

## A MINI-DEBATE ON SOUL

**T**he 'soul' is such an important topic that it is being discussed since the time immemorial and is the main subject in every religion. The soul, in several philosophical movements and many religious traditions, is the core essence of a being. The humanity of the Science Age wants to know about every aspect of 'soul'.

Soul is understood differently by different religions. In science there is no word as 'soul'. All the functions assigned to soul by theologians, however, are biological processes directly involved with the neurons in the brain according to science. Let us consider the views of our participants, having expertise in Medicine, Surgery, Molecular Biology, Philosophy, and Microbiology, in this mini-debate.

**Dr Dhaliwal**, a Medicine man, has tried to interpret Gurbani to explain the existence and role of soul. Every living organism has a soul. The thoughts, feelings and consciousness are its attributes. The physical body, mind and soul are different entities coexisting as a human being. Ever since the awareness of its identity, human has questioned the origin, existence and meaning of the soul! How does soul interplay with the mind and body? What happens to soul after death? Religious, theosophical, academicians and science scholars in every aspect of life are still debating answers to these questions. It is beyond the scope of this author's comprehension to solve this mystery, however, an attempt is made searching Gurbani to find answers to some of these questions.

**Dr Grewal**, a Surgeon, discusses that soul is a metaphysical, indefinable, infinite, inaccessible, inapprehensible, vital principle part of a Higher Power or Energy, not subject to destruction, having a conscious, and is unappreciated by the normal five senses of, vision, hearing, smell, touch, and taste. He had analyzed it in a surgical scientific way with references from the AGGS.

**Dr Dhillon**, a Molecular Biologist, discusses soul as energy by interpreting Gurbani and science. All religions believe in the existence of SOUL in human body. Sikhism considers SOUL (*atma*) to be part of UNIVERSAL SOUL (*paramatma*), which is GOD. While all religions admit the existence of soul, but they differ in what happens after death. Sikh and Hindu

concept of soul revolves around transmigration and reincarnation. Muslims and Christians believe in the Day of Judgment when its fate will be decided. All the followers have faith in their religions but if we believe in one and the same God (as Sikhs do), then both views cannot represent the truth that God made two types of souls. It's time for scientific evaluation to form a logical opinion. Everything in the universe came from this 'Energy' and will go back to this 'Energy' (because energy can convert into matter and matter can convert into energy). 'Everything' means all matter including human beings and all other beings. It is concluded that scientific concept enhances our understanding of religion, and is not about damaging a religious faith or creating a new religion, sect or movement.

**Dr Nath**, Prof of Philosophy, contradicts the soul philosophy found in Hinduism. This whole concept of bondage and liberation is based on the unproved assumption of life after death, and the existence of soul (*atma*), which continues to exist apart from the body even after death. In the famous words of Gita, the soul changes bodies just as human beings change clothes. Now, there are no good reasons for believing in the existence of soul or life after death or rebirth. These beliefs are not at all supported by incontrovertible scientific evidence.

**Prof Chahal**, a Microbiologist, discusses the concept of soul in different religions and according to science and logic. Finally he raises a question that if Nanakian Philosophy in some verses of Gurbani clearly indicates that it is not known where does the so-called soul goes after death and nobody get this life again and again then how could it be possible that some verses of Gurbani support the concept that soul is distinct from body and mind, indestructible, and comes into birth again and again till liberated from this cycle of re-birth or cycle of transmigration?

The purpose of this mini-debate is for the readers to decide what is right and what is wrong. Write your well-documented views on this topic to the Editor-in-Chief for further study.

Prof Devinder Singh Chahal, PhD  
Editor-in-Chief