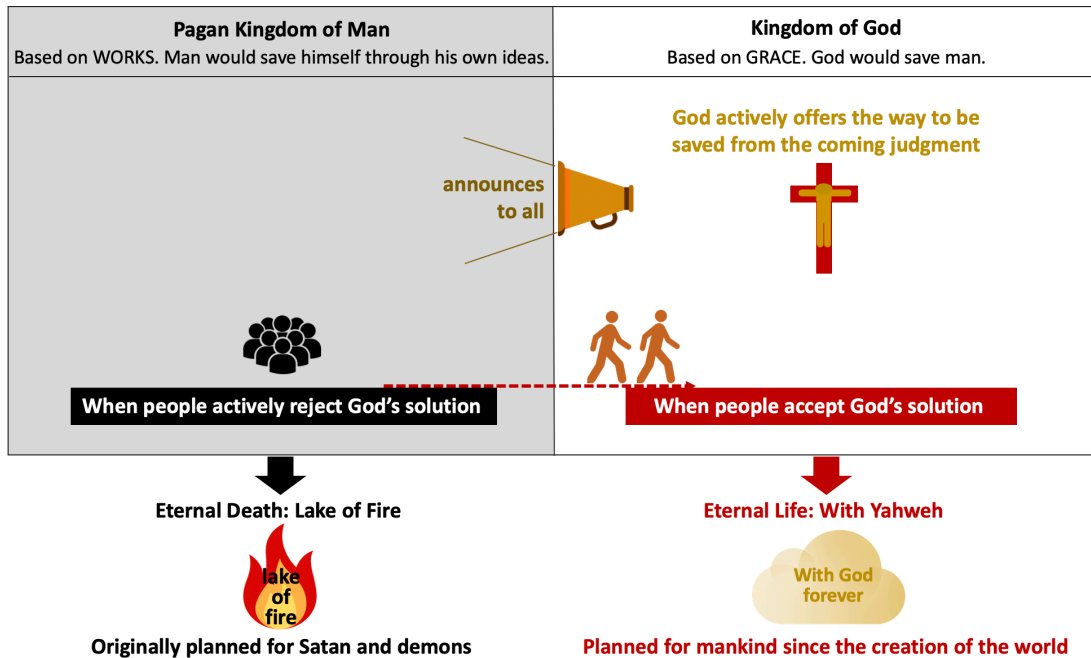


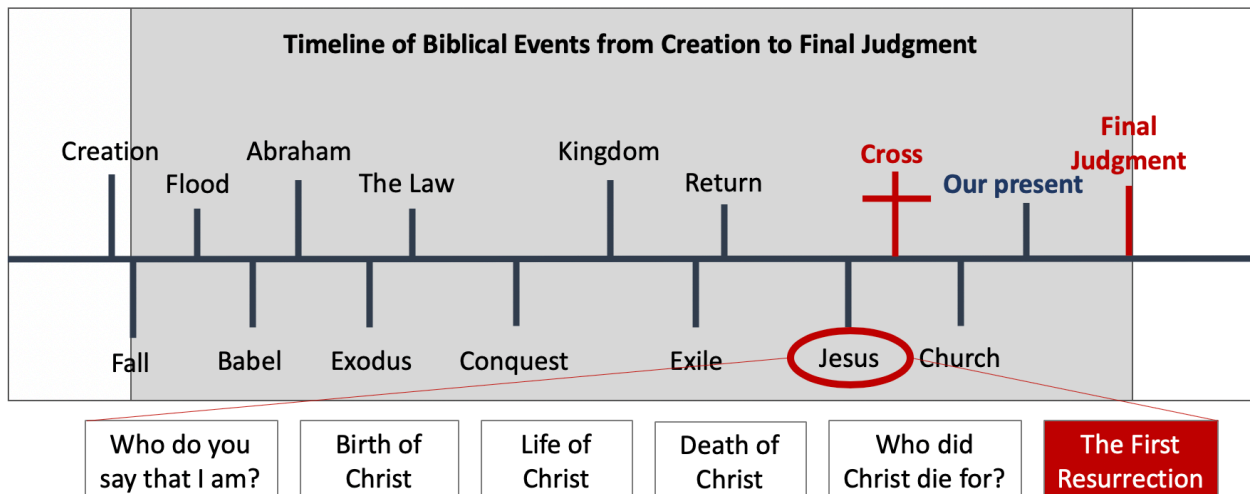
Lesson 37: The First Resurrection

Previously...

Jesus' death was for everyone, not just certain groups of people. However, the way that God judges and saves is not the same.



God judges those who have actively rejected Him. But God works hard to offer salvation to all people and He actively saves those who accept His offer. So, God is to be praised for saving man, but people are also responsible for making their own choices. This means that God's sovereignty and man's free will are both true.




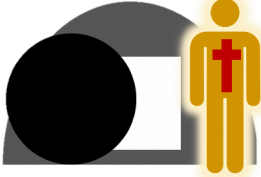

The Resurrection

Jesus' death on the cross is very important. It is the reason why God can forgive us and reconcile us to Him. However, Jesus' resurrection is equally important. Without the resurrection, believers have no hope in life. Why?



God made many promises about the future Kingdom of God and the Eternal State. Jesus and all mankind, both believers and unbelievers, must have actual physical bodies for all of these to come true.

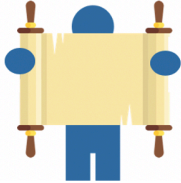


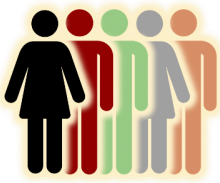
In this lesson, we will explore three aspects of resurrection.

1 What is "resurrection"	2 What happened after Jesus' resurrection	3 What Jesus accomplished with the resurrection
		



1. What is Resurrection

What can we learn about resurrection from the Bible and what does it mean for us?

 <p>a What the Old Testament teaches about Resurrection</p>	 <p>b What the New Testament teaches about Resurrection</p>	 <p>c Jesus' Resurrection</p>	 <p>d What Resurrection means for man</p>
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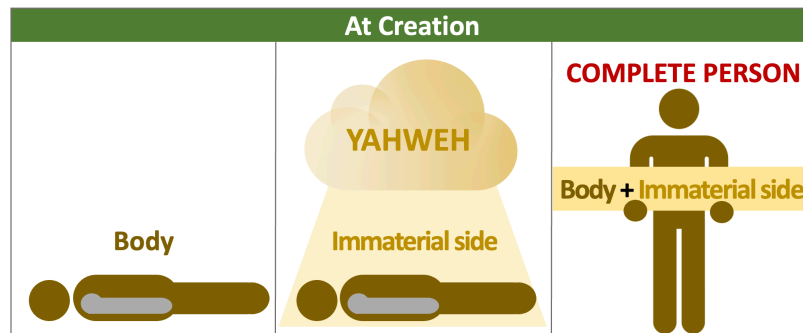
a. What the Old Testament teaches about Resurrection

At Creation, Yahweh says a person is made up of a physical side and an immaterial side.

Genesis 2:7

Then the LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground. He breathed the breath of life into the man's nostrils, and the man became a living person.

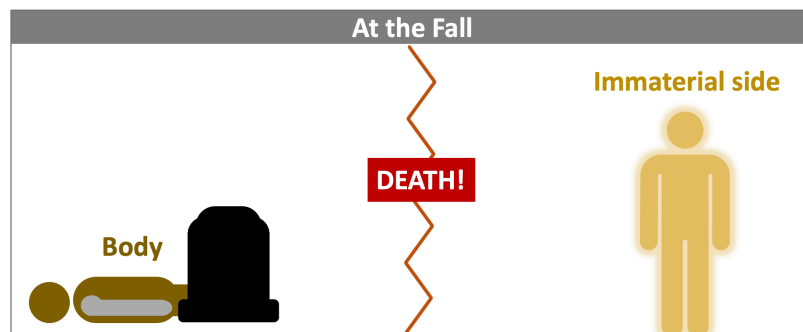
God made a physical body from the dust of the earth and He put in an immaterial side (consisting of a soul and a spirit). Together, the human body, human soul and human spirit form a complete person (1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 4:12).



When man rebelled and caused sin to enter the world, death separated man's body from their immaterial side. At death, the body crumbles to dust.

Genesis 3:19b

For you were made from dust,
and to dust you will return.

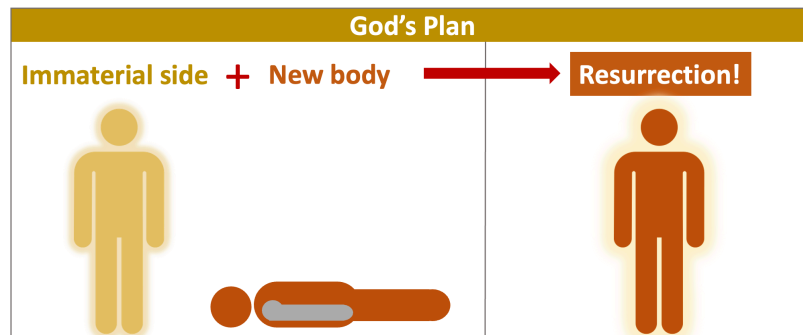


However, the immaterial side of man continues to live on (Isaiah 14:9).

But God does not intend to leave people in just an immaterial state because that is not how He designed mankind. Yahweh intends to have a relationship with a complete man: man with both the physical side and immaterial side united.

So God will provide every person with a new body and reunite it with their immaterial side. In this way, He will make a person whole and complete again.

This is what the Bible calls the resurrection. God will give each person a new body that will house their immaterial side.



To be clear, resurrection is not the same as resuscitation.

Resuscitation is where a dead person or seemingly dead person is brought back to life with **the same earthly body**. For example:

- The son of the woman from Shunem (2 Kings 4:18–27).



- Lazarus, brother of Mary and Martha (John 11:1–44).



- The son of the widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17:17–23).

1 Kings 17:17–23

¹⁷ Some time later the woman's son became sick. He grew worse and worse, and finally he died. ¹⁸ Then she said to Elijah, "O man of God, what have you done to me? Have you come here to point out my sins and kill my son?"

¹⁹ But Elijah replied, "Give me your son." And he took the child's body from her arms, carried him up the stairs to the room where he was staying, and laid the body on his bed. ²⁰ Then Elijah cried out to the LORD, "O LORD my God, why have you brought tragedy to this widow who has opened her home to me, causing her son to die?"



²¹ And he stretched himself out over the child three times and cried out to the LORD, “O LORD my God, please let this child’s life return to him.” ²² The LORD heard Elijah’s prayer, and the life of the child returned, and he revived! ²³ Then Elijah brought him down from the upper room and gave him to his mother. “Look!” he said. “Your son is alive!”

In these examples, the people resuscitated with their same bodies, but they all died again at a later stage. This is different from resurrection where the person never dies again.

Resurrection is when God provides a **brand-new, everlasting or imperishable body** for a person who has died.

During the Old Testament period, God provided only a little information about the resurrection. For example, when Job was talking to his friends, he talked about resurrection:

Job 19:25–26

²⁵ “But as for me, I know that my Redeemer lives, and he will stand upon the earth at last.

²⁶ And after my body has decayed,
yet in my body I will see God!

Isaiah prophesied about it:

Isaiah 26:19

But those who die in the LORD will live;
their bodies will rise again!

Those who sleep in the earth
will rise up and sing for joy!

For your life-giving light will fall like dew
on your people in the place of the dead!

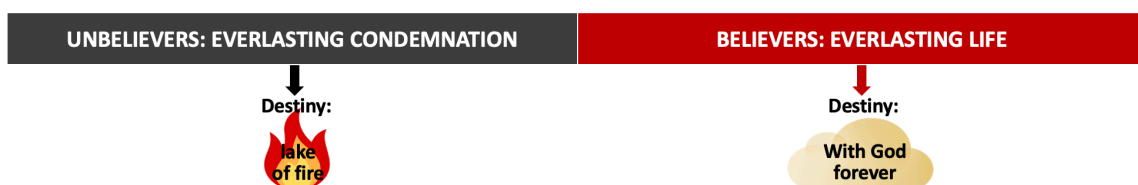
Daniel wrote about the resurrection of those who trust God (believers) and those who do not (unbelievers).

Daniel 12:2

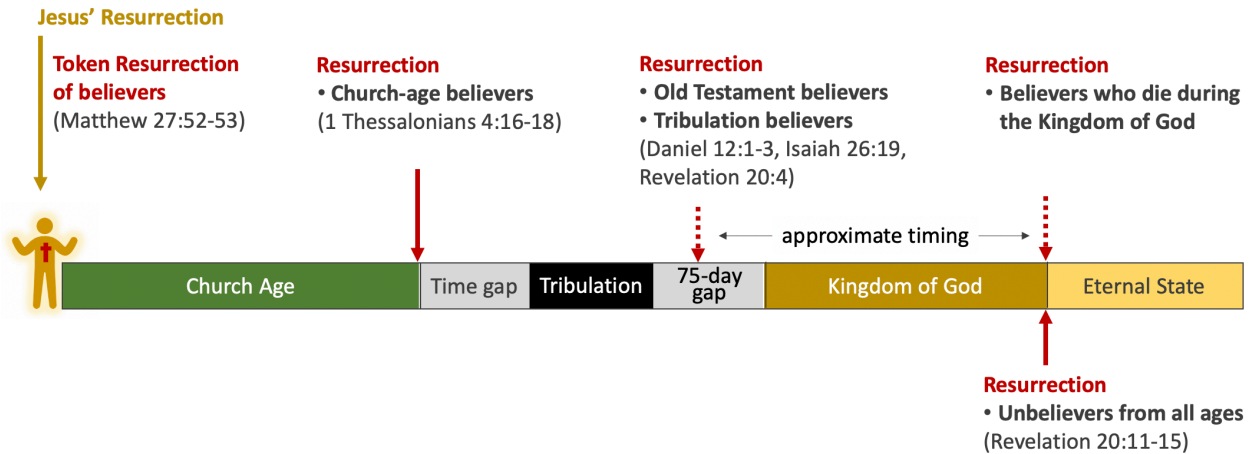
Many of those whose bodies lie dead and buried will rise up, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting disgrace.

Daniel said that both believers and unbelievers would be resurrected and come back to life but they would have different eternal destinies:

- the believers would receive everlasting life and live with God.
- the unbelievers would receive everlasting condemnation and separation from Yahweh in the lake of fire.



Note: Why does Daniel say “many” will rise up and not “all”? This is because there are different resurrections which we will discuss at a later lesson.



The main point is that when we die, the decision we made to believe or reject Yahweh will be confirmed and it will be unchangeable. This is how Yahweh will separate good from evil permanently. It is good news for believers but horrific news for unbelievers. This is why the Bible keeps warning us there will be no second chance after death.

From the Old Testament, the Jews also understood that the Messiah would be brought back to life after dying. In Psalm 16, David was talking to Yahweh about the “holy one”, who was the Messiah. He said that Yahweh would not leave Jesus in the grave. (Note: King David often wrote about himself and at the same time, referred to the entire Davidic dynasty, including the Messiah who was promised to him through the Davidic Covenant.)

Psalm 16:10

For you will not leave my soul among the dead
or allow your holy one to rot in the grave.

The prophet Isaiah also wrote about the resurrection of the Saviour.

Isaiah 53:8–10

⁸ Unjustly condemned,
he was led away.
No one cared that he died without descendants,
that his life was cut short in midstream.
But he was struck down
for the rebellion of my people.
⁹ He had done no wrong
and had never deceived anyone.
But he was buried like a criminal;
he was put in a rich man's grave.

¹⁰ But it was the LORD's good plan to crush him
and cause him grief.
Yet when his life is made an offering for sin,
he will have many descendants.
He will enjoy a long life,
and the LORD's good plan will prosper in his hands.

Many Jews living during New Testament times learnt about the resurrection from these Old Testament passages. However, Jesus taught more in the New Testament.



b. What the New Testament teaches about the Resurrection

At the death of Lazarus, his sister Martha spoke with Jesus about the resurrection.

John 11:21–27

²¹ Martha said to Jesus, “Lord, if only you had been here, my brother would not have died.

²² But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask.”

²³ Jesus told her, “Your brother will rise again.”

²⁴ “Yes,” Martha said, “he will rise when everyone else rises, at the last day.”

²⁵ Jesus told her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Anyone who believes in me will live, even after dying. ²⁶ Everyone who lives in me and believes in me will never ever die. Do you believe this, Martha?”

²⁷ “Yes, Lord,” she told him. “I have always believed you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one who has come into the world from God.”

Martha, as well as many Jews, believed in the resurrection of the dead.

But there were others like the Sadducees who denied it. The Sadducees were the rich upper class of Jewish society. Many were part of the ruling Jewish religious leadership known as the Sanhedrin.

Although they claimed to believe in God's Word, they didn't believe in the afterlife, spirits or demons. And they didn't believe in the resurrection. They tried to challenge Jesus about it by asking Him about a ridiculous situation.

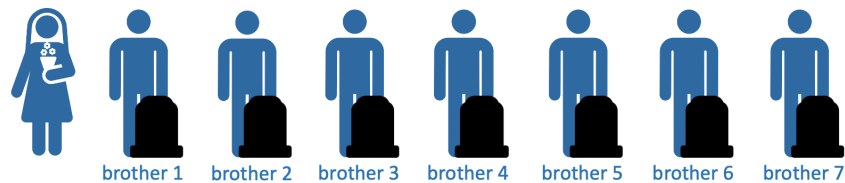
Matthew 22:23–33

²³ That same day Jesus was approached by some Sadducees—religious leaders who say there is no resurrection from the dead. They posed this question: ²⁴ “Teacher, Moses said, ‘If a man dies without children, his brother should marry the widow and have a child who will carry on the brother's name.’ ²⁵ Well, suppose there were seven brothers. The oldest one married and then died without children, so his brother married the widow. ²⁶ But the second brother also died, and the third brother married her. This continued with all seven of them. ²⁷ Last of all, the woman also died. ²⁸ So tell us, whose wife will she be in the resurrection? For all seven were married to her.”

²⁹ Jesus replied, “Your mistake is that you don’t know the Scriptures, and you don’t know the power of God. ³⁰ For when the dead rise, they will neither marry nor be given in marriage. In this respect they will be like the angels in heaven.

³¹ “But now, as to whether there will be a resurrection of the dead—haven’t you ever read about this in the Scriptures? Long after Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob had died, God said, ³² ‘I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.’ So he is the God of the living, not the dead.”

³³ When the crowds heard him, they were astounded at his teaching.



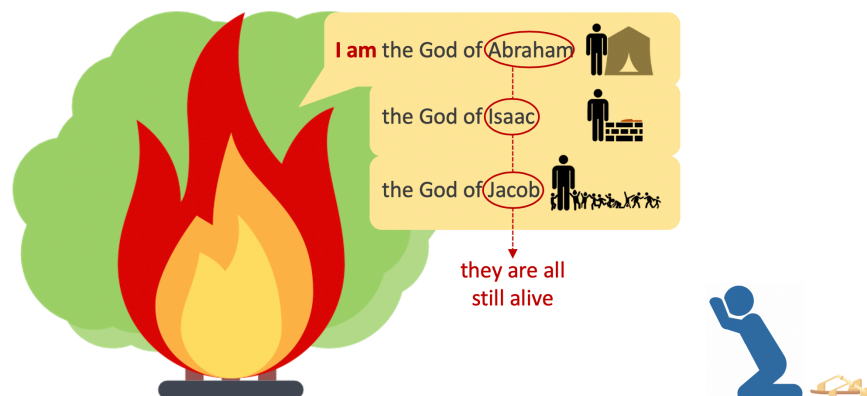
The Sadducees were wrong in thinking that life after death worked in the same way as life on earth. Jesus corrected them, saying the resurrection life was different. However, He gave only one detail: He said resurrected people would not marry. He didn’t give any more details so it’s hard to say more!

But Jesus used an unexpected passage of Scripture to show the Sadducees that the resurrection was true and it was coming. Instead of quoting from Job, Isaiah or Daniel, as we had read earlier, Jesus quoted from Exodus.

Exodus 3:6

I am the God of your father—the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.” When Moses heard this, he covered his face because he was afraid to look at God.

Jesus pointed out that Yahweh said “I am” rather than “I was”. Jesus’ point was that Yahweh **was still** the God of Abraham. That meant Abraham was not dead, but **was still** alive. And if Abraham continued to be alive, that meant he would get a new body at the coming resurrection. (Remember, God wants a relationship with physical people.)



The people listening to Jesus understood He was insisting that the resurrection was true and it was coming. So they were astounded!

Aside from what the Old and New Testaments say, we learn more through Jesus' own resurrection.



c. Jesus' Resurrection

After Jesus died on the cross, He was taken down and buried in a tomb. On Sunday morning, when the women disciples went to embalm Him properly, they discovered His body had disappeared. They went to tell the disciples.

John 20:6–7

⁶ Then Simon Peter arrived and went inside. He also noticed the linen wrappings lying there, ⁷ while the cloth that had covered Jesus' head was folded up and lying apart from the other wrappings.

The strips of cloth that had bound Jesus were lying there and the cloth around His head had been folded up. It didn't look like His body had been stolen. It looked as if He had vanished, leaving the strips of cloth behind.



Jesus appeared to the women first and then later, He appeared to the others.

John 20:19–20

¹⁹ That Sunday evening the disciples were meeting behind locked doors because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. Suddenly, Jesus was standing there among them! "Peace be with you," he said. ²⁰ As he spoke, he showed them the wounds in his hands and his side. They were filled with joy when they saw the Lord!

Although the disciples had locked themselves in a room, Jesus was able to appear as if by magic! He must have frightened them with His sudden appearance because He said, "Peace be with you!" This was probably to calm them down. Then Jesus proved who He was by showing the disciples His crucifixion scars so they knew it truly was Him.



A week after that, Jesus appeared again. This time He also talked to Thomas, who had not seen Him the first time He appeared. Jesus let Thomas examine Him and touch His scars so Thomas could see and feel for himself that Jesus was alive and in a resurrection body.

For 40 days, Jesus appeared to His disciples. He was showing them clearly that He had come back to life with a new resurrection body. He ate with them and spoke with them. He also appeared to the larger group of believers.

The apostle Paul wrote about these appearances.

1 Corinthians 15:3–8

³ I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me. Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. ⁴ He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, just as the Scriptures said. ⁵ He was seen by Peter and then by the Twelve.

⁶ After that, he was seen by more than 500 of his followers at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died. ⁷ Then he was seen by James and later by all the apostles. ⁸ Last of all, as though I had been born at the wrong time, I also saw him.

Jesus, in His resurrection body, was seen by many believers before He ascended to heaven.

**d. What Resurrection means for man****Our earthly bodies**

When Adam and Eve rebelled against Yahweh, death came into the world. So, at the end of their lives, they died physically. Because of the Fall, all mankind also dies physically.

(Note: Scripture does talk about two special cases of men who didn't die: Enoch [Genesis 5:23–24] and Elijah [2 Kings 2:11]! The Bible doesn't tell us why God did that, but we know they are unique cases.)

Our resurrection bodies

Our resurrection bodies will not be like our earthly ones.

i. Our earthly and resurrection bodies are related, but they are both completely different in kind.

This is how Paul explains it.

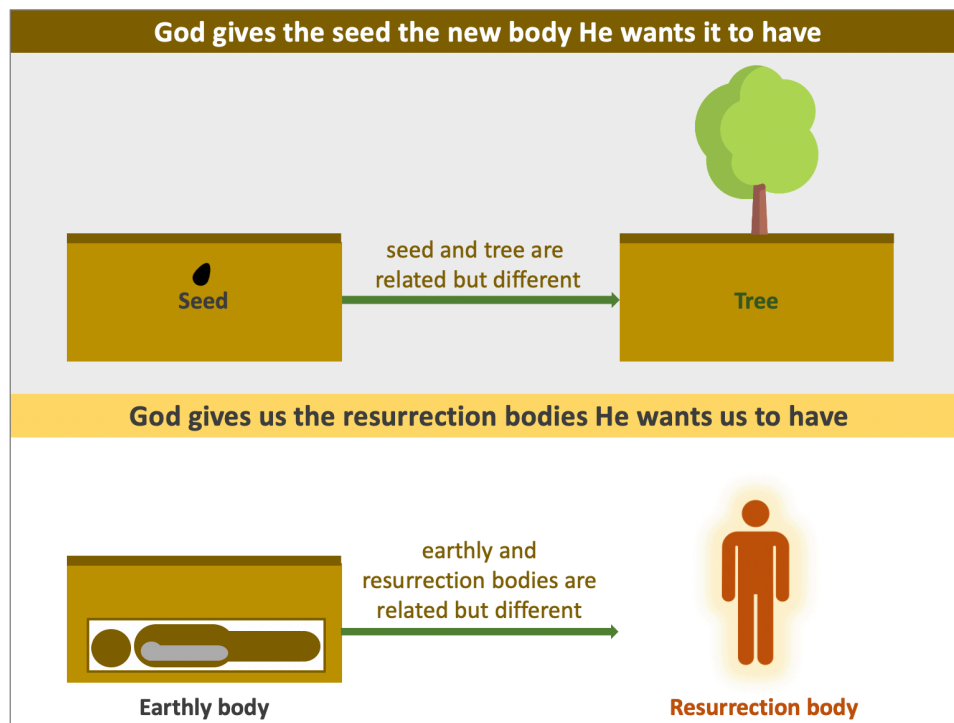
1 Corinthians 15:35–38

³⁵ But someone may ask, “How will the dead be raised? What kind of bodies will they have?” ³⁶ What a foolish question! When you put a seed into the ground, it doesn't grow into a plant unless it dies first.

³⁷ And what you put in the ground is not the plant that will grow, but only a bare seed of wheat or whatever you are planting. ³⁸ Then God gives it the new body he wants it to have. A different plant grows from each kind of seed.

Paul says that resurrection is like a seed that is planted into the ground which then grows into a plant. There is a connection or relationship between the seed and plant but both are completely different in type. But before the seed becomes a plant, it has to die first.

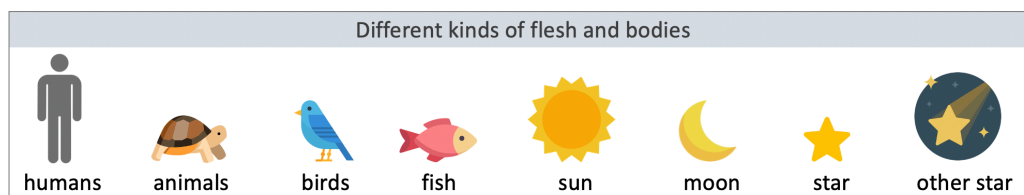
In the same way, after we die, then we receive a resurrection body. There is a connection between our earthly and our future resurrection bodies but they are different in type.



Paul reminds us that in Genesis, Yahweh created many different kinds of creatures such as birds, fish and land animals. He also created different heavenly bodies like the sun, moon and stars. They are all separate kinds or types.

1 Corinthians 15:39–41

³⁹ Similarly there are different kinds of flesh—one kind for humans, another for animals, another for birds, and another for fish. ⁴⁰ There are also bodies in the heavens and bodies on the earth. The glory of the heavenly bodies is different from the glory of the earthly bodies. ⁴¹ The sun has one kind of glory, while the moon and stars each have another kind. And even the stars differ from each other in their glory.



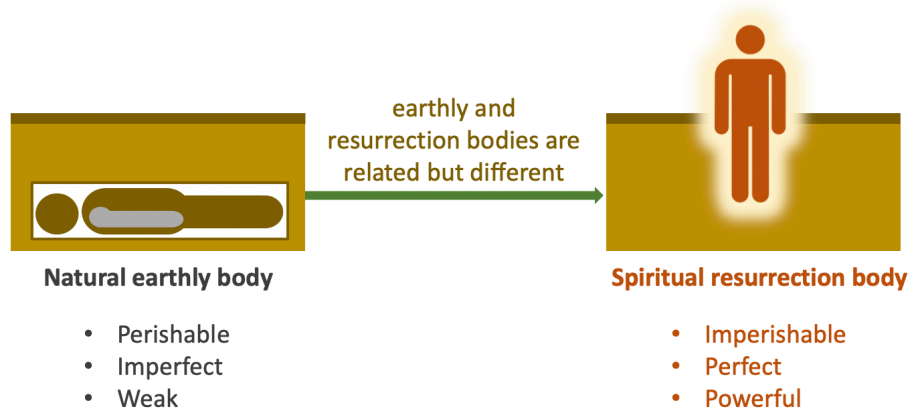
The differences in these types of earthly creatures and heavenly bodies show there are also differences between the natural earthly body and the resurrection body.

(Notice how Paul, in explaining what the resurrection body is like, treats Genesis literally.)

ii. Our earthly body is natural and perishable but our resurrection body is spiritual and imperishable.

1 Corinthians 15:42–44

⁴² It is the same way with the resurrection of the dead. Our earthly bodies are planted in the ground when we die, but they will be raised to live forever. ⁴³ Our bodies are buried in brokenness, but they will be raised in glory. They are buried in weakness, but they will be raised in strength. ⁴⁴ They are buried as natural human bodies, but they will be raised as spiritual bodies. For just as there are natural bodies, there are also spiritual bodies.



Our earthly bodies are the kind that dies, but our resurrection bodies cannot be destroyed. It will last forever.

Some Bible translations use the words “perishable” and “imperishable” in verse 42 to describe this difference.

1 Corinthians 15:42 (NIV)

So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable;

Some people have wondered what would have happened to Adam’s and Eve’s physical bodies if they had not sinned. Would they have lived forever in their natural earthly bodies? Or would God have “upgraded” their bodies to the resurrection one after a while? We don’t know because the Bible does not say, but reading this verse, it appears that only resurrection bodies were made to last forever.

iii. Although we have an earthly body now, we will have a resurrection body in the future.

1 Corinthians 15:45–50

⁴⁵ The Scriptures tell us, “The first man, Adam, became a living person.” But the last Adam — that is, Christ—is a life-giving Spirit. ⁴⁶ What comes first is the natural body, then the

spiritual body comes later. ⁴⁷ Adam, the first man, was made from the dust of the earth, while Christ, the second man, came from heaven.

⁴⁸ Earthly people are like the earthly man, and heavenly people are like the heavenly man.

⁴⁹ Just as we are now like the earthly man, we will someday be like the heavenly man.

⁵⁰ What I am saying, dear brothers and sisters, is that our physical bodies cannot inherit the Kingdom of God. These dying bodies cannot inherit what will last forever.



Our present bodies are from the earth. They are made of the same carbon, minerals, amino acids and more that are found on this planet.

But our resurrection bodies are a spiritual type that come from heaven. It will be a physical body but it's made up of something not from this planet! They are not made of the same substance as our earthly bodies and they don't behave in the same way.

iv. We cannot get a resurrection body on our own. God will give us a resurrection body because of Jesus' death and resurrection.

From all that Paul explained, we understand that we cannot produce a resurrection body by ourselves. All natural bodies will only be able to produce other natural bodies.

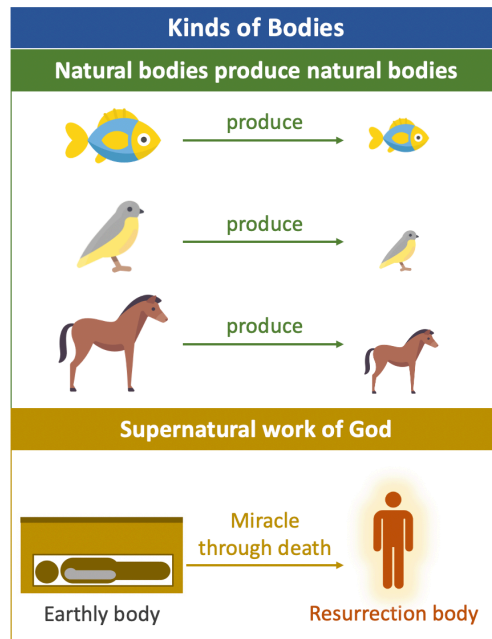
For our natural bodies to get a resurrection body, God must do a miraculous work for us.

Philippians 3:20–21

²⁰ But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior. ²¹ He will take our weak mortal bodies and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same power with which he will bring everything under his control.

1 Corinthians 15:20–23

²⁰ But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died. ²¹ So you see, just as death came into the world through a man, now the resurrection from the dead has begun through another man. ²² Just as everyone dies because we all belong to Adam, everyone who belongs to Christ will be given new life. ²³ But there is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back.



v. Jesus' resurrection body gives us a hint of what our resurrection bodies will be like.

The Bible doesn't give us too many details about the resurrection body. However, looking at Jesus in His resurrection body gives us an idea of what it will be like for us. For example:

- Jesus called to Mary in a way that she instantly recognised. In His resurrection body, His voice still sounded the same (John 20:16).
- Jesus has a physical body that others could touch. In fact, Thomas could put his hands in Jesus' side and feel His scars (John 20:26–28).
- After Jesus identified Himself, His disciples and friends could recognise Him (John 20:14–16). There appears to be some similarities between His earthly and resurrection body.
- Jesus talked, ate, walked and behaved like He did before death (John 21:9–13).
- However, Jesus also did amazing things in His new body. He could appear and disappear any time He wished (John 20:19).

This same body that Jesus has will also be given to us by God. And when we get it, we will have it forever. We cannot get rid of our resurrection body nor will it be taken from us. This is all good news!





2. What Happened After Jesus' Resurrection

After living 40 days on earth in His resurrection body, Jesus ascended, or went up into heaven with His disciples watching.

Luke 24:50–51

⁵⁰ Then Jesus led them to Bethany, and lifting his hands to heaven, he blessed them. ⁵¹ While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up to heaven.



Where is Jesus now? Paul repeated what Jesus Himself said many times, that He is now in heaven in His physical body, seated at the right hand of God the Father.

Ephesians 1:19–20

¹⁹ I also pray that you will understand the incredible greatness of God's power for us who believe him. This is the same mighty power ²⁰ that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms.



While living as a man on earth, Jesus gave up the authority to use His divine or godly power. He chose not to use His power unless God the Father told Him to and God the Holy Spirit helped Him. This is how the Bible describes Jesus' time on earth.

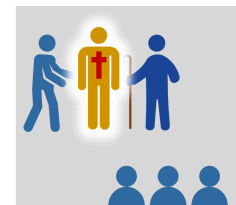
Philippians 2:6–8

⁶ Though he was God,
he did not think of equality with God
as something to cling to.
⁷ Instead, he gave up his divine privileges;
he took the humble position of a slave
and was born as a human being.
When he appeared in human form,
⁸ he humbled himself in obedience to God
and died a criminal's death on a cross.

However, at one time, Jesus did show His disciples a bit of His real glory when He transfigured in front of them. This word "transfigured" means Jesus changed in His physical appearance to a more glorious one.

Matthew 17:1–3

¹ Six days later Jesus took Peter and the two brothers, James and John, and led them up a high mountain to be alone. ² As the men watched, Jesus' appearance was transformed so that his face shone like the sun, and his clothes became as white as light. ³ Suddenly, Moses and Elijah appeared and began talking with Jesus.



Now that Jesus is back in heaven, He is once again fully glorious and is fully in control over all His own divine power.

But what is Jesus doing in heaven now?



i. Jesus is controlling world history.

Jesus, being God, has always been controlling history. In the Old Testament, He was directing history as the Angel of the LORD (or Yahweh). But with His resurrection, Jesus now resumes His control of history as the God-man and Son of Man!

After Jesus died and resurrected, God the Father put everything under Jesus' authority. This is what Paul said of Jesus.

Ephesians 1:21–22

²¹ Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come. ²² God has put all things under the authority of Christ and has made him head over all things for the benefit of the church.

This is amazing. For the first time ever in the history of the world, God accepted a human being into heaven, not as a visitor, but to take the honoured seat next to Him. This is the first time a man is given authority over all of God's creation, both the physical and spiritual world! This is what Peter said.

1 Peter 3:22

Now Christ has gone to heaven. He is seated in the place of honor next to God, and all the angels and authorities and powers accept his authority.

ii. Jesus is interceding for His beloved believers: that means all of us.

Because Jesus lived as a man on earth, He truly understands mankind's struggles and weaknesses. He is sympathetic towards us and helps us in our need by being our High Priest.

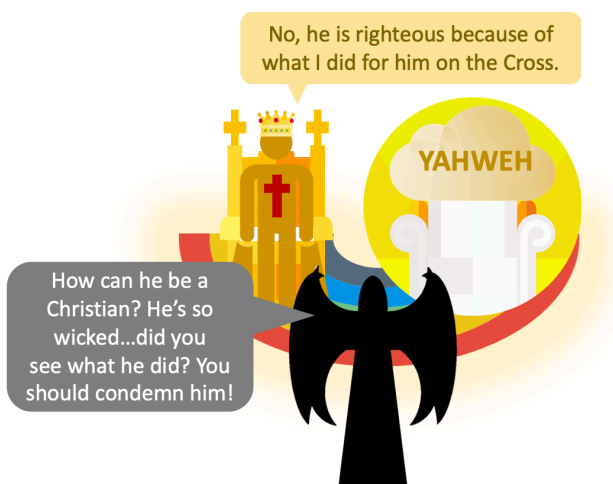
Hebrews 4:14–16

¹⁴ So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. ¹⁵ This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses, for he faced all of the same testings we do, yet he did not sin. ¹⁶ So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most.

What does being our High Priest mean? It means Jesus is interceding for all believers, mediating for us and defending us before God against Satan's accusations (See for example, Job 1:6–12.)

1 John 2:1

My dear children, I am writing this to you so that you will not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate who pleads our case before the Father. He is Jesus Christ, the one who is truly righteous.



Jesus has already paid for our sins and given us His righteousness. But He continues to speak up for us to God the Father!

Romans 8:33–34

³³ Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself. ³⁴ Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God's right hand, pleading for us.



iii. Jesus is preparing a place for all believers to be with Him.

Today, all believers who die will leave their bodies behind and their immaterial sides will go to be with Jesus in heaven (2 Corinthians 5:8).

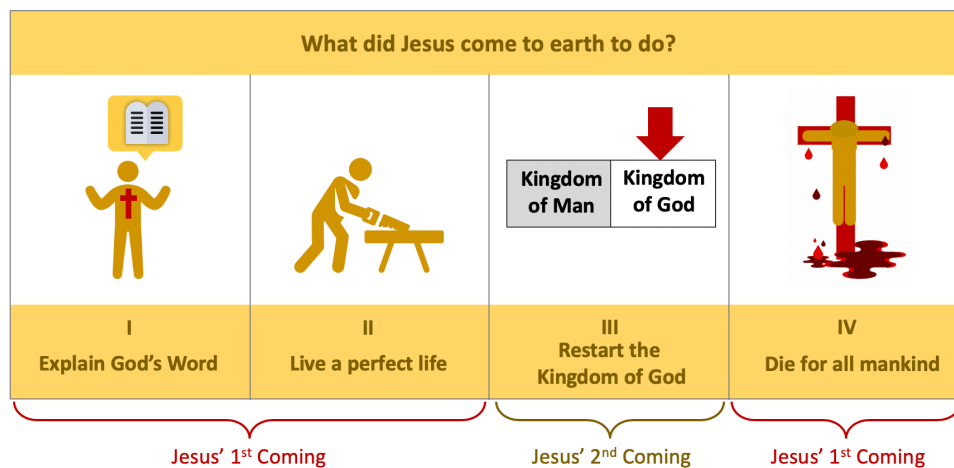
In heaven, Jesus is preparing a special place for all believers. When His disciples were upset that He would be leaving them, He told them this.

John 14:1–3

¹ “Don’t let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God, and trust also in me. ² There is more than enough room in my Father’s home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? ³ When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am.

Some time in the future, when He is ready, Jesus will return to take believers who are still alive on earth to be with Him. Then all believers (all those already in heaven and all He will take to heaven at that future point in time) will receive their new resurrection bodies and live with Him in that special place in heaven. We will discuss this event in a later lesson.

At Jesus’ first coming, He successfully completed key jobs that God the Father sent Him to do. He explained God’s Word, lived the perfect life and died for mankind.



But Jesus will be doing more work at His second coming. When will this be? Before He ascended, He told His disciples they will not know when this would happen.

Acts 1:6–9

⁶ So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?” ⁷ He replied, “The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” ⁹ After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him.

However, Jesus gave clear instructions of what they were supposed to do while waiting for His return. They were to live by the power of the Holy Spirit and tell the whole world about Him. And this is still true for believers today. We must actively and intentionally live to tell others about the gospel of Jesus and train believers into becoming mature disciples of Christ.



In the future, Jesus will come back in the same way He left. He will return in a physical, visible way.

Acts 1:10–11

¹⁰ As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. ¹¹ “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!”

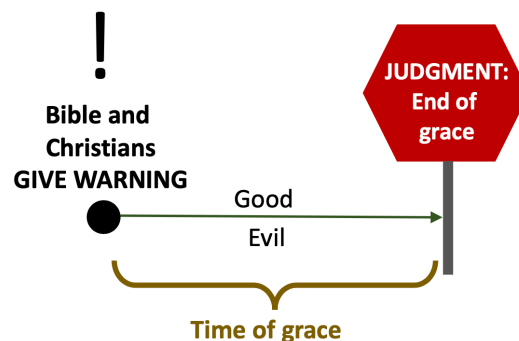
When Jesus returns the second time, the grace period for the world will come to an end. All who reject Him will realise what they have done and will mourn.

Revelation 1:7

Look! He comes with the clouds of heaven.

And everyone will see him—
even those who pierced him.
And all the nations of the world
will mourn for him.

Yes! Amen!



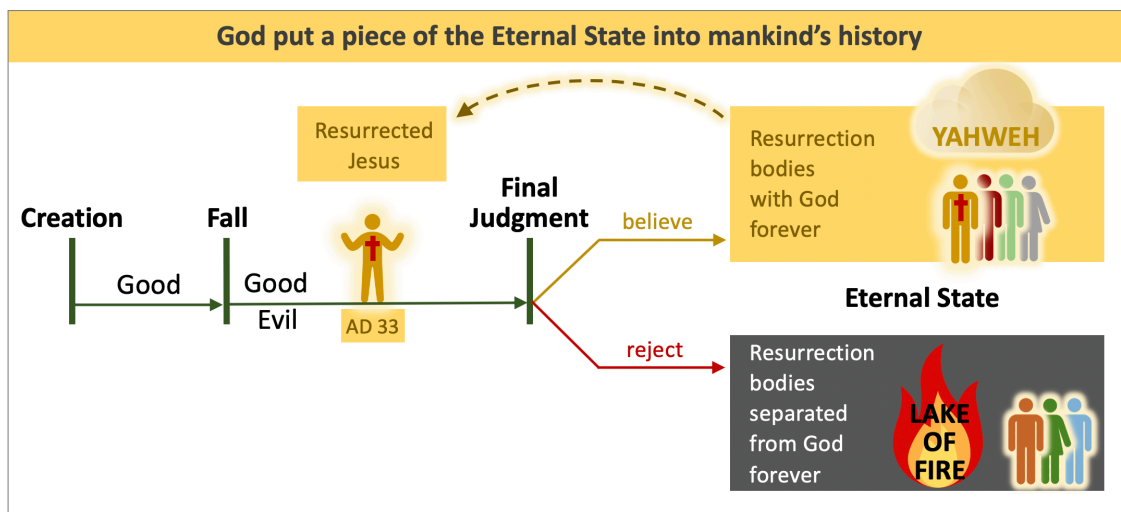


3. What Jesus accomplished with the Resurrection

a. Jesus' resurrection proves that there is a perfect "Eternal State" where there will be no more evil.

God the Father gave mankind proof that there is life beyond death for believers. How? He sent Jesus to earth in His resurrection body!

The resurrected Jesus belongs to the perfect eternity where there is no more sin and evil. But it was as if Yahweh "broke off" one "sample" piece of perfect eternity and placed it in our history so we could see what the future looks like!



Jesus' resurrection is physical proof of what God promised to do: He will permanently separate good and evil forever and will give us all bodies like Jesus'! Christ's disciples witnessed for themselves what this Eternal State is like.

Only Christians who believe in the resurrection have an actual "piece" of the Eternal State already existing in human history. No other worldview has proof that its concept of the future is true. For example, Marxism, socialism or Nazism or any other belief in a future utopia have no evidence that their vision of a future perfect human society will work. Only the Bible's revelation about the future has actual evidence in the form of Jesus' resurrection body.

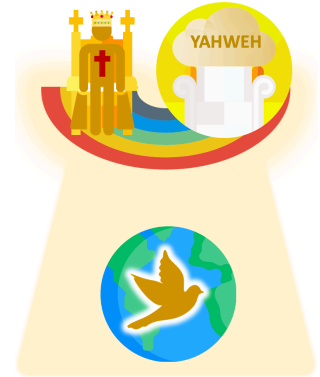
And here's another important point. Jesus showed proof of His resurrection body because He really wants people to believe in the coming judgment and believe in Him to be saved. His death and resurrection show that He made it possible for man to be reconciled to God and also that He won the battle against Satan, sin and death.

This is why Jesus told His disciples that when He goes back to heaven, He will send the Holy Spirit (the Advocate) to live in the hearts of believers.

The Holy Spirit's job is to help believers convince people everywhere of their evil and sin, and encourage them to believe in Jesus as their Saviour.

John 16:5–11

⁵ “But now I am going away to the one who sent me, and not one of you is asking where I am going. ⁶ Instead, you grieve because of what I’ve told you. ⁷ But in fact, it is best for you that I go away, because if I don’t, the Advocate won’t come. If I do go away, then I will send him to you. ⁸ And when he comes, he will convict the world of its sin, and of God’s righteousness, and of the coming judgment. ⁹ The world’s sin is that it refuses to believe in me. ¹⁰ Righteousness is available because I go to the Father, and you will see me no more. ¹¹ Judgment will come because the ruler of this world has already been judged.



The resurrection is amazing because God didn’t just tell us what the future will be like, He showed us through Jesus’ resurrection body!

b. With His resurrection body, Jesus will fulfil the original job of under-lord that God gave mankind.

The first divine institution that God gave mankind was to be under-lord of the world. Adam and Eve failed in this.

But Yahweh didn’t cancel responsible dominion or pretend it never existed. He is never thwarted.

Yahweh planned to send a second Adam (or second man) to fulfil this job. This second Adam is Jesus. He is fully human and without sin.

1 Corinthians 15:23–28

²³ But there is an order to this resurrection: Christ was raised as the first of the harvest; then all who belong to Christ will be raised when he comes back. ²⁴ After that the end will come, when he will turn the Kingdom over to God the Father, having destroyed every ruler and authority and power.

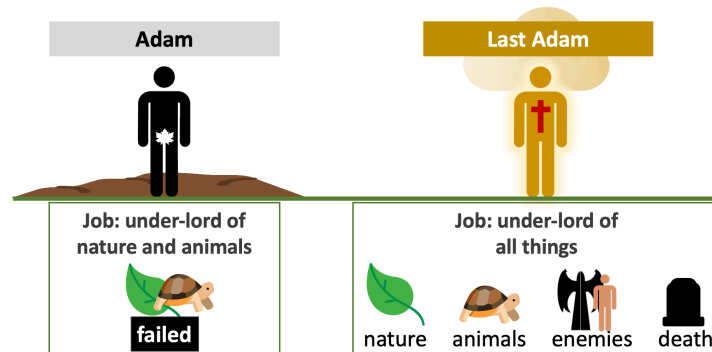
²⁵ For Christ must reign until he humbles all his enemies beneath his feet. ²⁶ And the last enemy to be destroyed is death. ²⁷ For the Scriptures say, “God has put all things under his authority.” (Of course, when it says “all things are under his authority,” that does not include God himself, who gave Christ his authority.)

²⁸ Then, when all things are under his authority, the Son will put himself under God’s authority, so that God, who gave his Son authority over all things, will be utterly supreme over everything everywhere.

Jesus proved by His life on earth that man, by relying on God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, can live in perfect obedience to God. He showed that Yahweh’s original design for mankind is capable of living an obedient and righteous life that glorifies God.

As a man, Jesus demonstrated that sin did not occur because mankind’s design was flawed. Rather, sin was the result of mankind’s choice to rebel. Now Jesus shows how mankind can be the proper under-lord. In His resurrection body, He rules as the perfect human under-lord that

mankind was created to be. He will fulfil the role of under-lord successfully. He will bring glory to mankind by doing this job very well.



In addition, Jesus will also restore all believing mankind to their original roles as under-lord too. Mankind will reign on the earth! This is a new song that will be sung to Jesus at the end. The song talks about what Jesus did for mankind.

Revelation 5:9–10

⁹ And they sang a new song with these words:

“You are worthy to take the scroll
and break its seals and open it.

For you were slaughtered, and your blood has ransomed people for God
from every tribe and language and people and nation.

¹⁰ And you have caused them to become
a Kingdom of priests for our God.
And they will reign on the earth.”

In fact, Paul also tells believers that believers will judge the world and even angels!

1 Corinthians 6:2–3

² Don't you realize that someday we believers will judge the world?
And since you are going to judge the world, can't you decide even
these little things among yourselves? ³ Don't you realize that we will
judge angels? So you should surely be able to resolve ordinary
disputes in this life.



After the resurrection of all mankind, God's original plan for believers to be victorious under-lords will be entirely fulfilled! All because of what Jesus did!

c. Jesus uses the resurrection as the tool for final judgment.

After Jesus' resurrection, God the Father appointed Him as the judge of all mankind.

Acts 17:31

For he has set a day for judging the world with justice by the man he has appointed, and he proved to everyone who this is by raising him from the dead.”

Jesus has the power to resurrect all people and He uses it to judge everyone.

John 5:21–23

²¹ For just as the Father gives life to those he raises from the dead, so the Son gives life to anyone he wants. ²² In addition, the Father judges no one. Instead, he has given the Son absolute authority to judge, ²³ so that everyone will honor the Son, just as they honor the Father. Anyone who does not honor the Son is certainly not honoring the Father who sent him.

But how does Jesus use resurrection for judgment? First, He offers His gospel to everyone.

John 5:24–27

²⁴ “I tell you the truth, those who listen to my message and believe in God who sent me have eternal life. They will never be condemned for their sins, but they have already passed from death into life.

²⁵ “And I assure you that the time is coming, indeed it’s here now, when the dead will hear my voice—the voice of the Son of God. And those who listen will live. ²⁶ The Father has life in himself, and he has granted that same life-giving power to his Son. ²⁷ And he has given him authority to judge everyone because he is the Son of Man.

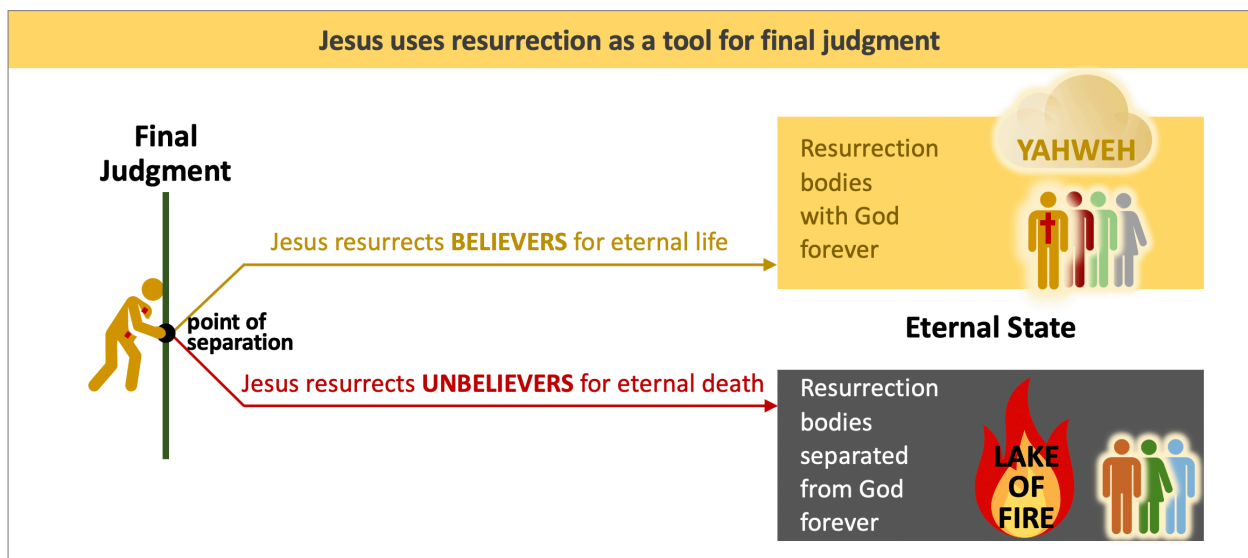
Jesus says “the time is coming, indeed it’s here now” that when those who are spiritually dead (“the dead”) hear His gospel and believe, they will receive spiritual life. (This is being born again. See John 3:3–5.) In other words, Jesus has the power to save those who trust Him.



Then He says how He will use physical resurrection to separate believers and unbelievers.

John 5:28–29

²⁸ Don’t be so surprised! Indeed, the time is coming when all the dead in their graves will hear the voice of God’s Son, ²⁹ and they will rise again. Those who have done good will rise to experience eternal life, and those who have continued in evil will rise to experience judgment.



Jesus says there is the soon-to-come, physical resurrection of both believers and unbelievers. He says “the time is coming” when “all the dead in their graves”, that is all believers and unbelievers, will be resurrected. (Notice how He does not repeat “indeed it’s here now” because the resurrection is a future event. See also Acts 24:15.)

He will give believers resurrection bodies so they can enjoy eternal life with Him.

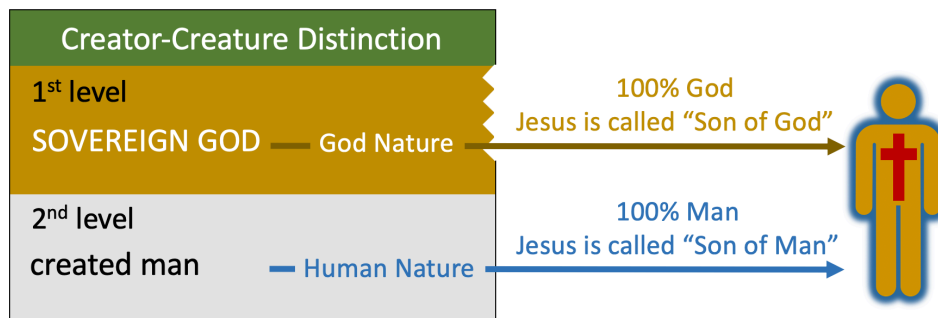
And He will give resurrection bodies to unbelievers so they will suffer eternal condemnation. Unbelievers will not escape His justice by dying!

That is how Jesus uses the resurrection as the tool of judgment and salvation.

And Jesus is the qualified Judge who can do this because He is both the Son of God and the Son of Man.

As the Son of God, He is fully divine, righteous, holy and the ultimate authority on right and wrong.

As the Son of Man, He is fully human, completely able to understand what we are like and able to judge us fairly as a fellow human. He is a peer Judge.



As a tool of judgment, the resurrection is both good and bad news:

- it’s wonderful for those who trust in Jesus for salvation, but
- it’s horrific for rebellious sinners who reject Christ. There is no escape from God’s justice!

Did the resurrection of Jesus really happen or is it just a lie?

Many people accuse Christians of making up the story that Jesus resurrected. Ever since He rose from the dead, unbelievers have been attacking that event. Even in the Bible itself, we see the Jewish leaders trying to stop people from talking and believing in the risen Christ. Right after the resurrected Jesus met with the women at the tomb, this is what the Jewish leaders did.

Matthew 28:11–15

¹¹ As the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city and told the leading priests what had happened. ¹² A meeting with the elders was called, and they decided to give the soldiers a large bribe. ¹³ They told the soldiers, “You must say, ‘Jesus’ disciples came during the night while we were sleeping, and they stole his body.’ ¹⁴ If the governor hears about it, we’ll stand up for you so you won’t get in trouble.” ¹⁵ So the guards accepted the bribe and said what they were told to say. Their story spread widely among the Jews, and they still tell it today.

Over the years, unbelievers have suggested these and other theories to say the resurrection never happened.



1. Jesus’ body was stolen.

This is the same story that the Jewish leaders bribed the guards to tell others. Unbelievers today still claim that the disciples stole Jesus’ body and then told everyone that He came back to life.

The problem with this is that the disciples would have had to spend the rest of their lives lying to more and more people. Why would they do that? Not one of them became rich from saying that Jesus came back from the dead. In fact, all of them (except the apostle John) were killed in horrible ways for talking about Jesus’ death and resurrection. It would be ridiculous to think that a whole group of people sacrificed their own lives for a lie they made up.

2. The disciples hallucinated the resurrection.

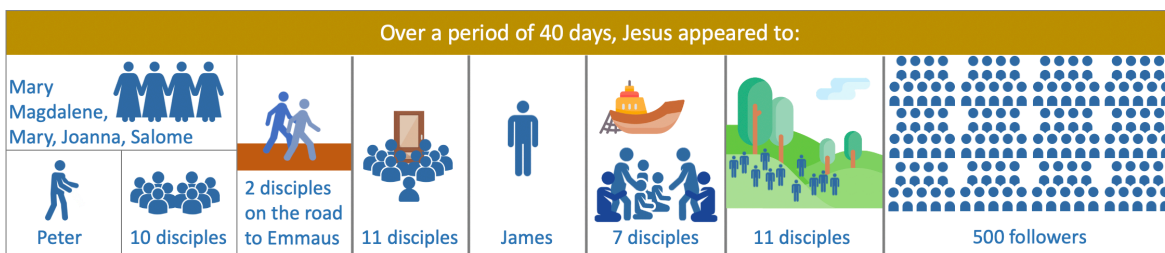
Some unbelievers claim the disciples imagined the resurrection. They say the disciples all thought they saw the resurrected Jesus, but it was actually not real. It was all in their minds.



However, in the 40 days that Jesus was on earth, He appeared to different people at different times. For example:

- On resurrection day, Jesus appeared to at least four different women (Matthew 28:1–10; Mark 16:1–10; Luke 24:1–10; John 20:1–3), Peter (Luke 24:34), two disciples on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–31) and the other disciples except for Thomas (John 20:19–24).

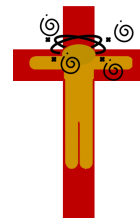
- Eight days later, Jesus appeared to the disciples again. This time, Thomas was present (John 20:26–28).
- The Bible records that Jesus also appeared to his earthly brother James (1 Corinthians 15:7).
- Another time, Jesus appeared to seven disciples by the Sea of Galilee (John 21:1–14).
- Jesus also spoke to 11 of His disciples on a mountain in Galilee (Matthew 28:16–20).
- On another occasion, Jesus appeared to more than 500 followers at the same time (1 Corinthians 15:6). These people could not have imagined the same thing all at the same time!



The idea that all these people imagined Jesus is not reasonable.

3. Jesus didn't die; He just fainted.

Some unbelievers claim that Jesus didn't die on the cross. They say He fainted from His injuries and later woke up in the tomb where He was buried.



However, trained Roman soldiers who considered Jesus a criminal were the ones who made sure He was dead. Mistakes would possibly cost them their own lives. It is not possible that they made a mistake about Jesus' death.

John 19:33–34

³³ But when they came to Jesus, they saw that he was already dead, so they didn't break his legs. ³⁴ One of the soldiers, however, pierced his side with a spear, and immediately blood and water flowed out.

Also, medically speaking, blood and water came out as proof that Jesus had already died.

Those are three common theories to deny the resurrection.

Then there are unbelievers who admit that it is possible that Jesus really resurrected. However, they say that it is a miracle that happened just once and will never happen again to anyone else. However, the Bible says that Jesus is just the very first to resurrect. Other resurrections will follow.

1 Corinthians 15:20

But in fact, Christ has been raised from the dead. He is the first of a great harvest of all who have died.

If we need to investigate more about the historical evidence for the resurrection, there are many good books that we can read to learn more.

However, the question is why do unbelievers want to deny the resurrection of Jesus?

There are many reasons but here's an important one: they are frightened that there is life after death.

If the resurrection is true, that means there really is life after death and people will be held accountable for how they have lived their lives on earth.

Rather, this is what they prefer to believe:

- Some unbelievers think our current life is all there is, so pursuing enjoyment is the most important thing. There's no need to think about life after death because it doesn't exist.
- Other unbelievers think we will be reincarnated so we can have another (and another, and another) chance at life.
- Still others believe all people will go to some kind of restful, peaceful "heaven" where everyone is forgiven and everything is fine.

Resurrection

I don't want the Bible to be true.

I prefer to think:

- the current life is all there is... or
- I'll be reincarnated... or
- everyone will just go to heaven... or

I really don't actually want to think about it.

But Scripture says all people, believers and unbelievers, will be resurrected with new bodies and God will separate them. Believers will spend eternity with God and unbelievers will be separated from Yahweh to suffer never-ending punishment for their rebellion and rejection of the Creator-God.

That is deadly serious if it's true!

And Jesus' physical and historical resurrection proves that the Bible's description of life after death is true and is coming.

For believers, the resurrection is a guarantee that the gospel is true. The good news is a message of love, grace and mercy. It is a gift that we all do not deserve. So the life, death and resurrection of Jesus is very precious to us.

While we pray for our unbelieving friends and family, let us be compassionate and kind and try to understand why they struggle to believe such good news. And let us gently and reasonably explain the reason for our faith.

1 Peter 3:15–16a

¹⁵ Instead, you must worship Christ as Lord of your life. And if someone asks about your hope as a believer, always be ready to explain it. ¹⁶ But do this in a gentle and respectful way. Keep your conscience clear.

Let us not be harsh when we speak to them. Let us not dishonour, disrespect and insult them because they do not accept or believe. Rather, let us ask for God's help to treat them with the same love, grace and mercy that God has shown to us.



Discussion Questions

Discuss the following questions as a group or use them for personal reflection.

1. Why is the resurrection such a key event in the Bible? How does it affect the truthfulness of the Bible's message and how does it impact every person on earth?
2. The resurrection is not only about the salvation of man but God has several purposes for it. In your own words, can you describe why the resurrection is an essential part of God's plan for the universe?
3. The resurrection permanently locks in a person's decision to believe or reject Christ. Understanding this, how does this motivate you to reach out to your unbelieving friends and loved ones?



Pre-reading for next lesson: Romans 3–8. Also review Lesson 10 (the whole lesson) and Lesson 18, pages 11–29.