

# FAQ

**FROM THE MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS ARCHIVES (2000-2018)**

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**MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS**  
messianicapologetics.net

# Frequently Asked Questions

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# 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)

# Psychopannychy, motivation for belief

**What does your ministry think is the main reason(s) why some people are motivated to believe or advocate a doctrine of psychopannychy/soul sleep?**

It is undeniable that a main influence guiding the adoption of psychopannychy/soul sleep is the effect which Darwinian evolution and materialism has had on Biblical Studies, which is steadily being received by some notable parts of evangelicalism. Once a human being is thought to just be an advanced form of animal, then individuals quickly tend to forget that they have a unique supernatural imprint upon themselves—and think they will die a death the same way as any cat, dog, or ape.

This is problematic because Believers are certainly to have a spiritual connection to a God who resides in a dimension outside of the time and space of this universe (cf. Ephesians 1:20; 2:6). Even though theistic evolution advocates that God directed the process of natural selection—many who go from believing that humans were created *ex nihilo* and that there is a disembodied afterlife between death and resurrection, to believing in evolution and psychopannychy—are prime targets for atheism. In this case, denying an intermediate afterlife can be only one stage on the road to apostasy.

In the case of a group like the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, which is well known for advocating psychopannychy, the adoption of this view may have been in response to the growth of spiritism and séances in the Nineteenth Century. Overreacting to the trend practiced by some Christians who attempted to contact their deceased relatives, but most of all how popular Christian preaching often fails to emphasize the future resurrection of the body and just talks about “going to Heaven”—it would instead be taught that the deceased were simply unconscious in the grave. The SDA doctrine of “soul sleep” would later influence groups like Hebert W. Armstrong’s Worldwide Church of God, and the Sacred Name Only movement.

The common SDA emphasis on monism, meaning that the human person is entirely a physical being—closely associated with “soul sleep”—has nothing to do with their Sabbatarianism. The First Century Jewish Pharisees were far more stringent in their observance of *Shabbat* and the Torah than the Adventists, and they believed in an intermediate disembodied afterlife attended by future resurrection. Instead, the adoption of “soul sleep” by the SDA Church, WWCOG, and other offshoots, is probably more guided by wanting to reject what is thought to be a mainline Protestant doctrine. Hebrew Roots groups which tend to advocate complete unconsciousness between death and resurrection, are usually guided by a similar impetus, but they often irresponsibly connect a disembodied afterlife as being some form of “paganism.” Quite contrary to this, liberals and those various conservatives in contemporary theology, who believe in psychopannychy, do so on the basis of their position that the human being is an entirely physical creature, something which they also usually believe modern science and Darwinian evolution have proven.

Those who believe in psychopannychy are ultimately confronted with a great deal of discomfort and dread when a loved one passes away, or when they are facing their own deaths. What does a spiritual leader who is comforting a grieving family—who believes in “soul sleep”—have to offer? *That the deceased will only be steadily decomposing in a gravesite, until some far off and distant resurrection?* Rather than with Believers being with the

Messiah in some kind of Paradise after death, that it will only be a matter of time before the casket seal breaks and maggots and parasites get to have their way with their father, mother, or dear friend?

It is easy to see how the traditional view of the deceased righteous waiting in Heaven until the future time of resurrection, firmly based within the Scriptures, brings much comfort. A cemetery gravesite is actually an encouraging place of solace to visit—as a grave will one day be reopened, with the deceased consciousness returning to a reanimated body at the Second Coming! Decomposition, regardless of how fast or slow it may be, should not frighten us—because the essential person of memory, emotion, and experience has not been buried. The one who placed his or her trust in the Messiah Yeshua is consciously in His presence, yet is most eager to return to Earth as salvation history progresses forward. We only run into problems when we fail to emphasize the intermediate state as only temporary, and that it will be attended by a future resurrection.

Ultimately, why do some people adopt psychopannychy—a view essentially shared by atheists and agnostics that when a person dies, he or she falls into endless unconsciousness? **Is it a fear of what lies beyond?** Is it a failure to really contemplate the 100 billion galaxies (or more) in our known universe, and consider the multiple dimensions of existence and paralleling universes, and humans' place within the cosmic scheme? Is it a phobia of recognizing that outside of all of these venues of being, sits a great and everlasting God to whom all must give account, and that death is the means by which the mysteries of the cosmos *begin* to be revealed to us? We may never know the final answer; the key is to know Yeshua (Jesus) the Messiah as Lord and Savior, and in being prepared for eternity at all times.