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Yet for many Jews, and many more Christians, questions abound about what is to occur between the moments of physical death and future resurrection. *What happens to people?* Do people somehow go into absolute unconsciousness, only to then be somehow recreated? Is the death of a human being little different than the death of an animal? Is the death of a human being much different than the death of an animal, with the consciousness of mind, memory, experience, and creativity—often more called in the vernacular to be a “soul”—temporarily held in another dimension until the resurrection?

This installment of the *Confronting Issues* series by Messianic Apologetics, *To Be Absent From the Body*, has brought together some important information and critical FAQ entries. There are definite questions of human dignity and worth to be evaluated regarding the intermediate state. This volume addresses this subject quite well. If you have a relative, a friend, or another loved one who has passed away knowing the Lord—you can be assured that he or she is consciously in His presence right now—but is also quite eager to return to the Earth to see His Kingdom restored!

**TO BE ABSENT
FROM THE BODY**

TO BE ABSENT FROM THE BODY

J.K. McKee

MESSIANIC APOLOGETICS

messianicapologetics.net

TO BE ABSENT FROM THE BODY

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This volume is dedicated to

David G. Pavlik (1949-2012)

a servant, a shepherd, a friend

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	xv
TO BE ABSENT FROM THE BODY	1
Death Expectations in the Tanach	55
Genesis 37:35.....	56
Leviticus 19:31; 20:6; Isaiah 8:19-20.....	57
Numbers 16:30-33	59
1 Samuel 28:13-15	60
Isaiah 14:9-11, 18-20	62
Psalm 146:2-4	66
Ecclesiastes 3:18-22.....	68
Ecclesiastes 9:5-10.....	72
Death Expectations in the Apostolic Scriptures.....	88
Mark 9:4-5; Matthew 17:3-4; Luke 9:30-33	89
Mark 12:25-27; Matthew 22:31-33; Luke 20:37-39.....	91
Luke 16:19-31	95
Luke 23:42-43.....	100
John 3:12-13.....	103
John 14:2-3.....	105
Acts 2:29, 34	108
Acts 7:56-60	111
1 Thessalonians 4:14-15	114
2 Corinthians 5:1-10	115
Philippians 1:21-23.....	120
2 Timothy 4:6-8.....	124
Hebrews 9:27-28	126

Hebrews 12:22-23.....	127
1 Peter 3:18-20	129
2 Peter 1:13-15	132
Revelation 6:9-11.....	133

ASSOCIATED FAQs

ON THE INTERMEDIATE STATE163

Psychopannychy, motivation for belief.....	163
Dualism.....	166
Death, as an unconscious sleep	172
Breath of life, humans and animals.....	180
Eternal life, physically alive forever	183
Afterlife, negates need for resurrection.....	188
Afterlife, negates significance of death.....	191
Heaven, prayer covering offered by deceased loved ones	193
2 Corinthians 5:8.....	196
Philippians 1:23.....	205
Luke 16:19-31	211

ABOUT THE AUTHOR219

BIBLIOGRAPHY221

Abbreviation Chart and Special Terms

The following is a chart of abbreviations for reference works and special terms that 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.

Special terms that may be used have been provided in this chart:

ABD: <i>Anchor Bible Dictionary</i>	DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition
AMG: <i>Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament</i>	DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls
ANE: Ancient Near East(ern)	ECB: <i>Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible</i>
Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament	EDB: <i>Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible</i>
Ara: Aramaic	eisegesis: "reading meaning into," or interjecting a preconceived or foreign meaning into a Biblical text
ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996)	EJ: <i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i>
b. Babylonian Talmud (<i>Talmud Bavli</i>)	ESV: English Standard Version (2001)
B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C.	exegesis: "drawing meaning out of," or the process of trying to understand what a Biblical text means on its own
BDAG: <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich)	EXP: <i>Expositor's Bible Commentary</i>
BDB: <i>Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i>	Ger: German
BECNT: <i>Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament</i>	GNT: Greek New Testament
BKCNT: <i>Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament</i>	Grk: Greek
C.E.: Common Era or A.D.	<i>halachah</i> : lit. "the way to walk," how the Torah is lived out in an individual's life or faith community
CEV: Contemporary English Version (1995)	HALOT: <i>Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> (Koehler and Baumgartner)
CGEDNT: <i>Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words</i> (Barclay M. Newman)	HCSB: Holman Christian Standard Bible (2004)
CHALOT: <i>Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i>	Heb: Hebrew
CJB: Complete Jewish Bible (1998)	HNV: Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible

- ICC: *International Critical Commentary*
- 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)
- LS: *A Greek-English Lexicon* (Liddell & Scott)
- 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*
- NIGTC: *New International Greek Testament Commentary*
- NICNT: *New International Commentary on the New Testament*
- NIDB: *New International Dictionary of the Bible*
- NIV: *New International Version* (1984)
- NJB: *New Jerusalem Bible-Catholic* (1985)
- NJPS: *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*
- orthopraxy: lit. "the right action," how the Bible or one's theology is lived out in the world
- OT: *Old Testament*
- PreachC: *The Preacher's Commentary*
- 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*
- TEV: *Today's English Version* (1976)
- TLV: *Tree of Life Messianic Family Bible—New Covenant* (2011)
- TNIV: *Today's New International Version* (2005)
- TNTC: *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*
- 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

WBC: *Word Biblical Commentary*

Yid: Yiddish

YLT: Young's Literal Translation
(1862/1898)

Introduction

Without any doubt, one of the most uncomfortable subjects that any human being has to confront in life is **death**. You do not have to be that well versed in reading the Bible, to adequately understand that *death is a part of living*. With the possible exception of those who will actually be alive at the moment of the Second Coming (1 Corinthians 15:51), the biological life functions of each and every one of us will cease. A mainstay, of both Judaism and Christianity, is the firm belief in the future resurrection of the dead. A Scripture passage like Daniel 12:1 unambiguously tells us, “Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake...” (NASU). Everyone whom I know in today’s broad Messianic movement would agree that the deceased from all ages will have their physical remains reanimated and resurrected to new biological life.

Yet for many Jews, and many more Christians, questions abound about what is to occur between the moments of physical death and future resurrection. *What happens to people?* Do people somehow go into absolute unconsciousness, only to then be somehow recreated? Is the death of a human being little different than the death of an animal? Is the death of a human being much different than the death of an animal, with the consciousness of mind, memory, experience, and creativity—more often called in the vernacular to be a “soul”—temporarily held in another dimension until the resurrection?

There are many important theological and philosophical questions to be considered about the intermediate state between death and the resurrection. Many in the broad Messianic movement believe in some sort of conscious, disembodied afterlife following death. Many others do not. *They all attend*