



Solomon writes in the Book of Ecclesiastes:

- *I also said to myself, "As for humans, God tests them so that they may see that they are like the animals. Surely the fate of human beings is like that of the animals; **the same fate awaits them both**: As one dies, so dies the other. All have the same **breath (ruwach = spirit!)**; humans have no advantage over animals. Everything is meaningless. All go to the same place; **all come from dust, and to dust all return.** (Ecclesiastes 3:18-20)*

Solomon was the wisest king Israel has ever known. He describes in the Book of Ecclesiastes how he researched everything in the world. He came to the conclusion that the same fate awaits human beings and animals, whereby humans are not above the animals.

The life of humans and animals in this world is of short duration. Both humans and animals die and return to dust.

Ecclesiastes asks the following question in this regard:

- *Who knows if the human **spirit (ruwach)** rises upward and if the **spirit (ruwach)** of the animal goes down into the earth? (Ecclesiastes 3:21)*

Ecclesiastes sees a distinction between humans and animals. He concludes that no one notices it, however.

A few chapters further on, with reference to human ageing, Ecclesiastes says:

- *... and **the dust returns to the ground** it came from, and the **spirit (ruwach)** returns to **God** who gave it. (Ecclesiastes 12:7)*

The animals return to dust, but a separation takes place when humans die.

- The body returns to the earth, out of which it was taken.
- The spirit returns to God, Who gave it.

The distinction between humans and animals is prescribed in creation.

In Genesis 1, God commands on the fifth day:

- *Let the water teem with **living creatures (living souls)**, and let birds fly above the earth across the vault of the sky. (Genesis 1:20)*

And on the sixth day:

- *Let the land produce **living creatures (living souls)** according to their kinds: the livestock, the creatures that move along the ground, and the wild animals, each according to its kind. (Genesis 1:24)*

The animals were created, by **the power of God's spoken Word**.

It is clear that the animals that crawl on the ground came forth from the earth.

It is clear from the report of creation in Genesis 1 that the **animals are souls**. They are referred to as 'living souls' in any case.

King Solomon remarks in Ecclesiastes 3 and 12 that the **animals** also have a **spirit**, just like human beings.



The man, Adam, did not come forth from the earth, however.

Adam became a living soul at the moment **God breathed His breath of life** into his nostrils, in the body He had crafted from the dust of the earth.

- *Then the LORD God formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being (a living soul). (Genesis 2:7)*

Both humans and animals are a trinity of body, soul and spirit.

What humans and animals have in common is the body.

The animals came forth from the earth and the human body is taken from the earth. At the moment of death all that has been taken from the earth will return thereto.

The difference between humans and animals.

The body, soul and spirit of the **animals** will 'go down into the earth' at death.

Only man's **body** will return to the earth and degenerate back to dust.

At that moment **man's soul and the spirit** will 'return to God' and live on, eternally, in the invisible world.

With the **animals body soul and spirit** came forth from the earth and they are **completely oriented towards the earth.**

This is the instinct, which an animal receives at birth and that determines each animal's specific nature.

With **humans**, the **body** is taken from the **earth**, but the **soul and the spirit** are **breathed in by God.**

Man's **soul and spirit** are **oriented towards the spiritual world**, towards God Himself.

The ban on eating blood.

The difference between humans and animals is emphasized by the fact that God forbade the Israelites from eating blood.

- *For the **life of a creature is in the blood**, ... Therefore I say to the Israelites, "**None of you may eat blood**, nor may any foreigner residing among you eat blood. (Leviticus 17:11-12)*

Humans, whose souls have been breathed into them by God, may not have any intercourse with the soul of animals, which came forth from the earth.

Meat from animals may be eaten, as God told Noah:

- *Everything that lives and moves about will be food for you. Just as I gave you the green plants, I now give you everything. (Genesis 9:3)*

But:

- *... you must not eat meat that has **its lifeblood** still in it. (Genesis 9:4)*