

**TO BE ABSENT
FROM THE BODY**

confronting issues series

TO BE ABSENT FROM THE BODY

J.K. McKee



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

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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> | understand what a Biblical text means on its own |
| AMG: <i>Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament, New Testament</i> | EXP: <i>Expositor's Bible Commentary</i> |
| ANE: Ancient Near East(ern) | Ger: German |
| Apostolic Scriptures/Writings: the New Testament | GNT: Greek New Testament |
| Ara: Aramaic | Grk: Greek |
| ATS: ArtScroll Tanach (1996) | <i>halachah</i> : lit. "the way to walk," how the Torah is lived out in an individual's life or faith community |
| b. Babylonian Talmud (<i>Talmud Bavli</i>) | HALOT: <i>Hebrew & Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> (Koehler and Baumgartner) |
| B.C.E.: Before Common Era or B.C. | HCSB: Holman Christian Standard Bible (2004) |
| BDAG: <i>A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature</i> (Bauer, Danker, Arndt, Gingrich) | Heb: Hebrew |
| BDB: <i>Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon</i> | HNV: Hebrew Names Version of the World English Bible |
| BECNT: <i>Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament</i> | ICC: <i>International Critical Commentary</i> |
| BKCNT: <i>Bible Knowledge Commentary: New Testament</i> | IDB: <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible</i> |
| C.E.: Common Era or A.D. | IDBSup: <i>Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible Supplement</i> |
| CEV: Contemporary English Version (1995) | ISBE: <i>International Standard Bible Encyclopedia</i> |
| CGEDNT: <i>Concise Greek-English Dictionary of New Testament Words</i> (Barclay M. Newman) | IVPBBC: <i>IVP Bible Background Commentary (Old & New Testament)</i> |
| CHALOT: <i>Concise Hebrew and Aramaic Lexicon of the Old Testament</i> | Jastrow: <i>Dictionary of the Targumim, Talmud Ba'ali, Talmud Yerushalmi, and Midrashic Literature</i> (Marcus Jastrow) |
| CJB: Complete Jewish Bible (1998) | JBK: New Jerusalem Bible-Koren (2000) |
| DRA: Douay-Rheims American Edition | JETS: <i>Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society</i> |
| DSS: Dead Sea Scrolls | KJV: King James Version |
| ECB: <i>Eerdmans Commentary on the Bible</i> | Lattimore: <i>The New Testament by Richmond Lattimore</i> (1996) |
| EDB: <i>Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible</i> | LITV: <i>Literal Translation of the Holy Bible</i> by Jay P. Green (1986) |
| eisegesis: "reading meaning into," or interjecting a preconceived or foreign meaning into a Biblical text | LS: <i>A Greek-English Lexicon</i> (Liddell & Scott) |
| EJ: <i>Encyclopaedia Judaica</i> | LXE: <i>Septuagint with Apocrypha</i> by Sir L.C.L. Brenton (1851) |
| ESV: English Standard Version (2001) | |
| exegesis: "drawing meaning out of," or the process of trying to | |

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

The *Confronting Issues* series began in 2007, as a selection of small stapled booklets, comprising a rather forthright article or two produced by Outreach Israel Ministries and (now) Messianic Apologetics. Today in 2012, because of the significant wave of changes and transitions occurring within the broad Messianic community, the *Confronting Issues* series is being retooled a bit, into small books, addressing some of the major debates of the day. It would be our hope and prayer that these new releases are able to interject a well-needed perspective into the conversation regarding the different topics of importance, offering fair-minded and constructive solutions, which carefully address the Biblical text, and can sincerely help Jewish and non-Jewish Believers in their walk with Yeshua the Messiah.

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..." 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—

often more 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 Messianic congregations together.* Frequently, though, one’s views or opinions surrounding the condition of the departed between death and the resurrection only crops up once and a while—but subsequent to the death of a fellow congregational member, is a debate that can get absolutely out of control. Accusations from those who do not believe in any kind of intermediate afterlife before the resurrection, can be particularly offsetting to people, who have often not heard them before.

This installment of the *Confronting Issues* series by Messianic Apologetics, *To Be Absent From the Body*, has brought together my article by the aforementioned name and some critical FAQ entries website. While as a ministry, Outreach Israel and Messianic Apologetics would fully affirm, in the words of some contemporary theologians, that the Bible is more concerned about “the life *after* the afterlife”—meaning what is to occur after the resurrection—there are definite questions of human dignity and worth to be evaluated regarding the intermediate state. I believe that this volume addresses this subject quite well, and that if you have a relative, a friend, or another loved one who has passed away knowing the Lord—that 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!**

J.K. McKee
Editor, Messianic Apologetics

To Be Absent From the Body

Death is one of the most difficult topics that any human being ever has to deal with. None of us likes dealing with the death of a family member, a close friend, or even people we do not know but still admire. Many people regularly visit the gravesite of a loved one, whereas others have their remains cremated and scattered into the wind. Even if you do not regularly visit a cemetery where your loved one may be buried, thoughts and memories of the deceased will undoubtedly still come to your mind from time to time, and the last memory you may have of such a person—that of your loved one’s funeral—is perhaps what you remember.

The Holy Scriptures give us as Believers a great deal of comfort, as we know that we will see those who die in the faith again. Those of us who believe in the doctrine of resurrection know that a gravesite is not the final destination. The Apostle Paul, writing to the Thessalonians who had not largely originally grown up in a culture of resurrection, corrected them with this instruction:

“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of *the* archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Messiah will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words” (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18).

The doctrine of resurrection is comforting, because the process of decomposition will be reversed. No matter how hard the funeral industry may try to retard decay via embalming, the placement of a body in an hermetically sealed casket, and then the placement of a casket in a heavy airtight vault—a corpse will still decay. But as the Scriptures so properly put it, “I will put sinews on you, make flesh grow back on you, cover you with skin and put breath in you that you may come alive; and you shall know that I am the LORD” (Ezekiel 37:6).

Isaiah 26:19 likewise says, “Your dead will live; their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy.” The resurrection of our Lord Yeshua should assure us that those who have died in faith will also be resurrected, with bodies that will live and breathe again: “Messiah has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep” (1 Corinthians 15:20).

The doctrine of resurrection is something very important for each of us to believe, especially as it concerns salvation and what Yeshua has accomplished for us (Hebrews 9:28). Yet undeniably connected to the doctrine of resurrection is what happens to the deceased in the interim. What is the intermediate condition of those who have died? Are our friends and loved ones, who knew the Lord during their lives and were saved, simply waiting in the ground for that day of resurrection, their bodies decaying? Or, are our friends and loved ones, who knew the Lord during their lives and were saved, **in the presence of the Lord**, awaiting to be reunited with their bodies on that day of resurrection?

Belief in a post-mortem afterlife, where deceased Believers wait in Heaven in the presence of the Lord until the time of resurrection, has come under considerable attack in the past century, primarily from theological liberals, but now even from some purported theological conservatives.¹ Even in our own Messianic movement, the idea that “going to Heaven when you die” is not a Biblical teaching, has gained much ground in various sectors, even though there has been little detailed engagement with the ramifications of such a view. The words of the Maccabean martyrs, “For if we so die, Abraham and Isaac and Jacob will welcome us, and all the fathers will praise us” (4 Maccabees 13:17; cf. 9:8-9), are not heard. Ignored are the countless testimonies of faithful Believers who have lived their lives knowing that once they die, they will meet their Savior, having glimpses of Him in their twilight moments. And what of the conviction of those who know that when they worship the Lord, they join in with a company of angels and saints who are in Heaven right now worshipping the Lord (Hebrews 12:22-23)?

¹ In my experience at Asbury Theological Seminary (2005-2008), at least one prominent faculty member, Joel Green, was an open psychopannychist, although this would largely only be known from his various writings. I doubt if many of the average students knew of his position on the intermediate state, and I do know that if some of my friends at seminary knew of this—they would be shocked and horrified.

In my own personal assessment, Green, especially given the various statements he makes in his book *Body, Soul, and Human Life*, is basically a liberal theologian in evangelical garb.

While he firmly held to the doctrine of resurrection, Paul's own words "My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better" (Philippians 1:23, RSV), or perhaps more significantly, "**I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord**" (2 Corinthians 5:8), get quickly left out of the discussion. Frequently, it is not until one is facing death—either the death of a loved one, or one's own personal death—that the subject comes up. Many, because of all of the rhetoric that has been floating around, are confused and do not know what to believe about the time between death and resurrection. They do not know what to think between hearing things about Hellenistic philosophy, the different dimensions of life and death, Sheol and the grave, and whether or not the human being is unique among God's creatures in comparison to the animals.

It is easy to say that this is a topic worthy of our discussion, lest we be confused any longer. An evaluation of the subject matter, and an impetus not to oversimplify things, is needed. The subject of death and resurrection is supposed to be something elementary (Hebrews 6:1-2), meaning that it is *to already be understood* by mature men and women of God. Is our inability to understand this properly as Messianic Believers an indication that we are not as mature as we should be? What are the motives of Believers who are convicted that when they die they will be immediately transported into the presence of their Savior, and the motives of those who think that they will just fall asleep into sheer unconsciousness and be buried?

Stopping the Confusion

When surveying the debate over the intermediate state between death and resurrection, there are people in today's independent Messianic community who are confused. Most of Messianic Judaism's position on the intermediate state between death and resurrection has been the same as most of evangelical Christianity: a Believer in the Messiah departs this Earth for the presence of the Lord, with the person's consciousness (sometimes called a "soul") to be returned to his or her reanimated physical body at the time of resurrection.² Today, however, instead of hearing things like "In My Father's house are many dwelling places..." (John 14:2), many independent Messianics will instead declare "...the dead do not know anything..." (Ecclesiastes 9:5).

² Consult David H. Stern, *Jewish New Testament Commentary* (Clarksville, MD: Jewish New Testament Publications, 1995), pp 134, 594.

The doctrine of psychopannychy—more commonly known by the vernacular “soul sleep”—is often not viewed as heresy in today’s evangelical Church, but is instead viewed as a theological aberration.³ I would not consider Messianics who believe in what is commonly called “soul sleep” to be heretics, but I would consider their interpretations of Scripture to be questionable, misguided, usually materialistic, and a bit one-dimensional (in view of the over 100 billion galaxies in our known universe, and especially in light of diverse scientific research proving the existence of multiple “universes”).

To further complicate things, some of the passages, that psychopannychists bring to the attention of Bible readers, have sometimes been viewed as being anti-resurrection. Today, a sizeable number of independent Messianics believe in psychopannychy, or at least concede that it has valid points. Outreach Israel Ministries and Messianic Apologetics have never advocated any kind of “soul sleep,” always firmly adhering to the Bible’s complete teaching of an intermediate afterlife for all people (whether in the presence of the Lord in Heaven *or* separated from Him in Hell) until the resurrection. **But, perhaps contrary to popular thought, we have always affirmed the reality of a future resurrection, never advocating a permanent disembodied afterlife.**

It has been our observation that as the independent Messianic movement has expanded, people from traditions outside those of mainline Judaism and evangelical Christianity have brought their theology of psychopannychy with them.⁴ *They frequently make it their duty to “correct” everyone.* This influence is often coupled with a wide

³ Everett F. Harrison, “soul sleep,” in *Baker’s Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1960), 492; Walter Martin, *The Kingdom of the Cults* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1985), pp 447-459.

Samuele Bacchiocchi, *Immortality or Resurrection? A Biblical Study on Human Nature and Destiny* (Berrien Springs, MI: Biblical Perspectives, 1998), 189 actually considers any kind of dualistic view of human nature to be a “deadly heresy.” Contrary to this, Martin, *Kingdom of the Cults*, pp 447-459 only considers the views of Bacchiocchi’s Seventh-Day Adventist Church in this regard to be an aberration, and states quite clearly that he does not consider the Adventists to be a cult. I largely concur with Martin’s conclusion,

“The question of soul sleep...should cause no serious division between Christians since it does not affect the foundational doctrines of the Christian faith or the salvation of the soul. It is merely an area of theological debate and has no direct bearing upon any of the great doctrines of the Bible. The ground of fellowship is not the condition of man in death but faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and the love He commanded us to have one for another (John 13:34, 35)” (*Kingdom of the Cults*, 456).

⁴ These groups include, but are by no means limited to: the Seventh-Day Adventist Church, various offshoots from the Worldwide Church of God (Armstrongism), and various Sacred Name Only cults.

amount of disrespect that has been encouraged toward our Christian theological heritage, and is now being coupled with disrespect toward our Jewish theological heritage (in particular, the beliefs of the ancient Pharisees). The doctrine of psychopannychy is now an avant-garde teaching in many sectors of the Messianic movement, with some actually claiming that it is “revelation” that the Father is restoring to His people.

It has become quite en vogue in parts of today’s Messianic movement to advocate that any belief in a disembodied afterlife is one of the so-called “lies” of the Christian Church that must be discarded, with information on this subject presented in a very harsh manner. When people hear this—especially those who have lost loved ones and have had to go through some kind of grief counseling—they can be easily confused and not know what to do. C.J. Koster, founder of the Institute for Scripture Research, is quite direct in stating,

“One of the most popular doctrines of the Church is that of ‘going to heaven.’ Nobody is going to heaven. The Reign (Kingdom) of heaven is coming to earth - that is what we read in Scripture! The ‘going to heaven’ was a popular Pagan doctrine.”⁵

For some of today’s Messianics, this is *all* that needs to be said. They think that Born again Believers being transported into the presence of the Lord at time of death is a pagan doctrine, and thus it must be rejected. We who believe in a disembodied intermediate time in Heaven are said to be denying the blessed hope of the resurrection (1 Thessalonians 4:13). We are said to be denying the reality that Heaven is coming to Earth, and that Yeshua the Messiah will reign over this planet. We are said to have denied that God is concerned about restoring the whole human person (1 Thessalonians 5:23). They think that further examination with Scripture passages that strongly point to Believers departing to an intermediate time in Heaven prior to the resurrection is not necessary.

Yet this kind of argument leaves out some very important data: it assumes that *everyone* who believes in a disembodied intermediate state for Believers in Heaven denies the doctrine of resurrection—**which we surely do not!** No one should ever deny the fact that the orthodox Jewish and Christian traditions—which today’s Messianic movement largely benefits from—are *united* in their shared conviction that there will be a resurrection of deceased bodies in the eschaton (Daniel 12:2).

⁵ C.J. Koster. (n.d.). *Replacement Theology-Part 2*. Qodesh Publishers. Retrieved 04 February, 2009, from <<http://www.qodesh.co.za/>>.

The doctrine of resurrection sets the Biblical message strikingly apart from paganism, because it advocates that our Creator is very much concerned with the physical human body every bit as much as He is concerned with the immaterial human consciousness.

It is right to say that various Christian teachers and pastors have overemphasized “going to Heaven” in popular preaching—perceived as some form of endless disembodied bliss in the clouds—at the expense of underemphasizing the Second Coming of the Messiah, where physical bodies of deceased persons will be resurrected and His reign will come to Planet Earth. It is not incorrect to assert that some have adopted a dangerous Platonic idea that matter is evil (discussed further), and that instead all we need to be concerned about is something spiritual or metaphysical. N.T. Wright, among today’s evangelical scholars, has been correct to remind us, “The meaning of ‘resurrection’ as **‘life after life after death’** cannot be overemphasized”⁶ (emphasis mine). As the people of God, we are responsible for remembering that the world God has made is “very good” (Genesis 1:31), and that physical matter is by no means inherently evil. If we can view physical matter as “very good,” it will lead to us properly fulfilling His mission and our dominion over the Earth, rather than spurning it.

It is also important for us to remember that those who believe in psychopannychy have often been divided into two sub-groups: sectarian cultists who deny key Biblical doctrines such as Yeshua’s Divinity, and theological liberals. For almost two centuries, liberal theology has widely advocated that Holy Scripture should be treated as some kind of inspirational theology, but not as accurate history.⁷ Liberals have to often deny an intermediate state for the dead, because if Believers are waiting in the presence of the Lord in Heaven prior to resurrection, then unbelievers must be similarly waiting in some kind of intermediate punishment prior to their resurrection and final sentencing. (Their actual position on the doctrine of resurrection is frequently uncertain.) Sectarian cultists, however, are simply guided by an ethos of wanting to inflict as much damage as they can on what they perceive as any cardinal doctrine of evangelical Christianity.

⁶ N.T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 31; see also *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008), pp 151, 169.

⁷ For a presentation of this point of view, this writer recommends you peruse Marcus J. Borg, *Reading the Bible Again for the First Time: Taking the Bible Seriously But Not Literally* (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2001).

Messianics who have recently adopted a belief in psychopannychy are largely those who want to give evangelical Christianity a similar kick in the tuccus, not often being guided by wanting to constructively discuss the issues. Frequently, they are very contentious and mean-spirited about their newfound "Truth," and want everyone to know that they now deny some kind of "pagan belief" of going to Heaven. *This approach breeds nothing less than confusion among brethren*, and does not encourage an objective analysis of the Scriptures. It certainly does not help those who are grieving over the loss of a loved one who knew the Savior.

In contrast to this, we should be those who want to give a fair hearing to the issue, examining what the Scriptures say about the human constitution, the intermediate state of the dead prior to resurrection, and the ideology of a person wanting to go to the presence of the Savior at time of death *or* just to a place of burial. Denying something simply because "the Church taught it" is insufficient; what matters is that one's convictions are confirmed by a fair examination of Biblical texts. I have discovered via experience that not all Messianics who embrace a belief in psychopannychy hold to it indefinitely, as there will often be a reevaluation of the view when a relative or close friend dies, or when one's own self is struck with the question of death. Many realize that they get caught up in a fad, and that they have been influenced by sensationalistic rhetoric of little substance.

Interpretational Issues

Those who believe in the doctrine of psychopannychy are often marked by failing to consider a wider scope and selection of Biblical passages, including the principle of progressive revelation whereby statements made in the Tanach may be clarified by further statements made in the Apostolic Scriptures (Hebrews 1:1-2). Messianic advocates of psychopannychy often base their arguments entirely upon what they read as stated in the Tanach. Robert A. Morey rightly observes in his book *Death and the Afterlife*, "we cannot base our understanding of death and an afterlife solely upon passages found in the Old Testament...we must recognize that the vision of the Old Testament prophets was intrinsically blurred and, as a result, was vague on most of the details."⁸ Only focusing on the Tanach is a serious problem even for those who *just hold* to a doctrine of resurrection, and deny any kind of disembodied post-mortem state for the interim.

⁸ Robert A. Morey, *Death and the Afterlife* (Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1984), 23.

The principle of progressive revelation should not at all be difficult for us to understand, because as Believers in Messiah Yeshua we stand on the firm conviction that He is the dénouement of the Tanach Scriptures (Luke 24:44; cf. Romans 10:4, Grk.). Prophecies that speak of Yeshua's Messiahship in the Tanach are made clear by specific examples we see in the Gospels of His ministry and atoning work for us. In a similar way, it should not be a stretch for us to see that vague or unclear statements regarding death and human destiny in the Tanach, have greater clarification when the testimony and the events of the Apostolic Scriptures are taken into account.

Those who advocate the doctrine of psychopannychy do not typically consider a wider array of Scripture passages regarding the post-mortem state prior to resurrection. They often give an obscure text like the Book of Ecclesiastes more theological weight in the discussion of the state of the dead, than texts like the Gospels or the Epistles. A clause such as "the dead know nothing" (Ecclesiastes 9:5, RSV/NIV) by the anonymous Qohelet, is believed to take vast precedence over statements by known people such as those of Yeshua the Messiah (Luke 23:43) or the Apostle Paul (2 Corinthians 5:4-10; Philippians 1:19-24). Furthermore, they often read Qohelet's words with the wrong presuppositions, failing to take into account its rather late acceptance (and somewhat controversial place) into the Tanach canon (m.*Yadayaim* 3:5; cf. m.*Eduyyot* 5:3).

One issue that absolutely requires us to not ignore the testimony of the Apostolic Scriptures **is actually the doctrine of resurrection itself**. Some passages of the Tanach could be read from the perspective that there is no resurrection. Genesis 3:19 says, "you are dust, and to dust you shall return." Ecclesiastes 9:2-3 says, "It is the same for all. There is one fate for the righteous and for the wicked; for the good, for the clean and for the unclean...they go to the dead." And perhaps among the most problematic could be Psalm 78:39: "Thus He remembered that they were but flesh, a wind that passes and does not return." Are these just reminders that human beings are but the created, or are they assertions that people live their lives, die, *and that is it?*

Various people reading these verses would say that this indicates that there is no resurrection after time of death, as all die and there is no return from decomposition. No psychopannychists would argue that this is what these verses indicate; they would instead say, and rightfully so, that these are all general remarks made about how all people die. They would also rightly argue that a larger scope of Scripture passages needs to be taken into consideration in order to confirm a theology of