

FAQ

FROM THE MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS ARCHIVES (2000-2018)

J.K. McKee

MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS
messianicapologetics.net

Frequently Asked Questions

FROM THE MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS ARCHIVES

© 2021, 2024 John Kimball McKee

All rights reserved. With the exception of quotations for academic purposes, no part of this publication may be reproduced without prior permission of the publisher.

Cover Image: nullplus via Istockphoto

ISBN 979-8317009786 (paperback)

ASIN B09F1MWGB7 (eBook)

Published by Messianic Apologetics, a division of Outreach Israel Ministries

P.O. Box 516

McKinney, Texas 75070

(407) 933-2002

outreachisrael.net / outreachisrael.blog

messianicapologetics.net / messianicapologetics.blog

Fair Use Notice: This publication contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We make use of this material as a matter of teaching, scholarship, research, and commentary. We believe in good faith that this constitutes a “fair use” of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law, and is in accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107. For more information go to: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/17/107>

Outreach Israel Ministries is a non-profit 501(c)3. All prices listed on the publications of Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics are suggested donations.

Abbreviations and Special Terms

The following is a list of abbreviations for reference works and special terms which are used in publications by Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics. Please familiarize yourself with them as the text may reference a Bible version, i.e., RSV for the Revised Standard Version, or a source such as TWOT for the *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, solely by its abbreviation. Detailed listings of these sources are provided in the Bibliography.

- ABD: *Anchor Bible Dictionary*
AMG: *Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament*
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament
Ara: Aramaic
ASV: American Standard Version (1901)
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)
b. Babylonian Talmud (*Talmud Bavli*)
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.
BDAG: *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)
BDB: *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.
CGEDNT: *Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words* (Barclay M. Newman)
CGL: *Cambridge Greek Lexicon* (2021)
CHALOT: *Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Holladay)
CJB: *Complete Jewish Bible* (1998)
CJSB: *Complete Jewish Study Bible* (2016)
DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition
DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls
EDB: *Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*
EJ: *Encyclopaedia Judaica*
ESV: *English Standard Version* (2001)
Ger: German
GNT: *Greek New Testament*
Grk: Greek
HALOT: *Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament* (Koehler and Baumgartner)
HCSB: *Holman Christian Standard Bible* (2004)
Heb: Hebrew
HNV: Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible
IDB: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*
IDBSup: *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement*
ISBE: *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*
IVPBBC: *IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old & New Testament)*
Jastrow: *Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Bavli, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature* (Marcus Jastrow)
JBK: *New Jerusalem Bible-Koren* (2000)
JETS: *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*
KJV: *King James Version*
Lattimore: *The New Testament by Richmond Lattimore* (1996)
LITV: *Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* by Jay P. Green (1986)
LES: *Lexham English Septuagint* (2019)
LS: *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott)
LSJM: *Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell-Scott-Jones-McKenzie)
LXE: *Septuagint with Apocrypha* by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851)
LXX: *Septuagint*
m. Mishnah
MT: *Masoretic Text*
NASB: *New American Standard Bible* (1977)
NASU: *New American Standard Update* (1995)
NBCR: *New Bible Commentary: Revised*
NEB: *New English Bible* (1970)
Nelson: *Nelson's Expository Dictionary of Old Testament Words*
NETS: *New English Translation of the Septuagint* (2007)
NIB: *New Interpreter's Bible*
NIDB: *New International Dictionary of the Bible*
NIV: *New International Version* (1984)
NJB: *New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic* (1985)
NJSB: *Tanakh, A New Translation of the Holy Scriptures* (1999)
NKJV: *New King James Version* (1982)
NRSV: *New Revised Standard Version* (1989)
NLT: *New Living Translation* (1996)
NT: *New Testament*
OT: *Old Testament*
REB: *Revised English Bible* (1989)
RSV: *Revised Standard Version* (1952)
t. Tosefta
Tanach (Tanakh): the Old Testament
Thayer: *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*
TDNT: *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
TLV: *Messianic Jewish Family Bible—Tree of Life Version* (2014)
TNIV: *Today's New International Version* (2005)
TWOT: *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*
UBSHNT: *United Bible Societies' 1991 Hebrew New Testament revised edition*
v(s). *verse(s)*
Vine: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words*
Vul: *Latin Vulgate*
YLT: *Young's Literal Translation* (1862/1898)
WMB: *World Messianic Bible* (2020)

Afterlife, negates need for resurrection

Going to Heaven makes no sense in light of the doctrine of resurrection. What is the point of the future resurrection if Believers just go to Heaven when they die?

One of the most frequent arguments against a conscious, intermediate afterlife in Heaven, is that going to be with the Lord is thought to negate the significance of the resurrection, making it a bit anticlimactic. It is very true how many of today's Believers think that salvation is to be understood exclusively in terms of "going to Heaven when you die," and the future resurrection of the body, the Millennial Kingdom, and a restored Kingdom of God on Earth, are all distant afterthoughts. But how much of this is due to much of today's popular preaching, and not a careful and reasonable reading of Scripture? Admittedly, most people are more concerned about the place they will *immediately* go after they die, which most rightly consider to be the realm of another dimension, than they are about the long term plan of salvation history. Unfortunately, the whole picture of what comes *after* the intermediate state has not been told to enough of today's Believers.

Is going to Heaven immediately after death, akin to "canceling" the significance of the resurrection? Perhaps this is best answered with another question: *What do we consider the resurrection to be?* Do we consider it to be re-creation from personal extinction—or the reassembly of a deceased human person: with the consciousness placed back into a reanimated body?

One of the most serious problems regarding the concept of psychopannychy or "soul sleep," is what happens to human memory, which is chemically stored in the brain. In holding to a monistic anthropology of the human person effectively being a body, then when a deceased body decomposes, so does a person's memory. What happens at the resurrection? *Where has the memory gone?* Psychopannychists could argue that human memory is stored in the mind of God, but then that would require them to at least accept a quasi-dualism—where the "self" or "personality" part of a deceased person has to be stored outside of the body for a time.

From a monistic perspective, the human being is entirely physical, quantitatively the same as an animal like a dog or cat. If a deceased person has completely decomposed into base atoms, has to be re-created, and then outside memories are implanted—then philosophically there is enough doubt to wonder whether or not the one who is to be "resurrected" is the same person who lived a life on Earth before. Such atoms could, after all, have become part of someone else, after decomposition has had its way and someone's remains end up in the food and water supply. In their textbook *Across the Spectrum*, Boyd and Eddy as monists have to at least acknowledge,

"Some have argued that if the self does not exist between death and resurrection, then the Lord literally re-creates us on the resurrection day. This is problematic, they argue, for it is tantamount to claiming that God creates different people who replicate us in a previous life."¹

All that they can appeal to though, as monists, is some level of mystery on how God might preserve the memories and thoughts of a person who has died. Those who believe in a conscious intermediate state, do not have

¹ "The Human Constitution Debate," in Gregory A. Boyd and Paul R. Eddy, *Across the Spectrum: Understanding Issues in Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), pp 98-99.

to appeal to any degree of mystery, to know how a person remains the same in the time between death and resurrection. The anticipation of the dying Stephen, who had seen Heaven opened up, was clearly, “Lord Yeshua, receive my spirit!” (Acts 7:59, NASU). Bible readers might not be told all of the things which go on during the intermediate state, but an intermediate afterlife in either Heaven or Hell, before final rewards and punishment, undoubtedly assures us that the person who once lived an Earthly life is the same authentic one who will be resurrected—and not a copy or clone. Holistic dualism emphasizes that ideally a person is a fully embodied being, but recognizes the *temporary* separation of the consciousness between death and resurrection.

If anyone ever thinks that Believers looking forward to seeing the Lord in Heaven at time of death, makes the resurrection a bit of an add-on or appendage, then perhaps one really does need to think about what is stated told goes on in Heaven. Revelation 6:10, for example, includes the martyrs in Heaven entreating the Divine throne: “How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from judging and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?” (NASU). These deceased holy ones or saints, conscious and undoubtedly having seen the Savior, **are very much eager to see salvation history progress forward**. They are eager for Yeshua to defeat His enemies, to be resurrected, and to be reunited with their loved ones who are still living on Earth. This will only take place at the Second Coming of the Messiah.

In the estimation of Bruce Milne in *The Message of Heaven & Hell*, “we [must] carefully maintain the clear New Testament focus on the parousia [or, coming] of Christ as the true goal and crowning expression of the Christian’s victory over death....For [these Believers] the focus is on the coming of the Son of Man.”² So, as exciting as going to Heaven might be, those in Heaven know that more is to come! They know that it is only at the resurrection when all the righteous, both deceased and living, can be a unified company (1 Thessalonians 4:17).

² Bruce Milne, *The Message of Heaven & Hell* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002), 168.