

Life after death

Kristoffer Sjulsson from Tämna parish, at the end of the 19th century, expressed the relationship between the living and the dead in the following way. Although the dead man was dead, the survivors believed that he both heard and saw, and they were careful not to say anything that might disturb the dead man. He was dead in body but lived in the midst of the living, though invisible. He had supernatural power, for both evil and good. He could allow himself to be seen and heard, but no one wanted such a revelation. Many were those who could converse with the dead and thus find out the wishes he had when he appeared. By conforming to his will or fulfilling his wishes, one could induce him to stay in his kingdom or home.

Life after death is best known to us through the stories of the "*nåjd/noajdde*" (shaman). They could go to *Jabbmekájmmo*, the realm of the dead, and negotiate with the goddess of death or someone deceased in crisis situations. The "*nåjd*" have described the realm of the dead as similar to earthly life, but somewhat more colorless and gloomy.

The "*nåjd*" could also tell about a paradise-like underworld in sacred mountains, *Sájvvaájmmo*, where the "*nåjd*" met their dead relatives, their helping and protective spirits and received advice and help. We are also told about another kingdom of the dead, *Ruotájmmo*, which was a gloomy and dark place, where those who stole and were evil had to live after death. Both *Ruotájmmo* and *Sájvvaájmmo* have probably been colored by Christian notions of hell and paradise.