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# Death is a Night That Lies Between Two Days

By

**Rabbi Dr. Maurice Lamm**  
President and Founder NIJH

*Excerpted from*

**The Jewish Way in Death and Mourning**  
Jonathan David Publishing Co.



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In immortality man finds fulfillment of all his dreams. In this religious framework, the sages equated this world with an ante-room to a great palace, the glorious realm of the future. For a truly religious personality, death has profound meaning, because for him life is a tale told by a saint. It is, indeed, full of sound and fury which sometimes signifies nothing, but often bears eloquent testimony to the Divine power that created and sustained him.

The rabbis say this world can be compared to a wedding. At a wedding two souls are united. In that relationship they bear the seed of the future. Ultimately, the partners to the wedding die – but the seed of life grows on, and death is conquered, for the seed of the future carries the germ of the past. The world is like unto a wedding.

Death has meaning if life had no meaning. If one is not able to live, will one be able to die?

## **Is There Life After Life?**

**This section covers the concept of Immortality, the coming of a Messiah, the Resurrection of the Dead, and also the meaning of death in Jewish terms. Terminally ill patients, especially, may gain strength and confidence from the realization that Judaism has never considered death to be the final act of life. "Death is a night that lies between two days." "As we separate and die from the womb, only to be born to life, so we separate and die from our world, only to be re-born to life eternal."**



## The World Beyond the Grave

### Life After Death

Man has had an abiding faith in a world beyond the grave. The conviction in a life after death, unprovable and unshakeable, has been cherished since the beginning of thinking man's life on earth. It makes its appearance in religious literature not as a fiat, commanded irrevocably by an absolute God, but rather arises plant-like, growing and developing naturally in the soul. It then sprouts forth through sublime prayer and sacred hymn. Only later does it become extrapolated in complicated metaphysical speculation. The after-life has not been "thought-up"; it is not a rational construction of a religious philosophy imposed on a believing man. It has sprung from within the hearts of masses of men, a sort of *consensus gentium*, inside out, a hope beyond and above the rational, a longing for the warm sun of eternity. The after-life is not a theory to be proven logically or demonstrated by rational analysis. It is axiomatic. It is to the soul what oxygen is to the lungs. There is little meaning to life, to God, to man's constant strivings, to all of his great achievements, unless there is a world beyond the grave.

The Bible, so vitally concerned with the actions of man in this world, and agonizing of his day-to-day morals, is relatively silent about the world-to-come. But, precisely, this very silence is a tribute to this awesome concept, taken for granted like the oxygen in the atmosphere. No elaborate apologia, no complex abstractions are necessary.

beast, and the world – in Shopenhauer's phrase – *eine grosse schlachtfeld*, a great battlefield, and if values are only those of the jungle, aimed only at the satisfaction of animal appetites – than death is simply a further reduction to the basic elements, progress an adventure into nothingness, and our existence on this earth only a cosmic trap. In this scheme, life is surrounded by parentheses, dropped or substituted without loss of meaning to nature. Death, in this sense, is the end of a cruel match that pits man against beat, and man against man. It is the last slaughter. Furtively, irrevocably, despairingly, man sinks into the soil of a cold and personal nature, his life without purpose, his death without significance. His grave need not be marked. As his days were as a passing shadow, without substance and shape, so his final repose.

If life is altogether absurd, with man bound and chained by impersonal fate or ironbound circumstances, where he is never able to achieve real freedom and only dread and anguish prevail – then death is the welcome release from the chains of despair. The puppet is returned to the box, a string is severed, the strain is no more. But if life is the creation of a benevolent God, the infusion of the Divine breath; if man is not only higher than the animal, but also "a little lower than the angels"; if he has a soul, as well as a body; if his relationship is not only the "I-it" of man and nature, but the "I-Thou" of creature with Creator; and if he tempers his passions with the moral demands of an eternal, transcendent God – then death is a return to the Creator at a time of death set by the Creator, and life-after-death the only way of a just and merciful and ethical God. If life has any significance, if it is not mere happenstance, then man knows that someday his body will be replaced, even as his soul unites with eternal God.

With all of modern man's sophistication, his brilliant technological achievements, the immense progress of his science, his discovery of new worlds of thought, he has not come one iota closer to grasping the meaning of death than did his ancient ancestors. Philosophers and poets have probed the idea of immortality, but stubbornly it remains, as always, the greatest paradox in life.

In practice, however, we must realize that what death means to the individual depends very much on what life means to him.

If life is a stage, and we are the poor players who strut and fret our hour upon the stage and then are heard no more; if life is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing; if life is an inconsequential drama, a purposeless amusement – then death is only the heavy curtain that falls on the final act. It sounds its hollow thud: *Finita la comedia*, and we are no more. Death has no significance, because life itself has no lasting meaning.

If life is only the arithmetic of coincidence, man a chance composite of molecules, the world a haphazard conglomeration without design and purpose, where everything is temporal and nothing eternal – with values dictated only by consensus – then death is merely the check-mate to an interesting, thoughtful, but useless game of chance. Death has no transcendent significance, since nothing in life has transcendent significance. If such is the philosophy of life, death is meaningless, and the deceased need merely be disposed of unceremoniously, and as efficiently as possible.

If life is only nature mindlessly and compulsively spinning its complicated web, and man only a high-level

The Bible, which records the sacred dialogue between God and man, surely must be founded on the soul's eternal existence. It was not a matter of debate, as it became later in history. When whole movements interpreted scripture with slavish literalism and could not find the after-life crystallized in letters or words, or later, when philosophers began to apply the yardstick of rationalism to man's every hope and idea and sought empirical proof for this conviction of the soul. It was a fundamental creed, always present, though rarely articulated.

If the soul is immortal then death cannot be considered a final act. If the life of the soul is to be continued, then death, however bitter, is deprived of its treacherous power of casting mourners into a lifetime of agonizing hopelessness over an irretrievable loss. Terrible though it is, death is a threshold to a new world – the "world-to-come."

### **A Parable**

An imaginative and telling analogy that conveys the hope and confidence in the after-life, even though this hope must be refracted through the prism of death, is the tale of twins awaiting birth in the mother's womb. It was created by a contemporary Israeli rabbi, the late Y. M. Tuckachinsky.

Imagine twins growing peacefully in the warmth of the womb. Their mouths are closed, and they are being fed via the navel. Their lives are serene. The whole world, to these brothers, is the interior of the womb. Who could conceive anything larger, better, more comfortable? They begin to wonder; "We are getting lower and lower. Surely if it continues, we will exit one day. What will happen after we exit?"

Now the first infant is a believer. He is heir to a religious tradition which tells him that there will be a “new life” after this wet and warm existence of the womb. A strange belief, seemingly without foundation, but one to which he holds fast. The second infant is a thorough-going skeptic. Mere stories do not deceive him. He believes only in that which can be demonstrated. He is enlightened, and tolerates no idle conjecture. What is not within one’s experience can have no basis in one’s imagination.

Says the faithful brother: “After our ‘death’ here, there will be a new great world. We will eat through the mouth! We will see great distances, and we will hear through the ears on the sides of our heads. Why, our feet will be straightened! And our heads – up and free, rather than down and boxed in.”

Replies the skeptic: Nonsense. You’re straining your imagination again. There is no foundation for this belief. It is only your survival instinct, an elaborate defense mechanism, a historically-conditioned subterfuge. You are looking for something to calm your fear of ‘death.’ There is only *this world*. There is no world-to-come!”

“Well then,” asks the first, “what do you say it will be like?”

The second brother snappily replies with all the assurance of the slightly knowledgeable: “We will go with a bang. Our world will collapse and we will sink into oblivion. No more. Nothing. Black void. An end to consciousness. Forgotten. This may not be a comforting thought, but it is the logical one.”

in God as the God of goodness. A great teacher of our generation supports this by citing from the central prayer in the daily prayerbook, “You support the *falling*, and heal the *sick*, and free those who are *bound up*, and keep your faith with those who *sleep in the dust*.” The prayerbook lists a series of evils that befall man, and asserts that God will save man from them. Those who “fall” suffer financial failure, a defect in the structure of society. We believe that God who is good will overcome that defect. He will “support the falling.” Worse than that is sickness, which is a flaw in the physical nature of man. We believe that God is good and will not tolerate such an evil forever. He will heal the sick. Worse yet is the disease of slavery, the sickness which man wishes on his fellowman. God will overcome this, too, for He not only supports the falling and heals the sick, He is the great emancipator of man. The worst evil of all, however, the meanest scandal, the vilest disgrace to that being created in the image of God, is death, the end to all hope and all striving. But we believe in an ethical and good God. As He prevailed over the evils of lifetime, so will He prevail over the final evil, that of death. Thus, we conclude, you who support and heal, and free, will also keep your faith to those who are dead.

### **The Meaning of Death**

What is death? Is it merely the cessation of the biological function of living? Is it but the tragedy to end all other tragedies? Is it simply the disappearance of the soul, the end of consciousness, the evaporation of personality, the disintegration of the body into its elemental components? Or, is there a significance, some deep and abiding meaning to death – one that transcends our puny ability to understand?

the just God balances the scales and rewards or punishes those who truly deserve it. This doctrine of a resurrection is, thus, a necessary corollary of our belief in a just God.

### *God is Merciful*

But if we ask of God only that He can be just, can we expect that we ourselves will be resurrected? Who is so righteous as to be assured of that glorious reward? Hence we call upon God's mercy that he revive us. Thus, Joseph Albo, a fifteenth-century philosopher, notes that in the prayerbook the concept of resurrection is associated with "great mercy," whereas God's gift of life and sustenance are considered only "grace, kindness and mercy." Says Rabbi Albo: "The life of man is divided into three portions: the years of rise and growth, the middle years or the plateau, and the years of decline." These are described by the three adjectives – grace, kindness and mercy. While one is vigorous one does not require an *extra* measure of assistance from God in being nourished. All that he needs is Divine grace. In the second portion of life, man grows older, but he is still able and strong. He needs more than just Divine grace, he needs God's kindness. In the declining years, he is weak, dependent on others, and in desperate need of more than grace and kindness. He now needs God's mercy. But there is also a fourth portion of life: life after death. For this man requires more than grace, kindness and mercy. He needs "great mercy!" Thus in Albo's scheme, resurrection is only a natural, further development of God's providence. In the words of the prayerbook: "He sustains the living with kindness and revives the dead with *great* mercy."

### *God as an Ethical Personality*

The concept of life-after-death also follows from a belief

Suddenly the water inside the womb bursts. The womb convulses. Upheaval. Turmoil. Writhing. Everything lets loose. Then a mysterious pounding- a crushing, staccato pounding. Faster, faster, lower, lower.

The believing brother exits. Tearing himself from the womb, he falls outward. The second brother shrieks – startled by the "accident" befallen his brother. He bewails and bemoans the tragedy – the death of a perfectly fine fellow. Why? Why? Why didn't he take better care? Why did he fall into that terrible abyss?

As he thus laments, he hears a head-splitting cry, and a great tumult from the black abyss, and he trembles: "Oh my! What a horrible end! As I predicted!"

Meanwhile as the skeptic brother mourns, his "dead" brother has been born into a "new" world. The head-splitting cry is a sign of health and vigor, and the tumult is really a chorus of *mazal tovs* sounded by the waiting family thanking God for the birth of a healthy son.

Indeed, in the words of a contemporary thinker, man comes from the darkness of the "not yet," and proceeds to the darkness of the "no more." While it is difficult to imagine the "not yet" it is more difficult to picture the "no more."

As we separate and "die" from the womb, only to be born to life, so we separate and die from our world, only to be re-born to life eternal. The exit from the womb is the birth of the body. The exit from the body is the birth of the soul. As the womb requires a gestation period of nine months, the world requires a residence of 70 or 80 years. As the womb is a *prozdor*, an anteroom prefatory to life, so our present existence is a *prozdor* to the world beyond.

## The Concept of Immortality

The conception of an after-life is fundamental to the Jewish religion; it is an article of faith in the Jews' creed. The denial of the after-life constitutes a denial of the cornerstone of the faith. This concept is not merely an added detail that may lose its significance in some advanced age. It is an essential and enduring principle. Indeed, the Mishnah (*Sanhedrin* X, 1) expressly excludes from the reward of the "world beyond" he who holds that the resurrection of the dead is without Biblical warrant. Maimonides considers this belief one of the 13 basic truths which every Jew is commanded to hold.

The concept of the after-life entered the prayerbook in the philosophic hymns of *Yigdal* and *Ani Ma'amin*. Centuries later, hundreds of thousands of Jews, packed in cattle cars, enroute to the crematoria, sang the *Ani Ma'amin*, the affirmation of the coming of the Messiah. Philosophers, such as Hasdai Crescas in the fourteenth century, changed the formulation of the basic truths, but still kept immortality as a fundamental principle without which the Jewish religion is inconceivable. Simon Ben Zemah Duran, in the early fifteenth century, reduced the fundamentals to three, but resurrection was included. Joseph Albo, in the same era, revised the structure of dogmas, and still immortality remained a universally binding belief. No matter how the basic principles were reduced or revised, immortality remained a major tenet of Judaism. Indeed, we may say of immortality what Hermann Cohen says of the Messiah, "If the Jewish religion had done nothing more for mankind than proclaim the messianic idea of the Old Testament prophets, it could have claimed to be the bedrock of all of

useless, but are to be brought to fulfillment at the end of days.

The concept of resurrection thus serves to keep God ever in man's consciousness, to unify contemporary and historic Jewry, to affirm the value of god's world, and to heighten, rather than to depress, the values of man's worthy strivings in this world.

Which specific virtues might guarantee a person's resurrection is a subject of much debate. The method of resurrection is, of course, an open question that invites conjecture, but which can offer no definite answer.

While the details of the after-life are thus very much a matter of speculation, the traditional consensus must serve to illuminate the dark path. In the words of rabbi Joshua ben Chanania (*Niddah* 70b): "When they come to life again, we will consult about the matter."

### Life After Death: A Corollary of Jewish Belief

The existence of a life after death is a necessary corollary of the Jewish belief in a just and merciful and ethical God.

#### *God Is Just*

The Jew is caught in a dilemma: he believes that God is righteous and just – He rewards the good and punishes the wicked. Yet, for all the strength of his belief, he lives in a world where he sees that life is unfair. he sees all too often the spiritual anomaly of the righteous who suffer and the wicked who prosper. The sages answer by saying that there is *spiritual* reward and *spiritual* punishment. the answer that religion gives is that the good, just, and eternal God revives the righteous dead, while the wicked remain in the dust. It is in life-after-death at which time

character. It will live again as a whole people. The individual, even in death, is not separated from the society in which he lived. Third, physical resurrection affirms unequivocally that man's soul *and* his body are the creations of a holy God. There is a tendency to assume that the affirmation of a spiritual dimension in man must bring with it the corollary that his physical being is depreciated. Indeed, such has been the development of the body-soul duality in both the Christian tradition and in Oriental religions, and account for their glorification of asceticism. Further, even the Greek philosophers who were enamored at the beauty of the body, came to denigrate the physical side of man. They crowned reason as man's noblest virtue. For them the spiritual-intellectual endeavor to perceive the unchanging truth was the highest function of man. Man's material existence, on the other hand, was always in flux, subject to chance and, therefore inferior. Thus, they accepted immortality of the soul – which to the Greeks was what we call mind – which survives the extinction of his physical being. But they could not understand physical resurrection because they did not, by any means, consider the body worthy of being reborn.

To the contrary, Judaism has always stressed that the body, as the soul, is a gift of God – indeed, that it belongs to God." The soul is yours, and the body is your handiwork," the Jew declared. To care for the body is a religious command of the Bible. The practice of asceticism for religious purposes was tolerated, but the ascetic had to bring a sacrifice of atonement for his action. Resurrection affirms that the body is of value because it came from God, and it will be revived by God. Resurrection affirms that man's empirical existence is valuable in God's eyes.

His activities in this world are significant in the scheme of eternity. His strivings are not to be deprecated as vain and

the world's ethical culture."

Strange as it may appear, despite the historic unanimity has never been pierced, and only shadowy structures can be discerned. But, as a renowned artist remarked, the true genius of a painting can be determined at dusk when the light fades, when one can only see the outline, the broad strokes of the brush, while the details are submerged in darkness. The beauty of the concept of immortality and its enormous religious significance does not lie in the details. Maimonides denies that man can have a clear picture of the after-life and compares earth-bound creatures with the blind man who cannot learn to appreciate colors merely by being given a verbal description. Flesh-and-blood man cannot have any precise conception of the pure, spiritual bliss of the world beyond. Thus, says Maimonides, the precise sequence in which the after-life will unravel is not a cardinal article of the faith, and the faithful should not concern themselves with the details. So it is often in Judaism that abstract principles must be held in the larger, conceptual sense, while the formal philosophic details are blurred. Contrariwise, pragmatic religious ideals – the observance of the faith – are worked out to their minutest details, although the basic concept behind them may remain unknown forever.

For all that, there is a consensus of belief based on Talmudic derivations from the Torah and philosophic analyses of statements uttered by the sages. The concept is usually discussed under the headings of "Messiah" and "Resurrection of the Dead." (Concepts such as *Ge-hinnom* and *Gan Eden* are too complicated for discussion in this work.) The term *olam ha'ba*, the "world beyond," while relatively unclear, seems to have encompassed the two basic concepts of Messiah and resurrection. Maimonides lists these two as cardinal principles of the Jewish creed.

## Messiah

The generic term, Messiah, means “anointed one.” Kings and priests were anointed in ancient times to set them apart as specially designated leaders of society. The anointed one will bring redemption to the world. It will be a time of true bliss, unparalleled in our own existence. It will not be a new world, a qualitatively *different* world, rather will it be this world brought to perfection. Universal peace, tranquility, lawfulness and goodness will prevail, and all will acknowledge the unity and lordship of God.

Will the Messiah be a specific person, or will he only represent an era of perfection – “the days of Messiah?” Traditional Judaism believes, without equivocation, in the coming of an inconceivably great hero, anointed for leadership – a descendant of the house of David, who will lead the world out of chaos. He will be of flesh and blood, a mortal sent expressly by God to fulfill the glory of His people. The traditional belief is that man must work to better the world and help bring on the Messiah. It believes the idea that mankind *by itself* will inevitably progress to such an era to be unfounded optimism. A supernatural gift to mankind, in the person of the Messiah, will be required to bring the world to this pinnacle of glory. God will directly intervene to prevent the world from rushing headlong into darkness, and will bring the redemption through a human personality. The personal Messiah, supernaturally introduced to mankind, will not, however, be a Divine personality. He will only bring about the redemption that is granted by God. The Messiah will have no ability to bring the redemption himself. He will have no miraculous powers. He, himself, will not be able to atone for the sins of others. He will have no superhuman

the latter is even more significant – for resurrection serves only the righteous while the rain falls indiscriminately on all men.

This is one, supplementary reason why the body and all its limbs require to be interred in the earth and not cremated, for it expresses our faith in the future resurrection. Naturally, the all-powerful God can recreate the body whether it was buried or drowned or burned. Yet, willful cremation signifies an arrogant denial of the possibility of resurrection, and those who deny this cardinal principle should not share in the reward for its observance. The body and its limbs – whether amputated before death, or during a permissible post-mortem examination – have to be allowed to decompose as one complete organism by the process of nature, not by man’s mechanical act.

### Resurrection: A Symbolic Idea

Some contemporary thinkers have noted that the physical revival of the dead is symbolic of a cluster of basic Jewish ideas:

First, man does not achieve the ultimate redemption by virtue of his own inherent nature. It is not because he, uniquely, possesses an immortal soul that he, inevitably, will be resurrected. The concept of resurrection underscores man’s reliance on God who, in the words of the prayerbook, “Wakes the dead in great mercy.” It is His grace and His mercy that rewards the deserving, and revives those who sleep in the dust.

Second, resurrection is not only a private matter, a bonus for the righteous individual. It is a corporate reward. *All* of the righteous of *all* ages, those who stood at Sinai, and those of our generation, will be revived. The *community* of the righteous has a corporate and historic

culminating in the birth of the astoundingly complex network of tubes and glands, bones and organs, their incredibly precise functioning and the unbelievably intricate human brain that guides them, is surely a miracle of the first magnitude. Curiously, the miraculous object, man himself, takes this for granted. In his preoccupation with daily trivia, he ignores the miracle of his own existence. The idea of rebirth may appear strange because we have never experienced a similar occurrence, for which reason we cannot put together the stuff of imagination. Perhaps it is because we can be active in creating life, but cannot participate with God in the recreation of life. Perhaps it is because, scientifically, recreation flies against any biological theory, while we are slowly coming to know how life is developed, and our researchers are about to create life in the laboratory test tube. But, who has created the researching biologist? And, can we not postulate an omnipotent Divine Biologist who created all men? Surely resurrection is not beyond the capacity of an Omnipotent God.

The sages simplified the concept of a bodily resurrection by posing an analogy which brings it into the experience of man. A tree, once alive with blossoms and fruit, full of the sap of life, stands cold and still in the winter. Its leaves have browned and fallen, its fruit rots on the ground. But the warm rains come and the sun shines. Buds sprout. Green leaves appear. Colorful fruits burst from their seed. With the coming of spring, God resurrects nature. For this reason the blessing of God for reviving the dead, which is recited in every daily prayer, incorporates also the seasonal request for rain. When praying for the redemption of man, the prayerbook uses the phrase "planting salvation." Indeed, the Talmud compares the day of resurrection with the rainy season, and notes that

relationship with God. He will be an exalted personality, of incomparable ability, who will usher in the rehabilitation of the Jewish people and the subsequent regeneration of mankind.

How the Messiah will come, and how we will be able to identify him has aroused the magnificent imaginative inventiveness and poetic fancy of masses of Jews in every age. Many of these ruminations are contradictory. Some are founded in Biblical interpretation, some on traditional beliefs handed down from father to son, while others are flights of folkloristic fancy. The time of the coming of the Messiah has aroused such fantastic conjecture by so many who confidently predicted specific dates and signs, causing so much anxiety and unreasonable anticipation, and culminating in such heartbreaking and spiritually-shattering frustration, that the sages have had to chastise severely those who "count the days" to "bring near the end" of redemption.

While some theologians have sought to dispute the supernatural introduction of the Messiah, or to denigrate the idea of a personal Messiah, there is no *a priori* reason to deny either. On the other hand, however, there does stand a millennium of unwavering conviction on the part of our most profound scholars and the great masses of Jews to affirm it. The authority of hundreds of generations will withstand superficial rational analysis, let alone the meta-physical misgivings and begrudging consent of contemporary, sophisticated theologians.

### **The Resurrection of the Dead**

The body returns to the earth, dust to dust, but the soul returns to God who gave it. This doctrine of the immortality of the soul is affirmed not only by Judaism

and other religions, but by many secular philosophers as well. Judaism, however, also believes in the eventual resurrection of the body, which will be reunited with the soul at a later time on a “great and awesome day of the Lord.” The human form of the righteous men of all ages, buried and long since decomposed, will be resurrected at God’s will.

The most dramatic portrayal of this bodily resurrection is to be found in the “Valley of Dry Bones” prophecy in Ezekiel 37, read as the *haftorah* on the Intermediate Sabbath of Passover. It recalls past deliverances and envisions the future redemption of Israel and the eventual quickening of the dead.

“The hand of the Lord was upon me, and the Lord carried me out in a spirit, and set me down in the midst of the valley, and it was full of bones; and He caused me to pass by them round about, and , behold there was very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry. And He said unto me: “Son of man, can these bones live?” And I answered: “O Lord, God, Thou knowest.” Then He said unto me; “Prophecy over these bones, and say unto them: “O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord; Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones: Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live. And I will lay sinews and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.” So I prophesied as I was commanded; and as I prophesied, there was a noise, and behold a commotion, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. And I beheld, and, lo, there were sinews upon them and flesh came up, and skin covered them above; but there was no breath in them. Then said He unto me: “Prophecy unto the breath, prophecy, son of man, and say to the breath: “Thus saith

the Lord God: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.” So I prophesied as He commanded me, and the breath came upon them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, an exceeding great host. Then He said unto me: “Son of man, these bones are the whole house of Israel; behold, they say: “Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we can clean cut off.’ Therefore, prophesy, and say unto them: ‘Thus saith the Lord God: behold, I will open your graves, and cause you to come out of your graves, O my people; and I will bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people. And I will put my spirit in you, and ye shall live. And I will place you in your own land; and ye shall know that I the Lord have spoken, and performed it, saith the Lord.”

The power of this conviction can be gauged not only by the quality of the lives of the Jews, their tenacity and gallantry in the face of death, but in the very real fear instilled in their enemies. After destroying Jerusalem and callously decimating its Jewish population, Titus, the Roman general, returned home with only a portion of his Tenth Legion. When asked whether he had lost all his other men on the battlefield, Titus gave assurance that his men were alive, but they were still on combat duty. he had left them to stand guard over Jewish corpses in the fields of Jerusalem because he was sincerely afraid that that their bodies would be resurrected and they would reconquer the Holy Land as they had promised.

The belief in a bodily resurrection appears, at first sight, to be incredible to the contemporary mind. But when approached from the God’s-eye view, why is rebirth more miraculous than birth? The adhesion of sperm and egg, the subsequent fertilization and development in the womb