

The New You! Resurrection of the Dead

It may be surprising to discover that the concept of resurrection is central to Jewish thought, given the fact that many people are familiar with it through other religions. But in fact, *Techiat HaMaitim* (the Resurrection of the Dead) in the future World to Come is one of the most fundamental principles of Judaism, and is the subject of this third part in the series of classes about the World to Come.

As discussed in Parts I and II of this series, the World to Come is the time and place in which we will experience closeness to God commensurate with our actions and the choices we made during our lifetime. The first stage of this reward is in the entirely spiritual World of the Souls. But that is not the highest level of existence. Ultimately, the body will be resurrected and the soul will be reunited with the body to experience a new dimension of reality and attachment to God.

In this class we will seek to answer the following questions about this little-known fundamental of Jewish faith:

- Does Judaism really believe in a resurrection?
- What is the purpose of resurrection?
- When will the Resurrection take place and how will it happen?
- What will life be like in the post-Resurrection World to Come?
- What lesson can we learn for our lives today from the Resurrection and World to Come?

Contents:

- Section I. Belief in Resurrection
 - Part A. Resurrection is Essential to Jewish Belief
 - Part B. As Reflected in Prayer
 - Part C. Biblical Sources for the Concept of Resurrection

- Section II. The Purpose of Resurrection
 - Part A. The Necessity of Death
 - Part B. Judgment of the Whole Person
 - Part C. Perfection of the Physical World

- Section III. The Process of Resurrection
 - Part A. The Stages of Resurrection
 - Part B. How the Resurrection Will Happen
 - Part C. Which Body will be Resurrected?
 - Part D. Healing of Defects
 - Part E. Where the Resurrection Will Take Place

- Section IV. The Nature of the Post-Resurrection World to Come
 - Part A. Overview
 - Part B. Man's Alternative Physical Nature
 - Part C. Levels of the World to Come
 - Part D. Economy of the World to Come
 - Part E. Time in the World to Come
 - Part F. Spiritual Growth in the World to Come

- Section V. The Lesson of the World to Come for This World

SECTION I. BELIEF IN RESURRECTION

Dear young man,

You wrote to me and asked whether a fetus that was miscarried in your family will come to life at the Resurrection of the Dead.

In the Talmud (Sanhedrin 110b) it is asked: From what age does a child gain a place in the World to Come? And the answer: From the moment the fetus is conceived. In his commentary, Rashi adds that this is true even if the fetus does not reach full term.

We see that it is explicitly written that at the time of the Resurrection of the Dead, even fetuses will live. And furthermore they will have the status of tzaddikim (righteous ones) since they are clean and pure of any wrongdoing. Therefore you can be sure that at the time of the Resurrection you will have righteous brothers.

May you be blessed with peace of soul and body. May you become great in Torah wisdom and deeds of kindness,

Rabbi Moshe Feinstein

(From Igrot Moshe, Yoreh Deah 3:138, slightly adapted)

Belief in the Resurrection of the Dead is fundamental to Judaism. As we shall see below, Rambam (Maimonides) classifies it as one of the Thirteen Principles of Faith and it is referred to daily in the prayer book (*siddur*).

PART A. RESURRECTION IS ESSENTIAL TO JEWISH BELIEF

1. Rambam/Maimonides, Thirteen Principles of Faith, Principle 13 – Resurrection is one of the thirteen fundamental beliefs of Judaism.

I believe with complete faith that there will be a Resurrection of the Dead, at the time when the Creator, may He be blessed, wills it to happen ...

אני מאמין באמונה שלמה, שתהיה תחית המתים בעת שיעלה רצון מאת הבורא ...

2. Maimonides, Treatise on the Resurrection of the Dead (Ma'amar al Techiat Hamatim) – Resurrection is a universally accepted tenet of Judaism.

The concept of the Resurrection of the Dead – universally acknowledged by our people, incorporated in our daily prayers, which were composed by prophets and great wise men full of knowledge of the Talmud and Midrash – refers literally to the returning of the soul to the body after it has been separated from it ... It requires no [allegorical] explanation ...

ואומר שתחית המתים המפורסמת והנודעת באומתנו המוסכם עליה מכלל כתותנו אשר רוב זכרה בתפלות והספורים ובתחנונות אשר חברים הנביאים וגדולי החכמים ימלא מוהם התלמוד והמדרשות ענינה שוב זאת הנפש לגוף אחרי הפרידה זה ... ואין בו פירוש כלל ...

PART B. AS REFLECTED IN PRAYER

1. Nusach HaTefillah, Birkat HaGevurot (second blessing of the silent Amidah) – We praise God daily for His ability to resurrect the dead.

You are eternally mighty, my Lord, the Resuscitator of the dead are You. You are abundantly able to save.

He sustains the living with kindness. He resuscitates the dead with abundant mercy. He supports the fallen, heals the sick, releases the confined, and maintains His faith to those who sleep in the dust.

Who is like You, Master of mighty deeds, and who is similar to You? A King Who causes death and resurrection, and Who causes salvation to sprout.

And You are faithful to resurrect the dead. Blessed are You, God, Who resurrects the dead.

אתה גבור לעולם אדני. מחיה מתים אתה רב להושיע:

מכלל חיים בחסד. מחיה מתים ברחמים רבים. סומך נוֹפְלִים. וְרוֹפֵא חוֹלִים וּמַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים. וּמְקִים אַמּוֹנְתוֹ לְיִשְׁנֵי עָפָר.

מי כמוך בעל גבורות ומי דומה לך. מלך ממיית ומחיה ומצמיח ישועה: ונאמן אתה להחיות מתים:

ברוך אתה ה', מחיה המתים:

2. Nusach HaTefillah, Morning Blessing – We thank God for our soul, knowing that He will take it away and restore it to us in the World to Come.

My God, the soul which You have placed within me is pure. You created it ... and You preserve it within me. You will eventually take it from me, and restore it to me in the future. As long as the soul is within me, I offer thanks to You ... Master of all works, Lord of all souls. Blessed are You, God, Who restores souls to dead bodies.

אלוקי, נשמה שנתת בי טהורה היא, אתה בראת... ואתה משמרה בקירבי, ואתה עתיד ליטלה ממני, ולהחזירה בי לעתיד לבא, כל זמן שהנשמה בקירבי מודה אני לפניך... רבון כל המעשים אדון כל הנשמות ברוך אתה ה', המחזיר נשמות לפגרים מתים.

PART C. BIBLICAL SOURCES FOR THE CONCEPT OF RESURRECTION

In the following sources we will examine some of the allusions to the Resurrection found in the Torah and Prophets.

1. Shemot (Exodus) 6:3-4 – God promised the Land of Israel to the Patriarchs, yet the promise went unfulfilled in their lifetimes.

And I [God] revealed Myself to Avraham (Abraham), to Yitzchak (Isaac), and to Yaakov (Jacob) ...

And I have also established My covenant with them, to give them the Land of Canaan, the land of their dwellings, where they dwelled.

וארא אל אברהם אל יצחק ואל יעקב...

וגם הקמתי את בריתי אתם לתת להם את ארץ כנען את ארץ מגריהם אשר גרו בה:

2. **Talmud Bavli, (Babylonian Talmud), Sanhedrin 90b – This promise implies that the Patriarchs will be resurrected. Since the promise went unfulfilled in their lifetimes, it will be fulfilled after they are resurrected.**

Rabbi Simai said, “Where in the Torah is the Resurrection of the Dead mentioned? In the verse, “And I have also established My covenant with [the Patriarchs], giving them the Land of Canaan” [Shemot/Exodus 6:4]. The verse does not say “to give you” but “to give *them*.” Hence [we learn that] the Resurrection is from the Torah.

Rashi:

“To give them” – The verse implies that God promised the Patriarchs, Avraham, Yitzchak, and Yaakov, that He would give them the Land of Israel. But was it actually given to them? No, it was given only to their descendants. Hence, the verse teaches us that it has yet to happen; in the future God will give them the Land of Israel.

תניא רבי סימאי אומר, מניין לתחיית המתים מן התורה? שנאמר (שמות ו) 'וגם הקימותי את בריתי אתם לתת להם את ארץ כנען'. 'לכם' לא נאמר אלא 'להם', מכאן לתחיית המתים מן התורה.

רש"י

אלא להם. דמשמע שהבטיח הקדוש ברוך הוא לאבותינו אברהם יצחק ויעקב שיתן להם ארץ ישראל, וכי להם ניתנה - והלא לבניהם ניתנה אלא מלמד שעתידין לחיות ועתיד הקדוש ברוך הוא ליתן להם את ארץ ישראל.

3. **Devarim (Deuteronomy) 32:39; Talmud Bavli, Pesachim 68a – God takes lives and grants life again in the future.**

See, now, that I, I am He – and no god is with Me. I put to death and I bring life, I struck down and I will heal, and there is no rescuer from My hand.

Pesachim 68a

“I put to death and I bring life” – The Holy One, Blessed be He said, “Whoever I cause to die, I shall resurrect.”

ראו עתה כי אני הוא ואין אלהים עמדי אני אמית ואחיה מחצתי ואני ארפא ואין מידי מציל:

פסחים דף סח עמוד א

אמר הקדוש ברוך הוא: מה שאני מומית אני מחיה

4. **Yeshayahu (Isaiah) 26:19 – The dead shall live.**

Your dead shall live; corpses shall arise; awaken and sing, you who dwell in the dust ...

יִחְיוּ מֵתֶיךָ וְגִבְלֹתֶיךָ יִקְוּמוּן וְקִיצוֹ וְרָנְנוּ שְׂכָנֵי עֶפְרוֹ...

5. **Daniel 12:2 – The dead shall yet awaken once more.**

And many who sleep in the dust of the earth will awaken ...

רבים מִיִּשְׁנֵי אֲדָמַת עֶפְרוֹ יִקְיצוּ...

KEY THEMES OF SECTION I:

- ∞ Although many may find it surprising, belief in the Resurrection of the Dead is a fundamental principle of Judaism, universally acknowledged by all classical sources, and codified as a tenet of Jewish faith by the Rambam.

- ∞ This fact can be seen in the many references to the Resurrection found in the standardized prayers of the Jewish people.
- ∞ While the Torah does not make specific reference to the event of the Resurrection, it is hinted to in a number of verses. The concept is made more explicit in the writings of the Prophets and the Talmud.

SECTION II. THE PURPOSE OF RESURRECTION

In this section we will explore the purpose and deeper meaning behind the Resurrection. In the previous class we discussed the spiritual experience of attachment to God found in the World of the Souls after death. Is this experience as a disembodied soul not a sufficient reward? Why must the soul and body be reunited for the purpose of Creation to be fulfilled?

By way of answering the above questions, let us ask a more fundamental question: why must man die in the first place only to be resurrected in the future? Why couldn't his soul remain with his body forever?

PART A: THE NECESSITY OF DEATH

The phase of life called death – which is the parting of the soul from the body – was never part of the original plan of Creation. Death only became a necessary component of man's experiences after Adam's transgression in the Garden of Eden.

1. **Bereishit (Genesis) 3:17-19 – Adam was originally destined to live forever. After he ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, death was decreed upon man.**

God said to Adam, "Because you listened to the voice of your wife and ate of the tree about which I commanded you saying, 'You must not eat of it,' accursed is the ground because of you. Through suffering will you eat from it all the days of your life. Thorns and thistles will it grow for you, and you will eat the herb of the field. By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread until you return to the ground, from which you were taken. For you are dust, and to dust shall you return."

יז וְלָאָדָם אָמַר כִּי-שָׁמַעְתָּ לְקוֹל אִשְׁתְּךָ וְתָאָכַל מִן-הָעֵץ
 אֲשֶׁר צִוִּיתִיךָ לֵאמֹר לֹא תֹאכַל מִמֶּנּוּ אַרְוֶה הָאָדָמָה
 בְּעֵבוּרֶךָ בְּעֵצְבוֹן תֹּאכְלֶנָּה כָּל יְמֵי חַיֶּיךָ.
 יח וְקוֹץ וְדַרְדַּר תַּצְמִיחַ לְךָ וְאָכַלְתָּ אֹת-עֵשֶׂב הַשָּׂדֶה.
 יט בְּזַעַת אַפְיֶיךָ תֹאכַל לֶחֶם עַד שׁוֹבֶיךָ אֶל-הָאָדָמָה כִּי
 מִמֶּנָּה לָקַחְתָּ כִּי-עָפָר אַתָּה וְאֶל-עָפָר תָּשׁוּב.

2. **Ramchal (Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzzatto), Derech Hashem (The Way of God) 1:3:9, translated by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, Feldheim Publishers, pp. 51-53 – After Adam's transgression, man is in a non-perfect state. To re-attain the perfection for which man was destined, his body and soul each undergo a purification process.**

[After Adam's mistake] justice decreed that neither man nor the world will ever be able to rise to perfection while still in their current fallen state. Because they remain in this spoiled, non-ideal condition, and evil in the meantime has increased, both man and the world must go

ואולם מלבד כל זה גזרה מידת דינו יתברך, שלא יוכלו,
 לא האדם ולא העולם מעתה, הגיע אל השלמות -
 עודם בצורה שנתקלקלה, דהיינו הצורה שיש להם
 עכשיו שבה נתרבה הרע. אלא יצטרך להם בהכרח
 עבור מעבר ההפסד, דהיינו המיתה לאדם, וההפסד
 לכל שאר ההווים שנתקלקלו עמו.

through a stage of destruction before either can arrive at perfection.

Man must therefore die, and everything else that was corrupted with him also must perish. The soul cannot purify the body until the body dies and deteriorates and a new structure is composed, that the soul can enter and purify ...

It was therefore decreed that man should die and then be brought back to life. This is the concept known as the Resurrection of the Dead ...

The true time and place of reward will therefore be after the Resurrection in this renewed world. Man will then enjoy his reward with both body and soul. The body will be purified by the soul, and will therefore also be in a proper state to enjoy that good.

ולא תוכל הנשמה לזכך הגוף, אלא אחר שתצא ממנו תחילה, וימות הגוף ויפסד, ואז יחזור ויבנה בניין חדש ותכנס בו הנשמה ותזכהו...

ועל כן נגזר על האדם שימות ויחזור ויחיה, והוא עניין תחיית המתים...

והנה לפי שורש זה, זמן הגמול האמיתי, דהיינו זמן קיבול השכר... ומקומו הוא אחר התחייה בעולם שיתחדש, והאדם ייהנה בו בגופו ובנשמתו, בהיות גופו מזוכך על ידי נשמתו, ומוכן על ידה להיות נהנה בטוב ההוא.

Death is the process by which the soul and body are temporarily separated and return to their sources. The soul returns to the World of the Souls and the body returns to the ground. This is so that a new, purified structure can be built at the time of the Resurrection, when the soul will re-inhabit the body, free from the deficiencies caused by Adam's transgression.

PART B. JUDGMENT OF THE WHOLE PERSON

Another purpose of the Resurrection is so that the body and soul can be reunited for the purpose of standing in judgment before God. The following incident in the Talmud is explained more fully by Rabbi Yaakov Weinberg in the subsequent source.

1. Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 91a-b – Body and soul must be judged as one unit.

Antoninus said to Rabbi (Yehudah HaNasi), “The body and the soul can both free themselves from judgment. Thus, the body can plead: The soul has sinned, [the proof being] that from the day it left me I lie like a dumb stone in the grave [powerless to do anything]. While the soul can say: The body has sinned, [the proof being] that from the day I departed from it I fly about in the air like a bird [and commit no sin].”

Rabbi Yehudah HaNasi replied, “I will tell you a parable to explain this. To what may this be compared? To a human king who owned a beautiful orchard which contained splendid figs. He appointed two watchmen for the orchard, one lame and the other blind. [One day] the lame man said to the blind man, ‘I see beautiful figs

אמר ליה אנטונינוס לרבי: גוף ונשמה יכולין לפטור עצמן מן הדין, כיצד? גוף אומר: נשמה חטאת, שמיום שפירשה ממני - הריני מוטל כאבן דומם בקבר. ונשמה אומרת: גוף חטא, שמיום שפירשתי ממנו - הריני פורחת באויר כצפור.

אמר ליה, אמשול לך משל, למה הדבר דומה: למלך בשר ודם, שהיה לו פרדס נאה, והיה בו בכורות נאות, והושיב בו שני שומרים, אחד חירג ואחד סומא. אמר לו חירג לסומא: בכורות נאות אני רואה בפרדס. בא והרכיבני ונביאם לאכלם.

in the orchard. Come and take me upon your shoulder that we may take and eat them.' So the lame man rode on top of the blind man, and took and ate them.

“Sometime later, the owner of the orchard came and asked them, ‘Where are those beautiful figs?’ The lame man replied, ‘Have I then feet to walk with?’ The blind man replied, ‘Have I then eyes to see with?’ What did he do? He placed the lame man upon the blind man and judged them together. So will the Holy One, Blessed be He, bring the soul, [re]place it in the body, and judge them together. This is referred to in the verse, ‘He will call to the heavens above and to the earth, to judge His people’ [Tehillim/Psalms 50:4]. ‘He will call to the heavens above’ refers to the soul; ‘And to the earth, that he may judge his people’ refers to the body.”

רכב חיגר על גבי סומא, והביאום ואכלום. לימים בא בעל פרדס. אמר להן: בכורות נאות היכן הן? - אמר לו חיגר: כלום יש לי רגלים להלך בהן? - אמר לו סומא: כלום יש לי עינים לראות? מה עשה - הרכיב חיגר על גבי סומא ודן אותם כאחד. אף הקדוש ברוך הוא מביא נשמה וזורקה בגוף, ודן אותם כאחד. שנאמר יִקְרָא אֶל הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעַל יְאֵל הָאָרֶץ לְדִין עַמּוֹ. יִקְרָא אֶל הַשָּׁמַיִם מֵעַל - זו נשמה, ואל הארץ לדין עמו - זה הגוף.

2. **Rabbi Yaakov Weinberg with Rabbi Mordechai Blumenfeld, Fundamentals and Faith – The body is just as much a part of us as the soul.**

The relationship of body and soul is like that of a blind man and a lame man (Sanhedrin 91b). Just as there could be no punishment for the lame man alone, there can be no reward or punishment for the soul. Alone, it cannot sin. A soul only sins in its body. Reward and punishment can only apply to the entity that is the person, the body and soul together. Only thus can justice be meted out. The soul cannot enter the World to Come without the body. Is it possible that once the entity of body and soul achieves a place in the World to Come, the body is discarded? A soul is not an image of God. A body is not an image of God. The soul doesn't have free will. Only the two together have free will, only the two together are the image of God.

This ultimate experience of being connected with actual, absolute Existence requires the whole being, the body as well as the soul. Without resurrection, without man's knowing that he, as he now perceives himself, will experience this pleasure, the idea of the World to Come is irrelevant. People are not impressed with their soul existing in the World to Come. They can't relate to such an existence because they feel that their soul alone is just not their whole self.

The principle of resurrection implies that the body is not merely an object but a subject. The body is part of the person himself.

PART C: PERFECTION OF THE PHYSICAL WORLD

Another purpose of the Resurrection of the Dead is that it is a time when everything in existence reaches its *tikun* (perfected state), fulfilling its ultimate purpose in God's plan. At this time, the whole physical creation will join the spiritual world in a new unity.

1. **Rabbi Ehud Rakovski, Daat Tefillah: Kedushah – The entire world will be renewed along with man in the service of God.**

The Resurrection of the Dead will not be for

ולא יהיה תחיית המתים להאדם לבד אלא כל פרטי

man alone, but rather for every force in the entire universe that came into actualization at any time since Creation – they will all be renewed and perfected at the time of the Resurrection of the Dead. The whole idea of man being resurrected is that he is a microcosm of the world, but the whole world will likewise experience the same thing. This is what Rabbi Shlomo Elyashiv wrote in *HaDe'ah* (Vol. II, Ch. 2), “The central principle of the Resurrection of the Dead, as it has been revealed to us by the Arizal, is continuously taking place even in this world as we find more and more of the physical world being harnessed for the good of man. It is all to be used in the service of man ... and when he uses the world in the service of God ... both he and it rise up higher and higher, each and every force according to its intrinsic nature ...”

הכחות דכל הבריאה כולה והנהגתה אשר בכל ימי עולם, הנה כולם יתחדשו ויתקנו בעת תחיית המתים. וכל ענין תחיית המתים אשר להאדם שהוא עולם קטן. הנה יתנהג כמו כן לכל העולם כולו. רב שלמה אלישיב [כתב], [ב]הדעה ח"ב דרוש ב: "כי הרי עיקר הענין דתחיית המתים נודע הוא מדברי האריז"ל שהוא נוהג באמת תמיד בכל רגע...והא מה שאנו רואים גם בעולם הזה שיוצא תמיד פעולות חדשות בכל חלקי הדצח"מ [דומם, צומח, חי מדבר] שבה ומתקנים לצורך האדם. וכל פעולתם הרי הוא לצורך האדם...וכשמשמש האדם בהנאתם המגיע לו מהם לעשות רצון קונו... עולה כל חלקי נפשו עם כל כחות...הללו למעלה למעלה, כל כח וכח לשרשו ומקורו...

KEY THEMES OF SECTION II:

- ⌘ After Adam ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, it became inherently impossible for man to achieve perfection in his current state. The purpose of the Resurrection, therefore, is for man to transition through a stage of death, after which the soul will be reunited with a purified body.
- ⌘ Like a lame man on the back of a blind man, neither can claim the reward nor accept responsibility on his own. Similarly, since man is composed of body and soul, the Resurrection is the time when they will be reunited to receive reward and accept responsibility for their actions together.
- ⌘ Resurrection is not just for man alone; he is the microcosm of the universe at large. Ultimately, the whole physical world will be renewed along with man in a new, elevated form of existence.

SECTION III. THE PROCESS OF RESURRECTION

PART A. THE STAGES OF RESURRECTION

After the arrival of the *Mashiach* (Messiah), there will be two separate resurrections of the dead. A first resurrection will take place following the arrival of the *Mashiach*. However, only people who were completely righteous during their lifetime will rise at that time. A second resurrection for the rest of mankind will follow at the end of the period of *Mashiach*.

1. **Responsa of Rabbi David ibn Zimra (Radbaz), Vol. III, #1069 – The Resurrection will take place in two stages, first for the righteous and then for everyone else.**

You, my dear friend, asked me about the time

שאלת ממני ידיד נפשי על זמן התחייה לפי שקבלת

of the Resurrection, for you claimed to have received a tradition from your forefathers that it will take place close to the time of the seventh millennium [which begins in 2240 CE], along with the “Shabbat” of the world, which will be a time of complete rest. Secondly, you were bothered by the possibility that the great righteous people, who died for the sake of God’s name during the period of exile, would not see the good fortune of Israel and will not be able to rejoice in their joy [during the Messianic times].

The answer: All my life I was bothered by this question, until I saw the words of the Ritva (Rabbi Yom Tov Asevilli) in the name of his rabbis that there will be two resurrections. The first will be a private one for the righteous that died during the period of exile, and that will be close to the time of the coming of Mashiach. They will merit to experience the good fortune of Israel in both body and spirit, as well as [to see] the building of the Beit HaMikdash (Temple), and they will rejoice in joy, etc. And the second, more general resurrection will be close to the time of the Shabbat of the world, just as you and I have received the tradition. That is what is referred to as the World of the Resurrection, and upon it was it said, “Many of those who sleep in the dust shall awaken ...” [Daniel 12:2].

מאבותיך שהוא סמוך לאלף השביעי עם הכנסת שבת העולם שכלו מנוחה וק"ל א"כ הצדיקים וחסידים עליון אשר מתו על קדושת שמו בגלות לא יראו בטובתן של ישראל ולא ישמחו בשמחתן:

תשובה כל ימי הייתי מצטער על דבר זה עד שראיתי דברי הריטב"א ז"ל בשם רבותיו נ"נ דאיכא תרי תחיות אחת פרטית לצדיקים שמתו בגלות והיא סמוכה לביאת המשיח ויזכו לכל ימות המשיח בגוף ונפש ויראו בטובתן של ישראל ובבנין הבית וישמחו בשמחת חלף עבודתם וכו' וא' כללית והיא סמוכה להכנסת שבת כאשר קבלתי [קבלת] והוא נקרא עולם התחייה ועליה נאמר וְרַבִּים מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֲדַמּוּת עֶפְרָיִם וכו':

A second resurrection will take place at the end of the Messianic era, at a time that is known as the *Yom HaDin HaGadol*, the Great Day of Judgment. At that time, all people, both good and evil, will rise. However, the evil ones will be judged and punished while the righteous will be awarded their portion in the eternal World to Come.

2. **Ramchal, Maamer Halkarim, BeGeulah – All will be judged after the final Resurrection.**

At the time of the Resurrection, both the righteous and the wicked shall arise. The wicked who sinned but did not receive the full measure of their punishment will receive it then.

However, after the Resurrection will be the Great Day of Judgment on which God will determine who deserves eternal life and who will be lost ... Those who deserve to remain in existence will be assigned an appropriate level according to the system of justice in the newly created world.

והנה בתחיה יקומו צדיקים ורשעים, והרשעים שחטאו ולא נשלם בהם העונש הראוי יענשו או כראוי להם.

ואמנם אחרי התחיה יהיה יום הדין הגדול שידין הבורא יתברך את כלם וישפט הראויים לישאר לנצחיות והראויים ליאבד ... והראויים לישאר ישארו במדרגה שתגיע להם כפי המשפט בעולם שיחודש.

PART B. HOW THE RESURRECTION WILL HAPPEN

We find differing opinions in the Midrash as to exactly how the physical resurrection of bodies will take place. Will the body be reconstructed from its original matter or will God create a new body into which the soul will be resurrected?

1. Bereishit Rabbah 14:5 – Will the resurrection mimic the growth process of a new fetus or will it reverse the process of decay after burial?

“And He formed” [Bereishit 2:7 is written with two letter *yuds*] representing two formations of the body: one in this world and one in the World to Come.

The School of Shammai and the School of Hillel had a dispute. The School of Shammai maintains that man’s formation in the World to Come will not be like that of this world. In this world skin and flesh are formed first, the sinews and bones last; but in the future man’s formation will begin with sinews and bones and finish with the skin and flesh, for thus it says in connection with the prophecy of the resurrection of the dead by Yechezkel (Ezekiel): “And then I looked, and behold, upon [the skeletons of dry bones] were sinews, and flesh had come up on them” (Yechezkel 37: 8) ...

The School of Hillel said that just as man is formed in this world, so will he be formed in the World to Come. In this world the skin and flesh come first, the sinews and bones last; so in the future will his formation begin with the skin and flesh and end with the sinews and bones.

וייצר ב' יצירות, יצירה בעולם הזה, ויצירה לעולם הבא,

ב"ש וב"ה, ב"ש אומרים לא כשם שיצירתו בעוה"ז, כך יצירתו לעולם הבא, בעולם הזה מתחיל בעור ובבשר וגומר בגידים ובעצמות, אבל לעתיד לבא מתחיל בגידים ובעצמות וגומר בעור ובבשר, שכך הוא אומר במתי יחזקאל (יחזקאל לו) ראיתי והנה עליהם גידים ובשר עלה ...

ב"ה אומרים כשם שיצירתו בעוה"ז, כך יצירתו בעוה"ב, בעוה"ז מתחיל בעור ובבשר וגומר בגידים ובעצמות, כך אף לעתיד לבא מתחיל בעור ובבשר וגומר בגידים ובעצמות.

2. Ibid. 28:3 – Man will be resurrected from an indestructible bone in his spine.

Hadrian – may his bones rot – once asked Rabbi Yehoshua ben Chanania, “From what part of the body will the Holy One, Blessed be He, cause man to blossom forth in the future?” “From the *luz*, the ‘nut’ of the spinal column [the prominent bone just below the back of the neck],” he replied. “How do you know that?” he asked. “Bring me one and I will prove it to you,” he replied. He ground it in a grinder but it did not get ground; he threw it into the fire, yet it was not burnt; he put it in water, but it did not dissolve; he placed it on an anvil and hit it with a hammer, but the anvil split and the hammer broke, yet the “nut” was not damaged at all.

אדריאנוס שחיק עצמות שאל את רבי יהושע בן חנניא א"ל מהיכן הקב"ה מציין את האדם לעתיד לבא, א"ל מלז של שדרה א"ל מנין אתה יודע א"ל איתיתיה לידי ואנא מודע לך, טחנו ברחים ולא נטחנו, שרפו באש ולא נשרפו, נתנו במים ולא נמחה, נתנו על הסדן והתחיל מכה עליו בפטיש נחלק הסדן ונבקע הפטיש ולא חסר כלום.

PART C. WHICH BODY WILL BE RESURRECTED?

Judaism affirms the belief in reincarnation and therefore one soul might have lived many lifetimes in different physical bodies. The prospect of resurrection raises the question: which body will be the one to be resurrected? This question is asked by the *Zohar*, in the next source.

1. **Zohar I, 131a – Man will be resurrected in the body in which he achieved the greatest degree of self-perfection.**

Rabbi Chizkiah asked, “If all the dead bodies rise up from the dust, what will happen when a number of bodies shared the same soul in succession?”

Rabbi Yose answered: “Those bodies which were unworthy and did not achieve their purpose will be regarded as though they had not been: just as they were a withered tree in this world, so will they be regarded at the time of the Resurrection. Only the last one that had been firmly planted and took root and prospered will come to life, as it says, ‘He will be like a tree planted near water ... whose leaves are ever fresh’ (Yirmiyahu/ Jeremiah 17:8). This alludes to the body that struck deep root, produced fruit, and prospered. But of the former body which remained fruitless, which did not take root, which was unworthy and did not achieve its end, it is written, ‘He will be like a lone tree in the desert, and will not see when goodness comes ...’ (ibid. 17:6), i.e. he will not be included in the Resurrection, and will not see the light stored up at the Creation for the enjoyment of the righteous ...”

אמר רבי חזקיה אי תימא דכל גופין דעלמא יקומו ויתערוון מעפרא אינון גופין דאתנטיעו בנשמותא חדא מה תהא מנייהו,

אמר רבי יוסי אינון גופין דלא זכו ולא אצלחו הרי אינון כלא הוו כמה דהוו עץ יבש בההיא עלמא הכי נמי בההוא זמנא וגופא בתראה דאתנטע ואצלח ונטל שרשי' כדקא יאות יקום, ועליה כתיב (ירמיה י"ז) והיה כעץ שתול על מים וגו' והיה עלהו רענן וגו', דעבד איבין ונטע שרשין ואצלח כדקא יאות ועל ההוא גופא קדמאה דלא עבד איבין ולא נטע שרשין (ולא זכה ולא אצלח) כתיב (שם) והיה כערער בערבה ולא יראה כי יבא טוב וגו' כי יבא טוב דא תחיית המתים, ויתנהיר ההוא נהורא דזמין לאנהרא להו לצדיקיא דהוה גניז קמיה מיומא דאתברי עלמא...

PART D: HEALING OF DEFECTS

There are two seemingly conflicting prophecies about what will happen to physical defects during the Resurrection that are reconciled by the Talmud below.

1. **Yimiyahu 31:7 – The resurrected will come back with the same physical defects with which they died.**

Behold, I shall bring them from the land of the north, and gather them from the far reaches of the earth. Among them shall be the blind and the lame, the pregnant woman and the woman in labor; a great assembly will return to there.

הנני מביא אותם מארץ צפון וקבצתיים מן־צפון ארץ כּם עור ופסח־הרָה וילדת־יחדו קהל גדול ישובו־הנה:

2. **Yeshayahu 35:6 – The resurrected will be healed of their original defects.**

Then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the

אז ידלג כּאֵיל פּסח־וּתְרוֹן לְשׁוֹן אֵלֶם כּי נִבְקְעוּ בַמְדְבָר

tongue of the mute shall sing, for waters shall break forth in the wilderness and streams in the desert.

מים ונחלים בעֶרְבָה:

3. **Babylonian Talmud, Sanhedrin 91b – The resurrected will arise with defects and then be healed of them.**

Reish Lakish contrasted two verses: It is written, “Among them will be the blind and the lame, the pregnant woman together with the woman in labor.” And yet another verse states, “Then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute shall sing, for waters shall break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert” (Yeshayahu 35:6). How can these verses co-exist? They shall rise with their defects and then be healed.

ר"ל רמי כתיב (ירמיהו לא) 'בם עור ופסח הרה ויולדת יחדיו'.
וכתיב (ישעיהו לה) 'אז ידלג כאיל פסח ותרון לשון אלם כי נבקעו במדבר מים ונחלים בערבה'.
הא כיצד?
עומדין במומן ומתרפאין.

Why is it necessary to first resurrect the body with its defects and then heal it? Why not just resurrect the healed body?

4. **Zohar III, 91a – One will be resurrected into his previous state in order to be recognizable.**

When they awaken from the dust, they will rise up as they went in – lame or blind, so that no one will be able to say it was a different person who was revived.

Then, the Holy One, Blessed be He, will heal them so they will be whole before Him ...

...כד יתערוך מעפרא, כמה דעאלו, הכי יקומו, חגרין או סומין... דלא יימרון דאחרא הוא דאתער.

ולבתר, קודשא בריך הוא יסי לון, וישתכחון שלימין קמיה ...

PART E. WHERE THE RESURRECTION WILL TAKE PLACE

1. **Zohar I, 131a – Those bodies buried in the Diaspora will have to travel through subterranean tunnels to get to Israel. The soul will only be restored to the body in the Land of Israel.**

Observe that it has been laid down that the dead of the Land of Israel will be the first to rise, and of them it is written, “Your dead will come to life” (Yeshayahu 26:19). On the other hand, the words “My dead bodies shall arise” (ibid.) allude to the dead of other lands, since instead of saying, “shall come to life” it says “shall arise.” The living spirit, in fact, will only infuse the bodies in the Land of Israel. But the bodies buried in other lands will rise without the spirit of life, and only after they have rolled underground and reached the Land of Israel will they receive souls and be truly resurrected – only there, but not in other lands.

תא חזי הא אתמר כל אינון מתין דבארעא דישראל יקומו בקדמיתא בגין דקודשא בריך הוא יתער עלייהו ויוקים לון, עלייהו כתיב "יחיו מתין" אלין אינון די בארעא דישראל "נבלתי יקומו" אלין אינון דבגו ארעאן אחרנין דלא כתיב בהו תחייה אלא קימה דהא רוחא דחיי לא תשרי אלא בארעא קדישא דישראל ובגין כך כתיב בהו יחיו מתין ואינון דלבר יתברי גופא דלהון ויקומו גופא בלא רוחא, ולבתר יתגלגלון תחות עפרא עד דימטון לא"י ותמן יקבלון נשמתא ולא ברשו אחרא בגין דיתקיימון בעלמא.

Because the Land of Israel is the place of the ultimate Resurrection, Jews as far back as the Patriarchs have always longed to be buried there, as the next source illustrates.

2. Bereishit 47:29-31, with Rashi – The Land of Israel was always the desired burial place of the Forefathers, since they would be resurrected easily at the time of the Resurrection.

When Israel (Yaakov) realized that he would soon die, he called for his son Yosef (Joseph), and said to him, “Please – if I have found favor in your eyes, please place your hand under my thigh [to swear] and do kindness and truth with me – please do not bury me in Egypt.”

Rashi

“Please do not bury me in Egypt” – ...because the process of resurrection for those who die outside the [Holy] Land will necessitate ... rolling through underground passages...

כט וַיִּקְרָבוּ יְמֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל, לְמוֹתוֹ, וַיִּקְרָא לְבָנוֹ לְיוֹסֵף וַיֹּאמֶר
לוֹ אִם-נָא מְצָאתִי חֵן בְּעֵינֶיךָ, שִׂים-נָא יָדְךָ תַּחַת יְרֵכִי;
וַעֲשֵׂיתָ עִמָּדִי חֶסֶד וְאֱמֶת, אֵל נָא תִקְבְּרֵנִי בְּמִצְרָיִם

אל נא תקברני במצרים - ... ושאין מתי חוצה לארץ
חיים אלא... (על ידי) גלגול מהילות...

Similarly, Yosef requested that his bones be brought out of Egypt during the Exodus and buried in the Land of Israel (Bereishit 50:24-26).

KEY THEMES OF SECTION III:

- ⌘ There will be two stages of resurrection: first, the completely righteous will be resurrected when the Messiah arrives to share in the experiences that will occur at that time. Second, everyone else will be resurrected at the end of the Messianic Era.
- ⌘ While belief in resurrection is universal, we find different opinions as to how the physical process of resurrection will take place: either a new body will grow organically or bones will rise and recover their flesh.
- ⌘ If a person is reincarnated, the body in which the soul achieved the greatest self-perfection will be the one in which it shall be restored. Any defects the body may have had will also be visible at first, so that everyone will recognize each other in the World to Come. After this, all defects will be healed.
- ⌘ While physical resurrection may happen anywhere in the world, the actual restoration of the soul to the body will only take place in the Land of Israel.

SECTION IV. THE NATURE OF THE POST-RESURRECTION WORLD TO COME

PART A. OVERVIEW

The post-Resurrection World to Come will usher in an entirely new form of existence. The nature of the post-Resurrection world flows from its purpose – to provide a venue for experiencing a closeness to God

achieved in one's previous lifetime. As such, spirituality and awareness of God will be much more apparent than it is today. The laws of the physical world, the awareness of time, and the manner of spiritual growth will all be drastically altered in the World to Come. As we shall see below, the physical world will be governed by laws of nature that facilitate the *receiving* of reward rather than *earning* it. This is Judaism's utopian vision for the future.

1. **Ramchal, Derech Hashem 1:3:4, translated by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, Feldheim Publishers, pp. 47-49 – The World to Come will function according to laws of nature conducive to receiving reward.**

Since the period of earning and that of reward are different, it is appropriate that man's environment and experiences be different in the two. While he is striving toward perfection, he must be in a setting containing elements necessary for such effort. The period of earning must therefore be one [where a maximum challenge exists and] where the spiritual and physical are in constant strife. In this environment there must be nothing to prevent the material from prevailing and doing what it can, and conversely, there must be nothing to prevent the spiritual from doing likewise. Nothing should exist that would give either one an inappropriate advantage. Although it might seem best to make the spiritual stronger than the physical, in the light of man's true purpose and what God desires of him, namely, that he earn perfection through his own effort, it would not be good at all.

In the period of reward, however, the exact opposite is appropriate. The more the physical would prevail, the more it would darken the soul and prevent it from being drawn close to God. During the time of reward, it is therefore appropriate that the soul prevail and that the physical be totally subjugated to it and not restrain it at all. And that is why God created two worlds, this world and the next: this world is the place that runs according to the laws of nature conducive to man's effort while the World to Come functions according to laws of nature that are fitting for receiving reward.

ואולם כפי התחלף זמניו, כך ראוי שיתחלף מצבו ושאר מקריו. כי כל זמן ההשתדלות הנה צריך שיהיה בתכונה אחת, שיוכלו לימצא בו כל הענינים המצטרפים לו לפי ענין ההשתדלות הזה. פירוש - כי הנה מוכרח שתמצא לו המלחמה שזכרנו בין השכל והחומר, ולא יהיה לו דבר שיעכב את החומר מלשלוט ולעשות את שלו כפי השיעור הראוי לו, ולא דבר שיעכב את השכל מלשלוט ולעשות את שלו כפי השיעור הראוי לו. וכן לא יהיה דבר שיגרום לחומר להתחזק יותר מן הראוי, וגם לא יגרום לשכל להתחזק יותר מן הראוי. כי אע"פ שמצד אחד היה נראה זה יותר טוב, הנה לפי הכונה האמיתית והענין הנרצה באדם, שהוא קניית השלימות בהשתדלותו, איננו טוב.

ובזמן קיבול השכר הנה ראוי לו שיהיה במצב הפכי לזה, כי הנה כל מה שיהיה החומר שולט באותו זמן, הנה לא היה אלא מחשיך ומעכב על הנשמה שלא תתדבק בבורא ית', ועל כן הנה ראוי הוא שלא ישלוט או אלא הנשמה, והחומר יהיה נמשך אחריה לגמרי באופן שלא יעכב על ידה כלל. ואמנם על כן נבראו שני העולמות, עוה"ז ועוה"ב, עוה"ז המקום והחוקים הטבעיים שלו הם מה שראוי לאדם כל זמן ההשתדלות, והעוה"ב המקום והחוקים שלו הם מה שראוי לו בזמן קיבול השכר:

PART B. MAN'S ALTERNATIVE PHYSICAL NATURE

After the Resurrection, when the soul will be reunited with the body, our new bodies will have a spiritual composition. We will no longer need food and water; rather, we will be nourished from spiritual energy alone. The level of our bodies then will be similar to the level of our souls now, while our souls will be higher still.

1. **Ramban (Nachmanides), Torat HaAdam, Shaar HaGemul – Just as we are sustained by food and drink in this world, we will be sustained by the radiance of God's Presence in the World to Come.**

In the World to Come, God will cause people to be satiated from the radiance of his Divine Presence (Bava Batra 10a).

This means to say that those that merit it will be sustained by the splendor of [God's] glory just as their bodies had been sustained in This World by food and drink.

We have seen the proof of the above phenomenon in regard to the pure of soul whose bodies were sustained by little physical sustenance; the more pure the person, the less sustenance he required. For example, manna was absorbed easily and was created by a supernal light that came into physical form only by virtue of God's Will. It was only eaten by those who experienced the tremendous spiritual elevation at the Splitting of the Reed Sea, as it is said, "The maidservant at the Sea saw more than Yechezkel in his prophecy" (Mechilta, Parshat Beshalach).

הקב"ה משביען מזיו שכינתו לעוה"ב שנאמר אשבעה בהקיץ תמונתך (ב"ב י"א)

רצו לומר שקיום האנשים הזוכים ההם בזיו הכבוד כקיום הנפש בגוף בעוה"ב באכילה ושתיה....

והנה ראינו כי זכי הנפש קיום גופם בדברים הדקים, והזכים מהם בדקים מן הדקים, כי אנשי המן נתקיימו במן הנבלע באברים שהוא מתולדת האור העליון המתגשם ברצון בוראו יתברך, וזכו בדבר משעה שנתעלית נפשם במה שהשיגו בנפלאות הים, כמו שאמרו (מכילתא בשלח) ראתה שפחה על הים מה שלא ראה יהזקאל הנביא.

2. **Talmud Bavli, Sanhedrin 91a – We will live forever.**

[The] Tanna d'vey Eliyahu [states]: The righteous, whom the Holy One, Blessed be He, will resurrect, will not revert to dust, for it is said, "And it shall come to pass that he that is left in Zion and he that remains in Jerusalem shall be called holy, every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem" (Yeshayahu 4:3). Just as the Holy One endures forever, so shall they endure forever.

תנא דבי אליהו: צדיקים שעתיד הקדוש ברוך הוא להחיותן אינן חוזרין לעפרן, שנאמר (ישעיהו ד:ג) והיה הנשאר בציון והנוותר בירושלים קדוש יאמר לו כל הכתוב לחיים בירושלים, מה קדוש לעולם קיים - אף הם לעולם קיימין.

PART C. LEVELS OF THE WORLD TO COME

This new state of existence will not come about overnight; rather, mankind and the world will proceed through various levels of existence as spirituality slowly but surely overcomes and then replaces physicality.

1. **Rabbi Chaim Freidlander, Sifsei Chaim, Pirkei Emunah U'Bechirah, Vol. II, pp. 226-7 — In the first level of the World to Come the soul will be in control and the body will be nourished from spirituality.**

The first level of the world of reward is the seventh millennium, which the Sages described as "a millennium of desolation" after which

המדרגה הראשונה בעולמות השכר – אלף השביעי, כפי שהגדירו חז"ל (סנהדרין צב.) "וחד חרוב" ואח"כ "הקב"ה מחדש עולמו", העולם של אלף השביעי הוא

“God will renew His world” (Sanhedrin 92b). The world of the seventh millennium will be temporal, but unlike the first six millennia in which physicality rules like “the master of the house,” in the seventh millennium, while physicality will still exist, it will be “as a wanderer from place to place, a guest looking for lodging” (as Ramchal has described it in Da’as Tevunos, p. 83). That is, the body will not have control.

Rather, everyone will be on the level of Moshe (Moses) when he ascended the mountain: who did not eat or drink. This does not mean that he fasted for forty days, but rather that his body was completely drawn after the spiritual and sustained by the spirituality of the soul. As such, there was simply no need to eat or drink. That is why the Sages have referred to this type of world as “a day that is entirely Shabbat and tranquil for eternal life” (Sanhedrin 97a). The body will not be entirely nullified by the soul but rather the soul will be free of the necessity of physical needs. That is what the Sages meant when they said that there would be “one millennium of desolation” – desolation of physical needs, that is, physicality shall not dominate. Clearly, though, the desolation of the physical is an empowerment for the soul, for by virtue of the cessation of physical needs the soul is able to develop and build itself up for the future elevation of the time after the seventh millennium.

כפי שעתה, אך ההבדל שכאמור בשית אלפי שנים הגוף הוא שולט “כאיש השורר בביתו”, ובאלף השביעי אף שיש גוף כמו שהוא עתה, אך הוא רק “כאיש נודד ממקומו וכאורח נוטה ללון” (לשון רמח”ל דע”ת עמ’ פג), שאין לגוף שליטה,

אלא מדרגת האדם תהיה כמו משה רע”ה כשעלה להר, שלא אכל ולא שתה, שאין פירושו שהתענה בצום ארבעים יום, אלא גופו הלך לגמרי אחרי הנשמה וניזון מרוחניות הנשמה, ממילא לא היה זקוק לאכול ולשתות, לכן הגדירו חז”ל עולם זה “יום שכולו שבת ומנוחה לחי העולמים” (סנהדרין צז.), עדיין לא בטל הגוף אל הנשמה, אלא שיש רק שביטה מפעולות הגשמיות של הגוף, זו ההגדרה בפי חז”ל על אלף השביעי “וחד חרוב” – חורבן פעולות הגוף, דהיינו, שאין הגופניות פועלת, ברם חורבן הגוף הוא בנין הנשמה, שבעולם ההוא ע”י שביטה מפעולות הגוף היא יכולה להתפתח ולבנות את עצמה, לקראת המשך עלייתה אחר אלף השביעי.

2. **Ibid. – In the second level of the World to Come the soul increases its dominion, yet the body still has some influence.**

The second level – the eighth millennium – will see the universe transformed into a world of pure spirituality with only the slightest trace of physical influence. At this stage the body will be completely secondary and subservient to the soul. This will facilitate the ability of both of them to receive their spiritual reward.

המדרגה השנייה – אלף השמיני, חידוש העולם והפיכתו לעולם רוחני זך, תהיה עדיין שליטה מסוימת של הגוף, אבל אז הגוף יהיה טפל ובטל אל הנשמה, כך שיוכלו שניהם לקבל את שכרם הרוחני.

3. **Ibid. – In the third level of the World to Come the soul will be only slightly burdened by the body.**

In the third level – the ninth millennium – the body and soul combination that ascended to the level of the eighth millennium will be further refined, the body having even less dominion,

מדרגה השלישית – אלף התשיעי, שהגוף והנשמה שעלו במדרגתם באלף השמיני, יעלו מדרגה נוספת שישאר לגוף רק שליטה כלשהי, כדברי הרמח”ל

as Ramchal has written (Da'as Tevunos, p. 79), “The soul will not be able to develop all of its potential. Rather, it will feel an ever so slight burden without being able to pinpoint quite what is holding it back.” In this world the soul will still be somewhat bound by the body.

(דע“ת עמ' עט): לא תמצא כח הנשמה בעצמה להתפשט בכל כוחותיה, אלא תרגיש כמו איזה כובד מועט לה, ואין פרטי המניעה נודעים, שבעולם ההוא יהיה עדיין איזה מוגבלות לנשמה ע“י הגוף.

4. **Ibid. – The fourth stage of the World to Come is when the body is completely subservient to the soul.**

The fourth level, which is the highest level in the world of reward – the tenth millennium – is when the body will be completely and utterly subservient to the soul. From then on, the body and soul will together take delight in God in perfection forever and ever. This level is far beyond what man can fathom ...

מדרגה הרביעית שהיא מדרגה העליונה בעולמות השכר – אלף העשירי, שהגוף יתבטל לגמרי לנשמה, ומאז והלאה גוף ונשמה יתענגו יחד בשלימות את השי“ת לנצח נצחים, מדרגה זו היא נשגבה מאוד למעלה מהשגת אנוש...

PART D. ECONOMY OF THE WORLD TO COME

As man develops through these elevated stages of existence, the physical world too takes on more spiritual properties. However, since man's need for the physical world will decline in proportion to his spiritual growth, why should the world present such bounty? The answer, symbolized by the following two Talmudic excerpts, is that the physical world will effortlessly provide for man's sustenance in contrast to the Old World order when man had to toil. (Rabbi Reuven Leuchter).

1. **Talmud Bavli, Ketubot 111b – There will be overflowing natural bounty, no food preparation necessary, and no scarcity of resources.**

The World to Come is not like this world. In this world there is difficulty involved in harvesting and treading [grapes], but in the World to Come a man will bring one grape on a wagon or a ship, put it in a corner of his house and use its contents as [if it had been] a large wine cask, while its timber would be used to make fires for cooking. Each grape will contain thirty kegs of wine. This is hinted to in the verse, “And you would drink the blood of grapes like delicious wine” [Devarim 32:14]. Do not read it as “*chamer*” (delicious wine) but rather as “*chomer*” (a volume measure of 30 *se'ah*).

אמרו לא כעולם הזה העולם הבא העולם הזה יש בו צער לבצור ולדרוך. העולם הבא מביא עונה אחת בקרון או בספינה ומניחה בזוית ביתו ומספק הימנה כפטוס גדול ועציו מסיקין תחת התבשיל. ואין לך כל ענבה וענבה שאין בה שלשים גרבי יין שנא' (דברים לב) “יָדַם עֵנֶב תִּשְׁתֶּה חֶמֶר” אל תקרי חמר אלא חומר.

2. **Talmud Bavli, Bava Batra 122a – There will be unlimited real estate in the World to Come.**

The division of land in this world is not like the division of land in the World to Come. In this world if someone has a grain field he cannot have an orchard. If he has an orchard he does not have

ולא כחלוקה של עולם הזה חלוקה של עולם הבא העולם הזה אדם יש לו שדה לבן אין לו שדה פרדם שדה פרדם אין לו שדה לבן. לעולם הבא אין לך כל אחד ואחד שאין לו בהר ובשפלה ובעמק.

a grain field. But in the World to Come, everyone will have a hill, a valley, and a flat field.

3. **Rabbi Yerucham Levovitz, Da'as Torah, Bereishit p. 28 – One's physical portion in the World to Come is limitless.**

I was once with HaGaon Rav Naftali Amsterdam when someone related an incident to him. One person said to another, "You want me to do something for you? Well, if you give me your portion in the World to Come I will do what you ask." The other person didn't agree. When Rav Naftali heard this he exclaimed, "This person does not understand; he is an ignoramus and a fool. What does it matter to him if he gives part of his portion to someone else? He will still have more than enough for himself! This person doesn't understand the World to Come. This is complete ignorance. One could give away portions to a hundred different people and it would still make no noticeable difference to him or to his portion, for each portion in the World to Come is limitless, without end."

הייתי פעם אצל הגה"צ ר' נפתלי אמסטרדם זצ"ל וספרו לפניו מעשה באחד שאמר לרעהו, אתה מבקשני שאעשה לך זאת וזאת, הנה אם תתן לי חלק מחלקך בעולם הבא אז אעשה מזה שאתה מבקשני, ורעהו לא הסכים. וכששמע זה ר' נפתלי זצ"ל ענה ואמר כי הלו אינו מבין, עם הארץ וכסיל הוא, כי מה איכפת לך כי לרעהו גם כן יהיה חלק, מספיק די והותר גם בשבילך, הנה לא מבין מה זה עולם הבא, הנה זה עם הארצות פשוטה, יכול אתה ליתן חלקים גם למאה אנשים וממך ומחלקך לא יגרע על ידי זה כלום, כי כל חלק וחלק הנהו עד אין קץ ועד אין תכלית.

PART E. TIME IN THE WORLD TO COME

1. **Rabbi Chaim Friedlander, Sifsei Chaim: Emunah U'Bitachon, Vol. II, p. 190 – Time will be perceived differently than it is currently.**

"The World that is eternally long" [Kiddushin 39b] means that even the first moment of it will have limitless length, for even one moment of eternity is itself an eternity.

"לעולם שכולו ארוך", היינו שגם הרגע הראשון הוא ארוך ללא הפסק, כי ברגע אחד של הנצח יש בו את כל הנצח.

PART F. SPIRITUAL GROWTH IN THE WORLD TO COME

Although the time for earning reward will have ended, the World to Come will not be a static situation. A person will continue to grow, acquiring greater heights of spirituality as time progresses.

1. **Talmud Bavli, Berachot 64a – Torah scholars will go from strength to strength.**

Rabbi Chiya bar Ashi said in the name of Rav, "Torah scholars have no rest, neither in this world nor in the World to Come [for they continually delve further into the pleasure of God's Presence – Maharsha], as it says, 'They go from strength to strength, every one of them appears before God in Zion'" (Tehillim 84:8).

אמר רבי חייא בר אשי אמר רב: תלמידי חכמים אין להם מנוחה לא בעולם הזה ולא בעולם הבא, שנאמר ילכו מחיל אל חיל יראה אל אלהים בציון.

2. **Ramchal, Derech Hashem 1:3:13, translated by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, Feldheim Publishers, p. 59 – Even in the post-Resurrection World to Come man will still be able to elevate his spiritual level.**

When the soul is recombined with the body after Resurrection it will no longer be bound or restricted and it will enter the body with all its brilliance and strength. The body will then experience a great enlightenment, and it will not have to develop gradually as a child does now. The soul will immediately shine forth and purify the body to a very great degree.

This does not mean, however, that resurrected man will not be able to continue to elevate himself.

The instant that the soul reenters the body, the individual is raised to a high spiritual level and the body experiences its initial enlightenment. At this point, the body will immediately be on a higher level than it could ever possibly attain in its first life.

The degree of enlightenment will depend on the individual's good deeds in his first life, and accordingly he will be placed on an appropriate level among those worthy of enjoying this ultimate perfection. [This level, however, is not permanent,] and the complete person, both body and soul, will still be able to elevate himself in relation to the initial level upon which he is placed.

אכן בשובה בגוף אחר התחיה, לא תתמעט ולא תתעלם, אלא תכנס בכל זהריה ובכל כחה, ואז מיד תזכך את הגוף ההוא זיכוך גדול, ולא יצטרך לו הגידול מעט מעט שצריך עתה לילדים, אלא מיד בשעתו תאיר בו, ומיד תזככהו זיכוך גדול.

ואמנם לא ימנע זה, שיהיו לגוף ולנשמה יחד עילויים אחר עילויים.

אבל הענין הוא, שמיד בבוא הנשמה בגוף יהיה האדם ההוא יקר ונעלה, וגופו יקבל מיד זיכוך ראשון, יתעלה בו מכל מה שהיה כל ימי חייו הראשונים.

ויהיה הזיכוך ההוא כפי כל המעשים הטובים שעשה כבר, וישים אותו במדרגה שראוי לו להיות בין הזוכים ליהנות בשלימות. ואחר כך יתעלו שניהם עילויים, כפי מה שראוי למי שהוא במדרגה ההיא:

KEY THEMES OF SECTION IV:

- ∞ The World to Come after the Resurrection of the Dead will be governed by laws of nature that facilitate the *receiving* of reward rather than the *earning* of it.
- ∞ As the ultimate purpose of Creation, it will be designed to provide the greatest spiritual delight and connection to God. Just as man is sustained here by food and drink, there he will be sustained by the radiance of God's Presence.
- ∞ It will be a physical world, yet there will be overflowing natural bounty, endless resources, no death, an altered sense of time, and continual spiritual elevation. The soul too will not be bound by the limitations of the body and man will experience an awareness of God beyond that which we can currently imagine.

SECTION V. THE LESSON OF THE WORLD TO COME FOR THIS WORLD

1. Rabbi Chaim Friedlander, Sifsei Chaim, Pirkei Emunah U'Bchirah, Vol. II, pp. 230-1 – The World to Come teaches us the meaning of our lives in this world.

The subject of the World to Come and belief in it are not just fundamental principles of faith that teach us the greatness and kindness of God. As Rabbi Sa'adiah Gaon said, "There is nothing more spectacular about the Resurrection than there is about Creation itself." (This sentiment is based on the Talmud, Sanhedrin 91a: If that which at one time did not exist came into existence, then all the more so will that which already exists come into existence again.) That is, the actual existence of man testifies no less to God's greatness and kindness than does the Resurrection of the Dead.

Rather, since the reward of the World to Come is a function of man's effort and toil, we can learn that the purpose of man in this world and the way in which he prepares himself [for the World to Come] is through the fulfillment of the Torah and the mitzvot. The soul elevates the body and purifies it, and therefore it too is elevated and further elevates, according to the effort of a person in this world. To whatever extent the body is able to become a receptacle for receiving the reward of the World to Come together with the soul, it is a function of man's efforts in this world. To the degree to which man purifies his body in this world, it will be fit to participate in the reward of the World to Come.

It turns out, then, that we are here in this world to prepare our bodies and souls for eternal reward, for the body too needs to be prepared for the World to Come by the power exerted over it by the soul. The body should function as an assistant in the service of the soul. Accordingly, also in the World to Come the body will merit to be in the service of the soul; as the soul receives supernal splendor so too will the body, forever and ever.

נמצא שענין תחיית המתים והאמונה בו, אין הוא רק מיסודות האמונה כדי ללמדנו את גדולת הבורא והכרת חסדיו יתב', כפי שהרס"ג כותב על תחיית המתים: "אין בזה פלא יותר מעיקר בריאתו" (ועיין סנהדרין צא. דלא הוּו – חיי, דהוּו חיי – לא כל שכן), כי עצם בריאת האדם הוא פלא והכרת גדולת הבורא וחסדיו לא פחות מתחיית המתים,

אלא מתוך שהשכר בעוה"ב לפי מידת עמלו והשתדלותו של האדם, נמצינו למדים שתפקיד האדם בעוה"ז והכשרתו הוא ע"י קיום תורה ומצוות, שהנשמה תעלה את הגוף ותזככו, וגם היא תוסיף, לעלות ולהתעלות, כפי מדת עבודת האדם בעוה"ז, שעד כמה שהגוף יהיה בר קליטה להיות ראוי לקבל את שכר עוה"ב יחד עם הנשמה, זה תלוי בעבודת האדם בעוה"ז, שבאותה מידה שזיכך את גופו בעוה"ז כך יהיה ראוי להשתתף בשכר עוה"ב.

נמצא איפוא, שאנחנו כאן בעוה"ז מכינים את הגוף ואת הנפש לשכר בעולם הנצח, שגם את הגוף צריך להכין לעוה"ב ע"י השלטת הנשמה על הגוף, שהגוף ישמש בעוה"ז רק ככלי שרת לנשמה, כך גם בעוה"ב יזכה הגוף להיות ככלי שרת נטפל לנשמה, שהנשמה תקבל את זיו העליון, והגוף יקבל את זיו העליון מהנשמה לחיי נצח נצחים.

2. Pirkei Avot (Ethics of the Fathers) 4:16 – This world is a chance to prepare for the next.

Rabbi Yaakov would say, "This world is comparable to the antechamber before the World to Come. Prepare yourself in the antechamber, so that you may enter the banquet hall."

רבי יעקב אומר העולם הזה דומה לפרוזדור בפני העולם הבא התקן עצמך בפרוזדור כדי שתכנס לטרקלין:

KEY THEMES OF SECTION V:

- ≈ Belief in a future life in the World to Come should not seem any more miraculous than life itself: if God can give us life in this world then He can certainly grant life again in the World to Come.
- ≈ Belief in the World to Come is not simply a statement about our faith in God and His attributes. Rather, this belief imparts to us a perspective on the meaning of our lives in this world – that we are here to prepare ourselves for the next world through Torah study and the performance of mitzvot.
- ≈ Since the body too must be prepared for the spiritual existence of life in the World to Come, we must start the process of making the body subservient to the soul. To the extent that we can do that in this world, we will have life in the World to Come as well.

CLASS SUMMARY:

DOES JUDAISM REALLY BELIEVE IN A RESURRECTION?

Yes, this is a fundamental principle of Judaism, universally acknowledged by all classical sources, and is codified as a tenet of Jewish faith by the Rambam.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE RESURRECTION?

The post-Resurrection World to Come will usher in an entirely new form of existence. It will provide a venue for experiencing a closeness to God achieved in one's previous lifetime.

WHEN WILL THE RESURRECTION TAKE PLACE AND HOW WILL IT HAPPEN?

After the arrival of the Messiah, there will be two stages of resurrection. At the beginning of the Messianic Era completely righteous individuals will arise. Later, at the end of the Messianic Era, everyone else will be resurrected for the Great Day of Judgment, followed by the World to Come.

WHAT WILL LIFE BE LIKE IN THE POST-RESURRECTION WORLD TO COME?

As the ultimate purpose of Creation, it will be designed to provide the greatest spiritual delight and connection to God. Just as man is sustained here by food and drink, there he will be sustained by the radiance of God's Presence.

WHAT LESSON CAN WE LEARN FOR OUR LIVES TODAY FROM THE FUTURE RESURRECTION AND WORLD TO COME?

The World to Come teaches us that the ultimate goodness is attachment to God. Since we know where we are headed, we can use our time here to prepare for the existence in the World to Come by studying Torah, performing mitzvot, refining our character, and helping others. This is the ultimate *tikun olam*.

ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED READING & SOURCES

Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan, *The Handbook of Jewish Thought*, Vol. II, Ch. 23, 25
 Rabbi Chaim Friedlander, *Emunah U'Bechirah*, Vol. II, pp. 179-252

SECTION I. BELIEF IN RESURRECTION

Rabbi J. David Bleich, *With Perfect Faith*, pp. 619-681
Sanhedrin 90b, citing *Bamidbar* 18:25-28
Sanhedrin, beginning of Ch. 10

SECTION II. THE PURPOSE OF RESURRECTION

Rabbi Yochanan Bechhoffer, *Even Shetiah*, pp. 100-101

SECTION III. HOW THE RESURRECTION WILL HAPPEN

Bereishit Rabbah 96:5
Zohar I, 113b (*Midrash HaNe'elam*)

SECTION V. THE POST-RESURRECTION WORLD TO COME

Rabbi Eliyahu E. Dessler, *Michtav M'Eliyahu*, Vol. I, pp. 284-295