

# Jewish Afterlife

Jonah Mickelson

# Heaven and Hell?

The talmud vaguely describes two places in the afterlife, one with fire and one that is peaceful.

## Berakhot 57b



The Talmud presents the idea of a Hell. Claiming that Gehinnom is 60 times hotter than fire on Earth.

## Berakhot 28b



The earliest reference to Gan Eden (the Garden of Eden) and Gehinnom as a pair is probably the rabbinic statement of the 1st century sage Yochanan ben Zakkai: “There are two paths before me, one leading to Gan Eden and the other to Gehinnom.”

# Olam Ha-Ba: The World to come

## What is it?

The Talmud says, "This world is like the eve of Shabbat, and the Olam Ha-Ba is like Shabbat. He who prepares on the eve of Shabbat will have food to eat on Shabbat." We prepare ourselves for the Olam Ha-Ba through Torah study and good deeds. The Talmud states that all of Israel has a right to a portion of the Olam Ha-Ba. However, each portion is not equal, as a better person may receive a larger portion. The Olam Ha-Ba refers to the messianic period which is to be followed by a day of judgment. Various acts will increase or decrease one's share of the Olam Ha-Ba. Of course this can be viewed metaphorically as well, generally approving or disapproving of various deeds.

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## Daniel 12:2

“Many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth will awake, some to eternal life, others to reproaches, to everlasting abhorrence”

## Mishnah Sanhedrin 10:1

This states that those who don't believe in resurrection “have no share in the world to come.”

## Isaiah 25-26

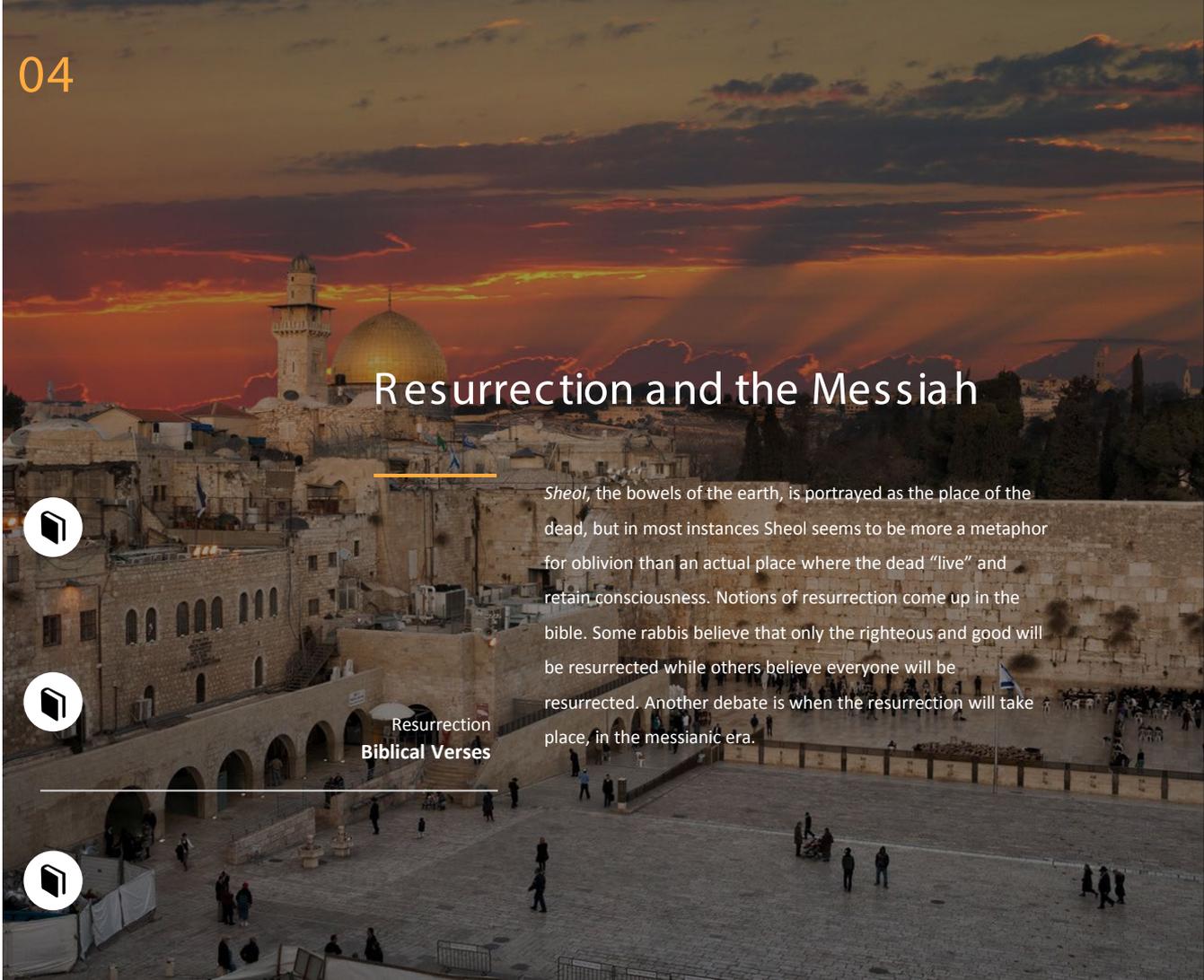
Oh, let Your dead revive! Let corpses arise! Awake and shout for joy, You who dwell in the dust!of target.



# Resurrection and the Messiah

*Sheol*, the bowels of the earth, is portrayed as the place of the dead, but in most instances Sheol seems to be more a metaphor for oblivion than an actual place where the dead “live” and retain consciousness. Notions of resurrection come up in the bible. Some rabbis believe that only the righteous and good will be resurrected while others believe everyone will be resurrected. Another debate is when the resurrection will take place, in the messianic era.

## Resurrection Biblical Verses



# Reform View: Here and Now

Jewish Afterlife

## What is it?

The reform movement is not so interested in the afterlife as they are more interested in the world we live in now. The view is that people should not do deeds for rewards in the afterlife, or entry to Gan Eden. People should complete mitzvot with the thought of bettering the world we live in. The Reform Jewish prayer book expresses this idea through a metaphor involving a leaf and a tree. A leaf falls to the ground from a tree, the leaf nourishes the soil in order for plants and trees spring up. The same is true in our lives. We nourish the future through the influence we have on those who follow us.

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Confirmand

## Reform

I personally agree more with the reform ideas. I do not think that the purpose of doing mitzvot is to be rewarded other than a feeling of good. I believe that the other views such as the Olam Ha-Ba could be metaphorically talking about our souls. One who does lots of mitzvot will live through memories. We all continue to live in the memories of our friends and families for generations to come.

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