

## God's great visual aids



**Psychological  
Dissonance**

Longings  
without satisfaction

Imagination  
without realization

Responsibility  
without ability

**Augustine of Hippo**

(Church father)

"You have made us for yourself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

**Alister E. McGrath**

(scientist / theologian)

"We are left with a longing for something undefinable, of which human nature knows nothing, save that it does not possess it."

## God's great visual aids



**Psychological  
Dissonance**

**Physical  
Death**



## *Romans 5:12*

"Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so **death spread to all men, because all sinned.**"

## *Hebrews 2*

"<sup>14</sup> Since then the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil; <sup>15</sup> and might deliver those who through **fear of death** were subject to slavery all their lives."

## *What is death?*

**It is the inescapable reminder that something is not the way it should or could be.**



*1 Corinthians 15:3-4*

“For I delivered to you as of **first importance** what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,”

*1 Corinthians 15:16-19*

“For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised; and if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; **you are still in your sins**. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. **If we have hoped in Christ in this life only, we are of all men most to be pitied.**”

***Background to Mark 12:18-27***

- ✓ **Sadducees** - aristocratic priestly class who were, in some ways like leaders in modern liberal denominations - autonomy & reason. They respected the Torah only.
- ✓ **Jesus is expected to challenge their views. So the question to him is to expose the foolishness of belief in a real afterlife.**

*Mark 12*

“<sup>18</sup> And some Sadducees (who say that there is no resurrection) came to Him, and began questioning Him, saying, <sup>19</sup> “Teacher, Moses wrote for us that *if a man’s brother dies, and leaves behind a wife, and leaves no child, his brother should take the wife, and raise up offspring to his brother.* <sup>20</sup> There were seven brothers; and the first took a wife, and died, leaving no offspring. <sup>21</sup> And the second one took her, and died, leaving behind no offspring; and the third likewise; <sup>22</sup> and so all seven left no offspring. Last of all the woman died also. <sup>23</sup> In the resurrection, when they rise again, which one’s wife will she be? For all seven had her as wife.””

“<sup>24</sup> Jesus said to them, “Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures, or the power of God? <sup>25</sup> For **when they rise from the dead**, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are **like angels** in heaven. <sup>26</sup> But regarding the fact that the dead rise again, have you not read in the book of Moses, in the passage about the burning bush, how God spoke to him, saying, ‘*I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob*?’ (Exodus 3:6) <sup>27</sup> He is not the God of the dead, but of the living; you are greatly mistaken.”

***Afterlife in Jewish theology***

- ✓ **The Torah is eternal** and cannot be set aside. (This is the assumption of the Jews of Jesus’ day).
- ✓ **Belief in the afterlife grew out of oral tradition** and was popular among the Pharisees.

***Tanakh (Hebrew Scripture)***

**Torah (Law)**

Nevi'im (Prophets)  
Ketuvim (Writings)

**Talmud (Official theology)**

Mishnah (Oral tradition) 200 AD  
Gemara (Commentaries) 500 AD





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## Afterlife in Jewish theology

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- ✓ Belief in the afterlife grew out of **oral tradition** and was popular among the Pharisees.
- ✓ The focus is on **earthly life** not eternal life.
- ✓ There is very little said about the afterlife in the Torah. **Sheol** is the mysterious domain of the dead.
- ✓ **Modern Jewish view - order of events after death**
  1. Physical Death
  2. Confusion (disorientation)
  3. Gehenna (purification) 1 yr.
  4. Eden (resurrection) Rejected by Reformed Judaism

NOTE: Only 17% believe in an afterlife (1965)

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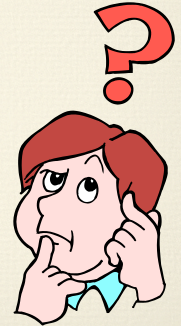
*Daniel 12:2*

“Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.”



“<sup>24</sup> Jesus said to them, “Is this not the reason you are mistaken, that you do not understand the Scriptures, or **the power of God?**”

- **What is the origin of life?**
- **Why are people born and why do they die?**
- **What is the source of our soul sorrow, longings, sense of beauty, ethics etc.?**



**What does it mean to be “like angels”?**

- **Material form** - Capable of appearing as a person with a physical body.
- **Spirit beings** - Operating outside the limitations of the physical world.
- **Emotionally sensitive** - Experiencing joy, etc.
- **Individuality** - Possessing names, personalities and the appearance of gender.
- **Limited understanding** - Not able to understand the mystery of the Gospel until it was revealed through the Spirit to the Apostles.

*1 Corinthians 15*

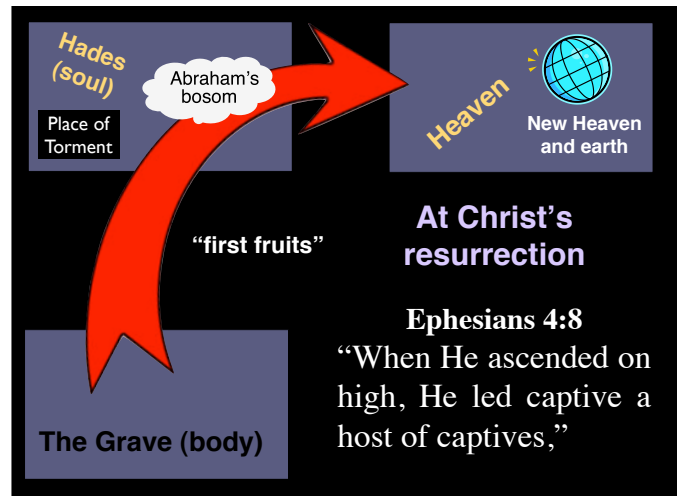
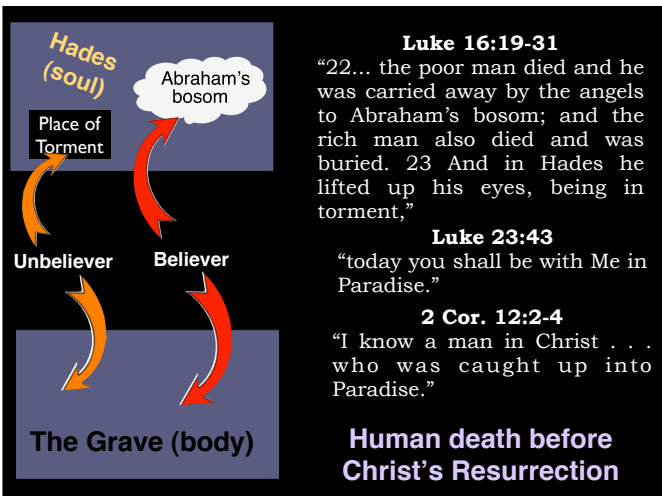
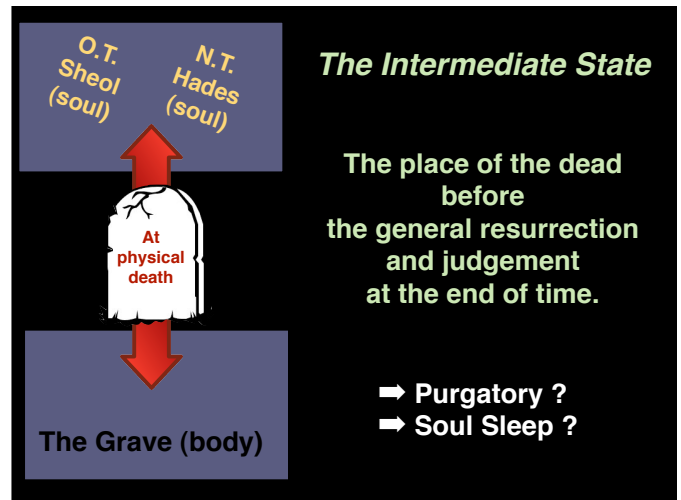
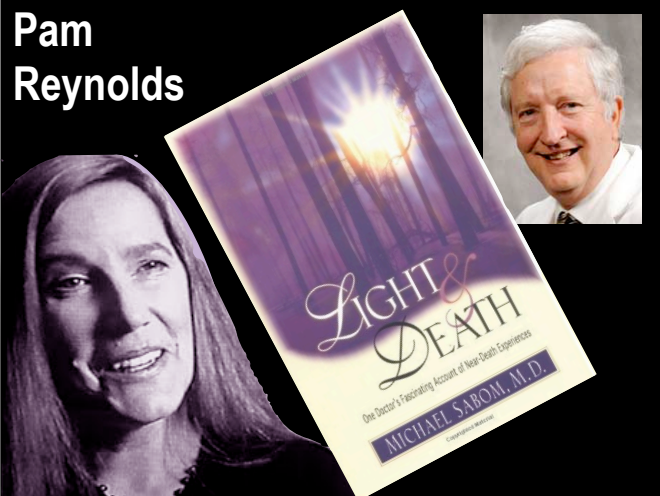
“<sup>35</sup> But someone will say, “How are the dead raised? And with what kind of body do they come?” . . .  
<sup>42</sup> . . . It is sown a perishable body, it is raised an **imperishable** body; <sup>43</sup> it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in **glory**; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in **power**; <sup>44</sup> it is sown a natural body, it is raised a **spiritual** body.”

“49 And just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also **bear the image of the heavenly**. 50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable.”

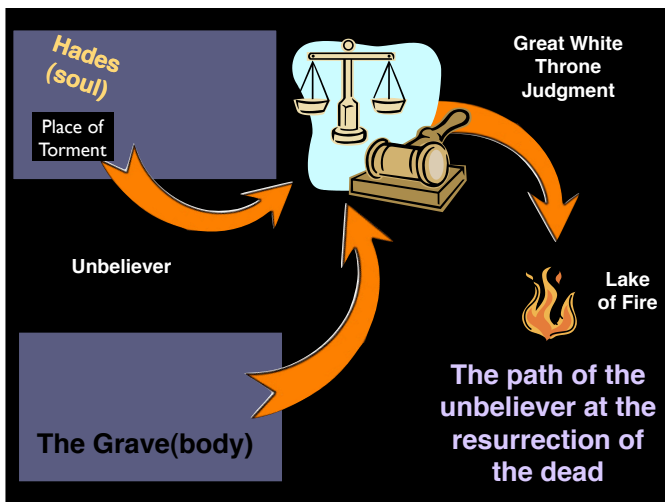
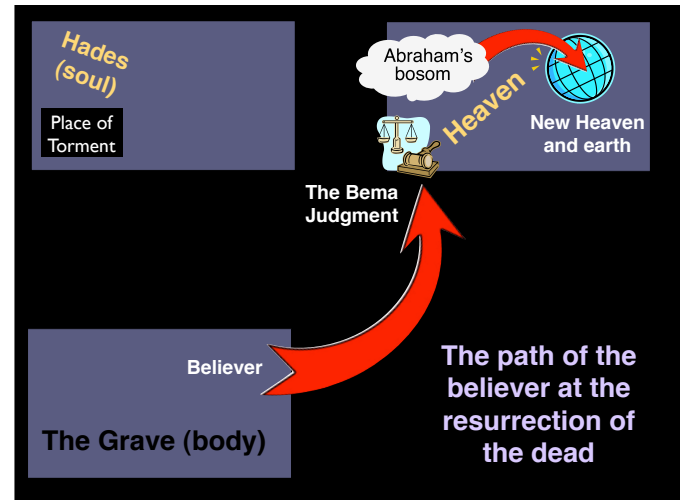
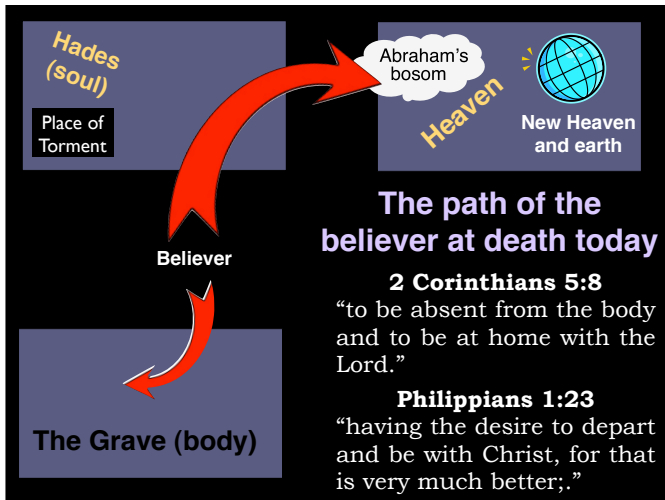
*What do we really know about life  
after death?*

**What happens  
when we die?**

**Pam  
Reynolds**







- Misunderstandings**
- ✓ To be heavenly minded means to be of no earthly good.
  - ✓ Man cannot live on the Word of God alone.
- Implications**
- ✓ No fear of death.
  - ✓ Delayed gratification in this life.
  - ✓ Loose hold on the things of this world.
  - ✓ Freedom to sacrificially serve.
  - ✓ An energizing vision, promise, & hope.
  - ✓ Invites us to look at life from an eternal perspective.

- Questions**
- ✓ Is heaven a place? **It is a new earth but unlike anything we have known.**
  - ✓ Will we know one another in heaven? **Yes but that will not be the big attraction.**
  - ✓ Will we have our questions answered? **Yes but we won't be asking questions.**
  - ✓ Will heaven last forever? **It will be a timeless existence.**
  - ✓ Can we have a taste of heaven now? **Yes, in a very limited way through many areas and experiences.**

**Example**  
**of Jesus being IN but not OF the world.**  
**As disciples we have an eternal (not a temporal) perspective on everything because of the resurrection.**