

Inyonei

MOSHIACH AND GEULAH

ב"ה

#10

THE GENERATION THAT DOESN'T DIE TRANSITION TO ETERNAL LIFE IN GARMENTS OF LIGHT

Free

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תהא שנת גילוי לעיניים

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IN HONOR OF THE LUMINESCENT DAY OF 28 SIVAN
MARKING 72 YEARS SINCE THE ARRIVAL
OF THE REBBE AND THE REBBETZIN
TO THE "LOWER HEMISPHERE" IN 5701 (1941).

The Rebbe on several occasions stated that our generation is the last generation that will be in exile, and the first generation that will experience the *Geulah*. Together with this comes a towering promise: **in our generation we will experience the transition to eternal life *without any interruption***—meaning without experiencing death like the previous generations (who will also receive the reward of eternal life, although following an interruption).

Since the time the Rebbe said those words there have been many funerals, and many Jews old and young, ר"ל, have passed away. It would seem at first glance that the Rebbe's promise is something that will be fulfilled only upon the arrival of the true and complete *Geulah* (may it be immediately).

However, upon delving into the sources we will see that what appears to our fleshly eyes as real is actually only a temporary covering.

What is real lies hidden on the inside, in the essence of what we see.

Furthermore, the state of the body as it will be when it reaches the purity and refinement of eternal life—the Resurrection of the Dead—is so lofty that it bears little resemblance to the coarse material covering which we perceive. The body will be like the body of Adam Harishon—Hashem's own handiwork, placed to dwell in Gan Eden.

We hope to show how eternal life—as a soul in a refined body—is not contradicted by a lack of signs of life in the material garment we wear in this world. Thus—***a funeral does not necessarily contradict eternal life without any interruption.***

The prophet Isaiah speaks of the time when death will be swallowed forever and Hashem will wipe the tear from every eye. May we see that this refers to our generation—as we go from exile towards *Geulah*.

By R' Yaakov Bock

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THE GENERATION THAT DOESN'T DIE

TRANSITION TO ETERNAL LIFE IN GARMENTS OF LIGHT

Some parts were previously published in issue #7 of this series

I. Eternal Life, Naturally

Man, as Hashem created him, was meant to live forever. Through the sin of the Tree of Knowledge, death was decreed upon man and his descendants, but the true nature of man¹ remains, inherently, eternal.

The decree of death goes hand in hand with what the Torah describes as man being dressed in “garments of skin” upon his expulsion from Gan Eden. Originally, the garments of man were garments of divine light, כתנות אור. The Torah describes that when Adam Harishon and his wife were expelled from Gan Eden, Hashem fashioned for them other garments—garments of skin (כתנות עור).

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 Seitze, 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.

של"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 Shelah 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 eternity will be complete—body and soul eternally...”**²

Before we can return to the level of eternal life, every one of us has a mission to complete in this world. To understand this mission—to refine and purify the “garments of skin”, a task called *Avodas Habirurim*—we must understand the nature of these garments in which we are garbed 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 in Tanya (based on the Zohar) as “the skin of the snake”. This 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 comes from becoming connected to the *klipos* which conceal G-dliness, a result 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

Tzaddikim are conscious of this skin being merely an external garment, as explained in Tanya, ch. 29: **“the man himself is the pure soul, which is the Divine Soul, while their body is called the flesh of man. It was in this sense that Hillel the Elder would say to his disciples when he went to eat that he was going to do a favor to the lowly and poor creature, meaning his body. He regarded his body as a foreign thing...”**. The greater the level of the Tzaddik, the less he feels a connection to this garment³.

However, for those not yet on the level of Tzaddikim, their soul is deeply embedded and intertwined in the physical (more than simply “enclothed” in a foreign thing). Thus, they are so greatly affected by what happens to the body that they can no longer perceive any distinction between “self” and “garment”. The Alter Rebbe likens the “garments of skin” to a leather shoe which covers and conceals the foot.

The soul’s primary mission is refining and elevating the sparks of holiness which are contained in this external garment, the “garment of skin”. This garment’s internal aspect is the true body of man, and by refining it the person becomes capable of receiving the revelations of the Time to Come, which comes as a result of completing the task of refinement. The external aspect is a part of the fabric of this world, it does not possess intrinsic existence after the sparks of holiness have been refined and elevated.

II. The Purpose of the Soul Coming Into the Body

The reason the soul descends to be enclothed 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.”**⁴ The Tzemach Tzedek explains that the number of sparks left to refine determines the length of life in this fleshly garment. Based on the sparks, the soul is granted a certain amount of time to refine them, 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.”**⁵

An individual soul’s mission is completed when all the sparks associated with the soul have been refined. After that, there is no longer any purpose for the soul to be in the lowly body, the “skin of the snake”. (Although the Rebbe mentions that a person’s days can be extended in this garment for the purpose of adding on to one’s mission, “after the completion of the *avodah*”).²⁸

The point to emphasize is that after the soul completes its mission, there is no longer any purpose to continue to dwell in a material body (note that in Chassidus there is an important distinction between the *material* body and the *physical* body, for they are not the same*). This can be likened to a baby after it is born, at which time there is no further need for the placenta which covered its body for nine months while it was in the womb:

The placenta clung to the body of the baby while in the womb as a concealing garment for the purpose of protecting his body. But when the baby goes out into the air of the world then the body must disrobe from the placenta which is discarded because the baby does not need it once it goes out into the air of the world. The placenta by itself is intrinsically waste matter...while the baby was in the womb it served to protect his body, but afterward it is discarded..

Mitteler Rebbe, Shaarei Orah, Purim 98a

והנה בהיות הולד בבטן אמו היתה השליא דבוקה בגוף הולד והיה לו ללבוש ומכסה לשמור גופו כ' אך כאשר הולד יוצא לאויר העולם בהולד מבטן אמו אז בהכרח שיופשט גוף הולד מן השליא והשליא תלך לאבוד כי הולד א"צ לשליא ביציאתו לאויר העולם והשליא מצד עצמה היא מבחינת הפסולת...לצורך הולד וקיומו בהיותו בבטן אמו בלבד אבל אח"כ תלך לאבוד ונשלך ארצה כידוע וד"ל.

אדמו"ר האמצעי, שיערי אורה, שער הפורים פח, א

One who has completed his mission and sheds the “coarse garment” of this world appears to our fleshly eyes to undergo a cessation of life, G-d forbid—there is a funeral, etc. But in truth such a case is not a cessation of life at all, but rather a continuation of life in a manner of *chayim nitzchiim*—true and eternal life in a pure, refined body, as will be explained, G-d willing. This is called *histalkus* and *hillula*.

Hillula (meaning a wedding celebration) refers to the perspective of the one who has completed his mission in this world—joy and celebration. *Histalkus* (meaning departure or disappearance) refers to the perspective of those who are still in this world and lack the ability to grasp what has transpired. Thus the Rebbe could speak about the Previous Rebbe (after the Previous Rebbe’s passing) in this way:

* The Material Body is not the Physical Body

“The precise expression in Tanya is ‘the **material** body which is similar in its **materiality** to the bodies of the nations of the world’ and not ‘the physical body which is similar in its physicality’—because the physical body of a Jew is different (also) in its **physicality** from the bodies of the nations of the world (due to the refinement of the body (blood and flesh) which occurs through eating and drinking only kosher foods (which becomes blood and flesh like his flesh), and the like)...that the materiality is the lowest level...” (Sicha, Parshas Bereishis, 5752, ch. 3).

(And see the sicha of Yud Shevat in Likutei Sichos 6, that the external aspect of the body, which is similar to the bodies of the nations of the world, will disappear but the internal aspect is a true existence.)

As regards Moshe Rabbeinu, and the extension of Moshe in every generation, including the Moshe of our generation, my father-in-law the Rebbe—that also now his is present and illuminates as before, and if we were proceeding together with him we would see that he continues to illuminate as powerfully as before (and even more so). It is only because he is elevating from level to level whereas we didn't proceed with him, but rather we have remained in our places, that we don't see this with fleshly eyes....

Sicha Parshas Chukas, 5710, ch. 4

בנוגע למשה רבינו, ואתפשטותא דמשה שבכל דרא, עד למשה שבדורנו, כ"ק מו"ח אדמו"ר — שגם עתה נמצא ומאיר כמו קודם, ואילו היינו הולכים יחד עמו היינו רואים שמאיר בכל התוקף כמו קודם (ואדרבה, באופן נעלה יותר), אלא, כיון שנתעלה למעלה בעילוי אחר עילוי, ואנחנו (לא הלכנו עמו, אלא) נשארנו במקומנו, לכן אינו נראה לנו בעיני בשר....

שיחה ש"פ חוקת, ט' תמוז, תש"י, פ' ד

From this it is clear that life of Tzaddikim (and "all Israel are Tzaddikim") continues *just as before*, lacking only the material garment that enables our fleshly eyes to see.

III. End of 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 of his young son, R' Avraham Sender (at only eight years old) 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."**⁶

The *Histalkus* of a Tzaddik is in truth the completion of his mission in this world. Meaning that internally—*b'pnimiyus*—it is not what it appears to eyes of flesh, which perceive it as a cause for sadness, etc. In fact, the completion of the soul's mission is a rejoicing for the *neshoma*, as we see by the rejoicing of Lag B'Omer and the festive Chassidic *farbrengens* that are prepared on the *Hillulas* of the *Rebbeim*. Similarly, the custom of *Poilisher* Chassidim is not to say *Tachanun* on the *Yahrtzeit* of *Tzaddikim*²⁹. Even though it appears to eyes of flesh to be an interruption of life, G-d forbid, it is in fact an elevation and release from the "prison of the skin of the snake" to true and eternal life, in body and soul.

We see that the years of *Tzaddikim* are tailored to enable them to complete their mission and they do not remain in this world longer than the fixed time (even though as *Tzaddikim* they would seemingly merit greatly lengthened lives, to say the least). It becomes clear that the continued existence of the *neshoma* in a material garment of this world is only due to the need to complete the Divine service which requires such a garment, but it is not an end in and of itself. After each soul completes its service in this world, it no longer has any need to be en clothed in a material body.

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 only in order to nurse from a Jewish mother. Having accomplished its mission, 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.

Perhaps this is the reason behind what the Abarbanel writes: that the time will come when we will not shed tears over those who pass away. He writes:

"Death will be swallowed forever" because man will be oriented towards the perfection of his soul and will be disgusted by his physical desires and his yearning will be for eternal life...and since upon perfection of the soul it receives its reward and remains alive after death [of the material body, therefore] men will no longer shed tears over the dead. This is the implication [of the continuation of the prophecy] "and Hashem Elokim will wipe the tear from every face."

Mashmia Yeshua, ch. 11

בלע המות לנצח לפי שבהיות האדם
נוטה אחר שלימות נפשו ומואס
תאוותיו החמדיות יחיה חיים
נצחיים...ומפני השתלמות הנפש ושכרה
והשארותה אחר המות לא יבכו בני אדם
את המתים וזהו ומחה ה' אלקים דמעה
מעל כל פנים.

משמיע ישועה, פ' יא

We also can see this concept written "between the lines" of this letter of the Rebbe:

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.⁷

Igros Kodesh, 12:383

במענה על שאלתו, למה מבין הבנים של
פלוגי בן פלוגי הנשאר בחיים הוא דווקא
הפחות ירא שמיים, והיראי שמים באו
לקידוש השם. - בכלל בשאלות כאלו
כתוב, בהדי כבשי דרחמנא למה לך [למה
לך להיכנס לענינים של הקב"ה], ואחד
הבאורים שנמצא בספרים על מעורות
כאלו הוא, שהנשמה צריכה עדיין
לעשות תשובה על דברים בלתי-רצויים,
או שהגורל שלה הוא לעשות טובה
לפלוגי או לפלוגי בן פלוגי, ולכן
משאירים לו בגוף...

אגרות קודש ח' יב, ע' שפג

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 mission, then *there is no need for him to continue in a fleshly body* (“when there aren’t any more sparks to be refined...the day comes to die”).

IV. Those Who Dwell in the Dust

The resurrection of the dead (*Tchiyas Hameisim*) is one of the thirteen fundamental beliefs of Torah, according to the Rambam. According to Chassidus it is explained that the level of *Tchiyas Hameisim* is exceedingly lofty, higher even than Gan Eden (where the soul goes after it leaves the body). But in order to avoid confusion: the body that we will exist in at the resurrection of the dead is not the body as it is presently in a materialized state, the state of “garments of skin”. Rather, the body as it will be at the resurrection will be as it was at the time of Adam Harishon when he was still in Gan Eden—“garments of light”.

It becomes clear that “those who dwell in the dust” (who will “arise and sing” in the resurrection of the dead) refers not only those who died in prior generations, but it refers also to those *neshomas* which are still found in the “dust” of this world and the material body, the “skin of the snake”. As it states in the Zohar “**Tzaddikim who guard the covenant do not return to their dust, which is the skin of the snake who was created from dust.**”⁸ *We ourselves* still need to “arise from the dust”, because dwelling in the dust refers to reincarnation (*gilgulim*), as the Shelah Hakadosh writes:

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...

של"ה פ' משפטים

On the other hand, the resurrection of the dead refers to the lofty level of a refined and pure body (“garments of light”) which lives eternally—*chayim nitzchim*. Because eternal life does not imply the limited physical existence which we are familiar with. As the Rebbe writes:

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 נק' 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

V. *Histalkus*—Beginning of True Life

In addition to the death that was brought into the world due to the sin of Adam Harishon (“on the day you eat from it you shall die”¹⁰), about which it is stated that in the Time to Come “death will be swallowed forever”, the Rebbe explains an interesting point—there is an aspect of death which **preceded** the sin, which has no connection to the sin, reincarnation, and rectification. How so?

The Torah describes “a Man who dies in a tent”¹¹ as part of the very text of the Torah. The Torah itself, our Sages teach, “preceded the world by 2,000 years”¹², and thus this “death” which the Torah is speaking of here preceded the world and the sin and therefore is independent of the sin and its punishment. The Rebbe explains:

This is the departure of the *neshoma* to a world which is higher than the world in which it is found (but in a way that the *neshoma* remains in the body)...an elevation even higher than Gan Eden, where the *neshoma* ascends to the endless worlds.

Maamor Parshas Para (Ki Sisa), 5747

הוא ענין עליית וסילוק הנשמה לעולם שלמעלה מהעולמות שנמצאת בו (אבל באופן שנשארת נשמה בגוף)...יש דרגה של אדם כי ימות גו', עליה למעלה גם מבחינת גן עדן שעולה לעולמות האין סוף.
מאמר פרשת פרה (כי תישא), תשמ"ז,
בתחילתו

Similar to this is the following explanation of the Tzemach Tzedek, that when the consciousness of the soul in the body (which has finished its mission) is granted the ability to see the elevation, then this is no longer what we call “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 מיתתן רואים אבל אם לא חטא עה"ד היה הגוף מרגיש וראה עלייות הנשמה ולא היה טעם מיתה כלל.

אור התורה, עקב, ע' תקמה

Even though such a passing appears to our fleshly eyes as what we call “death” (an interruption of life), we see that in fact it is exactly the opposite. It is not a separation of the soul from the body (“death” in the simple sense) but rather an elevation of the soul *together with* the body. The body sheds the coarse garment of this world (the “garments of flesh”, the “skin of the snake”) and the soul remains in a refined body which can then be garbed in the garments of the higher worlds:

Tzaddikim die on the day they were born, meaning that their death is an elevation of the higher levels of the soul, which disrobes from the coarse bodily garments and is garbed in the spiritual “Rabbinical cloak” to enter into higher worlds.

Likutei Sichos, vol. 5, p. 86

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

לקוטי שיחות 5:86, מספר רסיסי לילה

For this reason *Tzaddikim* are called living even after they pass away, because they have departed a limited aspect of life to enter true, eternal life. This eternal life refers to a level of existence without *klipos* which conceal G-dliness (and thus the *klipos* themselves are called “death”). The Zohar states:

These *Tzaddikim* live in two worlds...one who is from the World to Come is called living...living there and living here. One who is garbed in these *klipos* of skin and flesh and bones and sinews of the lowly body...You who are in this world and do not have *klipos* and skins—you have permission to gaze upon those dwelling in this world, but those in this world do not have permission to see you. Thus you are called living, and your world is the world of the living, but the lowly world is the world of the dead.**

Zohar, Mishpatim 116b

[אלו הצדיקים] חיים בשני עולמות...מי שהוא מעולם הבא נקרא חי... חיים שם [בעולם הבא] וחיים כאן [בעולם הזה]. מי שהוא מלובש באלו הקליפות של עור ובשר ועצמות וגידין של הגוף השפל, שהרוח הוא כמת שם כמו שמת אינו רואה ואינו שומע ולא מדבר... אתם בעולם הזה ואין לכם קליפות ועורות יש לכם רשות להסתכל בבני העולם, ובני העולם אין להם רשות להסתכל בכם, ובשביל זה נאמר עליכם שאתם חיים, ועולם שלכם הוא עולם החיים, אלב עולם השפל הזה הוא עולם המתים.**

זוהר, משפטים, קטז, ב

Our world is called “the world of falsehood” and we cannot even see the true world, where the bodies are not covered in “garments of skin”. This gives insight into what the Rebbe says in a sicha that was said following the passing of one of the Chassidim:

The *concealment of life-force* is a “good sign”, since through this there is an *increase of life-force* until it becomes an *incomparably greater increase*....Specifically *after his passing* do we see in a revealed way the eternality (and truth) of “he is alive”. Thus, via death is brought about an *increase and renewal of life*—the revelation of the eternality and truth of life

Sicha, parshas Va'era 5752, ois 3,5

סילוק החיות הרי זה “סימן (שגורם ומביא דבר) יפה”, כיון שעל ידי זה נעשה תוספת חיות ועד להוספה שהיא באי-ערות...שדוקא אז (לאחרי פטירתו) רואים בגילוי הנצחיות (אמיתיות) ד”הוא בחיים”. ונמצא, שעל ידי המיתה נעשה תוספת וחידוש החיות—התגלות הנצחיות והאמיתיות דהחיים.

שיחה פ' וארה, תשנ”ב, פ' ג, ה

In other words, the “reality” created by the *klipos*, the concealment, is limited and not true reality. Also, the garment which we wear (“skin and flesh and bones and sinews of the lowly body”, as quoted above) is limited and temporary. The process of its “passing” also conceals—the elevation that occurs when the mission is finished.

VI. Souls in Bodies in this Physical World

The level of refinement of the body which the soul will inhabit after the Resurrection of the Dead is incomparable to the body which we are familiar with at present:

[At] the time of the coming of Moshiach and the revelation of the future, the physical will be more refined, which means that the physicality of the future will be as it was at the beginning of Creation, before the sin of Adam Harishon.

Maamorim 5702, p. 74

בזמן ביאת המשיח וגילוי דלעתיד דאז
הרי גם הגשמי יהי' מזוכך יותר והיינו
שהגשמי' דלעתיד יהי' ע"ד הגשמי' שהי'
מתחילת הבריאה קודם החטא של עה"ד,
ועוד מזוכך יותר.

מאמרים תש"ב, ע' 74

This is as we explained above—the return of the “garments of flesh” to “garments of light”. The Rebbe Rashab gives further understanding by explaining that “**in the time to come there will be souls in bodies, but the bodies will not be physical like the physical bodies of the present time...for they will not be material.**”¹⁶

We should emphasize at this point that according to Chassidus, the refinement of the body as it will be in the Resurrection of the Dead is not considered a *new* creation and a *new* body, but rather it is *the same body which we have now*. This is explained that the future body is the same body as we have now *in its essence* (but *not* as it is

** “One Who Has Eyes, Sees!”

At the Yom Tov meal on the night of Sukkos (5721) the Rebbe mentioned how the Previous Rebbe revealed that there are “*Chassidische Ushpizin*” who are guests in the Sukkah. The Rebbe told that the Previous Rebbe “pointed with his finger and said: here sits the Baal Shem Tov, here sits the Maggid, etc., and one who has eyes, sees!”¹³ It is difficult to understand how those in the World of Truth can appear in this world in a form which “one who has eyes, sees” them sitting in a particular place. But the Holy Zohar already writes about the Tzaddikim who have completed the refinement of the *klipos* and they are both in this world and in the World to Come: “**You who are in this world and do not have *klipos* and skins—you have permission to gaze upon those dwelling in this world, but those in this world do not have permission to see you.**” They don’t see because “**One who is encllothed in these *klipos* of skin and flesh and bones and sinews of the lowly body, where the spirit is like the dead who do not see or hear or speak.**”

But it is known that by Moshe Rabbeinu (and the extension of Moshe in every generation) the physical body does not conceal at all,¹⁴ like it will be for all in the Time to Come. And the Rebbe wants that we should know that we have reached the end of exile in concealing materiality, and then “the eyes of all the *neshomas* will be opened...similar to our sense of sight and like ‘all flesh will see.’”¹⁵ That it is already in our power to open our eyes and see all the revelations, and also to see that “here sits the Baal Shem Tov, here sits the Maggid, and here sits, etc.”

revealed to us externally, as explained above at length). Because we know only the “garments of flesh” as the body, the body in its true clean and refined state — “garments of light”—seems to us spiritual and intangible. However, the truth is that this true essence of the body that will be revealed in the future is not something new or different but rather the essence, even now, of the body which we know.

The body as it will be in the future is, on the one hand, in fact the same body that we have now—the same essential sense of self, the essence of our being—but on the other hand it will be refined and elevated to an infinitely higher level after Hashem will remove the spirit of impurity and will restore the “garments of light”. The Mittler Rebbe describes this phenomenon:

At the Resurrection of the Dead the dead will live, meaning the same body as now...only that the body will be refined and not like it is now when the body is completely physicalized...it is the same body that [the *neshoma*] lived in...completely removed from physicality...

Mitteler Rebbe, Hanachos 5577, p.183; Maamarim Vayikra II (Lag B'Omer), p.687

בתחיית המתים שבודאי יחיו המתים דהיינו אותו הגוף עצמו שכעת...רק שהגוף יהיה מזוכך ולא כמו כעת שהגוף הוא בתכלית הגשמיות. [והוא] אותו הגוף שהיה חי בו...בתכלית הפשטה מן הגשם, ולזה אמרו העולם הבא אין בו אכילה ושתייה כלל.

אדה"ע הנחות תקע"ז, ע' קפג.
מאמרי אדה"ע, ויקרא ב' (ל"ג בעומר)
ע' תרפז

We can see from the description of the Previous Rebbe that we simply have no concept of what the experience of such of a level of reality will be like:

At the Resurrection of the Dead *neshomas* will arise in bodies which will be physical, but not born from mother and father, rather...[Hashem] will cover them with skin and flesh like the bones revived by Yechezkiel...

Maamarim 5711 (Rebbe Rayatz), p.208

בתחיית המתים יעמדו נשמות בגופים, דהגופים ההם יהיו גם כן גשמים אבל אינם מלידת אב ואם אז כי אם שיחיו בטל תחיה, והיינו שיקרם עליהם עור ובשר, וכמו בעצמות שהחיה יחזקאל שקרם עליהם עור ובשר... הגם שיהיה גוף גשמי יהיה

ספר מאמרים רי"ע, תשי"א, ע' 208

The Previous Rebbe 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 שיהי' גוף גשמי יהי' הוויתו מהקב"ה ע"י טל תחי' טלא דעתיקה, ולהיות שהגוף שיהי' בתחה"מ יהי' מהקב"ה ע"י טל תחי' ע"כ יהיו גופים קדושים וטהורים לגמרי, וכמו גופו של אדה"ר שהי' יציר כפיו של הקב"ה...שהי' גופו מזוכך וטהור לגמרי כמו אור.

ספר מאמרים רי"ע, תשי"א, ע' 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.”**²⁰ 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:

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, Techiyas Hameisim

בתחה"מ יהי' עלי' רוחניות לעולם
הגשמי דהיינו יופשט ההגשמה מכל
הדברים שהרי גם האדם עכשיו גשמי
ובתחה"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, תחה"מ

We can reconcile the seeming contradiction between 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”) because the Rebbe is speaking about the *essence* (“*atzmius*”)^{***} of the physical, not it’s externality. Meaning: **what is now beyond our reality (“spiritual”) will become our reality (“physical”).**

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

When we speak of the rectification of the sin of Adam Harishon and a return to the level of physicality in which he dwelled, we are quite literally speaking of a return to Gan Eden. This is mentioned in the Rebbe’s very first *maamor* (“*Bosi Legani*”), in which the Rebbe brings the verse “your nation are all *Tzaddikim*, they will all inherit the earth”, explaining that the word “earth” means “Gan Eden”. That Hashem’s desire for a dwelling place in the lower worlds is fulfilled by the complete refinement of those lower worlds, until they are elevated to the lofty level of Gan Eden.

*** What is the “Essence” of the Body?

Summary of Sichas of Yud Shevat, Likutei Sichos volume 6

This world is described as being the lowest of all worlds “full of *klipos* and *sitra achra*”, but this is not the essential being of the world. At the beginning of Creation that world was in another state—it was a dwelling place for Hashem’s presence. More than this, it is known that in the Time to Come the world will return to its original state, and for this reason this world of *klipos* which we know is considered a “change which reverts to its original state” and thus it is not truly called change. Therefore, intrinsically and internally, the world even now is a dwelling for Hashem.

As regards the body of a Jew: after the passing we see that the body will (eventually) cease to exist, because the body by itself is “dust”. All that remains from the body is the Luz bone. But in truth the Holy One *chose* the body of the Jew—the physical body, “**and therefore the body is a real and true existence which is not subject to disappearance. The change that came about through the sin of the Tree of Knowledge is only in the externality, and not in its essential being.**” The externality—which is like something additional—will disappear, but the essence will never cease to be because it is the essential being of the body, and therefore intrinsically and internally it is not possible for the body to cease to exist.

We have to understand that despite that presently Gan Eden is where the *neshoma* goes after it separates from the body (and thus considered by us as a spiritual place, and not physical), at the beginning of creation **“Gan Eden was for Adam Harishon the place of his *avodah* just like this world is for us now...[Gan Eden] was his dwelling place just as now our dwelling place is this world.”**²¹ His reality was Gan Eden.

To properly understand this we need to understand Gan Eden according to Chassidus, which describes it as “the spiritual dimension of the physical”.²² In our eyes it is a spiritual place (above the experience of reality which our body can perceive), but in truth Gan Eden Ha’aretz (the lowest level of Gan Eden, part of this world) is *physical*, only that it is the aspect of **“spirituality which is in physicality”**, and thus it is the essence of physicality.²³ With that in mind, it is very interesting to see the Rebbe’s explanation of a return to Gan Eden...in a body:

We could say that this will be one of the novelties (*“chiddushim”*) 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.²⁴

VIII. Our Generation — Completing the Mission

The Rebbe announced on numerous occasions that the overall mission of *Avodas Habirurim* has been completed: **“The [task of the] Jewish People collectively, over all the generations, which needs to be accomplished during the time of exile in order to come to the complete Geulah *has been completed and finished*...[and all that remains] lacking is a small detail which is like a minor weakness or infirmity on the externality of an individual limb.”**²⁵

This means that presently, in our generation, that every single one of us possesses the ability to complete our soul’s mission, our individual mission. Each individual can finish the process of refining the *klipos* which we accomplish via the garment of “the skin of the snake” (the “garments of skin”) and then make the transition to eternal

life without the interruption of another incarnation in this world. Not death but rather a *Hillula*! This is the practical implication of being, in the Rebbe's words, the final generation of golus and the first generation of Geulah—the last generation that will be required to inhabit the “skin of the snake” in order to refine the sparks.

The Rebbe explains that there is something new in our generation, the 9th generation from the Baal Shem Tov: in the previous generations there was **“the *Histalkus* of the soul from the body...which is not the case in our generation, the last generation of exile and the first generation of Geulah...”** The Rebbe is speaking about ***our generation as a whole***, explaining that each Jew in this generation can experience a *Hillula*—the peaceful transition of *Tzaddikim* who have finished their mission—instead of death, *r”l*, when the soul must return to the dust of *klipos* to continue its work.

From all of the above it is possible to understand that an event that appears to fleshly eyes as an interruption of life, G-d forbid, does not contradict the Rebbe's words that we in this generation will transition to eternal life without any interruption. For, as we have learned, a *neshoma* is only encloded in the material garment of this world for the sake of performing its mission—*Avodas Habirurim*. When this mission is completed, the *neshoma* is freed from the “prison of the body” which comes from the “skin of the snake”. Our eyes of flesh still only perceive the externality, and thus we cannot appreciate that only the externality of the body of a Jew can cease to show sign of life, and meanwhile the internality—the essence of the body—is a true entity that cannot cease to exist.

Before the completion of the soul's mission it is **“to the dust you shall return’ [which] 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.”**²⁶ However, after a person has completed his soul's mission he removes the material body which possesses only a temporary existence and he is elevated to eternal life in “garments of light” and “does not return to the dust”, as explained above.

How can this apply to every single member of our generation? The Rebbe explains: **“Rabbeinu Hakadosh...was a ‘complete chosid’, who completed his *avodah*, nonetheless he suffered illnesses...only the waste which is at the ends of his garment still wasn't refined, etc...and in our generation we could say that all of the Children of Israel are on this level.”**²⁷

While it remains possible that we might have a shadow of a doubt as to whether *this or another particular individual* did or did not finish his soul's mission before passing on, nonetheless the knowledge that this generation as a whole has completed the mission of all the generations and that lack of signs of life in the material garment *do not contradict* the continuation of life in a true and eternal way gives actuality to the words of the Abarbanel: **“since upon perfection of the soul it receives its reward and remains alive after death [of the material body, therefore] men will no longer shed tears over the dead. This is the implication of ‘and Hashem Elokim will wipe the tear from every face.’”**³⁰

More than merely wiping away tears—we can transform the tears entirely, as the Rebbe says regarding what is told in the Mishnah about Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai. When Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakai took to his deathbed, his students came to visit him and saw him start to cry. They asked him “Why are you crying?” He responded: “There are two paths before me, one leads to *Gan Eden* and one leads to *Gehinom*, and I don’t know on which path they are taking me.”³¹

On this the Rebbe adds that for us: **“The crying is in a way of joy—tears of joy, which are caused by an abundance of happiness beyond what the person can take...and the happiness is due to the fact that he knows which direction they are taking him—since he is a ‘foot’ and a ‘shaliach’ of my father-in-law the Leader of the Generation...since that is his situation then he knows which direction they are taking him—to my father-in-law the Leader of the Generation!”**³²

יחי אדוננו מורנו ורבינו מלך המשיח לעולם ועד!

Resurrection of the Dead While Still in the Dust?

The Gemara³³ states that *Tzaddikim* will return to their dust one hour before the Resurrection of the Dead. The Rebbe explains that this can be fulfilled through the spiritual service of “my soul will be as dust to all,” in which case there is no need to actually return to dust.

In the Zohar³⁴ it states in the name of Rabi Yitzchok: **“They have taught that in the future the Holy One Blessed Be He will revive the dead and shake them from their dust — that they will not be fabric of dust like they were at the beginning when they were created from actual dust which lacks permanent existence...they will be shaken from that fabric of dust and they will arise in permanent fabric giving them lasting existence. For it says: Arise! Shake off the dust.”**

This expression of being “shaken from the dust” is found in the gemara³⁵ in the name of Rebi Elazar: **“Anyone who possesses arrogance [גסות הרוח], his dust will not be shaken”.**

It has been asked³⁶ why do our sages use the term “to be shaken” to refer to the Resurrection of the Dead? Why didn’t they say “he won’t arise” or “he won’t live” at the Resurrection? It is possible to answer that this means that even while the arrogant will indeed arise at the Resurrection, he will arise in the original dust of this world, and this original dust is not shaken off from him. Thus, while he has actually reached the level of eternal life, it remains hidden beneath a layer of “dust” (the “skin of the snake”) and thus he will still undergo the humbling process of passing away in order to “shake off the dust” that comes from arrogance.

This would then explain that **our generation is already on the level of the Resurrection of the Dead**, since our generation is on the level of Rabbeinu Hakadosh **“who completed his avodah, nonetheless he suffered illnesses...only the waste which is at the ends of his garment was still not refined”**²⁷. We are only “dwelling in the dust” due to a lack of *bittul*. Thus the Rebbe instructs our generation that it is specifically *bittul* (“My soul will be dust to all”) that nullifies the requirement to “return to the dust”—negating the need to die and return again in another incarnation.

(And see Ben Yehoyada³⁵ that the arrogant will arise in the resurrection like a person who was put to sleep to undergo a painful operation, and when he awakens “he is still sick and feels his body’s weakness”.)

INDEX OF SECTIONS

I. Eternal Life, Naturally (p.2)	VI. Souls in Bodies in the Physical World (p.10)
II. Purpose of a Soul Coming Into a Body (p.3)	VII. Return to Gan Eden...in a Body (p.12)
III. End of the <i>Avodah</i> (p.5)	VIII. Our Generation--Completing the Mission (p.13)
IV. Those Who Dwell in the Dust (p.7)	
V. <i>Histalkus</i> --Beginning of True Life (p.8)	

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

**לע"נ אלטא מינה בת ישכר שלמה, ז"ל
לזכות אריאל זלמן, רפאל שלום, ישעי' יוסף, מנחם מענדל, שיחיו, באק**

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| 2) Shela"h Ki Seitze, Ekev. Also Maamorim 5679 p. 415. | 15) Toras Chaim, Shemos, 334a. |
| 3) See sicha of Yud Shevat, 5726. | 16) Hemshech 5672, p.685. |
| 4) Torah Ohr, Vayeshev 27d. | 17) Brochos, 34b. |
| 5) Ohr Hatorah, Ki Seitze 883-4, on the verse in Tehillim (139:16) "days are fashioned" ("yomim yutzaru"). | 18) Alter Rebbe, Maamarim Katzarim. |
| 6) Sichas of 20 Menachem Av, 5712 (Hisvadyos, p. 117). | 19) Maamarim Melukatim, 2:277. |
| 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"). | 20) Likutei Torah, Korach, 52c. |
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