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THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD & THE DAY OF JUDGMENT

RABBI ELIYAHU KIN

One of the thirteen principles of Judaism is to believe in the resurrection of the dead. This is based upon pure faith as opposed to full knowledge (that for example Hashem created the world). We believe in the resurrection, but it is harder to prove than things that we know for a fact. Our belief in the resurrection of the dead is very strong, and it is considered one of the principles and cornerstones of our faith. If someone doesn't believe in it, its like he doesn't believe in the whole Torah.

We have sources in the Torah that allude to the resurrection. It is not explicitly written in the Torah because Hashem doesn't want us to serve him for ulterior motives. The verse says in the Torah that Hashem tells Moshe, you are about to leave this world to go to your forefathers, but “they will rise”. This refers to the resurrection of the dead. Similarly, the verse states “then Moses will sing”. Meaning, there will be a time in the future, at the resurrection of the dead, that Moses will sing again. Also it says “I will fulfill my promise to the forefathers” (they will see the land of Israel in its full glory), how will Hashem fulfill his promise? When the forefathers resurrect. And the verse also says “I will strike them dead and I will bring him back alive.” Just like G-d can bring about someone's death, he can bring someone back alive.

We also have a concept of reincarnation where someone who dies has his soul reincarnated in a different person. So we see that there is a cycle. Even before the resurrection of the dead, the souls of the vast majority of people are constantly being put into different bodies. The purpose of reincarnation is to make up or fix all the things that the person hadn't done right in a previous lifetime.

We thank Hashem every morning for the fact that he allows us to rise again. We get back our souls when we wake up in the morning and we thank G-d for this. So every morning we rise like a new person. We believe that this is similar to the resurrection of the dead.

The verse in Daniel says that the date of Moshiach's arrival is hidden. There are various dates that Moshiach can come, earlier or later. If we deserve, he comes earlier, if not, he will come at the last possible moment for him to come. “Many of those who are asleep will wake up.” Everyone will rise, some to glory and some to embarrassment.

What will the world be like after Moshiach comes? We will live in a world without taxation, war and famine. It will be like the world before Adam sinned with the tree of knowledge.

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The Baal Shem Tov says that every night the soul goes up and must give an accounting of whatever transpired that day. There is a mini-judgment every night. That's why it is good to say the kariat shema every night. Once a year, Rosh Hashana, we are judged for a whole year. At the end of our lives we must give an accounting of our whole lives. After Moshiach comes, we will be judged on all our reincarnations on all of our lives. There is a need for all these judgments. The soul is aware that it is being judged.

When a soul comes down to this world, only the part that needs correction comes down. The part that has fulfilled its purpose stays in heaven. A soul can be divided into many different parts. The only way a soul can come back down is if it is buried. The day of judgement will determine which part of the soul will remain. The eternal reward goes to the soul, but the body will be rewarded as well. The period of time until the year 6000 will be when the body gets its reward. What about a person who was cremated or burned, how will they rise? Every single one of us had a bone called the luz bone that can never be destroyed, the resurrection of the dead starts from that bone. How will a person come back? Exactly the same way they left, so people can recognize him.

Why can't a person be cremated? There are three reasons. The first reason is that there is a mitzvah to be buried. The second reason is because it is a form of disrespect to the body. There is also a form of atonement which is when the body decomposes in the ground. If someone is cremated, then he could never decompose. There are some righteous people whose bodies do not decompose, but they are very few. The soul mourns over the body's pain, it knows what is going on with it. When a person dies, the physical body that was limiting the soul, separates itself and falls apart. The separation allows itself to separate from that which caused it to sin. So just like you take a piece of pottery and you shatter it and remake it, Hashem decomposes our bodies and recreates brand new ones. Death, in essence, is a necessity because it is an atonement.

This world is set to last until the year 6000. When the resurrection of the dead happens, the evil inclination will be slaughtered and as a result there will be no more death. This is up to the year 6000. This physical world will end and it will become a spiritual world. We are extremely close to the year 6000. One opinion says, however, that those who will be alive when Moshiach comes will experience death for a short amount of time so that they can experience the resurrection of the dead as well.

We learn from this passuk "*Bonei Yerushalayim Hashem, nidchey yisrael yechanes, harofeh lishevurey lev, umechavesh le'atzvotam*" the order of what exactly will happen when Moshiach comes/ The first thing that will happen is that Hashem will build the Beit Hamikdash, then he will regather all

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of Bnei Yisrael. Next, Hashem will heal all those heartbroken ones.

The resurrection of the dead will take 40 years. Hashem will start the resurrection of the dead in the land of Israel. Everyone else will roll there through subterranean tunnels. It is a tremendous merit to be buried in Israel and specifically on Har Hazeitim.

How do we convince someone that the resurrection of the dead will happen? If you read tanach, you see instances that we see people coming back to life after they were dead. We see by both Eliyahu Hanavi and Elisha that they resurrected people that were completely dead. Yechezkel resurrected an entire valley of dry bones of people that were dead for hundreds of years! We see nowadays that people experience clinical deaths where they die temporarily and they come back. That is also a form of resurrection of the dead. There are people who dream of dead people who give them information that there is no other way of them knowing. We know the soul exists after death because it is the essence. People think that when someone is dead it is the end of them, they could not be further away from the truth. The soul is very much around. The human being comes from a drop of seed which turns into a beautiful human being. If you think about it, it is easier for a dead person to come back to life than a whole person being born from a drop because by the dead person the whole body is intact all that is need is the soul. But by the drop, you need the body and the soul. Hashem created us the first time around he can create us again in the exact same body.

We know that even though Hashem created this world, he also created a certain system of laws , he created nature, and he assigns different angels to oversee different things, but some things he manages by himself. The Gemara in Taanit says that there are 3 keys that Hashem has: the first of childbirth, the second is the key of rain, and the third is the key of the resurrection of the dead.

When we comfort someone we say may Hashem give you comfort. Why do we say that? Because we can comfort someone until a certain point but we cant actually bring someone back from the dead, only Hashem could do that and that is the greater consolation there is. Only Hashem can comfort us. When that day comes out mouth will be full of laughter and joy. We will look back at this world, the 6000 years of history and realize that it really wasnt worth getting too worked up about it. This is a temporary world, 6000 years in the eyes of Hashem is like the blink of an eye. This world is temporary pain for an everlasting reward. We must believe in the resurrection of the dead fully, and in this merit, may we be able to see it soon. Amen.