

בס"ד

PIRKEI AVOS OF THE WEEK

Introduction to **Pirkei Avos**

9 Menachem Av, 5782 – August 6, 2022

Compiled from the works of
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The Lubavitcher Rebbe

by
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An Outline of the Rebbe's Explanation of Pirkei Avos Introduction

Sefer Maamarim Melukat Volume 3, Page 221

Important Note

This Shabbos is Tisha B'Av, the ninth day of the Hebrew month of Menachem Av. On Shabbos, one may neither fast nor display public signs of mourning; hence this year, the fast is pushed off until Sunday. However, private signs of mourning must be observed on Shabbos. Since the words of the Torah make one happy¹, one may not study Torah on the ninth day of Menachem Av after midday². For the exact halachic time of midday in your location, check https://www.chabad.org/calendar/zmanim_cdo/aid/143790/jewish/Zmanim-Halachic-Times.htm.

We will not continue with Chapter III until the following Shabbos. Therefore, this week's "Pirkei Avos of the Week" will explain the Mishnah we read before each chapter. Next week, with Hashem's help, we will continue with an explanation of the Rebbe of a Mishnah in Chapter III. Please remember not to learn this after midday on this Shabbos, 9 Menachem Av, 5782 – August 6, 2022.

Introduction

סנהדרין פרק י', משנה א': כל ישראל יש להם חלק לעולם הבא, שנאמר ועמד כלם צדיקים, לעולם יירשו ארץ, נצר מטעי מעשה ידי להתפאר

Sanhedrin Chapter 10³, Mishnah 1: All Israel have a share in the World to Come, as it is stated⁴, "Your people are all righteous; they shall inherit the Land forever. (They are) the branch of My planting, the work of My hands in which to take pride."

The Simple Explanation

This Mishnah is customarily learned before reciting/learning each chapter of Pirkei Avos. There is a difference of opinion as to the general meaning of the term "World to Come." Some say it refers to Gan Eden, where the souls (without bodies) bask in Hashem's presence⁵. Others believe that it refers to the era of the "Revival

1. Tehillim 19:9.

2. See Shulchan Aruch Orach Chaim, Laws of Tisha B'Av, Chapter 554. There are exceptions to this ruling; laws directly related to Tisha B'Av, and sorrowful sections of the Torah, such as Iyov.

3. In the printed editions the Mishnah which we have, this is Chapter 10. In our printed editions of the Talmud it is Chapter 11.

4. Yeshayahu 60:21.

5. Rambam, Laws of Teshuvah, Chapter 8, Paragraph 8.

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of the Dead⁶." However, in this context, it certainly means the time following the revival of the dead⁷. Their proof for this comes from the continuation of the Mishnah. "The following do not have a portion in the World to Come. One who says that 'there is no indication in the Torah that the dead will be resurrected.'" The Gemorah explains⁸ that G-d punishes and rewards "measure for measure." Because an individual *denies* the resurrection, he will not *merit* resurrection.

Furthermore, the only possible explanation of this Mishnah is that it discusses the dead's revival. The Mishnah says that each Jew has guaranteed entry into the "World to Come." However, this cannot be the case in the Garden of Eden, the reward given to bodiless souls. Regarding Gan Eden, we are told, "Who may go up to the mountain of Hashem? (Only) one who has clean hands and a pure heart." In other words, entry into Gan Eden is based upon one's conduct throughout his lifetime. It is an "exclusive" world.

Furthermore, Gan Eden has many levels; even one who is granted entrance can only go to the level he has earned in his lifetime. Here the Mishnah says that the World to Come is not exclusive; "all Israel have a share in the World to Come." Therefore, it cannot possibly refer to Gan Eden, which is not accessible to many.

Difficulties in Understanding the Mishnah

Gan Eden exists now as well. Nevertheless, it is called the "World to Come," which implies a world that does not exist yet. This is because one does not acquire a portion in Gan Eden until after he completes his life in this world and earns it. Throughout one's lifetime, it's a world that has yet to come to him. Conversely, the era of the "Resurrection of the Dead" will not exist until after the arrival of Moshiach. In other words, the "Resurrection of the Dead" cannot occur until the world reaches a perfection sufficient to warrant Moshiach's coming.

Furthermore, we say⁹, "There is none comparable to You... in this world, and none apart from You... in the life of the World to Come. There is nothing aside from You... in the Era of Moshiach. There is none like You in the Era of Resurrection of the Dead." This prayer lists four different epochs in ascending order. The first is this world. The World to Come (meaning Gan Eden) follows this. Next comes the Era of Moshiach. The fourth and highest is the era of the Resurrection of the Dead.

This makes it clear that the revelations of the era of the Resurrection of the Dead are far greater than those of Gan Eden. Nevertheless, the era of the Resurrection of the Dead is accessible to one and all. Contrast that with Gan Eden, which has a lower level of revelation. Despite that, it has "limited membership." Why should that be

6. This is the opinion followed by the Kabbalists and Chassidic teachings. There are many sources for this; see, for example Likkutei Torah, Parshas Tzav, Page 16, c.

7. Bartenura (and other commentaries) on our Mishnah in Sanhedrin. See also Midrash Shmuel, beginning of Pirkei Avos.

8. See Gemorah Sanhedrin 90, a.

9. Shabbos morning prayer service.

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so?

The Explanation

There are various explanations given to answer this apparent difficulty. The core of one of these is as follows. It is written in many Chassidic discourses that¹⁰ Gan Eden is a reward for Torah study. On the other hand, the Resurrection of the Dead comes as a reward for the observance of Mitzvos. This explains why Gan Eden is a world of souls without bodies; Torah study is primarily related to the soul. In the Era of Resurrection, the souls will be clothed within bodies. This is because the observance of Mitzvos relates mainly to the body¹¹.

Every Jew, without exception, observes Mitzvos. The Sages tell us that¹² "even the sinners of Israel are as full of Mitzvos as a pomegranate (is full of) seeds." That is why "Every Jew has a share in the World to Come."

This may also be why the Mishnah follows the statement that all Jews have a portion in the World to Come with the verse¹³ "your people are all righteous, they will inherit the land forever...." This proof-text proves that all Jews have a portion in the World to Come ("they will inherit the land forever"). However, in addition to this, it also explains why this is so.

One who observes Mitzvos is called "righteous," in Hebrew a Tzaddik. This is because all of the Mitzvos are called Tzedokoh¹⁴, meaning righteousness. Hence, those who perform Mitzvos are termed Tzaddikim, "righteous ones¹⁵." Since "your people are all righteous," meaning that *all* Jews perform Mitzvos, therefore "they shall inherit the land forever" — the "Land of Life¹⁶," which refers to life in the World to Come.

(Adapted from the Maamor (Chassidic discourse) Lehovin Inyan Techiyas Hamaisim, 5746)

I hope you gained as much by reading this as I did by translating and adapting it.

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10. See Torah Ohr, Parshas Yisro 73, b. See also Sefer Hamitzvos of the Tzemach Tzedek, 15, b.

11. See Tanya chapters. 35 and. 37.

12. See Talmud Eiruvim 19, a and Chagigah 27, a.

13. See Footnote 4.

14. See Tanya chapter. 37 (page 48b). See also Sefer Hamaamorim Melukat Volume I, page 308, footnote. 33.

15. Likkutei Torah, Shir Hashirim, Page 16, c.

16. Or Hatorah, Nach, on this verse of Yeshayahu, Chapter 3, page 288.

**DEDICATED IN HONOR OF
THE LUBAVITCHER REBBE**

* * *

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

**Dr. Mindel Rivka (Muriel) bas Reb Menachem Mendel Shlomo ע"ה
Stitt**

Passed away on Shabbat Parshat Lech Lecha, 10 Mar-Cheshvan, 5782
May Her Soul be bound in the Eternal Bond of Life

*

DEDICATED BY HER FAMILY שיחיו

* * *

IN HONOR OF

The Soldiers of "Tzivos Hashem"

Chaim and Aiden Oded שיחיו

Morris

May they merit to be a source of Chassidic pride
to their family and a Torah light to their community

*

DEDICATED BY THEIR PARENTS

Rabbi & Mrs. Menachem M. and Chaya Mushka שיחיו

Morris

* * *

IN HONOR OF

Mrs. Esther' שתחי Sharabani

May she go from strength to strength
in health, happiness, Torah, and mitzvot

*

DEDICATED BY HER SON

Mr. Gershon (Geri) שי' Bentov

מוקדש לזכות

כ"ק אדמו"ר נשיא דורנו מליובאוויטש

*** * ***

לעילוי נשמת

מרת מינדל רבקה בת ר' מנחם מענדל שלמה ע"ה

סתית

נפטרה ש"ק פרשת לך לך, יו"ד מר-חשון תשפ"ב

ת. נ. צ. ב. ה.

נדבת בני משפחתה שיחיו

*** * ***

לזכות

חיילי "צבאות השם"

חיים ועדן עודד שיחיו

מאריס

נדפס ע"י הוריהם

הרה"ת ר' מנחם מענדל וחי' מושקא שיחיו

מאריס

*** * ***

מרת אסתר שתחילי שרבני

לאריכות ימים ושנים טובות עד ביאת גואל צדק

ומתוך בריאות הנכונה ולשנת ברכה והצלחה בגו"ר

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