

In previous posts I have discussed the different Jewish sects that we know about from the first century, at the dawn of Christianity (Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, Fourth Philosophy) in order to show that (a) there were different understandings of the afterlife among them, but (b) there was a belief in a future resurrection of the dead attested in at least two of the groups: the Pharisees and Essenes. We don't know what the eschatological views of the Fourth Philosophy were; possibly different Jews who wanted the violent overthrow of the Roman overlords had various expectations. We really don't know.

One reason we don't know is that we don't have any writings from any of them. On other hand, that's true of the Sadducees and the Pharisees as well. That may seem weird, but it's the case. We have no clear and certain writing from any Sadducee in all of antiquity that explains what it is they thought and believed. Even more strange, from all of antiquity up until the time of the Jewish war, leading to the destruction of the Temple in 70 CE, we have only *one* author who was a Pharisee who explains his views. As it turns out, that author is the apostle Paul. His writings, though, were produced after he became a follower of Jesus. Still, he was a Pharisee and he left us writings. Obviously they will, though, be of limited use in knowing what Pharisees believed (except for what this particular Pharisee believed after he became a Christian).

We do have later writings that ...

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