



Article Side

George's Rants and Raves: Eat Your Pet [George Brozowski](#)

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I know, I know I usually write about spirits but you really can't blame a guy for wanting to expand his horizons. After all spirits are usually paired with food and in many cultures today pets are food and I eat food so why couldn't I eat my pets? As I typed that last sentence I looked down at my feet and there laying comfortably next to me and looking up at me with big brown eyes and a perpetual smile was my Golden Retriever Chimmy. I named him after my favorite food, chimichangas so why couldn't I turn him into a great big Golden Chimichanga? He noticed me looking down at him and he got up, stretched lazily and placed his paws up on my leg and bent close and licked my face. That bastard knew what I was thinking!

OK, so this wasn't the greatest idea I ever had but nobody has sent me any booze to review now for over two weeks and I was getting desperate for a topic to write about in my column. I couldn't eat my dog but maybe my cat Gabby. There he was sprawled out in a ray of sunshine on my desk sleeping peacefully. Maybe I could sneak up on him and strangle him and throw him into a crock pot with some carrots and onion and celery and after 8 hours he just might be tender and tasty. I reached over to grab him and he woke up and started "talking" to me. I named him Gabby for good reason. He meows and meows and meows almost without end at me. He cocks his head to one side and asks Meow? And then he'll answer his own question with a couple of more Meows and then he'll wait for me to respond and if I'm not quick enough he'll ask again, "Meow?"

I can't eat him either. This is hopeless. Those critters are my best friends. They have intelligence and souls and when I die they're going to be with me in the hereafter. That bit about having souls sparked a heated debate with half a dozen other people some of whom said I was crazy and that couldn't be while another group just as fervently agreed with me. Well that argument went on for some time so I decided to get to the bottom of this soul question.

This all really started out as a simple exercise to get a simple answer to the simple question of whether or not pets have souls. Turns out it really wasn't quite that simple.

If you go to your local preacher or priest or whichever other person you turn to for answers in times of religious need I'm sure they will give you one solid unwavering answer. However if you make the mistake of going to several of these people from different religious persuasions, like I did, you will discover they will give you different answers. Of course there will be black and white totally polar opposite responses and there will also be as many shades of gray as the number of people you consult. Having quickly lost "faith" in these official interpreters of the word of God I determined to go to the source.

In an attempt to get the truth from "the horse's mouth" so to speak I consulted the Bible. Unfortunately that ended up being as confusing as consulting all the previously mentioned Biblical scholars. Turns out there's not one Bible but quite a few and, of course, versions not officially approved by a given religion are condemned by it and not considered the "official" word of God. Stupid me, I always thought that the Bible was the Bible and was one in the same Bible. Go figure?!?

Adding to the confusion, on top of the different versions officially sanctioned by their approving religions there were different translations with their own subtle and not so subtle variations.

Originally the text that became the Bible was written in Aramaic, Hebrew and Greek. Over many centuries these texts were found, lost, rediscovered, translated and retranslated and edited and condemned and approved and folded, spindled and mutilated until a thousand years after they had

been written they finally became the Bible. Consider if you will that the writings of the Old Testament and the New Testament were written over a period of thousands of years. And yet the first complete Bible did not appear until 325 AD during the Council of Nicea and the first printed Bible didn't appear until 1456 shortly after Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press.

On top of that there are 6,809 languages in the world today and at least 3,000 will go extinct during the next century. 230 are spoken in Europe, while 2,197 are spoken in Asia. Interestingly, one area of particularly high linguistic diversity is Papua-New Guinea, where there are an estimated 832 languages spoken by a population of just around 3.9 million.

So what? Well, the complete Bible is available in 438 of those languages with just the New Testament available in 1168 languages and various parts and pieces available in 848 languages for a total of 2,454 languages.

So full circle back to the original question: do pets have souls?

In the Old Testament Hebrew the original word for "soul" is "nephesh" while in Greek it's "psyche" both meaning the same thing and used interchangeably with one even used to translate the other. Nephesh occurs 750 times in the Old Testament and 500 of those times it is translated "soul" while the other 250 times it is translated into 40 different other English words. Don't ask, I have no clue! 22 times the word is used when animals are referred to alone and 7 times to refer to men and animals together and of course over 320 times when souls are the subject of death and dying.

So if you put yourself through all this scientific and religious mental masturbation you will come to the same conclusion that I have come to. Don't believe a word of it. Simply look in your pet's eyes and ask them if they have a soul and then believe them and your heart and mind to tell you the truth. Nothing else matters.

Humorist Will Rogers famously said "If there are no dogs in Heaven, then when I die I want to go where they went."

I ordered a pizza.

By George Brozowski

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