshmat or הנֶשֶׁת neshamah. I will insert רִוח before the bolded English words translating רוח ruach. When רִוח ruach is translated **breath** I will replace the word breath with **spirit** breath and bold other words translating ruach when referring to them in the verses. Other Hebrew words, words which I show in the verses, will be the actual Hebrew word. The first verse we will consider is Job 32:8, where Elihu responds to Job saying:

KJV Job 32:8 But there is **רוּחַ** a **spirit** in man:
and the **נֶשֶׁת** neshmat of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

Job 32:8 informs us that **נֶשֶׁת** neshmat enables understanding, and (by implication) discernment. It also informs us that **נֶשֶׁת** neshmat and **רוּחַ** ruach differ. The Hebrew word **רוּחַ** ruach is commonly translated **spirit**, wind, or breath. **רוּחַ** ruach is present in all living animals, birds, and humans, but **נֶשֶׁת** neshmat is applied "only to Yahweh and man."⁴ In Job 4:8-9, Job speaks about the judgment of the wicked, and says:

KJV Job 4:8 Even as I have seen, they that plow iniquity, and sow wickedness, reap the same.
KJV Job 4:9 **By** the **נֶשֶׁת** neshmat of God they perish, (וְ is a prefix meaning "from" or "by.")
and by the **רוּחַ** spirit **breath** of his **nostrils** are they consumed.

From Job 4:9 we learn that the **נֶשֶׁת** neshmat of God can act to impose judgment and the perishing of the wicked.⁵ The Septuagint of Job 4:9 translated: "την πνευματικην From the **command** of the Lord they perish" attributing the cause of the perishing to the **neshmat** of God. We find that **neshmat** is a sense of right and wrong given to humankind by God. From Job 4:9 we also learn that God's **רוּחַ** ruach was the agent that consumed the wicked. Modern English translations of Job 4:8-9 commonly translate **נֶשֶׁת** neshmat as breath and **רוּחַ** ruach as blast in phrases like "blast of his anger." The Hebrew word אַפּוֹ translated "of his **nostrils**" is more commonly translated anger (172 times), and translated nostrils (13 times). Prov. 20:27 tells us the **neshmat** of humans reveals their inward intents and motivations.

NAS Prov. 20:27 The **נֶשֶׁת** neshmat of man is the lamp of the LORD,
searching all the innermost parts of his being.

The searching of "all the innermost parts" is not about anatomy. The NKJ translation expresses this as "all the inner depths of his heart"- where "heart" is the biblical term referring to intents and motivations.

NKJV Prov. 20:27 The **נֶשֶׁת** neshmat of a man is the lamp of the LORD,
Searching all the inner depths of his heart.

In Job 27:3-4, Job says:

KJV Job 27:3-4 All the while my **נֶשֶׁת** neshmat is in me, and the **רוּחַ** spirit **breath** of God is in my nostrils;
My lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.

Job says his **neshmat** enables him to understand his inner motivations and, in accordance with his intent, to not speak wickedness or utter deceit. And (by implication) **neshmat** provides moral awareness. Having found that **נֶשֶׁת** neshmat is associated with judgment, understanding, discernment, and (by implication) moral awareness – we are now prepared to consider Gen. 2:7 in more detail.

In Gen.1:27 God created the **מִנְחָנָה** humans as male and female. And in Gen.1:28, God spoke to them, giving instructions to the male and female humans. Gen. 2:7 is the next appearance of **מִנְחָנָה** humankind in a story about a choice that leads to life, or to death. It is also part of the story of the redemption of mankind

⁴ See endnote 1 and the associated comments on page 1 of this paper.

⁵ In my opinion, it is our violation of our God given neshmat that leads many people to the self-condemnation which afflicts many. Neshmat, is more than that which we call conscience, it also includes understanding and discernment.

from death and sin to eternal life - which Paul in ^{NET} Eph. 3:9 calls ". . . God's secret plan – a secret that has been hidden for ages in God who has created all things. . . ."

We will now consider Gen. 2:7 which tells of the addition of **נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat** to humans.

Gen. 2:7 and the meaning and plural nature of words therein

To explain the plural nature of the words in Gen. 2:7, we start with a modified rendering of Gen. 2:7 as shown below. To facilitate our discussion, **אָדָם adam** has been translated **humankind**, as it was translated by the New English Translation (NET) in Gen. 1:27, the NIV translated **mankind**.

Gen. 2:7

- (1) And the LORD God formed **אָדָם adam** **humankind** **עַפֵּר** dust of **אָדָם adam** the ground, (**אָדָם adam** is a prefix meaning "the.")
- (2) **וַיַּפְחַד** and breathed **בְּאֹפוֹת** **into their** nostrils the **נֶשֶׁמֶת** breath of **חַיִם** **lives**; (**חַיִם** is a plural, i.e., "lives.")
- (3) and **אָדָם adam** **humankind** became living **שְׁפָשַׁת souls**. (**שְׁפָשַׁת** is a prefix meaning "to.")

*Below are three translations of Gen. 1:27 which illustrate that the plural meaning of **אָדָם adam** is well-known:*

^{NET} Gen. 1:27 God created **אָדָם adam** **humankind** in his own image, in the image of God he created **them**, male and female he created them.

^{NIV} Gen. 1:27 So God created **אָדָם adam** **mankind** in his own image, in the image of God he created **them**; male and female he created them.

^{KJV} Gen. 1:27 So God created **אָדָם adam** **man** in his *own* image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

The Hebrew word **אָדָם adam** is plural, meaning **humankind** or **mankind** as translated by the NET and NIV. When the English word **man** is preceded by "the," as in "**the man**," "the man" indicates a specific individual human. In Hebrew, prefixing the name of a male ancestor by **אָ** "the" indicates a plural – as **אָדָם adam** has been translated in the above examples. ^{KJV} Gen. 5:21 illustrates the procedure, indicating plural categories of ancestry.

^{KJV} Gen. 5:21 And **אַמּוֹרִי** the Amorites, and **כָּנָעָנִי** the Canaanites, and the **גִּרְגָּשִׁי** Gergashites, and **גְּבּוּסִי** the Jebusites. (The Hebrew letter **אָ** is the prefix meaning "the.")

The NET and NIV have correctly translated the pronoun **them** in the phrase ". . . in the image of God he created **אֶת** **הֶם them**." The KJV did not.⁶

In line (1) of Gen. 2:7, I have not included "*of the*" before the word "**dust**," words that the KJV added which can lead readers to think that Gen. 2:7 is about making mankind from dust.⁷ The Hebrew word **אָדָם adam** **humankind** sounds like **ha-adam** and **אָדָם adam** **the ground** sounds like **ha-ad-a-mah**. In my opinion, "dust of the ground" is best interpreted as a statement of mortality. **עַפֵּר dust** indicates the mortality of animals in Psalm 104:29, it indicates human mortality in Job 34:15, and in Genesis chapter 3 which continues the story in the Garden. The **אָדָם adam** **humankind** in line (1) consist of individual males and females which receive "the **נֶשֶׁמֶת** **breath of** **חַיִם** **lives**" **breathed** **into their** nostrils.

In line (2) the pronoun "**their**" comes from the pronominal ending **וּ** on the Hebrew word **בְּאֹפוֹת** "in his nostrils." In biblical Hebrew, a masculine, singular, pronominal ending is used for nouns referring to a group that includes male and female members. The **וּ** ending, a 3rd person masculine, singular, ending, is appropriate for referring to a plural number of male and female **אָדָם adam** **humankind**. Prior to Genesis 2:7, Genesis 1:27 used a 3rd person masculine ending to refer to the male and female humankind that God created. The "his" found in line (2) in other translations indicates a presumption that Gen 2:7 is about the first human. The addition of the "**נֶשֶׁמֶת** **neshmat** of **חַיִם** **lives**" to **אָדָם adam** **humankind** provides all humankind

⁶ Biblical Hebrew uses a masculine singular ending to refer to words or phrases which include both male and female. In Gen. 1:27 the direct object marker **וְ**, referring to the following "male and female," ends with the appropriate masculine singular ending **וּ**. The next direct object marker **וְ** referring to the **Humankind**, composed of male and female persons, used a third person masculine plural ending. Both should be translated **them**.

⁷ Hebrew has no word "of." The word **עַפֵּר** does not have the prefix **אָ** meaning "the." The Hebrew word "**the dust**" is **עַפֵּר**.

with capabilities suitable for the events which follow in Genesis chapters 2 and 3. These are the naming of animals, tilling the garden, under-standing moral issues, and the ability to choose the good and not choose the evil. These capabilities are beyond that required to be נֶפֶשׁ "living creatures" – the air breathing creatures which appear in Genesis chapter 1. Genesis does not distinguish between the lower animals and humans on the basis of the word נֶפֶשׁ **nephesh**. The word נִפְחָה translated **and breathed**, is not רָעַח ruach (**spirit**) or נְשָׁמָה **neshmat** – words which are also translated **breath**. נִפְחָה is a more forceful term used for the blowing into a fire to melt metals, and used to describe a seething pot.⁸

In line 3, the customary word **a** has been omitted between the words "became" and "living." The plural **אָדָם** **humankind** **do not** become a singular. The correct translation of נֶפֶשׁ is **souls**. The word נֶפֶשׁ nephesh is most often a plural composed of individual **souls**, as illustrated by Gen. 46:26 shown below:

KJV Gen. 46:26 All נֶפֶשׁ **the-souls** that came with Jacob into Egypt, which came out of his loins, besides Jacob's sons' wives, all **the** נֶפֶשׁ souls were threescore and six; (i.e., 66 souls.)

In the first line I have hyphenated **the-souls** to indicate that נֶ, a prefix meaning "the," is prefixed to the Hebrew word נֶפֶשׁ nephesh. In the second line I have italicized **the**, a word added by the KJV. נֶפֶשׁ nephesh is plural without being prefixed by נֶ. The Hebrew is "all nephesh." Lam. 3:25 illustrates more about the word נֶפֶשׁ **to** nephesh, and I have again italicized **the**, a word added by the KJV.

KJV Lam. 3:25 The LORD is good unto **them** that wait for him, נֶפֶשׁ **to** the **soul** that seeketh him.

The word נֶפֶשׁ **to** nephesh is often used to refer to any individual נֶפֶשׁ person of a category specified in the verse. In Lam. 3:25 that category is a plural number of נֶפֶשׁ **souls**. The נֶפֶשׁ "that seeketh him" constitute the "them that wait for him" – a plural composed of individual human souls (i.e., persons).

Gen. 2:7, as presented above, now has three plural Hebrew words: **מִן אָדָם** **humankind**, נִיְמִים "lives," and נֶפֶשׁ nephesh which I have translated **souls**. (In Gen. 2:7 the נֶ "to" is not necessary in English following the word "became.") The plural **humankind** become a plural of individual living human **souls**. That Gen. 2:7 speaks of the first human, a male, is not found in the Hebrew text of Gen. 2:7.

Augustine: The City of God, Book 13, Chapter 24, and **the words pnoee** (πνοή), and **pneuma** (πνεῦμα)

Augustine's interpretation of **pnoee** greatly influenced four other interpretations and understandings:

- 1) His interpretation of Gen. 2:7.
- 2) His understanding of how humans differ from the lower animals.
- 3) His understanding of, how the Bible describes the human soul.
- 4) His understanding of when humans first existed.

We will examine the effect of a missing word in the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew of Gen. 7:22, and then apply what we have learned to the interpretation of Gen. 2:7.

We begin with Augustine's **The City of God**, quoted from Dods' translation of Book 13, Chapter 24. Bracketed Latin and phonetic representations of Greek words will indicate some of the words being translated by Augustine. Bracketed inserts will identify verses being quoted. Augustine's interpretation of Gen. 2:7 was largely a result of a dispute which he described as:

" . . . Some have hastily supposed from the words, "God breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath (pnoee) of life, and man became a living soul (animam), "that a soul was not then first given to man, but that the soul already given was quickened by the Holy Ghost. They are encouraged in this supposition by the fact that the Lord Jesus after His resurrection breathed on His disciples, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit." From this they suppose that the same thing was effected in either case, as if the evangelist had gone on to say, And they became living souls. But if he had made this addition, we should only understand that the Spirit (Spiritus Dei) is in some way the life of souls, and that without Him (Spiritus Dei) reasonable souls (animae rationales) must be accounted dead, though their bodies seem to live before our eyes. . . ."⁹

⁸ Job 41:20, Jeremiah 1:13

⁹ Augustine, *City of God*, Marcus Dods, Translator (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, UK, 1913) Book 13 Chapter 24, 551. <https://ia902604.us.archive.org/25/items/cityofgodtransla01auguuoft/cityofgodtransla01auguuoft.pdf>

Augustine disputed his opponents' claim that the **pnoee** blown into the nostrils in Gen. 2:7 was the Holy **Spirit (pneuma)** , and it was the breathing in of the Holy **Spirit** that gave humans a "rational soul." (Dods uses "rational soul" and "reasonable soul" as equivalents, terms that derive from Aristotle in about 340 B.C.) Augustine subsequently gave them his answer, writing.

"... as I said, that the Holy **Spirit** was common to the Father and to the Son; for they have not each a separate Spirit, but both one and the same. Now this **Spirit** is always spoken of in sacred Scripture by the Greek word πνεῦμα (**pneuma**), as the Lord, too, named Him in the place cited when He gave Him to His disciples, and intimated the gift by the breathing of His lips; and there does not occur to me any place in the whole Scriptures where He is otherwise named. But in this passage (Gen. 2:7) where it is said, "And the Lord formed man dust of the earth, and breathed, or inspired, into his face the breath of life;" the Greek has not πνεῦμα (**pneuma**), the usual word for the Holy Spirit, but πνοή, (**pnoee**)"

(The Greek word *πνοή*, (pnoee) translates the Hebrew word נֶשֶׁת neshmat.)

Following the above, Augustine argued that *πνεῦμα* (*pneuma*) and *πνοή*, (*pnoee*) have the same meaning.

"... Without troubling themselves much, they might have found in a preceding page of this very book of Genesis the words, (Gen. 1:24) "Let the earth bring forth the living **שֶׁבֶת** soul," when all the terrestrial animals were created. Then at a slight interval, but still in the same book, was it impossible for them to notice this verse, (Gen 7:22) "All in whose nostrils was the **רוּחַ נַפְרַת** breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died," by which it was signified that all the animals which lived on the earth had perished in the deluge? ..."

And then, a few lines later:

" . . . Yet this creation was ordered that the human soul should live in an animal body, like those other animals of which the Scripture said, "Let the earth produce every living **שֶׁבֶת** soul," and regarding which it again says (in Gen. 7:22) "All things which have the **נַפְשׁוֹת** breath (pnoee) of life," where the word pnoee and not pneuma is used in the Greek, and where certainly not the Holy Spirit, but their **spirit** (spiritum) is signified under that name." . . . "

In Gen.7:22, the Septuagint had **not** translated **רוּחַ** **spirit** (**pneuma**), the word following **נֶשֶׁמֶת** **neshmat**.

ASV Gen. 7:22 All in whose nostrils was the **spirit** of **life**,
of all that was on the dry **land**, died. (חַיִם is a plural, i.e., "lives.")

This omission allowed Augustine's assertions: (1) That the **נֶשֶׁמֶת** **neshmat** in Gen. 7:22 included animals and (2) That **pnoee** (**πνοή**) and **pneuma** (**πνεῦμα**) meant the same thing and **both** could be translated breath. That led to the loss of important differences between human **נפש** **souls** and animal **נפש** **souls**. The Old Testament uses **נפש** **nephesh** to refer to humans more than 700 times and, infrequently, to refer to the animals. Humans and animals are not differentiated on the basis of the word **נפש** **nephesh**.

Consequences of Augustine equating נשמה neshmat and רוח ruach

The table below presents five verses important for the following discussion. The italicized words in the table identify those that have the properties listed following the italicized portion. Gen. 2:7 lists a property received, and Job 27:3 lists two properties that man has.

The first consequence of Augustine equating נֶשֶׁת neshmat and רֵיחַ ruach (spirit) was to produce a misunderstanding of Gen. 7:21-22 and Gen. 7:15.

The issue is the interpretation of the words **כל־בָּשָׂר** **all flesh** in Gen. 7:22. Gen. 7:21-22 is shown below using the ASV:

ASV Gen. 7:21

- (1) And **all flesh** died **רָמַשׁ** **that moved** **upon the earth**, (In Hebrew, "And died" is the first word of the verse.)
- (2) both **birds**, and **cattle**, and **beasts**, and every **creeping** thing that **creepeth upon the earth**,
- (3) and every **אָדָם** **man** (i.e., **humankind**):

In the first line of Gen. 7:21, I have underlined "**that moved**." The word **רָמַשׁ** translated "that moved" is a verb that ". . . describes the locomotion of small animals, especially reptiles . . ." ¹⁰ In line (2) there are four categories of **flesh**: the flesh of **birds**, and the flesh of three categories of animals - **cattle**, and **beasts**, and every **creeping**. These are the animals created in Gen. 1:24 where the words identifying the animals are bracketed, before and after, by "after their kind."¹¹ Gen. 7:21 does the same, bracketing the four categories of **flesh**, before and after, by **upon the earth**." The "all flesh" **רָמַשׁ** **that moved**" refers to animal movement, and does not include **אָדָם** **humankind**. The "and every **אָדָם** **man**" of line (3) speaks separately about **humankind** as Gen. 1:26-27 did in the sixth creative time.

Line (3) affirms the death of all the **humankind** present in the region covered by the flood - the "every **אָדָם** **man**" of Gen. 7:21. Gen. 7:22, shown below, informs us that "the **neshmat** of the **spirit** (pneuma) **of** life" of Gen. 2:7 is also "the **neshmat** of the **spirit** of life."

ASV Gen. 7:22 All in whose nostrils was the **neshmat** of the **spirit** (pneuma) **of** life,
of all that was on the dry *land*, died. (ם is a plural - "lives.")

Augustine's assertion that the **pnoee** (נַפְשׁוֹת) of Gen. 7:22, applied to the animals of Gen. 7:21, is contradicted by 1Cor. 15:39 – which tells us man's flesh differs from animal flesh, and that **beasts**, **birds**, and fishes have different flesh. It also informs us that "all flesh" can include humankind when used appropriately. An appropriate use in Job 34:14-15 will be discussed on page 8 in the section "Another Consequence."

ASV 1Cor. 15:39 All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one flesh of men
and another flesh of **beasts**, and another flesh of **birds**, and another of fishes.

In addition, we have Gen. 7:15 which refers to pairs of animals that entered the Ark, informing us that the animals have the "רֹוחַ spirit of life." The ASV translates Gen. 7:15 as below:

ASV Gen. 7:15 And they went in unto Noah into the ark, **שְׁנָנִים** **שְׁנִים** two and two of all flesh,
wherein is the **רוּחַ** **spirit** **breath** of life. (ם is a plural - "lives.")

The **NIV Gen. 7:15** translates "שְׁנָנִים **שְׁנִים** two and two of all flesh" as "pairs of all **creatures**."
(Passages supporting the NIV translation are found in end note 1 on page 14.)

1Cor. 15:39 provides an explanation for why we find the plural **לִבְנִים** "lives" in Gen. 7:15 and Gen. 7:22. Mankind, beasts (animals), and birds are all **רָמַשׁ** nephesh, types of nephesh which have different body control requirements. They have blood, breath air, move, react to their external environment, and have flesh.

The spiritual components of animals and mankind differ, as listed in the table on page 6. All **individual** **אָדָם** **humankind** have been given the "neshmat" of **life** (lives). They are "created in the image of God," which Job 27:3-4 describes as possessing his **neshmat** and having "God's **spirit** in his nostrils." (See page 3.)

¹⁰ R. Laird Harris Ed., Theological Word Book of the Old Testament Vol. 2., (Chicago. IL. Moody Press, 1980), 850.
#2177.0 **רָמַשׁ** (rāmaš) creep, walk on all fours.

¹¹ **ASV Gen. 1:24** And God said, Let the earth bring forth living creatures **after their kind**,
cattle, and **creeping things**, and **beasts** of the earth **after their kind**: and it was so.

(In Gen. 1:24 the NIV and NET translate **וְתַחַת־אָרֶץ** as "wild animals" instead of the "beasts of the earth" in the ASV.)

Hamilton's statement that ". . . **נֶשֶׁמֶת n^eshamâ** is applied only to Yahweh and to man . . ." (see page 1), informs that Gen. 7:22 does **not** refer to any animals. This disallows Augustine's argument for equating of **נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat** and **רוּחַ ruach** (spirit), and using "breath" to translate both words.

Another consequence

Gen. 2:7 tells of the event which gave **אָדָם adam** **humankind** the "תְּהִשְׁמֵת neshmat" of **חַיִם lives**." Arguably, "the רֹוחַ ruach of **חַיִם lives**" of living creatures and "the תְּהִשְׁמֵת neshmat" of the **רוּחַ ruach** of **חַיִם lives**" of **mankind** have God as their source which leads to **mankind** having two spiritual components. Job. 27:3-4 indicates that Job has the "spirit of God" and "תְּהִשְׁמֵת neshmat", two **spiritual components**.

KJV Job 27:3-4 All the while my **תְּהִשְׁמֵת neshmat** is in me, and the **spirit** of God is in my nostrils; my lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit.

Other verses also describe humans as having two **spiritual components**. **NET** Job 34:14-15, shown below with the word breath replaced by **תְּהִשְׁמֵת neshmat**, reveals Job's **neshmat** and God's **spirit** are both active and without both, **humankind** would perish.

NET Job 34:14-15 If God were to set his heart on it, and gather in his **spirit** and his **neshmat**, all flesh **עָגָם** would perish together and **human beings** would return to dust.

"All flesh" is appropriate because God is the source of "the **רוּחַ ruach** of **חַיִם lives**" of living creatures. **Mankind** has the "spirit of God" and "the **תְּהִשְׁמֵת neshmat** of **חַיִם lives**." For **mankind**, this **does not** interpret either spiritual component as the **Holy Spirit**. It interprets both as God-given invisible (**spiritual**) attributes. This disallows Augustine's model of the human as being composed of two parts - a body, and a soul. The "Two Part Three Part Human Soul Controversy" will be discussed more fully later.

Because he depended on the Greek Septuagint and old Latin translations, Augustine was not aware of the Hebrew "תְּהִשְׁמֵת neshmat" of the "רוּחַ ruach of **חַיִם lives**" in Gen. 7:22. Yet, Augustine knew he had not achieved an adequate understanding of the incorporeal soul, writing:

" . . . My way of putting it is this: whatever the soul is, it is not one of the four familiar elements, which are obviously bodies; and on the other hand, it is not identified with God. The best words to designate it are "soul" or "life-spirit." I add the word "life" because the air is also usually called "spirit." However, men have called this same air "soul" (anima), so that it is impossible to find a word by which we can precisely distinguish this thing which is not a body, nor God, nor life without sensation (which apparently exists in trees), nor life without a rational mind (such as is found in beasts), . . ." ¹²

In our terms, Augustine's "bodies" would be a reference to something that is intrinsically physical. The word for soul in Latin is *anima* from which we get "animal." Many English translations describe animals as having **נֶפֶשׁ nephesh** "living souls." **נֶפֶשׁ nephesh** is the Hebrew word for soul. In Greek, the word for soul is *ψυχή psyche*, from which we get the word psychology.

Augustine's term "life-spirit" is reminiscent of the "תְּהִשְׁמֵת neshmat" of **חַיִם lives** in Gen. 2:7.

Earlier we found **תְּהִשְׁמֵת neshmat** provided judgment, understanding, discernment, and (by implication) moral awareness – attributes of a "rational mind." Rom. 8:10-11 and Job 33:4, considered together, add evidence that **תְּהִשְׁמֵת neshmat** is what Augustine had in mind with his term "life-spirit." Rom. 8:10-11 is shown below.

KJV Rom. 8:10-11

And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

In the above, quicken is a KJV word meaning to make alive or to revive. About how we are renewed, Augustine wrote: ". . . It is in this way that we are renewed in respect of what Adam lost, that is, in the **spirit**

¹²John H. Taylor (Trans.), *St. Augustine, Vol. 2: The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, (Paulist Press, Mahwah, NJ, 1982) 22.

of our minds; . . ." ¹³ He later qualified this statement saying: "In Book 6 my statement that Adam by his sin lost the image of God in which he was made must not be taken to mean that no trace of the image remained in him. Rather it was so disfigured that it needed renewal. . . ." ¹⁴

Job 33:4 informs us that revival (i.e., renewal) is what נֶשֶׁם **neshmat** does.

KJV Job 33:4 The רוח **Spirit** of God hath made me,
and the נֶשֶׁם **neshmat** of the Almighty תַּחֲנִינִי **revives me** (or shall revive me).

Job 33:4 first tells us that God's רוח **ruach** made Elihu alive. Then Job 33:4 indicates that "the נֶשֶׁם **neshmat** of the Almighty" can (or shall) revive his life or preserve his life. The translation "revive me" that I have inserted above is found in Psalms 138:7, 143:11, 85:6, and 80:18. In Job 33:4 the KJV translated the imperfect תַּחֲנִינִי as a completed action "hath given me life." תַּחֲנִינִי **revive** does give life, but not in the sense of the initial giving of life to a nephesh.

Another form of יָחִינֵנוּ is found in Hosea 6:2 - a verse often considered a messianic reference to the resurrection. (A more complete analysis is given in the appendix on page 13-14.)

NAS Hosea 6:2 He יָחִינֵנוּ **will revive us** after two days;
He will raise us up on the third day.
That we may live before Him.

So, what is Gen. 2:7 about? Gen. 2:7 is about adding נֶשֶׁם **neshmat** to all אָדָם **humankind**, thereby providing them with capabilities important for the events that follow in Genesis chapters 2 and 3. Earlier we translated Gen. 2:7 as:

Gen. 2:7 (1) And the LORD God formed אָדָם **humankind** dust of the ground,
(2) and breathed into his nostrils the נֶשֶׁם **neshmat** breath of חַיִם **lives**; (חַיִם is a plural, i.e., "lives.")
(3) and אָדָם **humankind** וַיָּהִי became living נֶפֶשׁ **souls**.

The above tells us that **humankind** was given all the capabilities of **neshmat**.

But, in light of Job 33:4, Hosea 6:2, following events in Gen. 2-3, **and the resurrection of Jesus** - could the verb וַיָּהִי be understood in another way? I think yes, as I will now explain. Line (2) tells of a completed action that gave all **humankind** the abilities conferred by נֶשֶׁם **neshmat** – "judgment, understanding, discernment, and (by implication) moral awareness." This leads us to see line (3) as foreshadowing and preparing us for following story of humankind's loss of access to eternal life that occurs in chapter 3 - and the later regaining of access to eternal life through the death and resurrection of Christ.

The verb וַיָּהִי in line (3) affords two interpretations: וַיָּהִי "became" as presently marked for the vowels, or as וַיַּהַי - a form where the prefix ו "waw" is a waw-conjunctive which simply means "and." That form, a form called an "imperfect," is used to refer to future events and to express purpose or a desired result. Examples that use וַיַּהַי are shown below. In Ex. 9:22, וַיַּהַי tells the purpose of the commanded action.

KJV Ex. 9:22 And the LORD said unto Moses, Stretch forth thine hand toward heaven,
that there may be hail in all the land of Egypt,

In Gen. 9:26 וַיַּהַי indicates a future outcome.

KJV Gen. 9:26 And he said, Blessed be the LORD God of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant.

In the above examples, interpreting the consonantal verb וַיַּהַי as וַיְהִי is well accepted due to the presence of a command or an expressed wish. Translating וַיַּהַי as expressing purpose is called a "modal" translation.

The *Theological Word Book of the Old Testament* says about this form: (My added bolding.)

" . . . A waw with the usual pointing (simple shewa) is used with the imperfect and called the waw conjunctive. The meaning of this form also is debatable. It does not seem usually to refer simply to the

¹³John H. Taylor (Trans.), *St. Augustine, Vol. 1: The Literal Meaning of Genesis*, (Paulist Press, Mahwah, NJ, 1982) 206.

¹⁴op.cit., Endnote 97, 270.

future—that would call for a waw consecutive with the perfect. Rather it normally throws the verb into the subjunctive and expresses result, purpose, volition, etc. It often has a cohortative "a" attached. . . ."¹⁵

Since that time (1980) considerable progress has been made in understanding the imperfect with the waw-conjunctive.¹⁶ Jan Joosten's 2012 book, *The Verbal System of Biblical Hebrew*, concluded that the "Imperfect YIQTOL" verb form expresses modal meaning in all but one type of use. Line (3) of Gen. 2:7 is not of that one type of use, so a modal meaning for the verb וַיַּחַי in line (3) can be considered. Marking and translating the verb וַיַּחַי as it is translated in Ex. 9:22, and underlining the words translating that verb, Gen. 2:7 would translate as:

- (1) And the LORD God formed **אָדָם** **humankind** dust of **אָדָם** the ground,
- (2) and breathed into his nostrils the **נַשְׁמָה** breath of **חַיִם** lives; (**חַיִם** is a plural, i.e., "lives.")
- (3) **that** **אָדָם** **humankind** **may be** **חַיִה** living **נַפְשָׁלָה** **persons**.

How do we connect this with the resurrection? 1John 5:12, shown below with the Greek word ζωήν used for "life," offers assistance for connecting the modal translation of line (3) to the resurrection.

ASV 1John 5:12 He that hath the Son hath the ζωήν life;
he that hath not the Son of God hath not the ζωήν life.

Thayer¹⁷ says that the Greek word ζωήν is used by ". . . the Septuagint chiefly for **חַיִם** life," (חַיִם is the plural Hebrew word "lives" that appears above in line (2) of Gen. 2:7.)

Importantly, in line (3), "**that** **אָדָם** **humankind** **יְהִי** **may be** **חַיִה** living **נַפְשָׁלָה** **persons**," the word **נַפְשָׁלָה** refers to **humankind** as individuals. That was shown earlier, on page 5, by the example of Lam. 3:25. The New Testament emphasizes that a believer's access to eternal life depends upon their individual faith. A number of passages in the Old Testament also state that "being right with God" is on an individual basis. As Gen. 2:7 line (3) is translated above, the individual basis is already found in Gen. 2:7.

When Augustine equated **pnoee** (i.e., **נַפְשָׁה** **neshmat**) and **pneuma** (i.e., **רוּחַ** **spirit**) there were cascading consequences:

- 1) Augustine could not identify **נַפְשָׁה** **neshmat** as a separate, distinguishable, **spiritual** component of mankind.
- 2) The "**spirit** (ruach) of **חַיִם** lives," of animals was no longer separately identifiable as a component of the soul of mankind, which led to 3) below.
- 3) **For Augustine, the human soul had two parts, a soul and a body - not three parts, spirit, soul, and body.**

The two-part or three-part human soul controversy

Augustine concluded man was composed of two parts - a body, and a soul that was an immaterial unity. But that conclusion, based on the assumed equivalence of **pneuma** and **pnoee**, has been disputed. A three-part view of man was known to Justin Martyr who died in about 167 A.D. Justin Martyr wrote:

" . . . For the **spirit** dies not; the soul is in the body, and without a soul it cannot live. The body, when the soul forsakes it, is not. For the body is the house of the soul; and the soul the house of the **spirit**. . . ."¹⁸

That man has two distinguishable spiritual components is found in Job 34:14-15, Isa. 57:16, and 1Thes. 5:23.

¹⁵ Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament, R. Laid Harris, Editor, Gleason L. Archer, Jr., Assoc. Editor, Bruce K. Waltke, Assoc. Editor. Moody Press. 1980, in computer searchable version in BibleWorks 9.

¹⁶ Joosten, Jan. *The Verbal System of Biblical Hebrew. A New Synthesis Elaborated on the basis of Classical Prose*. Jerusalem Biblical Studies Vol. 10. Simor Ltd., Jerusalem, 2012.

¹⁷ Joseph Henry Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 1996), #2222 page 273.

¹⁸ Justin Martyr, *On the Resurrection, Fragments of the Lost Work of Justin on the Resurrection*, M. Dods trans., page 805. Available on line at: <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01> The Greek for the quote "οῖκος γὰρ σῶμα ψυχῆς πνεύματος δὲ ψυχή οῖκος ; and can be found in: J. B. Heard, *Tripartite Nature of Man*, (T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, UK, Third Edition 1871) page 63.

KJV Job 34:14-15

If he (God) set his heart upon man, if he gather unto himself his **רוּחַ** spirit and his **נֶשֶׁמֶת** neshmat;
All flesh shall perish together, and man shall turn again unto dust.

ASV Isa. 57:16 For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth (angry)

for the **רוּחַ** spirit would faint before me, and the **נֶשֶׁמֶת** neshmat that I have made.

KJV 1Thes. 5:23 And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God
your whole (πνεῦμα) **spirit** and (ψυχὴ) **soul** and (σῶμα) **body** be preserved blameless

Now we are in a position to clarify the lingering effects of Augustine having equated **pnoee** and **pneuma**. One effect was that he concluded Gen. 2:7 was not the addition of a second spiritual component to an already-living human.

Augustine's position was ". . . when man is spoken of, we forget the ordinary and established usage of Scripture, . . ." This was in spite of his knowing of verses which said man had both **pneuma** and **pnoee** (i.e., God's **רוּחַ** spirit and God's **נֶשֶׁמֶת** neshmat). Augustine's abandonment of established usage was another consequence of his equating pnoee and pneuma. In "ordinary use and established usage," animals which have a "soul of sensation" are alive.

In Gen. 1:24 animals are called "הַחַי living שֶׁפֶת souls." In the Septuagint of Gen. 1:24, **שֶׁפֶת** is translated ψυχὴ.¹⁹ ψυχὴ is a form of the Greek word ψυχὴ, the word from which we get the English word psyche. ψυχὴ is used for the soul of the boy Elijah revives in 1Ki. 17:21, and is commonly used by the Septuagint to translate **שֶׁפֶת** nephesh (soul). Paul uses ψυχὴ for the young man revived in Acts 20:10. Thayer says that forms of psyche are ". . . also in those passages where, in accordance with the trichotomy or threefold division of human nature . . ." ²⁰

The body and soul view is now called the dichotomous theory. The alternative view, that humans are body, soul, and spirit, is called the trichotomous theory. The three-part theory existed before Augustine and exists today. Henry Thiessen's comment in *Lectures in Systematic Theology* suggests a path to resolving the issues. Thiessen wrote:

" . . . It is probable that we are to think of man's immaterial nature as composed of a lower and a higher power. To the soul would belong man's imagination, memory, understanding; to the spirit, his powers of reason, conscience, and free will. This variation from the traditional trichotomous view makes it possible to conserve the arguments for the dichotomous view, and yet explain how some Christians are "carnal" and others "spiritual." It also coincides with the teaching that the present body is a natural or soul body and that the resurrection body will be a spiritual body (1 Cor. 15:44). In other words, man's immaterial nature is looked upon as one nature, but as composed of two parts. . . ." ²¹

In 1Thes. 5:23, Paul used ψυχὴ for soul, and in 1Cor. 2:14, 1Cor. 15:44, and 1Cor. 15:46 he used words derived from psyche - words the KJV translated "natural." Jude 1:19 uses ψυχικοί, another word derived from psyche:

KJV Jude 1:19 These be they who separate themselves, ψυχικοί **sensual**, having not the **Spirit** (pneuma).²²

Thayer defines these derived words as, "of or belonging to the psyche; a. having the nature and characteristics of the psyche i. e. of the principle of animal life," which men have in common with the brutes"

We have shown that **נֶשֶׁמֶת** neshmat provides the human with characteristics which closely match Augustine's "life-**spirit**." We need to reconsider the definition of the **שֶׁפֶת souls** of humans and animals. And we must reevaluate Augustine's rejection of "the ordinary and established usage of Scripture, . . .," – a usage which "speaks of animated bodies" as being alive.

¹⁹ Strong's pronunciation "psychē."

²⁰ Joseph Henry Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 1996) #5590 page 677.

²¹ Henry. C. Thiessen, *Lectures in Systematic Theology*, (William B Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI, 1979), 161.

²² Joseph Henry Thayer, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* (Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody, MA, 1996), #5591 pages 677-678.

The interpretation of Genesis chapter 2 has become a subject of much discussion, a discussion reflected in the titles of books like *The Historical Adam*, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve*, and *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist?* **Neshmat**, an identifiable, immaterial, spiritual component of man, should be part of that discussion. **Neshmat** informs how the Torah differentiates humans from the animals. Humans and animals are categorized as **שְׁנִי nephesh** (souls).

Without Augustine's incorrect equating of **pnoee** with **pneuma**:

- 1) Humans, male and female, would be created in Gen. 1:27.
- 2) A plural number of humans, male and female, would exist prior to the addition **נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat** in Gen. 2:7.
- 3) The addition of **נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat** gave **all humans** abilities beyond those of the lower animals and gave all humans the potential to gain access to eternal life. That conclusion contradicts the interpretation that there were no living humans prior the events of Gen. 2:7. But, it provides Hebrew textual support for N. T. Wright's proposal, provided that words "**early hominids**," (which I have shown bolded), are replaced by "**early humans**."

*"... that just as God chose Israel from the rest of **humankind** for a special, strange, demanding vocation, so perhaps what Genesis is telling us is that God chose one pair from the rest of **early hominids** for a special, strange, demanding vocation. This pair (call them Adam and Eve if you like) were to be the representatives of the whole human race, the ones in whom God's purpose to make the whole world a place of delight and joy and order, eventually colonizing the whole creation, was to be taken forward. God the creator put into their hands the fragile task of being his image bearers. If they fail, they will bring the whole purpose for the wider creation, including all the nonchosen hominids, down with them. . ."*²³

Wright said of the above proposal: "But believe me, this theme will preach."²⁴

- 4) Following the addition of the neshmat in Gen. 2:7, all humans would have two distinguishable spiritual components – prior to the putting of some (or all) humans in Eden as described in Gen. 2:8.

The translation of **נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat**

Now we will consider how we should translate **נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat** into English to convey the meanings found in this study. We have found that **נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat** enables upright behavior, understanding, and (by implication) a perception of right and wrong – a combination difficult to clearly represent by any existing English word. As a consequence, I suggest that we adopt a new English word, **neshmat**, to translate the Hebrew word **נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat** and its root word **נְשַׁמָּה** (ne-sha-mah) – a proposal similar to the adoption of baptism to represent the Greek word **βάπτισμα** (baptisma). We will first show Gen. 7:21-22 which we explained on page 7. There we found **נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat** did not refer to the animals in Gen. 7:21. That finding agreed with Hamilton's statement quoted on page one. As a consequence, Gen. 7:22 explains the final "and all **מִן** mankind" of Gen. 7:21. Psalm 150:6 shown following Gen. 7:21-22 is consistent with that conclusion.

^{NAS} **Gen. 7:21** And all flesh that moved on the earth perished, birds and cattle and beasts and every swarming thing that swarms upon the earth, and all **מִן** mankind;

^{NAS} **Gen. 7:22** of all that was on the dry land, all in whose nostrils was the **נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat** of the **רוּחַ spirit** of life, died.

And translating **נֶשֶׁמֶת** as **neshmat** we find:

^{NIV} **Psalm 150:6** Let everything that has **neshmat** praise the LORD. Praise the LORD.

We continue by illustrating the translation **neshmat** for a verse that uses **נֶשֶׁמֶת ne-sha-mah**. The vision in Dan.10:17 is the example.

^{KJV} **Dan. 10:17** For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there **נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat** left in me.

In this verse Daniel is talking, and therefore breathing, implicitly contradicting the later statement that he had "no **breath** left in me." The Hebrew is literally "**נֶשֶׁמֶת** **אַל not**." If we translate "neither is

²³ N. T. Wright, *SURPRISED BY SCRIPTURE*, (New York, NY, Harper Collins Publishers, 2014), 37-38.

²⁴ N. T. Wright, *SURPRISED BY SCRIPTURE*, (New York, NY, Harper Collins Publishers, 2014), 37-38.

there **נֶשֶׁמֶת** **neshmat** left in me," we remove the contradiction and change the understanding about what is missing. Daniel is saying that he has no understanding of how to reply or behave appropriately – he is overwhelmed.

How to end the confusion

The confusion about the meaning of Genesis 2:7 has persisted for about 1,600 years. In this section I will explain and support my suggestion about how to begin to end the confusion. I propose that we adopt the word "neshmat" as the translation for all Old Testament verses that presently translate **נֶשֶׁמֶת** **neshmat** as breath, spirit, or soul, blast, or inspiration. This proposal can be introduced gradually by:

- 1) First identifying the verses where **נֶשֶׁמֶת** is translated breath, spirit, blast, or inspiration.
- 2) Then lining-out the words that translate **נֶשֶׁמֶת** as breath, spirit, soul, blast, or inspiration.
- 3) And then writing "neshmat" above the lined-out word. (Examples are below.)

^{ASV} **Isa. 57:16** For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth (angry)

neshmat

for the **Ruach** **spirit** would faint before me, and the **breath** that I have made.

^{NET} **Job 33:4** The Spirit of God has made me, and the **breath** of the Almighty gives me life.

^{KJV} **Psalm 104:29-30** Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their **Ruach** **spirit**,
they die, and return to their dust. Thou sendest forth thy **Ruach** **spirit**,
they are created: and thou renewest the face of the earth.

^{ASV} **Job 34:14-15** If he set his heart upon himself, *If* he gather unto himself his **spirit** and his **breath**;
All flesh shall perish together, And man shall turn again unto dust.

This concludes our study of the meaning of **neshmat**. Because **neshmat** is used to describe several actions, an appendix at the end of this document has been included to help readers in their personal review of the context of each verse. The appendix presents twenty verses where **neshmat** has been entered to replace the English word that translated **נֶשֶׁמֶת** **neshmat** or **הַנֶּשֶׁמֶת** (**ne-sha-mah**).

We have shown that **נֶשֶׁמֶת** **neshmat** provides the human with characteristics which closely match Augustine's "life-**spirit**." How to define the **שֶׁמֶן** souls of humans and animals needs to be reconsidered.

The interpretation of Genesis chapter 2 has become a subject of much discussion, a discussion reflected in the titles of books like *The Historical Adam*, *The Lost World of Adam and Eve*, and *Did Adam and Eve Really Exist?* **נֶשֶׁמֶת** **neshmat**, an identifiable, immaterial, **spiritual** component of man, should be part of that discussion. **נֶשֶׁמֶת** **neshmat** informs about how the Torah differentiates humans from the animals. Humans and animals are categorized as **שֶׁמֶן** **nephesh** (souls). Without Augustine's incorrect equating of **pnoee** with **pneuma**:

- 1) **Humankind**, male and female, would be created in Gen. 1:27.
- 2) A plural number of **humankind**, male and female, exist prior to the addition **נֶשֶׁמֶת** **neshmat** to **all humankind** in Gen. 2:7.
- 3) Humans would have two distinguishable **spiritual** components.

This concludes: *The Neshmat of the Breath of Life: How humans differ from the lower animals.*

End note 1 is on page 14. The Appendix is on pages 15-16.

End note 1. All flesh of animals as used in verses:

After the Flood

KJV Gen. 8:15 And God spake unto Noah, saying,

KJV Gen. 8:16 Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee.

KJV Gen. 8:17 Bring forth with thee **כל** every **הַחַיָּה** living thing that is with thee, **מְכֹל** of all **הַבָּשָׂר** flesh, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth; that they may breed abundantly in the earth, and be fruitful, and multiply upon the earth.

In the above, Noah and his family are treated separately from the animals. In Gen 8:17 the words " **Bring forth with thee**" are not in Hebrew text. "**כל** every **הַחַיָּה** living thing" first appears in Gen.1:28. There it refers to land animals that humankind are to "have dominion over." In Gen 8:17 the list of the animals indicates that phrase

"**כל** every **הַחַיָּה** living thing" does not refer to **humankind**. (**ה** is a prefix meaning "the.")

Before the Flood

In the verses below Noah and his family continue to be considered separately from the " **מְכֹל** of all **הַבָּשָׂר** flesh." They connect the " **of every** **הַחַיָּה** living thing **מְכֹל** of all **הַבָּשָׂר** flesh," "with the animals that Noah is to take with him by **שְׁנַיִם** **two** of every sort" and **שְׁנַיִם** **two** and **two**."

KJV Gen. 6:18 But with thee will I establish my covenant; and thou shalt come into the ark, thou, and thy sons, and thy wife, and thy sons' wives with thee.

KJV Gen. 6:19 And **מְכֹל** of every **הַחַיָּה** living thing **מְכֹל** of all **הַבָּשָׂר** flesh, **שְׁנַיִם** **two** of every sort shalt thou bring into the ark, to keep them live with thee; they shall be male and female.

KJV Gen. 6:20 Of fowls after their kind, and of cattle after their kind, of every creeping thing of the earth after his kind, **שְׁנַיִם** **two** of every sort shall come unto thee, to keep them alive.

KJV Gen. 7:7 And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood.

KJV Gen. 7:8 Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth,

KJV Gen. 7:9 There went in **שְׁנַיִם** **two** and **two** unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah.

KJV Gen 7:13 In the selfsame day entered Noah, and Shem, and Ham, and Japheth, the sons of Noah, and Noah's wife, and the three wives of his sons with them, into the ark;

KJV Gen 7:14 They, **וְכֹל** and every **הַחַיָּה** **beast** after his kind, and all the cattle after their kind, and every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind, and every fowl after his kind, every bird of every sort.

KJV Gen 7:15 And they went in unto Noah into the ark, **שְׁנַיִם** **two** and **two** **spirit** **מְכֹל** of all **הַבָּשָׂר** **flesh**, wherein is the **רוּחַ** **breath** of **מְכֹל** **life**.

(**רוּחַ** is a plural - "lives," not the singular life.)

The above verses support the NIV translation as referring to the animals. Gen. 7:15 is shown below:

NIV Gen. 7:15 **Pairs** **שְׁנַיִם** **מְכֹל-הַבָּשָׂר** **of all creatures** that have the **spirit** **breath of life** in them came to Noah and entered the ark.

Appendix One: About the translation of נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat and 23 verses with neshmat inserted.

Gen. 2:7 (The first translation is the KJV modified by deleting "of the," and the verb וַיְהִי in line "became.")

Gen. 2:7 (1) And the LORD God formed אָדָם humankind dust of אָדָם the ground,
 (2) and breathed into his nostrils the נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat of חַיִים lives; (חַיִים is a plural, i.e., "lives.")
 (3) and אָדָם humankind became living נֶפֶש soul(s).

Or as explained on page 10, the verb in line (3) is וַיְהִי that there may be.

Gen. 2:7 (1) And the LORD God formed אָדָם humankind dust of אָדָם the ground,
 (2) and breathed into his nostrils the נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat of חַיִים lives; (חַיִים is a plural, i.e., "lives.")
 (3) that אָדָם humankind may be חַיה living נֶפֶש persons.

Verses supporting נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat as causing revival:

Job 33:4 The רוח Spirit of God hath made me,
 and the נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat of the Almighty קחני revives me (or shall revive me.)

English translations of Job 33:4 could be interpreted to say **neshmat** also gives life – it does, but not in the sense of making a nephesh alive as in its first creation – **neshmat** gives life in the sense of reviving people or preserving life. Job 33:4 used two words, רוח ruach and נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat, that the KJV commonly translated "breath." The KJV resolved the problem of using **breath** for both words by translating רוח as **Spirit**, and then translating נֶשֶׁמֶת neshmat as **breath**. (spirit is derived from a Latin word meaning breath) The final word קחני which they translated *hath given me life* is an imperfect verb, which translates "revives me," or "shall revive me." It is not an action completed in the past as the *hath given me life* indicates. The word קחני appears in Psalm 138:7 where the KJV and NAS translate it **revive me**, and the NIV translates it **preserve my life**. Both are requests for an action not yet completed. The KJV did recognize the future meaning of the imperfect verb in other verses.

קחני or קחני appear in Psalms in five verses. The table below lists the English translation of Hebrew words in four different translations. (Note: TNK is the Jewish Publication Society TNAKH 1985 version.)

The word "again" is shown were the verse translation includes the word *again*. קחני and קחני are piel imperfects indicating future action. קחני and קחני are piel perfects indicating completed action, and each appear 1 time. The piel can be used to refer to repeated actions.

verse	word	KJV	NAS	NIV	TNK
Psalm 138:7	קחני	revive me	revive me	preserve my life	preserve me
Psalm 143:11	קחני	quicken me	revive me	preserve my life	preserve me
Psalm 85:6	קחני	revive us again	revive us again	revive us	revive us
Psalm 80:18	קחני	quicken us	revive us	revive us	revive us
Psalm 71:20	קחני [קחני] (קחני)	quicken me again	revive me again	restore my life again	revive me again
Psalm 119:50	קחני	quickened me	revived me	preserves my life	preserved me
Psalm 119:93	קחני	quickened me	revived me	preserves my life	preserved my life

In Psalm 119, קחני a singular form of the same root word as קחני, appears nine times. Translations of this word are shown in the table below. (קחני ; is a verb piel imperative form, i.e., "do this.")

Verse	word	KJV	NAS	NIV	TNK
Psalm 119:25	קחני	quicken me	revive me	preserve my life	revive me
Psalm 119:37	קחני	quicken me	revive me	preserve my life	preserve me
Psalm 119:40	קחני	quicken me	revive me	preserve my life	preserve me
Psalm 119:88	קחני	quicken me	revive me	preserve my life	preserve me
Psalm 119:107	קחני	quicken me	revive me	preserve my life	preserve me
Psalm 119:149	קחני	quicken me	revive me	preserve my life	preserve me
Psalm 119:154	קחני	quicken me	revive me	preserve my life	preserve me
Psalm 119:156	קחני	quicken me	revive me	preserve my life	preserve me
Psalm 119:159	קחני	quicken me	revive me	preserve my life	preserve me

Another form of this imperfect verb קחני (also translated revive) appears in Hosea 6:2 expressed as a future action. Hosea 6:2 is a verse often considered a messianic reference to the resurrection.

NAS **Hosea 6:2** וְיִרְבֶּא חַיִּים נֶשְׁמָתְךָ He will revive us after two days;
He will raise us up on the third day That we may live before Him.

23 verses that use נֶשְׁמָת neshmat or נֶסֶם nesama with both shown translated neshmat.

KJV **Gen. 7:22** All in whose nostrils *was* the **neshmat** of the spirit of life, of all that *was* in the dry *land*, died.

KJV **2 Sam. 22:16** And the channels of the sea appeared, the foundations of the world were discovered, at the rebuking of the LORD, from the **neshmat** of the spirit of his nostrils.

KJV **1 Kings 15:29** And it came to pass, when he reigned, *that* he smote all the house of Jeroboam; he left not to Jeroboam any with **neshmat**, until he had destroyed him, according unto the saying of the LORD, which he spake by his servant Ahijah the Shilonite:

KJV **1 Kings 17:17** And it came to pass after these things, *that* the son of the woman, the mistress of the house, fell sick; and his sickness was so sore, that there was no **neshmat** left in him.

KJV **Job 4:9** By the **neshmat** of God they perish, and by the breath of his nostrils are they consumed.

KJV **Job 26:4** To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose **neshmat** came from thee?

KJV **Job 27:3** All the while my **neshmat** *is* in me, and the spirit of God *is* in my nostrils;

KJV **Job 32:8** But *there is* a spirit in man: and the **neshmat** of the Almighty giveth them understanding.

KJV **Job 34:14** If he set his heart upon man, *if* he gather unto himself his spirit and his **neshmat**;

KJV **Job 37:10** By the **neshmat** of God frost is given: and the breadth of the waters is straitened.

KJV **Psalm 18:15** Then the channels of waters were seen, and the foundations of the world were discovered at thy rebuke, O LORD, from the **neshmat** of the spirit of thy nostrils (or anger).

KJV **Psalm 150:6** Let everything that hath **neshmat** praise the LORD. Praise ye the LORD.

KJV **Proverbs 20:27** The **neshmat** of man *is* the candle of the LORD, searching all the inward parts of the belly.

KJV **Isaiah 2:22** Cease ye from man, whose **neshmat** *is* in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?

KJV **Isaiah 30:33** For Tophet *is* ordained of old; yea, for the king it is prepared; he hath made *it* deep *and* large: the pile thereof *is* fire and much wood; the **neshmat** of the LORD, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it.

KJV **Isaiah 42:5** Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens, and stretched them out; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it; he that giveth **neshmat** unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein: (*The word נֶשֶׁמֶת translated walk in Isaiah 42:5 most often refers to humans, but it has been applied to creeping things that walk on the עַמְּנָנָה on four feet in Lev. 11:42. Isaiah 42:5 is consistent with lower animals having נֶשֶׁמֶת spirit.*)

KJV **Isaiah 57:16** For I will not contend for ever, neither will I be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before me, and the **neshmat** which I have made.

KJV **Daniel 5:23** But hast lifted up thyself against the Lord of heaven; and they have brought the vessels of his house before thee, and thou, and thy lords, thy wives, and thy concubines, have drunk wine in them; and thou hast praised the gods of silver, and gold, of brass, iron, wood, and stone, which see not, nor hear, nor know: and the God in whose hand thy **neshmat** *is*, and whose *are* all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:

KJV **Daniel 10:17** For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there **neshmat** left in me.

KJV **Deu. 20:16-17** But of the cities of these people, which the LORD thy God doth give thee *for* an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing **with neshmat**:

KJV **Joshua 11:11** And they smote all the שָׁבָט souls that *were* therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying *them*: there was not any left **with neshmat**: and he burnt Hazor with fire.

KJV **Joshua 11:14** And all the spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves; but every οὐδὲ man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, neither left they any **with neshmat**.