

Nor does such a study confirm the claim that "soul" refers to our nonmaterial nature as related to the body or to the earth, while "spirit" refers to our nonmaterial nature as related to God or to heaven.

In Dichotomy the soul and spirit may be thought of as two aspects of man's nonmaterial nature. When distinctive nuances are intended, perhaps soul refers to man's nonmaterial nature thought of as a person as a being or an individual subsistence; and perhaps spirit refers to man's nonmaterial nature thought of in terms of its essence.

If this is the case, then either word can be used to denote our nonmaterial being. Sometimes these words could be used interchangeably; other times they could be used with an emphasis on the personal quality of man's nonmaterial nature or upon the essential spirituality of man's nature.

These ideas could be synthesized by stating that man is a person whose essence is spirit and that the full expression of a personal spirit in a space-time universe comprised of matter energy is achieved by means of a physical body

4. Objections to the view

Objections to Dichotomy arise from those biblical interpretations or theological inferences used to support Trichotomy. To avoid duplication, these are treated under Trichotomy.

C. Trichotomy

1. Definition of the view

Trichotomy is the view that body and soul and spirit refer to three distinct entities; and that therefore human beings are comprised of three parts, one of which is material and the other two nonmaterial.

2. Scriptural evidence used to support the view

Genesis 2:7 -- "Then the Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living being."

Trichotomists point out that in the phrase "breath of life," the word "life" is really plural, "lives" (נְפִשׁוֹת), and that this implies the inbreathing of both soul and spirit; thus Trichotomy.