

## REFERENCES

- 1) Maamar, Lag B'Omer, 5737, p.217. 13) Sicha 24 Teves, 5752. In the original: גמר שלימות העבודה
- 2) Tanya chapter 47, and other places. 14) Maamorim Melukatim vol. 5, pp. 86, 90.
- 3) See sicha of Yud Shevat, 5726. 15) Mitteler Rebbe, Hanachos – 5577, p. 182.
- 4) Torah Ohr, Vayeshev 27d. 16) Mitteler Rebbe, Maamorim Vayikra B, Lag B'Omer, p. 687.
- 5) Ohr Hatorah, Ki Seitze 883-4, on the verse in Tehillim (139:16) "days are fashioned" ("yomim yutzaru") 17) Yechezkiel 37:6.
- 6) Sicha of 20 Menachem Av, 5712 (Hisvadyos, p. 117). 18) Maamar, Lag B'Omer, 5740.
- 7) Note that the word "merit" in the Holy Tongue is "zechus", which is related to the word "zikuch", meaning refinement (Sicha of Parshas Pinchas 5715, section 23). It is possible that the Rebbe is also implying that a soul can remain in a body not only for its own refinement ("his own merit") but to help another soul achieve refinement ("the merit of so-and-so"). 19) "Bila Hamoves Lanetzach", Maamorim Melukatim vol. 2, p. 277.
- 8) Bereishis 3:19. 20) Yeshaya, 25:8.
- 9) Yeshaya, 26:19. 21) "The lie of the world is that the world sows itself to be an existence, the opposite of truth, for the main thing is the G-dly life force which gives it life" (Bosi Legani 5710, ch. 10).
- 10) Tikkunei Zohar, Hakdama 10b. 22) Shelah, parshas Noach.
- 11) Zohar Vayechi 245a. It is through learning Pnimityus Hatorah that enables the person to make the transition from this world to the next without feeling discontinuity and loss, as explained in the discourses. 23) Likutei Torah, Korach 52c.
- 12) Maamarim of Previous Rebbe, 5711, Beis Nissan, p.211. 24) Maamorim 5662, p.299; Maamorim 5711, Pinchas, p. 90; many places.
- 25) Ohr Hatorah, Bereishis VII, p. 1163. 26) In the original: חידושים
- 27) Sicha of 15 Menachem Av, 5743 (Hisvaduyos, p.1875).
- 28) See sicha of Parshas Emor 5751, section 9.
- 29) Hemshech Ayin Bais, p. 685.

Portions of this issue of Inyonei Moshiach and Geulah were previously published last year.

לזכות נשיא דורנו, מה"מ—שיתגלה לעיני בשר ממש!

לזכות אריאל זלמן, רפאל שלום, ישעיה יוסף, שיחיו, מש' באק

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Inyonei

## MOSHIACH AND GEULAH

בי"ה

## FROM HILLULA TO GEULAH

## A TRANSITION TO ETERNAL LIFE IN GARMENTS OF LIGHT

Volume II, #1

Kislev 5771

תהא שנת עצמות אראנו

[MoshiachInDepth.wordpress.com](http://MoshiachInDepth.wordpress.com)

Published in honor of 9 Kislev, the birthday of the Mitteler Rebbe (in the year 5534) and the day of his Hillula (in the year 5588) and 10 Kislev, the day of the Geulah of the Mitteler Rebbe (in the year 5587).

The anniversary of a tzaddik's passing (his *Histalkus*) should seemingly be a serious day, perhaps flavored with bitterness and mourning. After all, our Sages say that the day a Tzaddik passes away like the day the Beis Hamikdash was destroyed.

Yet, at the same time, we find that the *Histalkus* of the greatest Tzaddikim is called a *Hillula* (a joyous wedding feast). In fact, the author of the holy Zohar, Rabbi Shimon Bar Yochai (Rashbi), instructed that the day of his passing should be a day of rejoicing. Thus, Lag B'Omer is not referred to as "the day Rashbi died" (יום שמת רשב"י), but rather "the day of Rashbi's rejoicing" (יום שמחת רשב"י).

Even more than this, we find that the Mitteler Rebbe's "day of Geulah" is celebrated the day *after* the day of his *Histalkus*. The Rebbe explains that this is not by chance, but comes to teach us that the *Histalkus* is a preparatory step towards one's personal Geulah

(and as explained by the Rebbe numerous times, the true and complete Geulah is dependent upon the personal redemption of each and every individual Jew).

How can the *Histalkus* of a tzaddik be a day of rejoicing and a necessary step towards his personal Geulah? How can the day that the neshoma leaves the body be a preparation for Geulah, which is eternal life in a body?

This can only be understood in the light of *Pnimityus Hatorah*, the "soul of Torah". (In fact, the term *Hillula* only applies to tzaddikim who labored in the study of *Pnimityus Hatorah*.) For it is only through learning *Pnimityus Hatorah* that we can understand what is true life, eternal life, and how an *Histalkus* can appear to the fleshly eyes as the end of life when in fact it is really the beginning of true, eternal life in a pure and refined body. A transition from temporary bodily "life" to eternal bodily life with no interruption.

Next Issue: Teves/Shevat י"ה תמוז

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# FROM HILLULA TO GEULAH

## A TRANSITION TO ETERNAL LIFE IN GARMENTS OF LIGHT

### I. The Body of This World—A Garment of Skin

A man must wear clothes. The Torah tells us that when Adam Harishon and his wife were expelled from Gan Eden, Hashem first fashioned garments for them—garments of skin (כתנות עור). In truth, before the sin they were also had garments, but those garments were of an infinitely lofty nature—garments of divine light (כתנות אור).

Adam Harishon was created in garments of light, he was entirely shining light. Afterwards he brought the darkness on himself, his skin darkened and he was enclothed in garments of flesh...he became physical material, garments of skin...

*Shelah, Parshas Ki Seitzeh, Parshas Eikev*

אדם הראשון נברא בכתנות אור  
באל"ף היה כולו אור מזהר. ואחר כך  
הביא החושך על עצמו הושחר עורו  
ונתלבש בכתנות עור...בעור ובשר  
ונעשה גופו חומריי כתנות עור בעי"ן.

ש"ה, כי תצא, עקב

These “garments of skin”—what we perceive as our physical body—are a consequence of eating from the Tree of Knowledge. But this condition is only temporary., as the Rebbe states: “In the future we will return and we will be like Adam before the sin, “garments of light”, and in them we will live eternal life without death. The eternality will be complete—body and soul eternally...”<sup>1</sup>

Before we can reach eternal life, every one of us has a mission to complete in this world. To understand this mission—called *Avodas Habirurim*—we must understand the nature of the “garments of skin” that we are enclothed in and which we must refine. From this we can begin to understand the transition to true, eternal life.

The material body of this world—an entity subject to weakness, fatigue, illness, etc.—is referred to as the skin of the snake.<sup>2</sup> As explained by *Pnimiyus Hatorah*, the body is in fact merely a garment. This is true in a general sense: “the body is a garment for the soul”; but more specifically, our fleshly covering is the by-product of having become connected to *klipos*, a consequence of the sin of the Tree of Knowledge. What we now perceive to be physical is in fact a garment of *klipos* which conceal the true, essential nature of the physical. In the words of the Rebbe Rashab:

What we see as physical is not physical. What we see as physical is something attached, which we need to separate...what we see is the result of the sin of the Tree of Knowledge.

*Toras Sholom, p. 211*

ניט דאס וואס מיר זעהען גשמי, איז  
דאס גשמי, אט דאס וואס מיר זעהען  
גשמי איז דאס גאר א צוגעקלעפטע  
זאך, דאס דארף מען גאר אפצעשען...  
דאס וואס מיר זעהען איז דאך דאס  
געווארען דורך חטא עה"ד.

תורת שלום, ע' 211

### Addendum: Life After Resurrection

#### *Resolving the Difference Between the Rambam and the Ramban*

Based on the sources examined in this *kuntres*, we can suggest a possible resolution to the famous dispute between the Rambam and the Ramban on the subject of the ultimate existence of the future: will it be the neshoma enclothed in a body eternally, or a neshoma without a body?

According to the Rambam\*, “in the world to come, there is no body or physical form, only the souls of the righteous alone, without a body, like the ministering angels.” The Ramban writes that he and the Rambam agree on all details of resurrection, with the exception that the Rambam “gives a limited duration to the resurrection, and [he asserts] that everything will return to the world of souls...however we assert that those who are resurrected will live eternally.”\*\* As often stated, Chassidus and *Pnimiyus HaTorah* follow the opinion of the Ramban.

We could suggest that the difference is one of perspective: the Rambam writes from the perspective of *Nigleh*, the revealed plane of the Torah. From the perspective of *Nigleh*, the term “body” refers to the external aspect of the body—the “garments of skin” which we perceive as our body. Indeed, as the Rambam writes, this aspect will indeed cease to exist. At the same time the *essence* of the body, its internal dimension, will remain, being elevated to levels that are beyond the definition of physicality as it is perceived now. The body will exist forever, but the *materiality* of the body as we know it will cease. For, according to the Rambam’s perspective, the ministering angels exist *without* a body; yet according to Chassidus angels *do* possess a body—a body which is similar to the way our bodies will be after the Resurrection.

We find a hint to this in the Rebbe’s explanation about how the bodies after the Resurrection of the Dead will be so elevated and purified that these bodies will be able to live in Gan Eden, just as Adam Harishon did.\*\*\* Gan Eden is, from the vantage point of this world, a “world of souls”—the place that according to the Rambam we will exist eternally *without* bodies. Indeed, the lowly garment of dust that we call a body in this world does not exist there; but the pure, refined, and holy body of the Time to Come can and will exist there!

\*) Hilchos Tshuva 8:2, Maamar Tachiyas Hameisim, ch. 4.

\*\*) Shaar HaGemul, end.

\*\*\*) Sicha of 15 Menachem Av, 5743 (Hisvaduyos 5743, p.1875).

*lula*—the peaceful transition of tzaddikim who have finished their *Avodah*—instead of death, where the soul must return to the dust of *klipos* to finish its *Avodah*.

Perhaps in all the generations there has never been a *chiddush* greater than this—that we are the generation that will experience the fulfillment of the prophecy that death will be swallowed up forever!

The completion of the *Avodah* of the *Nosi Hador* (on the day of his *Hillula*) is also the end and completion of the *Avoda* of the entire generation (for “the *Nosi* is everything”), and since this generation is the last generation therefore it is the end and completion of the general *Avodah* of the Congregation of Israel to make for Him a dwelling place down below.

*Sefer Hasichos, 5752, p. 301*

גמר ושלימות עבודתו של נשיא הדור (ביום ההילולא שלו) הוא גמר ושלימות עבודת הדור כולו (שהרי “הנשיא הוא הכל”), וכיון שדור זה הוא דור האחרון, ה”ז גמר ושלימות כללות העבודה דכנסת ישראל לעשות לו ית’ דירה בתחתונים.

ספר השיחות ה’תשנ”ב, ע’ 301

Based on the sources presented above, we can understand how the Rebbe’s assertion that our generation will transition to eternal life without the interruption of death is not contradicted by what appears to our eyes as *Histalkus*. Indeed, this is the underlying message of the joy that accompanies the annual celebration of a tzaddik’s *Hillula*: that after the completion of the *Avodah*, shedding the “garment of skin” is not at all “death” but rather it is the means of transition to true eternal life.

When the fleshly body, the skin of the snake, has been fully refined and all the sparks have been elevated, then the soul can finally ascend to Gan Eden to be en clothed in its true body, meaning its pure and refined body, which “will not be physical like the physical bodies of the present time.”<sup>29</sup> A physical body, yes, but with a different kind of physicality—refined and “spiritual” physicality, the “garments of light”. This is how it will be at the Resurrection of the Dead.

All of this provides underlying reason why the *Histalkus* is called *Hillula*—rejoicing over the fact that on this day the tzaddik completed his need to dwell in the darkness of this world. Indeed, the special joy of the final generation of *golus* is that we have each been granted the ability to complete the *Avodah*, to bring an end to the cycle of *gilgulim*, and that we—ourselves personally and the entire Jewish people collectively—can merit to be freed from the prison of this lowly body and proceed to eternal life in an eternal body, without any interruption!

ית' אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד!

Tzaddikim are conscious of this skin being merely an external garment. The greater the level of the tzaddik the less he feels a connection to this garment<sup>3</sup>. However, for those not yet on the level of tzaddikim, their soul is so deeply embedded and intertwined in the physical (more than simply “en clothed”) that it is greatly affected by what happens to the body—to such a degree that they can no longer perceive any distinction between the “self” and the “garment”. The Alter Rebbe likens the “garments of skin” to a leather shoe which covers and conceals the foot:

This is the garment of skin that was made after the sin...like the leather of the shoe to the physical foot. It clothes in a way that it totally conceals the body and skin of the foot, but it is fitted to the size of his foot, and it looks as if it is the body of the foot...

*Siddur im Dach, Shaar Hamilah, p. 148d*

וזה הלבוש דכתנות עור נעשה אחר החטא...כמו שהעור דמנעל גשמי הוא מלביש באופן שמסתיר לגמרי גופו ובשרו של הרגל אך נמדד המנעל למדתו של הרגל ונראה כאלו הוא גופו של רגל מעור בלבד.

סדור עם ד”ח, שער המילה, קמח, ד

We have, then, two aspects of the body: internal and external, what is perceived from the outside and what is concealed on the inside. The external aspect of the body is eventually buried in the ground; the internal aspect of the body will, when it will be completely refined, enable the soul to experience the revelations of the World to Come. Similarly, there are two corresponding aspects of death. One aspect is external, which appears to our eyes of flesh to be death. This occurs to everyone when the soul disrobes from the body of this world, the “garments of skin”. The second aspect is concealed, and only occurs when the mission of the soul in the world has not been fulfilled. This second aspect is real death, because it means that the soul must descend again to this world and again inhabit a material body.

The second aspect does not apply to tzaddikim who have completed the soul’s mission in this world. The passing of a tzaddik is celebrated as festive *Hillula* in order to teach us that ultimate life (eternal life) is achieved when the soul disrobes from the body of this world for the final time. But in order to understand these concepts, we must first clarify the reason the soul descends to this world in the first place.

## II. The Purpose of the Soul Coming Into the Body

The reason the soul descends to be en clothed in this lowly body of flesh is to accomplish the task of *Avodas Habirurim*—refining and elevating the sparks of holiness trapped in it. “The intention of everything is to refine the 288 sparks, and when the *birurim* are finished, Moshiach will come.”<sup>4</sup> The Tzemach Tzedek explains that the number of sparks left to refine determines the length of life in this fleshly garment:

The soul is given a certain amount of time en clothed in a body, days and years, according to the requirements of the Animal Soul, in accordance with the number of sparks that need refinement from the evil, every day a new spark...and when there aren’t any

more sparks to be refined, then the days of the Animal Soul in a body come to an end and the day comes to die.<sup>5</sup>

An individual soul's assigned task of *Avodas Habirurim* is completed when all the sparks associated with the soul have been refined. After that, there is no purpose for the soul to be in the lowly body, the skin of the snake, since the holy sparks that were trapped in that skin have been refined. All that remains is the shell, the *klipos*, which can be discarded like the placenta which covers the baby in the womb but when the baby is born into the world the placenta is discarded.

What this all means is that a time arrives when the soul has completed its *Avodah* in the body and thus it has no further need to be in the "prison of the body"<sup>2</sup> and therefore it can leave—which appears to our eyes as death or *Histalkus*. (As mentioned earlier, the ultimate intent of Creation is indeed a soul in a body—but not the lowly body of this world. Rather, the intent is the pure and holy body of the Resurrection.)

There is an expression of our sages, *hai alma d'azlinan minei*—meaning "this world which from which we go". The intention, as explained in Chassidus, is that the only purpose of the soul in this world is to "go" from this world—to achieve a higher level after having completed the task of refinement, *Avodas Habirurim*. When the *Avodah* is done, there is no longer any purpose in remaining here. The ultimate state of eternal life in a body is something infinitely loftier, as will be explained.

### III. Completing the *Avodah*

What is stated above explains why various great tzaddikim passed away at relatively young ages, such as the Ariza"l, whose *Hillula* occurred when he was 38 years old. In a similar fashion, the Rebbe explains how the Alter Rebbe passed away before his time while fleeing from Napoleon. His great-grandson, the Rebbe Maharash, revealed after the passing, at only eight years old, of his young son, R' Avraham Sender that "the soul of R' Avraham Sender was the soul of the Alter Rebbe, and he lived the same number of years as the Alter Rebbe had passed away before his time"<sup>6</sup>

The Rebbe explains<sup>6</sup> that when one completes his personal *Avodah* before his allotted time on the earth, he can pass away suddenly in a manner of "in its time I will hasten it." If the individual in question is a tzaddik, then what appears to fleshly eyes to be a matter of sorrow and mourning is in reality the completion of the soul's mission. Thus the celebratory nature of the *Hillula* of tzaddikim—they have completed their *Avodah* and are "free to go" to a higher level of existence—"true life", which is eternal life, the life we will experience at the Resurrection.

Physical life, even though this is also called life, however this is not true life. For true life is eternal life, unlike physical life, which is not eternal life and therefore it is not true life.

*Maamorim 5734, p. 57*

חיים גשמיים אף שגם הם נקי חיים הרי אין זה חיים אמיתיים. דחיים אמיתיים הם חיים נצחיים, משא"כ חיים גשמיים אינם חיים נצחיים ולכן אין הם חיים אמיתיים.

*מאמרים תשל"ד, 57*

sion of physicality itself and thus is the true essence of physicality.<sup>25</sup> The Rebbe explains how our destiny is to return to Gan Eden and dwell there in actual bodies:

We could say that this will be one of the new revelations<sup>26</sup> of the Time to Come, that even souls in bodies will be able to be in "Gan Eden". For before the sin of the Tree of Knowledge Adam Harishon was in "Gan Eden", and only due to the sin of the Tree of Knowledge was he expelled from Gan Eden...

According to this—in the Time to Come, when "I will remove the spirit of impurity from the world", and the sin of the Tree of Knowledge will be completely rectified, then there is no reason man will not be able to be found in Gan Eden, as he was before the sin. On the contrary—in the Time to Come will be the fulfillment of "I came to my garden, my bridal chamber, the place where my essence was in the beginning", which refers to Gan Eden, which is the most select place in this lower world.

And as stated—in the Time to Come souls in bodies will be able to be in Gan Eden, and how much more so that in the beginning of the Creation Adam Harishon and Chava were in Gan Eden in a way of souls in bodies with eating and drinking ...in the Time to Come, in the world of the Resurrection, there will be tzaddikim in Gan Eden, as souls in bodies.<sup>27</sup>

This also helps explain the seeming contradiction between the perspectives of the Tzemach Tzedek ("at the Resurrection of the Dead man will be spiritual") and the Rebbe ("in the world of the Resurrection...souls in bodies in this physical world"). As explained elsewhere, what is now spiritual will then be considered physical.

### VIII. Our Generation — the End of the *Avodah*

In our generation, the ability to complete the *Avodah* is in the hands of every Jew. The Rebbe announced on numerous occasions that the overall *Avodas Habirurim* has been completed. This is the practical implication of our being, in the Rebbe's words, the final generation of golus and the first generation of Geulah, the last generation that will ever be required to inhabit the "skin of the snake" in order to refine and elevate the sparks. At this point in history *every single Jew* has the potential to complete his remaining personal *Avodah*<sup>28</sup> and go directly to eternal life without the interruption of death and another incarnation in this world!

The Rebbe mentions numerous times that in our generation every single Jew will achieve eternal life without interruption. One example is the sicha of parshas Bo, 5752, where the Rebbe states that there is something new in our generation, the 9<sup>th</sup> generation from the Baal Shem Tov: previously there was "the *Histalkus* of the soul from the body...which is not the case in our generation, the last generation of golus and the first generation of Geulah..." The Rebbe is openly speaking about the generation as a whole, explaining that each Jew in this generation can experience a *Hil-*

At the Resurrection of the Dead there will be spiritual ascents for the physical world, meaning that physicality will be removed from all things. Man now is physical, but at the Resurrection of the Dead he will be spiritual...

*Sefer Likutim Da"ch, Tchiyas Hameisim*

בתחיה"מ יהי עליי רוחניות לעולם  
הגשמי דהיינו יופשט ההגשמה מכל  
הדברים שהרי גם האדם עכשיו גשמי  
ובתחיה"מ יהי רוחני...שאז יהי בחי'  
הגילוי אור אלוקי למטה עד שהגוף  
גשמי יקבל חיותו מבחי' אור אלוקי  
ולא מדבר הגשמי כלל...

ספר ליקוטים דא"ח, תחיה"מ

At the beginning of Creation there was no death—Adam Harishon, the first man, was created to live forever. Death was introduced as a remedy for his sin. As the Rebbe explains, “Death came into the world through the sin of the Tree of Knowledge in order that evil should not be able to have eternal existence.”<sup>19</sup> This is why in the Messianic era we will experience the remarkable prophecy<sup>20</sup> that “death will be swallowed up forever”, because this is the transition of the Messianic era: going from a body which still contains evil to the utterly pure state of complete refinement.

“Refinement” means that it is in its essence the same body as we have now—this body is refined to its pure essence and ascends to the spiritual. What was previously spiritual (above reality) becomes the new reality. The spiritual becomes physical. When the evil is totally refined out and totally separated from the good, then the shell or peel (the *klipos*) can fall off, meaning the external dimension which appears as an entity independent from Hashem<sup>21</sup> will be removed, and the holiness that is the essence of the body will be able to ascend. In the words of the Shelah:

[Moshiach] will do away with the peels (*klipos*) which surround the fruit and then the world will be established like the intention at the beginning of Creation, and [the verse] “death will be swallowed up forever” will be fulfilled because they will live eternal life in garments of light...<sup>22</sup>

## VII. The Return to Gan Eden...in a Body

Returning to the way things were before the sin of Adam Harishon means literally returning to Gan Eden. The Rebbe mentions this concept in his very first maamar *Bosi Legani*, commenting that the word “land” in the verse “Your nation are all tzaddikim, they will inherit the land eternally” is a reference to “Gan Eden”. Hashem’s desire for a “dwelling place below” is fulfilled when the lower worlds are cleansed of evil and elevated to the pure and refined level of Gan Eden. Though Gan Eden is now a place where the soul goes after it leaves the body (i.e., spiritual and not physical), Chassidus teaches that originally “Gan Eden was for Adam Harishon what this world is for us now.”<sup>23</sup> He lived there in his body and Gan Eden was his reality. How so?

According to Chassidus, Gan Eden is the dimension of “spirituality that is within physicality”.<sup>24</sup> From the perspective of the world after the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, Gan Eden is a spiritual place; but in actuality, Gan Eden is the spiritual dimen-

This is not only true regarding the *Histalkus* of tzaddikim, but any Jew who has completed what he came into the world to accomplish. The Rebbe alludes to this in the following letter, printed in the Rebbe’s *Igros Kodesh* (volume 12, page 483):

Regarding his question, why from among the children of so-and-so, the one remaining alive is specifically the one who has the least fear of Heaven, whereas the G-d-fearing ones died in sanctification of G-d’s name. In general, on questions such as this it is said, “Why do you mix in to the Merciful One’s calculations?” Nevertheless, one of the explanations in our holy books regarding such occurrences is that the soul still needs to repent for certain undesirable things, or its destiny is fixed to do a favor for so-and-so or for the son of so-and-so, and therefore [the heavenly court] leaves him in a body in the merit of so-and-so even if not in his own merit.<sup>7</sup>

In other words, the Rebbe is explaining this same concept: remaining in a body is only relevant if the soul still has tasks to accomplish. In such a case, even if the individual lacks merit, he can continue to live in this world. On the other hand, if he has completed his *Avodah*, then *there is no need for him to continue in a body* (“when there aren’t any more sparks to be refined...the day comes to die”). But in fact, when the *Avodah* is completed, it is not really death at all.

This is also the underlying meaning of several stories of the Baal Shem Tov, including the well-known story of the gentile prince who converted to Judaism: the Heavenly court decreed that his soul must return to this world in order to nurse from a Jewish mother. Having accomplished this bit of *Avodah*, the child passed away. By revealing to the bereaved parents that the baby’s passing was not what they think of as death, the Baal Shem Tov was able to “wipe the tears” from their faces, so to speak.

On a deeper level, the Tzemach Tzedek explains that when the consciousness of the soul in the body (which has finished its *Avodah*) is granted the ability to perceive that death is really a *Hillula*, then what occurs is no longer in the category of death:

...at present death is great suffering even though the soul ascends to the Upper Worlds since the body doesn’t see this while the soul is still in it, only at the hour of death it sees. If not for the sin of the Tree of Knowledge the body would feel and see the elevation of the soul and there would not be the taste of death at all...

*Ohr Hatorah, Ekev, p. 545*

שעכשיו המיתה הוא יסורים גדולים  
אף שהנשמה עולה בעולמות עליונים  
מפני שאין הגוף רואהזה בעוד הנשמה  
בו רק שעת מיתתו רואים אבל אם לא  
חטא עה"ד היה הגוף מרגיש וראה  
עליות הנשמה ולא היה טעם מיתה  
כלל.

אור התורה, עקב, ע' תקמה

Ultimately, every Jew will achieve this, because “your nation are all tzaddikim”. Every Jew will complete his personal *Avodah* and achieve his personal Geulah from

this world, returning to his pure and holy body in which he will arise at the Resurrection of the Dead, to dwell eternally in Gan Eden (as will be explained).

## IV. Those Who Dwell in the Dust

Resurrection of the Dead is, as stated by the Rambam, one of the fundamental beliefs of Torah. However, there is a common misperception that the Resurrection of the Dead means the return of the soul to the body *as it appears now to our eyes*. A graphic vision of cemeteries filled with revived corpses climbing out of coffins dressed in their burial shrouds, dusting off the dirt of the grave is a misconception that only derives from a lack of knowledge of *Pnimiyus Hatorah*.

Indeed it is true that we shall all be reunited with our ancestors—for every Jew that ever lived will merit to be Resurrected—but in a bodily form that is much loftier and refined than what we conceive at present—the “garments of light”. Although we think that those buried in the cemetery are the ones dwelling in the dust, the deeper meaning of the concept is that it actually applies to *us*—we who are alive in this world right now are the one’s “buried in the dust”.

To explain: The soul’s work is accomplished over numerous lifetimes, called *gilgulim*. The soul is reincarnated into different bodies over different lifetimes in order to complete the task of refining sparks. This world, including the fleshly body of man as it is in this world, was created from the dust. As the verse states: “You are from the dust and to the dust you shall return.”<sup>8</sup> And, “Arise and sing those who dwell in the dust.”<sup>9</sup> Thus it is that we, who are presently in a state of *gilgul*, are the ones who are “in the dust”, meaning a soul enclothed in a body that was created from the dust of the *klipos* of this world. “Returning to the dust” really refers to the cycle of reincarnation:

The verse ‘to the dust you shall return’ refers to *gilgul*, meaning that a soul will reincarnate from dust to dust—that is to say, from body to body—and he will die and return again and die.

*Shelah, Parshas Mishpatim*

כשחטא אדם הראשון גרם מיתה לעולם...בסוד כי עפר אתה ואל עפר תשוב דהיינו סוד הגלול שיתגלגל מעפר לעפר דהיינו מגוף לגוף וימות ויחזור וימות...

שלי"ה פ' משפטים

The Resurrection of the Dead does not mean a *return* to the coarse, material body of this world, on the contrary—it is an *elevation*, a revelation of the Divine essence of the body, cleansed of all the impurity of the sin of the Tree of Knowledge. It is indeed the same body, but almost unrecognizable in the pure, refined state of “garments of light”. Based on this, we can understand the meaning of the Zohar which states: “Tzaddikim who keep the Covenant do not return to their dust, which is the skin of the snake which was created from dust.”<sup>10</sup> Rabbeinu Bachya offers the following clarification of the matter:

the future as “absolute separation from the physical, thus there is no eating or drinking at all...like Moshe on the mountain that he didn’t eat at all for 40 days.”<sup>16</sup>

The body of the future will be, on the one hand, the very same body we live in now—it will be the familiar sense of self, the true essence of our personal identity which we currently possess. Yet, at the same time, it will be something new: the pollution and impurity will be removed, giving the body an “upgrade” to the “garments of light”, a level of refined physicality that far surpasses our experience in this world.

The Rebbe Rayatz explains the bodies of the future based on what is stated in the book of Yechezkiel, in the famous section about the “dry bones”. The prophet Yechezkiel is instructed by Hashem to speak to the bones and say that “I [Hashem] will lay sinews upon you, and I will make flesh grow over you and cover you with skin and put breath into you, and you will live.”<sup>17</sup> This is the model for the Resurrection of the Dead: that instead of flesh and sinews and skin that come from physical parents, the bodies will be formed by Hashem Himself.

At the Resurrection of the Dead the souls will rise in bodies, and these bodies will also be physical but not from birth from mother and father, but rather from the dew of Resurrection, which means He will cover them with skin and flesh, like the bones that Yechezkiel revived...

*Maamorim Rebbe Rayatz 5711, p. 208*

בתחיית המתים יעמדו נשמות בגופים, דהגופים ההם יהיו ג"כ גשמי אבל אינם מלידת אב ואם אז כי אם שיחיו בטל תחי', והיינו שיקרם עליהם עור ובשר, וכמו בעצמות שהחיי יחזקאל שקרם עליהם עור ובשר...

ספר מאמרים רי"ץ, תשי"א, 208

The Rebbe Rayatz continues, explaining that this body will be on a level of purity and holiness far beyond the unrefined body as we know it now.

...even though there will be a physical body, it will be brought into being by the Holy One...thus they will be completely holy and pure bodies, like the body of Adam Harishon [the first man] who was the formation of G-d’s hands...his body was completely refined and pure like light.

*Maamorim Rebbe Rayatz 5711, p. 209*

הגם שיהיי גוף גשמי יהיי הוויתו מהקבי"ה עיי טל תחי' טלא דעתיקה, ולהיות שהגוף שיהיי בתחה"מ יהיי מהקבי"ה עיי טל תחי' עיי יהיו גופים קדושים וטהורים לגמרי, וכמו גופו של אדה"ר שהיי יציר כפיו של הקב"ה...שהיי גופו מזוכך וטהור לגמרי כמו אור.

ספר מאמרים רי"ץ, תשי"א, 209

In fact, the body will not only be similar to that of Adam Harishon—it will surpass it: “Souls will arise in bodies, completely pure and holy bodies...even higher than Adam Harishon.”<sup>18</sup> In the Time to Come, the entire world will be refined and elevated from the coarse physicality that derives from *klipa*. The Tzemach Tzedek explains:

The tzaddik when he dies elevates more sparks than he did in his entire life...We find that some tzaddikim died without sin, which appears as if Hashem is unfair, Heaven forfend. But, in fact, since Adam Harishon caused all these sparks to fall into the depths of the klipos it created the need for death to elevate them.

*Arizal, Sefer Halikutim, end p' Vayishlach*

הצדיק שמת...מעלה אז בשעת מותו יותר מכל מה שהעלה בחייו...תמצא כמה צדיקים מתים בלא חטא...שנראה ח"ו עול בחוקו ית', אלא שאדה"ר גרם שנפלו כל הנצוצות האלו בעמקי הקליפות, וע"כ הוצרכו המיתה להעלות.

אריז"ל, ספר הליקוטים, פי וישלח

## VI. Eternal Bodily Existence—World of Resurrection

By now we realize that the body of the Resurrection of the Dead is quite unlike the body we experience now. These “garments of skin” derive from the dust of the *klipos* of this world, and as such are exceedingly coarse and limiting. To better understand what the body of the Time to Come will be like, the Rebbe Rashab writes:

In the time to come there will be souls in bodies except that the bodies will not be physical like the physical bodies of the present time...not that they will cease to exist, but they will not be material.

*Hemshech Ayin Bais, p.685*

שלעתיד יהיו נשמות בגופים אך הגופים לא יהיו גשמיים כמו הגופים הגשמיים דעכשיו, הרי אין זה שיהי בבחי' העדר כ"א מה שלא יהיו חומריים.

המשך תער"ב, תרפה

We find a similar description—challenging the conventional, physicalized notions of our human intellect—in the writings of the Maharal of Prague:

In the World to Come man will not be material and physical as he is in this world, but will be on the level of angels—removed from physicality.

*Maharal, Netzach Yisroel, ch. 42*

לעולם הבא שלא יהיה האדם חמרי וגשמי כמו שהוא בעוה"ז. רק יהיה האדם במדרגת המלאכים המסולקים מן הגשמיות.

מהר"ל, נצח ישראל, פרק מ"ב

Although we see how different the body will be in the future, Chassidus states clearly that the body of Resurrection is the *same body* which we inhabit now, and not a new body (as some sources state). This means that it is the same body *in essence* (but not as we know it externally, because we relate to it as “garments of flesh” after the sin of the Tree of Knowledge. The body in its pure, refined state of “garments of light” seems to our limited comprehension to be some sort of spiritual reality.

Explains the Mitteler Rebbe: “It is certain that the dead will live, meaning the same body as now...except that the body will be refined and not like it is now where the body is at the maximum degree of physicality.”<sup>15</sup> He describes the state of being of

The bodily state [of the Time to Come] is not like we are now. Although we will not return to the dust ever, you should not misunderstand this to mean that the bodies will rise up with flesh and blood with sinews and bones like we have now.

*Rabbeinu Bachya, Shulchan Shel Arba*

ואף על פי שאין חוזרים לעפרן לעולם, אין לך להבין שיעמדו הגופות קיימים בבשר ודם ממש בגידים ועצמות כמו שאנו עכשיו, אלא שייזכו למעלות הלקיחה וההתהפחות, אבל לעפרן לא יחזרו לעולם.

רבינו בחיי, שולחן של ארבע

## V. *Histalkus*—Beginning of True Life

It is stated in Zohar that “If all the tzaddikim would know [what occurs at *Histalkus*], they would be rejoicing when the day arrives that they pass away from this world...”<sup>11</sup> For, in truth, the *Hillula* of a tzaddik is a transition to eternal life which is unlimited by the confines of the “garments of skin”. As the Rebbe explains:

...the *Histalkus* of tzaddikim is not that they are removed in the simple sense, G-d forbid, for the shepherds of Israel never leave their flocks. But rather it is quite to the contrary: it is a drawing down from the neshoma of the tzaddik itself, not limited in a vessel or garment. This is called *Histalkus* because it is a revelation which is greater than what can be encloded in vessels.

*Bosi Legani 5730, ois 5*

הסתלקות של צדיקים, שאינה סילוק כפשוטו ח"ו, שהרי רועי ישראל לא יעזבו את צאן מרעיתם, אלא אדרבא, המשכה נעלית יותר, המשכה מנשמת הצדיק עצמה שאינה מוגבלת בתוך כלי ולבוש, וזה נק' בשם הסתלקות הוא לפי שהוא גילוי שלמעלה מהתלבשות בכלים.

באתי לגני, ה'תש"ל, מוגה

The Previous Rebbe describes that “the day of *Histalkus* is the completion of his *Avodah*, and he will arise in his holy and pure body at the Resurrection of the Dead.”<sup>12</sup> The Rebbe also describes the day of *Histalkus* as “absolute completion of the *Avodah*.”<sup>13</sup> In *Likutei Sichos*, the Rebbe brings the following quote from the sefer of Tzadok Hakohen of Lublin, *Resisei Leilah*:

Tzaddikim die on the day they were born, meaning that their death is an elevation of the higher levels of the soul, that [the soul] disrobes from the bodily *levush sak* [garments of skin] and enclodes in the spiritual *chaluka d'Rabbanan* [garments of light] to enter into supernal worlds.

*Likutei Sichos, vol. 5, p. 86*

וצדיקים מתים ביום שנולד היינו לפי שאצלם המיתה היא התרוממות מזלו ומעלתו פשוט לבוש שק הגופני ולובש חלוקא דרבנן הרוחני ליכנס לעולמות העליונים.

לקוטי שיחות 86: 5, מספר רסיסי לילה

This is why tzaddikim are called alive after their passing, because they are in fact truly alive, no longer limited by being encloded in a lowly body of dust. Their true and eternal life begins when they shed the garment (the “body”) of this world.

Due to a [tzaddik’s] actions and great level he will merit that he will not die ever...He will merit that his soul will exist in his body forever...and when the time comes to pass away and to separate from the world he won’t need to undergo an interruption and to die, but rather his body will return to a spiritual state...and this refers to those called “*bonei aliyah*” [“those who have achieved elevation”].

*Ma’areches HaElokus, ch. 8*

ובפעולתו ובמעלתו הגדולה יזכה עוד שלא ימות לעולם...ויזכה היות נפשו קיימת בגופו תמיד כי דמה הצורה ליוצרה שהוא החיים ובבא זמן להסתלק והפרד מן העולם לא יהיה מן הראוי לקבל הפסד הזמן ולמות אך יחזור גופו ורוחני ולמעלה גדולה אשר אין לה תכלית והוא חיי העולם הבא...הזכירו רז”ל במקומות רבים מאנשי המעלה ההיא והם הנקראים להם בני עלייה.

מערכת האלקות, פרק שמיני

This is hinted at in the statement that “tzaddikim die on the day they were born”. This statement is telling us that the tzaddik’s “birth” in the World to Come appears as his “death” in this world—his soul exchanges the “garments of skin” for the “garments of light”. As he appears to have died in this world, he has actually been born in the higher world. Of course this is not really death at all (except the way that it appears to fleshly eyes.)

The Rebbe brings out this connection in the discourse *Padah b’Sholom*<sup>14</sup> (published for distribution in 5751, the year “*Nun Alef*”). In that discourse, the Rebbe explains how the Mittlerer Rebbe’s *Hillula* (9 Kislev, when he passed away) serves as a *preparation* for his day of *Geulah* (10 Kislev, the day on which, one year prior, he had been released from Russian prison). In the Rebbe’s words:

...the greatness of the elevation of the Mittlerer Rebbe’s day of *Geulah* [10 Kislev]...is due to the fact that the preceding day is the *Hillula* of the Mittlerer Rebbe...the day of 9 Kislev, the *Hillula*, is the eve of the day of *Geulah*...which comes after the preparation of the *Avodah* of the *Hillula*...

*Maamorim Melukatim 5, pp. 86, 90*

גודל העילוי דיום הגאולה [יו”ד כסלו]...הוא לפי שה”ערב” שלו הוא יום ההילולא דבעל הגאולה...יום התשיעי דכסלו, יום ההילולא, הוא הערב דיום הגאולה...ע”י שהגילוי דפדה בשלום נפשי הי’ אחרי קדימת העבודה דהילולא של בעל הגאולה.

מאמרים מלוקטים חלק ה, ע’ פו, צ

In other words, the one leads to the other: **first the *Hillula*, then the *Geulah*!** From this we see that after the tzaddik has completed all matters of *Avodah*, he must then shed the fleshly body of this world in order to experience *Geulah*. Thus, the *Histalkus* of tzaddikim becomes a *Hillula*, a day of celebration since the day they “died”

is really the day they are “born” into true, eternal life (regardless of the date of birth, which only in rare cases coincides on the calendar, as the Rebbe mentions).

In several sichos of 5752 (“*Nun Beis*”), the Rebbe addresses the concept that the apparent “death” of tzaddikim is something quite positive, for by exiting the “garments of skin” they arrive to a greater level of being alive.

The disappearance of vitality is seemingly something undesirable, but in fact it is a “good sign” which brings about something good, since through this comes about an incomparable *increase in vitality*...Specifically *after his passing* do we see in a revealed way the eternity (and truth) of “he is alive” and thus, an increase and renewal of life is brought about via death...

*Sicha Parshas Va’era, 5752, sections 3 & 5*

סילוק החיות ה”ז “סימן (שגורם ומביא דבר) יפה”, כיון שע”ז נעשה תוספת חיות ועד להוספה שהיא באין ערוך...שדוקא אז (לאחרי פטירתו) רואים בגילוי הנצחיות (אמיתיות) ד”הוא בחיים”. ונמצא, שע”י המיתה נעשה תוספת וחדוש החיות—התגלות הנצחיות והאמיתיות דהחיים.

שיחה, פ’ וארה, ה’תשנ”ב, אות ג ואות ה

The Rebbe emphasizes that the lofty state of the body as it will be after the Resurrection (“garments of light”) is still in the category of a body in this physical world:

...as regards the general matter of the *histalkus* of tzaddikim (*yahrtzeit* and *Hillula*) at the end and completion of their *Avodah*...that the main thing is that the “disappearance” is for a much greater (incomparable) ascent that will be in the world of the Resurrection...souls in bodies in this physical world...in the true and complete *Geulah*.

*Sefer Hasichos, 5752, p. 301*

בנוגע לכללות הענין דסילוק של צדיקים (יארצייט והילולא) בגר ושלימות עבודתם...עוד ועיקר, שה”סילוק” הוא בשביל עלי גדולה יותר (באין-ערוך) שתהיי בעולם התחי’...נשמות בגופים בעוה”ז הגשמי...בגאולה האמיתית והשלימה.

ספר השיחות ה’תשנ”ב, ע’ 301

The Midrash Rabba states, “‘good’—this is the angel of life, ‘very good’—this is the angel of death”. Why is the angel of death “very good”? Because the *Histalkus* of tzaddikim is the completion of everything they did in their life in this world. It only appears to our fleshly eyes to resemble “death”. But, in truth, when the completed soul departs from the “skin of the snake” after it has been emptied of holy sparks, a great elevation occurs—to the level of the Resurrection of the Dead.

As the Arizal explains, there occurs at the time of “death” a tremendous elevation of the sparks out of the *klipos*, something which did not occur to such a degree throughout the tzaddik’s entire life while he was in “garments of skin”: