Gate of Reincarnations

**“GATE OF REINCARNATIONS”**

**from the teachings of Rabbi Yitzchak Luria**

**translated by Yitzchak Bar Chaim**

**edited by Shabtai Teicher**

**Chapter One[[1]](#footnote-1)[1], Section One: The Five Names of the Soul**

We will begin with what the rabbis[[2]](#footnote-2)[2] wrote that the *Nefesh* has five names.

A reference to the five levels of soul.

From the bottom up they are *Nefesh*, *Ruach*, *Neshama*, *Chaya*, and *Yechida*.

Translated,[[3]](#footnote-3)[3] they are:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Yechida* | Singular |
| *Chaya* | Life (Force) |
| *Neshama* | Breath |
| *Ruach* | Wind |
| *Nefesh* | (that which has come to) Rest |

Each of these levels represents a different level of light that originated from *Ein Sof*, the Infinite light emanating out from G-d. On the level of *Yechida*, the light is still very sublime and unified; on the level of *Chaya*, it is less so, but it is considered to be the life force of all that comes after it. “*Neshama*” is derived from the word “*neshima*,” which means breath, because this level of soul is said to be like a breath in the mouth of G-d, so-to-speak. *Ruach* is the soul-light as it leaves the stage of *Neshama*, like a breath blown out of the mouth of a person. The soul-light comes to rest on the level called *Nefesh*, which is in the blood of a physical human being, and therefore it acts as an interface between the spiritual and the physical.

Certainly, these names have not been ascribed by chance or convenience. Rather, know that the person himself is the spiritual element within the body, while the body is only a garment for the person—not the person himself. This is what is written, “*On the flesh of man do not anoint*...” (*Ex.* 30:32), as is noted in *ari, Parashat Bereishit*, 20b.

In other words, “flesh of man” implies that the flesh belongs to man, but it is not the man himself. “Flesh of man” is only the body and exterior garment; it is not the real man. It is, therefore, not worthy to be anointed.

Since man connects all four worlds of *ABY”A*...

The Four Worlds and the Parts of the Soul

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Corresponding to: |
| *Atzilut* | Emanation | *Chaya* |
| *Beriya* | Creation | *Neshama* |
| *Yetzira* | Formation | *Ruach* |
| *Asiya* | Action | *Nefesh* |

A very important concept is implied by our text here. Even though a person’s physical body is miniscule compared to the physical world, his spiritual soul spans all *five* spiritual worlds that emanate from *Ein Sof*. Since there is a direct and automatic correlation between the levels of soul and the levels of worlds, man’s actions, besides having a direct impact on his soul, have a direct impact on the corresponding spiritual worlds. When a person performs righteous deeds, it unifies the levels of his soul,[[4]](#footnote-4)[4] and hence, the four worlds as well; the opposite is true if a person sins.

Since man connects all four worlds of *ABY”A*...

... by necessity, there has to exist within him sections from all four worlds, and each section is called by one of the five names: *NRNCh”Y* (*Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama, Chaya*, and *Yechida*), as we will explain.

Why did the original use 'Introductions' and not 'chapters'?   
"The way of wisdom is to acquire knowledge, one piece after another, until the entire subject fits together clearly into one whole. For this realization at the end, all these introductions were needed first." (Rabbi Moshe Chaim Luzatto, Da'at Tevunot, #30, Rabbi Friedlander edition)

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[Publisher’s note: An integral part of Kabbala study is to review the material a number of times.]

*From “The Way of G-d” (Feldheim), a translation by Rabbi Aryeh Kaplan of “Derech Hashem” by Rabbi Moshe Chayim Luzatto, Part 3, footnote 6.*

**CHAPTER ONE, Section Two: Spiritual Growth from Level to Level**

He does not acquire all of them [all five levels of soul] at one time, but rather according to his worthiness. At first, he obtains the lowest of them, which is called “*Nefesh*.” Afterwards , if he so merits, he then also attains “*Ruach*.” This is explained in several places in the *Zohar*, such as in *Parashat Veyechi*, and *Parashat Teruma*, and specifically at the beginning of *Parashat Mishpatim* (94b): “Come and see: When a person is born, he is given a *Nefesh*...”

Although a person begins life with only a *Nefesh*, he has the potential to ascend to higher levels of soul, according to his merit (as elucidated below).

…All *Nefashot* are only from the World of *Asiya*; all *Ruchot* are from the World of *Yetzira*; and, all *Neshamot* are from the World of *Beriya*. However, the majority of people do not have all five parts, which are called *NR”N*, etc., but only the *Nefesh* from *Asiya*.

We have seen at the end of the previous section that the abbreviation for all five levels of the soul is *NRNCh”Y*. Since the uppermost levels of *Chaya* and *Yechida* are inaccessible now, they are often ignored, and the short-form is even more abbreviated to *NR”N*. Late in history and distant from Mt. Sinai as we are, most people only have access to the *Nefesh* level of their soul, which is why it is so difficult to relate to God and spirituality.

However, even this *nefesh* has many levels, and this is because *Asiya* itself also divides into five *Partzufim*, called: *Arich Anpin, Abba, Imma, Zer Anpin,* and *Nukveh de’Zer Anpin*.

The word “*partzuf”* (plural: “*partzufim”*) literally means “face”. In the Kabbala it also refers to the entire human shape.

In general, there are ten *sefirot*: *keter, chochma, bina, chesed, gevura, tiferet, netzach, hod, yesod,* and *malchut*. However, each one is a localized version of the entire system. In other words, it is possible to discern within each one of them ten component *sefirot,* and within each one of those ten others, etc. (This may be likened to a photograph taken with a hologram, where any detail may be blown up to reveal all the basic information that is contained in the whole photograph. All the basic information of the whole is contained in the detail; and the detail contains all the basic information found in the whole.)

When we see a number of *sefirot* joined together, working together and functioning together as a system, then they are called a *partzuf*.

Each *partzuf* has a unique name, and these correspond to the names of the *sefirot*, the names of the soul and the names of the worlds, as discussed previously ([Chapter One, Section One](http://www.thirtysevenbooks.com/ShaarGilgul/Chap01Sec01.htm)).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Yechidah*  Singular |  | *Keter*  Crown | *Arich Anpin*  The long face |
| *Chaya*  Life force | *Atzilut*  Emanation | *Chochma*  Wisdom | *Abba*  Father |
| *Neshama*  Breath | *Beriya*  Creation | *Bina*  Understanding | *Imma*  Mother |
| *Ruach*  Wind | *Yetzira*  Formation | *Chesed* – *Yesod*  (details)[[5]](#footnote-5)[1] | *Zeir* *Anpin*  The short (or, near) face |
| *Nefesh*  Rested | *Asiya*  action | *Malchut*  kingdom | *Nukva de’Zer Anpin*  The feminine consort of *Zeir* *Anpin* (the short or near face) |

It should be noted that the *sefirot* according to the names of the *partzufim* resemble a family tree of three generations: grandfather, parents, child and his bride.

Before a person can merit to attain his *Ruach* from the world of *Yetzira*, he must first be complete in all of the five *partzufim* of the *Nefesh* of *Asiya*.

In other words, though a person begins life with a *Nefesh*, it too has higher levels that must be attained through spiritual growth and rectification. When all the levels of *Nefesh* are rectified, then a person is ready to ascend to a higher spiritual level, that of the level of *Ruach*. He then repeats the process of growth on this higher spiritual plane.

That is, he must first master the *Nefesh* of his *Nefesh*, then the *Ruach* of his *Nefesh*, the *Neshama* of his *Nefesh*, and so on. Once he has acquired the *Yechida* of his *Nefesh*, then the entire level of *Nefesh* is said to be “his,” and, he is ready to work on acquiring the levels of *Ruach*.

CHAPTER ONE, Section Three: Path Of Rectification

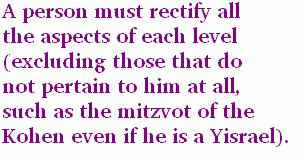
**Even though, as is known, there are people whose *Nefesh* is from *Malchut* of *Asiya*, and others who are from *Yesod* of *Asiya*, still, every person must rectify the entire spectrum of *Asiya*. Only then can a person receive his *Ruach* from *Yetzira*, since *Yetzira* is greater than all of *Asiya*.**

Not all souls are rooted in the same level. However, in spite of the level of the root of one’s soul, a person is still responsible to rectify all strata within the level of world that to which he is attached. This includes those levels within the same world but below his root as well as those above it. No individual can begin to rectify the next level of soul applicable to the next world until he has rectified all the lower levels of the world in which he is rooted. Thus, he can initiate work on *Ruach* from *Yetzira* only after his *Nefesh* from *Asiya* is completely rectified.

**Similarly, in order to attain his *Neshama* from *Beria*, a person needs to rectify every part of his *Ruach* in all of *Yetzira*, after which he can then receive his *Neshama* from *Beria*.**

**It is insufficient for him to rectify only the particular place in which his soul-root is grounded.**

That is, the level in which his *Nefesh* is rooted.

**Rather, he must rectify [all parts of each level as] we have mentioned, until he is fit [to receive the *Nefesh* of] all of *Asiya*, and then he can attain his *Ruach* of *Yetzira*. It is this way with all the worlds.**

**The import of this [above mentioned rectification—*tikun*] is that one must be involved with [the study of] Torah and [the performance of] *mitzvot* that correspond to *all* of *Asiya*—not just those which correspond to the specific place to which his *Nefesh* is attached.**

The 613 *mitzvot* correspond to the various limbs and tendons that make up a human being whose shape represents the structure of the *sefirot* in the spiritual realm. In the sense that *partzuf* refers to the entire human form, each *partzuf* consists of 613 limbs and tendons.Thus, the performance of specific *mitzvot* bring rectification to the corresponding parts of the human body and to the corresponding section of the *partzufim* and *sefirot*.

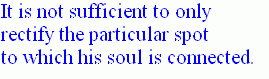
The Talmud has already taught that there are *mitzvot* that have special significance for specific people. That is to say, one *mitzvah* is important for a particular person, and another *mitzva* is significant for a second person. Nevertheless, in order to advance spiritually each individual must perform all the *mitzvot* that he can, and not content himself with the performance of only those *mitzvot* that are significant to him.

**This [above mentioned rectification] is [thus also applicable] in the realm of “upholding Torah and *mitzvot.*”**

**CHAPTER ONE, Section Four: Acquiring Levels of Soul**

{*The relationship of* tikun*-rectification to positive and negative mitzvot, and what parts of each world must be rectified by a particular person in order that he may advance to the next level of soul.*}

[Part of the last paragraph of the previous section has been repeated and the paragraphs of this section numbered in order to facilitate explanation of this section.]

 (1) It is not sufficient to only rectify the particular spot to which his soul is connected. Rather, he must rectify (all aspects of each level as) we have mentioned, until he merits all of *Asiya*, at which time he can achieve his *Ruach* of *Yetzira*. It is this way with all the worlds.

(2) This means that one must be involved with (the study of Torah) and (the doing of Her) *mitzvot*…. Likewise, if a person sins and blemishes a particular spot in *Asiya*, even though it is not the place to which his *Nefesh* is attached, he must rectify it.

Even though a person’s *Nefesh* comes from a specific place in the world of *Asiya*, he is still responsible to acquire every level of *Asiya*—the *Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama, Chaya*, and *Yechida* of *Asiya –* as we learned at the end of the previous section. Likewise, if he commits a sin that affects a part of *Asiya* to which his soul is not particularly connected, he is responsible to rectify the blemish, since he is expected to acquire that level as well on his way to attaining *Ruach* of *Yetzira*.

(3) However, if another *Nefesh* failed to perform a specific *mitzva* from the world of *Asiya*, or sinned and blemished [something in the world of *Asiya*], this does not obligate him to rectify the missing *mitzva* or the blemish caused by the sin of the other [*Nefesh*]. If they are both from the same place, [however], then this is not the case, as we will explain later on, with G-d’s help.

Though this will be explained in a later chapter, it can be said here briefly that there are times when more than one soul occupies a single body. If the souls originate from the same root, then they share a common responsibility and need for *tikun*. However, if they do not come from the same root, then the deficiency or sin of one *Nefesh* does not necessitate the other to be part of the rectification process.

(4) Alternatively, it is possible that the concept of *tikun*-rectification applies only to blemishes resulting from sin, and not from the [lack of] performance of any of the 248 positive commandments.

Thus, rectification is only necessary in the case of a sin, and not for positive commands that were not performed, as first proposed.

(5) Or, the following is possible, and it is the correct [interpretation]. Let us say that a soul is from the *Malchut* of the *Nukveh* of *Asiya,* called the *Nefesh* of *Asiya….*

If you take the tenth *sefira* called *Malchut*, and subdivide it into ten *sefirot* it becomes a *partzuf* called *Asiya.* The tenth *sefira* of this sub-set of ten *sefirot* is also called *Malchut*, and more specifically, the *Malchut* of *Asiya*. If this *Malchut* is, in turn, subdivided into its own set of ten *sefirot*, its tenth *sefira* will be the *Malchut* of the *Malchut* of the *Asiya*, or, the *Malchut* of the *Nukveh* of *Asiya*. Thus, the soul in question would be a level within the sub-set of the sub-set of the tenth *sefira Malchut* within the general structure of ten *sefirot*.

He will have to rectify all of the *malchuyot* (plural of *malchut*): of *Ruach*,and *Neshama*,and *Chaya*, and *Yechida* of *Asiya*.

A person has to rectify his five roots in the five *partzufim* of *Asiya*, but he doesnot have to rectify the sections that are not connected to the root of his soul. Since his root is specifically in *Malchut*, it is relevant to the *Malchut* on all levels in each *partzuf*.

Someone who only rectifies the *Malchut* of *Asiya* only acquires the *Nefesh* of the *Nefesh* that is within *Asiya*.

If the root of his soul is in *Malchut*, then he has to rectify the malchut of the *Malchut* of *Asiya* in order to acquire *Nefesh* of *Nefesh*.

A person who also rectifies the *Zer Anpin* of *Asiya* acquires both the *Nefesh* and *Ruach* from *Asiya*.

Since his soul is from the *Malchut*, then he must rectify the *Malchut* of the *Zer Anpin* of *Asiya* in order to acquire the *Ruach* of *Asiya* as well as the *Nefesh*.

If he also rectifies the *Imma* of *Asiya* then he attains the *Nefesh*, *Ruach* and *Neshama* from *Asiya*. It is the same until he rectifies all five *partzufim* of *Asiya*, in which case he will have acquired all the *NRNChY* .

This is discussed again in Chapter 11.

[SECTION 4B]

Review Of Chapter One, Section Four

by Shabtai Teicher

It will be worthwhile to review some of what has been taught until now, and specifically in relation to the information presented in this section. The text of this section contains two distinct ambiguities, separated by a parenthetical statement (not uncommon in the writings of the *Arizal*).

The parenthetical statement is what we have numbered paragraph (3). It has already been explained that this refers to a situation where more than one soul occupies the same body, and it will be explained later on.

The two uncertainties contained in the text are purposely left unsettled.

The first uncertainty emerges from contrasting paragraphs 2 and 4. It concerns the concept of *tikun*-rectification, whether it applies to both blemishes caused by transgression of negative commandments **and** incompleteness in the performance of positive commandments, or to transgression of negative commandments alone.

The second uncertainty emerges from contrasting paragraphs 1 and 5. It concerns the need to rectify all the aspects of each world before one can advance to the next level of soul. (This is the case whatever the definition of *tikun*–rectification discussed in the previous uncertainty is.) The question now concerns how we should count “all the aspects” that need to be rectified. Are they 5 of 5, or 5 of 25 (the *NRNChY* of his soul root alone)? This will now be explained.

The NRNChY of his soul root

We have already learned that the five levels of soul correspond to external worlds.

Since man unifies all four worlds of *ABY”A,* by necessity there has to exist within him sections from all four worlds, and each section is called by one of the five names: *NRNCh”Y* (*Nefesh, Ruach, Neshama, Chaya*, and *Yechida*), as we will explain….

The first level, *Nefesh*, comes from the world of *Asiya*; the second level *ruach*, from the world of *Yetzira*, etc.

All *Nefashot* are from the world of *Asiya* only, all *Ruchot* are from the world of *Yetzira*, and, all *Neshamot* are from the world of *Beria*….

We have also learned that each world has five parts or five *partzufim*.

However, even this *Nefesh* [from the world of *Asiya*] has many levels, and this is because *Asiya* itself also divides into five *Partzufim*….

Hence, for a person to merit his *Ruach* from the world of *Yetzira*, he must first have achieved completion of the five *partzufim* of the *Nefesh* of *Asiya*.

Now we will learn that each of these *partzufim* can also be further detailed into five *partzufim*. Thus, the world of *Asiya* will contain 25 parts, or cells. All the other worlds above – *Yetzira*, *Beria*, etc. – will also contain 25 cells each.

The way of depicting the 25 cells that comprise the *Nefesh* that is derived from the world of *Asiya* is shown in the following diagram that is entitled “The *NRNChY* of *NRNChY*”. However, let us first recall that the names of the souls, the *sefirot* and the *partzufim* are interchangeable.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *5* | *KETER* | *ARICH ANPIN* | *YECHIDA* |
| *4* | *CHOCHMAH* | *ABBA* | *CHAYA* |
| *3* | *BINA* | *IMMA* | *NESHAMA* |
| *2* | THE SIX | *ZER ANPIN* | *RUACH* |
| *1* | *MALCHUT* | *NUKVAH DE’ ZER ANPIN* | *NEFESH* |

Numbers have been added to this list of correspondences to simplify the following diagram where the numbers 1 – 5 represent any of the corresponding terms shown above.

The diagram that follows will deal only with the *Nefesh* that is derived from the world of *Asiya*. In this respect it follows our text. Now, let us review the text using the diagram as an explanatory aid.

(1) It is not sufficient to only rectify the particular spot to which his soul is rooted. Rather, he must rectify [all aspects of each level as] we have mentioned, until he merits all of *Asiya*, at which time he can achieve his *Ruach* of *Yetzira*. It is this way with all the worlds….

(5) Or, the following is possible, and it is the correct [interpretation]. Let us say that he is from the *Malchut* of the *Nukveh* of *Asiya,* called the *Nefesh* of *Asiya.*

**Diagram of the *NRNChY* of *NRNChY:***

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | COLUMN #1 | COLUMN #2 | COLUMN #3 | COLUMN #4 | COLUMN #5 |
| Row # 5 | O |  |  |  |  |
| Row # 4 | **O** |  |  |  |  |
| Row # 3 | **O** |  |  |  |  |
| Row # 2 | **O** |  |  |  |  |
| Row # 1 | **X** |  |  |  |  |
| ASIYA | | | | | |

In our diagram the *Nukva* of *Asiya* is indicated by the bottom row of *Asiya*, Row #1.

The *Malchut* of the *Nukva* of *Asiya* is one-fifth (so to speak) of the *partzuf Nukva* of *Asiya*, indicated in the diagram by the convergence of Row #1 with Column #1 (marked with an “**X**”).

The text provides an example where the soul-root is *Malchut* of *Nukva* of *Asiya*, the place marked **X**. That place is all that he is required to rectify on Row #1. The text further implies that it has already been rectified. Now it goes on:

He will need to rectify all the *Malchuyot* (plural of *Malchut*)*:* that of *Ruach*, and *Neshama*, and *Chaya*, and *Yechida* of *Asiya.*

These are indicated in the diagram with the mark “0”. In this way he will have rectified one column in our diagram – i.e., the *NRNChY* of *Nefesh* of the *Nefesh* from the world of *Asiya*.

Someone…

whose soul-root is from *Malchut* of *Asiya*…

who rectifies only the *Malchut* of *Asiya…*

only the first row of the first column – he…

only acquires the *Nefesh* from the *Nefesh* that is within *Asiya*.

Someone…

The same one, whose soul-root is *Malchut* of *Asiya*…

who also rectifies *Zeir Anpin* of *Asiya* –

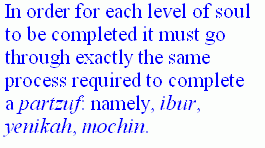
i.e., the second row of the first column in our diagram – he…

…acquires both the *Nefesh* and *Ruach* from *Asiya*. Someone who also rectifies *Imma* of *Asiya…*

the third row of the first column…

…will have acquired the *Nefesh*, *Ruach* and *Neshama* from *Asiya*. It is the same until he rectifies all five *partzufim* of *Asiya*, in which case he will have acquired all the *NRNChY* .

At that time he will have completed the general level of *Nefesh* from *Asiya*, and it will be possible to advance to the level of *Ruach* from *Yetzira*.

In the first possibility of this uncertainty, each level of *NRNChY* was detailed into five aspects corresponding to the five *partzufim* of each world. Someone whose soul-root is in *Asiya*, for example, has to rectify all five aspects of *Asiya*. In the new idea presented here, in the second possibility of the question, each of the five *partzufim* of a world is further detailed into five. Thus, there are 25 “cells” in *Asiya*. Nevertheless, each person rectifies only five corresponding to the 5 levels of *NRNChY* of his soul root in *Asiya*.

CHAPTER ONE, Section Five: Stages Traversed on Each Level of Soul

Similarly, [this process of spiritual growth continues] in this way, until the person has thus rectified all five *partzufim* of *Asiya*, giving him *NRNCh”Y,* which is called a whole *Nefesh* of *Asiya*.

Each aspect of the five levels is complete in its three sections, *Ibur, Yenika,* and *Mochin*, alluded to in the verse, “*His mother would make him a small robe, etc.*” (I *Samuel* 2:19).

Literally, these words mean: ‘embryo’, ‘suckling’, and ‘brains’. The first term refers to a stage where the *sefirot* *netzach*, *hod* and *yesod* are “pulled up” on top of *chesed, gevura* and *tiferet,* and in this posture of “three within three” they are curled up within the womb of *bina.* In this way she provides a direct transference of light to them, as a mother does to a fetus when the fetus is inside her womb.

The second term refers to the stage when these *sefirot* have since left the womb of *bina-Imma*, but like a new-born child they still require direct “nourishment” (of light) from their “mother,” i.e. *bina*. This stage corresponds to the sefirot of *chesed, gevura* and *tiferet* because the size of the *partzuf* is now equal to all six *sefirot* from *yesod* to *chesed*.

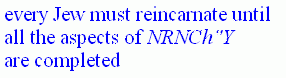
The last term, *mochin*-brains, is another way of referring to the *sefirot* of *chochma*, *bina*, and *daat,* which function as the “brains” of a *partzuf.* This stage is also called “adulthood” or “maturity”, and the size of the *partzuf* is correspondingly enlarged. The *partzuf* has now grown to its full size of ten *sefirot;* it is now complete and whole([see I-Y-M chart](http://www.thirtysevenbooks.com/ShaarGilgul/Chap01Sec05IYM.htm)).

All *partzufim* develop towards completion through these three stages; and we are being taught here that all the levels attained in the growth of the soul also go through the same three-stage process of spiritual development.

Then he merits the *Ruach,* which comes from *Yetzira*. On this level there are also five parts, and they make up the complete *Ruach* of *Yetzira*. It is the same with respect to *Neshama* from *Beria*, *Chaya* [from the world of *Atzilut*], and *Yechida* [which corresponds to the level called “*Adam Kadmon*”—“First Man”]. However, this is not the place to elucidate.

[[6]](#footnote-6)[1] In the original Hebrew text, each chapter is called “*hakdama*,” which means “introduction.” However, we shall refer to them as “chapters,” since that is what most English readers are accustomed to. Also, for purposes of this series, we will divide each chapter into a number of sections.

CHAPTER ONE, Section Six: Asiya Is Different Than Yetzira, Beria and Atzilut

It is important to explain a difference between the *nefesh* of *Asiya*, and the rest of the divisions, *Yetzira*, *Beria*, and *Atzilut*. This will also help us to answer a difficult question: How can a person, whose root is in *malchut* of *Asiya,* be able to ascend to *keter* of *Asiya*? Since every Jew must reincarnate until all the aspects of *NRNCh”Y* are completed, then by necessity every Jew will ascend to the *keter* of *Asiya*, [then eventually]) to *keter* of *Yetzira*, and [then finally] to *keter* of *Beria*. [That being the case, then] all the other [lower] levels would [eventually] become nullified!

Since all Jews, after all their *gilgulim*, would eventually reach the highest level, no one would be different and no one would remain on any of the lower levels. However, that can never be the case!

However, this is unimaginable. Obviously, there are Jews who are on the level of *malchut*, and others from *yesod*, etc., as mentioned at the beginning of *Sefer HaTikunim*: “There are ‘leaders of thousands of Israel’ from the side of *keter*, ‘wise men’ from the side of *chochma*, and ‘men of understanding’ from the side of *bina*….”

Clearly the Jewish nation is composed of many types of individuals with different abilities and strengths, which are determined by their soul-roots.

However, the explanation is based upon the difference between *Asiya* and all the other three worlds.

For, someone whose root is in the *malchut* of *Asiya* is obviously rooted there specifically. Yet, by rectifying his actions he can purify his *nefesh,* level after level, until it actually reaches and becomes part of the *keter* of *Asiya*.

Nevertheless, though it ascends to the *keter* of *Asiya*, even there it remains on the level of the *malchut* of the *keter* of *Asiya*, since its root is on the level of *malchut* specifically.

His soul-root level of *malchut* of *Asiya* remains, though it ascends as a result of his spiritual improvements. Because of its root in *malchut*, when it ascends to the *keter* of *Asiya* it becomes the *malchut* of that level.

However, he must be purified until he actually ascends to the *keter* of *Asiya*, even though it will only be called the level of *malchut* of *keter* of *Asiya*. This is true regarding any of the levels of *Asiya* [to which he may ascend]: he will only be considered the *malchut* of that level.

For example, if he reaches the *yesod* of *Asiya*, he will only be considered the *malchut* of the *yesod* of *Asiya*, etc.

However, concerning *Yetzira*, *Beria*, and *Atzilut*, it [the process] is different. A person whose soul-root is *malchut* of *Yetzira* who has rectified and completed that level, also receives a *ruach* from the *yesod* of *Yetzira* after he has also purified and rectified the *yesod* of *yetzira*.

As opposed to simply becoming the *Malchut* of the *yesod* of *Yetzira,* as was the case on the level of *Asiya*.

The first *ruach* that he had from the *Malchut* of *Yetzira* remains below [in its original place] in the *Malchut* of *Yetzira*, since that is where it belongs.

Unlike the levels in *Asiya* which actually ascend from level to level.

Likewise, when he completes the *hod* of *Yetzira*, he leaves the second *ruach* that he had from *yesod* in *yesod* of *Yetzira*, and instead he receives a *ruach* from the *hod* of *Yetzira*. And this is the way it continues up to the *keter* of *Yetzira*.

Since he has rectified all the levels of his *nefesh* from *Asiya*, he is able to receive *ruach* from all levels of *Yetzira*. It will be likewise with respect to the *Neshama* from *Beria*.

The reason for this difference is that *Asiya* is the lowest of all worlds, and is, therefore, encompassed by the *kelipot.*

This word means “encasements,” like the peel of a fruit, or the shell of a nut. It refers to the extreme opposite of spiritual purity and holiness, and is therefore the element within creation that makes possible spiritual impurity and sinful action. Sometimes the *kelipot* are called “*Chitzoniyot*,” which means “Externalities.” Being the least spiritually pure element in creation it is the furthest from light, and therefore at the bottom of all the worlds.

Consequently, even though a person has already rectified the root level of his *nefesh* in *Asiya*, still, if he leaves it on that level, there is a fear that the *kelipot* there will latch on to it.

Since evil has no independent existence of its own, it derives spiritual nourishment and strength from the side of holiness, but for its own evil purpose. The closer something holy is to the *kelipot*, the more vulnerable it is, and the more desirable it appears to the *kelipot* as a source of nourishment.

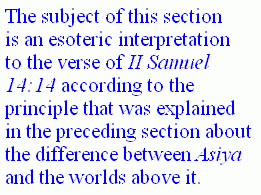
Therefore, he must constantly refine his actions until he rises as high as he can, until he reaches his root in the *keter* of *Asiya*.

However, in the World of *Yetzira*, and how much more so in the worlds above it, there is no fear of the *kelipot* latching on, as there was in *Asiya*.

The ability of the *kelipot* to latch on is eliminated on this more sublime level.

Hence, when a person rectifies the root of his *ruach* in *Yetzira,* he can rectify another *ruach* from a higher level. Then the first *ruach* can remain in its place, in his root. He can acquire a second from a higher place without having to raise up the first *ruach* to a higher place because the fear (of the *kelipot* latching on) is not there (in the world of *Yetzira*).

CHAPTER ONE, Section Seven: To Be Like Moshe Rabbeinu

The following is the esoteric meaning of the verse, *"G‑d spares [*yisa*] no one [*nefesh*]; He considers thoughts so that no one be banished from him"* [II *Samuel* 14:14]. These considerations – that no one be banished – are only for the sake of the *nefesh*, since the *nefesh* is in *Asiya*, and thus, because of the *kelipot* there, in danger of being "*banished from him*."

The "banished one" refers to King David’s son, Absalom, who had fled from his father after having his half-brother, Amnon, killed in revenge for violating Absalom’s sister, Tamar. The verseis addressed to King David, asking him to allow Absalom to return home. However, the *sod*—the esoteric understanding—of the verse is that it is talking about the *nefesh* of a person, asking G‑d that it not be "banished" amongst the *kelipot* which can latch on to it.

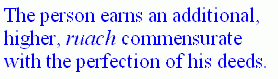
Therefore, because of this concern the remedy for the *nefesh* is that "G‑d does spare—*yisa*—the *nefesh*."

The word employed by the verse—*yisa*—is translated as "spare," but the more literal translation is "lift up," which leads to the following esoteric explanation of the verse:

In other words, G‑d does not "lift up" [*noseh*] and raise a person in order to give him another *nefesh* from a higher level than that of his actual root. That would necessitate leaving behind the first one in its place, leaving it vulnerable to the *kelipot* there.

In other words, as the person moved to a higher level of *nefesh*, the lower level of *nefesh* that was left behind would no longer be in use, which would render it vulnerable to the *kelipot*.

Acordingly, He [G‑d] does not give him another *nefesh,* more elevated and exalted. Rather the original *nefesh* itself ascends upward according to the person’s actions, up until the level of the *keter* of *Asiya*. He never possesses any other *nefesh*.**[[7]](#footnote-7)[1]**

However, this is not the case in *Yetzira* and the other worlds, where his *ruach* or his *neshama*, etc., remains on the level of its root. Instead, the person earns an additional, higher, *ruach* commensurate with the perfection of his deeds, as discussed earlier.

Beyond the World of *Asiya* the holiness is such that the *kelipot* can no longer latch on to a vacated soul-level. Therefore, the soul-level from which a person is ascending need not ascend with the person as he goes up from level to level.

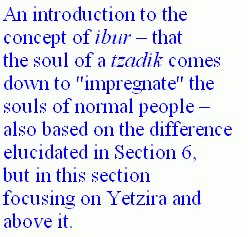
This is the esoteric meaning of the well-known statement: Every person can be like our teacher Moses [i.e.,] if he is willing to perfect his actions. For [by doing so] he continues to acquire higher levels of *ruach* until [he finally attains] the uppermost level of *Yetzira*. Similarly, [this advancement continues, and a person can ultimately obtain] a *neshama* from the uppermost part of *Beria*, etc.

*(Click on the footnote number to return to the text.)*

[[8]](#footnote-8)[1] This distinction will also make a difference in the level of spirituality that a person can actually achieve. For example, a person whose root is on the level of the *malchut* of *Asiya* cannot relate to the same spiritual level as one whose root is on the level of the *keter* of *Asiya*, even if the first one can ascend to the level of *keter*.

CHAPTER ONE, Section Eight: Help from Heaven

According to this, you can also understand another well known concept of our rabbis: *ruchot* or *neshamot* of the righteous are infused into a person, in accord with the esoteric principle called "*ibur*," to assist a person in his service of G‑d.

The concept of *ibur* here is not the same concept that was mentioned earlier in Section Five, although the nomenclature is the same. Literally, *ibur* refers to the embryo during the state of pregnancy. In this case, it refers to the "impregnation" of a person with the soul of a *tzadik,* which descends into the soul of a living person to assist the latter in his spiritual devotions.

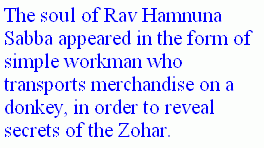
As is written in *Midrash Ne’elam,* [still] inhandwritten manuscript [form], concerning the statement that "Someone who comes to purify himself, they help him."

The *Midrash Ne’elam* is one of the books included in the holy *Zohar*. The Talmud (*Shabbat* 104a) informs us that someone who comes to purify himself is assisted from On High. The *Midrash Ne’elam* now explains this statement according to Rebbe Nathan.

Rebbe Nathan said: The souls of the righteous come and help him.

This is the type of heavenly assistance that may be granted. The soul of a *tzadik* will descend and become impregnated within the soul of a person who sets out to purify himself. [It is, also, a form of Divine inspiration – Ed.] Similar sources are found elsewhere in the holy writings.

The same is found in the Introduction to the *Zohar,* on *Genesis*, where Rav Hamnuna Sabba came to Rebbe Elazar and Rebbe Abba in the appearance of a donkey loader, etc.

That is, the soul of Rav Hamnuna Sabba appeared to Rebbe Elazar and Rebbe Abba in the form of simple workman who transports merchandise on a donkey, in order to reveal to them secrets of the Zohar.

Undoubtedly, the *ruchot* and *neshamot* of *tzadikim* are "hidden away" and "bound up" with the "Bundle of Life", each in his respective root, and G‑d does not cause them to descend at all. However, what descends are the *ruchot* that remained behind at each level of *Yetzira,* and which did not ascend, as we have spoken about.

As the righteous person ascended from level to level in the World of *Yetzira*, he left behind previous levels of *ruach* as he received new ones in their place. The levels of *ruach* that were no longer used became available to descend to help others in need of Divine assistance in their service of G‑d.

It is these that descend and enter other people to help them. However, the highest level of *ruach* that the righteous person acquired as a result of his deeds is bound up forever with the "Bundle of Life" [after he dies], and it does not move from there. This is true concerning the [levels of] *neshama*, *chaya*, and *yechida* as well.

When each level of *Asiya* was completed, the perfected level of *nefesh* (from *Asiya)* itself ascended to the next level (i.e., to the same aspect of the soul-root on the next level). In this way all the completed levels of *Asiya* ascend to the highest place in *Asiya*, the *keter* of *Asiya* (albeit, in accord with the aspect of the original soul-root).

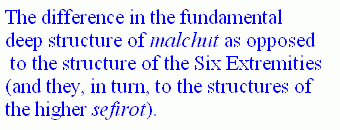
In the higher worlds of *Yetzira, Beria*, etc., the situation is different. There, each completed level of soul remains in its place.

The reason for this difference was also explained. *Asiya* is the lowest of the worlds. Consequently, it is in proximity to the *kelipot*, and in constant danger of attack by them. Therefore, each completed level of soul ascends to a higher level in order to distance it as much as possible from the *kelipot*. In the higher worlds, however, there is no such danger. Therefore, each completed level of soul may remain in its place.

Based on this difference between *Asiya* and the higher worlds, we digressed in this section to learn something about the concept of *ibur.* Since there was an ascent from level to level in the world of *Yetzira*, the lower levels of soul that were completed there and remained in place, are now available to descend to impregnate the souls of other people. This infusion, or *ibur,* takes place in order to assist these people in their divine service.

The text now returns to discuss another difference between *Asiya* and the higher worlds of *Yetzira*, *Beria*, etc.

CHAPTER ONE, Section Nine: Asiya Is Only One Sefira

There is a second reason for the difference between *Asiya* and the other worlds. As known, all the worlds have ten *sefirot* [collectively]. Now *Asiya,* in its entirety, has only one sefira [of the collective ten], the *sefira* of *malchut*.

In the system of ten general *sefirot*, the World of *Asiya* corresponds to the *sefira* of *malchut*, whereas the World of *Yetzira* corresponds to six different and separate *sefirot*: *chesed, gevura, tiferet, netzach, hod,* and *yesod*. Thus, the World of *Asiya* is one homogeneous *sefira*, whereas *Yetzira* is a composite of six different *sefirot*.

Thus, the *nefesh* that is there is able to rise as high as the *keter* of *Asiya*, because it is all one *sefira*.

In other words, even though *Asiya* has many levels, they are levels of one *sefira*, and therefore connected to each other, which allows movement amongst them.

However, *Yetzira* corresponds to six *sefirot*: *chesed, gevura, tiferet, netzach, hod*, and *yesod*, each of which is a separate level. Therefore, if someone’s root is the *malchut* of *Yetzira* and it becomes rectified, it cannot ascend and become part of the *yesod* of *Yetzira*. It must remain below and he will have to acquire a new *ruach* from the *yesod* of *Yetzira* if he wants to become elevated through his actions. This is true of the rest of the “Six Extremities” as well.

In Hebrew, the term is “*Sheish Kitzvot*,” the six extremities, another name for the six *sefirot* of *Yetzira*.

The five *partzufim* in every world— *Arich Anpin, Abba*, *Imma*, *Zeir Anpin,* and *Nukva*—correspond to the five levels of a person’s soul, which are from the bottom to the top: *nefesh, ruach, neshama, chaya*, and *yechida*.

*Nefesh* is from the *Nukva* [*Malchut*] of *Zeir Anpin*, whereas *ruach* is from *Zeir Anpin* itself.

That is, the six sefirot: chesed, gevura, tiferet, netzach, hod, and yesod.

Neshama is from Imma [Bina], and chaya is from Abba, which is called chochma because that is the place of life, as it has been taught concerning the verse, “Wisdom gives life to its owner” [Eccles. 7:12].

Yechida is from Arich Anpin, called keter, because it is alone and special…

The Hebrew word “*Yechida”* means both “alone” and “special”. The *partzuf* of *Arich Anpin* is both alone and special relative to all the other *partzufim*.

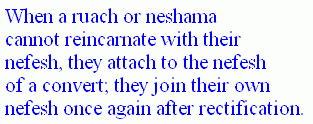
It is alone and special with respect to the rest of the sefirot because it lacks a “female” counterpart.

*Nukva* is the female consort of *Zeir Anpin*. *Abba-*father has a female counterpart, *Imma*-Mother. *Arich Anpin*, however, does not have a counterpart.

This is known from the verse, “*See now that I, I am He*” (*Deut.* 32:39), as elucidated in the *Zohar,* in *Parashat Bereishit*.

This verse is spoken by G-d, Who has no counterpart. *Arich Anpin* is also called “I”. Thus, on the level of *Arich Anpin,* the highest level and closest to the Infinite Creator, the One G-d, there is no counterpart and no corresponding female *partzuf*.

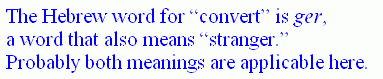
CHAPTER ONE, Section Ten: Gilgulim and Ruchot of Righteous People

Know, that if a person merits to obtain his *nefesh, ruach*, and *neshama,* and then blemishes them through sin, he will have to be reincarnated to rectify the damage.

The process of *gilgul* and *tikun* will be explained throughout the rest of the book, starting with the next chapter. The main point here is in this next paragraph.

When he returns in a *gilgul* with his *nefesh* and he rectifies it, his *ruach* will not join him. This is because his *ruach* remains blemished, and it cannot rest upon a rectified *nefesh*.

In other words, rectified levels of souls do not reside in the same body with blemished ones. In what was discussed previously, the person was adding non-blemished, new divisions of soul to already rectified divisions of his own soul. However, once he has sinned and must come back another time, the process of *tikun* changes. He cannot add blemished aspects of soul on top of parts that have already been rectified.

Therefore, his [blemished] *ruach* will be reincarnated into another person, joining up with the *nefesh* of a convert. The *neshama* will likewise do the same.

The Hebrew word for "convert" is *ger*, a word that also means "stranger." Probably both meanings are applicable here. The *nefesh* that will host this blemished *ruach* must be the *nefesh* of a convert, but relative to the homeless *ruach* it is also the *nefesh* of a stranger.

The reason for this is explained elsewhere, in chapter 4, section 2*, based on Shaar Maamrei RaSHB"Y*, *Parashat Mishpatim*, 98.

And the *nefesh* that was rectified will receive a rectified *ruach* of a righteous person who was similar to him in some of the particular good deeds that he performed. It will actually take the place of his own *ruach*. Similarly, if he rectifies his [blemished] *ruach* completely, then he will receive a *neshama* from some righteous person, which will act in place of his own *neshama*. This is the esoteric meaning of what *Chazal* say: "Righteous people are greater in death than during their lifetimes [*Sanhedrin* 47a]."

Since their *ruach* can fulfill this important function in the lives of others.

Now, after this person dies, his [own rectified] *nefesh* will go togther with this *ruach* [of a righteous person] and through it [i.e., the *ruach*] receive the blessing fitting for itself. When his own *ruach*, which joined with the *nefesh* of a convert, becomes completely rectified, then his original *nefesh* will say, "I will go and return to my first husband," since it has been rectified.

In other words, after parts of his own soul are rectified, they can later be reunited in another *gilgul*, and return together.

It works in the same way for the *neshama* with respect to the *ruach.* After a person dies, they return in a *gilgul* and achieve *tikun* together.

*End of Intoduction (Chapter) One.*

CHAPTER TWO, Section One: Concerning the Entry of Nefesh, Ruach and Neshama

When a person is born, his *nefesh* enters him. If he is adequately rectified through his actions, his *ruach* will enter him at the end of his thirteenth year when he becomes a "completed person." His *neshama* will enter him only when he completes his twentieth year, as it says in the *Zohar* (*Mishpatim* 94b).

This is talking about the ideal situation during a person’s first *gilgul*, as we will soon see.

However, if he does not completely rectify his *ruach*, then the *neshama* will not enter him and he will remain with only his *nefesh* and *ruach*. Likewise, if he doesn’t completely rectify his *nefesh*, then he will remain with only his *nefesh*, lacking both his *ruach* and *neshama*. The *ruach* and *neshama* will remain in a place known to The Holy One, Blessed is He, and there a place will be prepared for each one.

In other words, until a person is able to receive all parts of his soul, the parts he has yet to receive remain hidden away by G-d until the person is ready for them.

Now, if a person does not completely rectify his *nefesh* the first time and dies, then his *nefesh* will have to reincarnate, perhaps even many times, until it is sufficiently rectified. However, since he only achieved *tikun* through a *gilgul,* even after complete rectification is achieved his *ruach* will not enter (unless there is a pressing need, as will be explained, G-d willing).

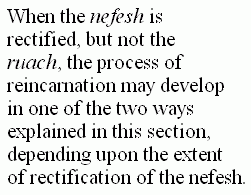
Had it been his first *gilgul,* then he could have received his *ruach* while still alive in his original body. This is not the case if the rectification of the *nefesh* is completed during subsequent *gilgulim*.

He will have to die and return in order to receive the *ruach*. Furthermore, once the *ruach* is sufficiently rectified, then he will also have to reincarnate before receiving a *neshama*, as was the case with the *ruach*.

After he finally rectifies his *nefesh* and dies, in the next reincarnation he will return with a *nefesh* and a *ruach*. Once the *ruach* is rectified as well, then he will die and come back in another *gilgul* with a *nefesh*, *ruach*, and *neshama*.

If the *ruach* is not sufficiently rectified, then the *nefesh* and the *ruach* will have to come back again, perhaps many times, until the *ruach* is rectified. Once rectification is achieved, then the person will die and his *nefesh* and *ruach* will come back with the proper *neshama* until all three are rectified. Once this is done, there is no need for any further *gilgulim*. When his *neshama* is completed, he has become a "complete person."

CHAPTER TWO, Section 2: Different Levels of Rectification

If a person rectified his *nefesh,* and came back to receive and complete his *ruach,* but during that *gilgul* he sinned, then his *nefesh* will not be affected in such a way that it would be forced to come back by itself to become rectified once again.

Once the *nefesh* has been completely rectified and he has returned to work on *ruach*, the *nefesh* is protected against any further damage. Otherwise, the rectification process could conceivably go on forever.

Rather, because he now has a *ruach,* the sin will only damage the *ruach*, and only this will need rectification.

Therefore, if an additional reincarnation is necessary to rectify the *ruach*, then both the (rectified) *nefesh* and the (blemished) *ruach* will come back again together. This will continue until the *ruach* is rectified, after which he will have to die in order for the rectified *nefesh* and *ruach* to reincarnate with the *neshama*. If he has accomplished this and then sins, then it will only damage the *neshama*, just as we explained with respect to the *tikun* of *ruach*.

However, there are different levels of rectification, and the above-mentioned procedure would be altered accordingly:

It can also happen that the *nefesh* becomes rectified and purified to such a great extent that it need not come back again with the *ruach* for the rectification of the *ruach*. Rather, the *nefesh* remains Above in a place fitting for it, "*bound up with the Bundle of Life.*"

One of the different levels of rectification is so complete that the level of soul that has been rectified does not need to ever come back again.

In such a case, the *ruach* would have to come back alone to rectify itself. However, this is not possible.

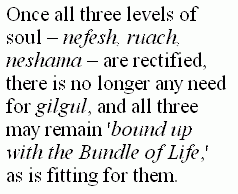
The *ruach* cannot come down into a body without the presence of a *nefesh*. In this case, however, the *nefesh* that has undergone such a complete *tikun* will not return to reincarnate.

Therefore, it reincarnates with the *nefesh* of a convert, as it says in *(Zohar)* *Sabba d'Mishpatim*. They will reincarnate together until the *ruach* is rectified.

This *ruach*, therefore, will come down to join the *nefesh* of a convert, and they will reincarnate together until the *ruach* is completely rectified.

Once that is achieved, then the person dies and the first *nefesh* comes back to join with it (the *ruach*) in order to receive and rectify the n*eshama*.

Or, the *ruach* may come back by itself with the *neshama* until the *neshama* is rectified, after which time the three of them no longer need to return and are instead "*bound up with the Bundle of Life,*" as is fitting for them.

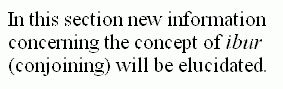
It was said previously that the *ruach* does not enter a body without the presence of a *nefesh*. In this case, however, where the *ruach* was completed when it was together with the *nefesh* of the convert, then the rectified *ruach* may serve as the vehicle and base for the entry of its *neshama*, as if it were both *nefesh* and *ruach*. In this case, therefore, the presence of a *nefesh* is not absolutely necessary.

In any case, once all three levels of soul – *nefesh, ruach, neshama* – are rectified, there is no longer any need for *gilgul,* and all three may remain "*bound up with the Bundle of Life,*" as is fitting for them.

The Arizal now returns to consider the fate of the *nefesh* of the convert that has been the vehicle for the *ruach* that came into the world without its *nefesh* because the latter had undergone such a complete *tikun*.

The *nefesh* of the convert that was joined to the *ruach* has helped it to perform good deeds in this world, and has been a vehicle for it in this world; through their union the *ruach* was able to achieve its *tikun*. This *nefesh* of the convert will also become elevated with the original *nefesh* of this particular *ruach*. The two of them will be on the same level in the World to Come, like "neighbors," and they will never part from one another.

Chapter Two, Section 3: The Rectified Nefesh Can Receive an Ibur

In this section the Arizal will disclose new information concerning the concept of ibur, which he has already discussed in Chapter One (see Section 5). First, however, he will review the important rule that we have been studying in this chapter: namely, if a *nefesh* achieves *tikun* only in a subsequent *gilgul* and not in its first lifetime, then it cannot receive *ruach* in the same *gilgul*. The person must first die, and then his *nefesh* and *ruach* will be reincarnated together.

If a *nefesh* reincarnates and becomes rectified through its actions to the point that it is ready for its *ruach*, he cannot receive his *ruach,* as it has been explained. (If it is not his very first *gilgul,* then) two or three levels of soul cannot become unified in one *gilgul* without great need, as we will mention later. Rather, each one requires its own *gilgul*.

First the *nefesh* needs to be rectified, and even when this happens he will not receive his *ruach* until after he dies. Then the *nefesh* can reincarnate and merit the *ruach*. The same is true of the two of them; if they become rectified to the point that they are ready for their *neshama,* they cannot receive it until they reincarnate again. Then they can merit their *neshama*.

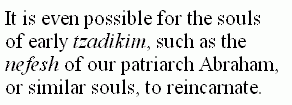
As we have already learned, only in the first *gilgul* can the *nefesh, ruach*, and *neshama* be rectified within one body. After that, the person must reincarnate to move from level to level, even if he finishes one level "early."

What happens for the *nefesh* that is already rectified but lacks a *ruach*?

We are talking about after the first *gilgul*, when it is not possible to receive another level of his soul without reincarnation. What happens, though, in the meantime until reincarnation, if the *nefesh* is already rectified?

This is the *sod*: From the same level of purity and extent of *tikun* attained by this *nefesh*, there will reincarnate into the body of this person, *while he is still alive*, the *nefesh* of a righteous *tzadik* that has already completed *gilgulim* and rectification, and does not need to reincarnate here. By entering here, the *nefesh* of this *tzadik* takes the place of the *ruach* of this person.

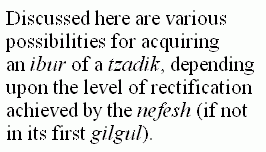
Thus, from the time that the *nefesh* has become rectified, the *nefesh* of a righteous person will enter him and fill the role of the *ruach* that cannot come down.

Sometimes, it is even possible for the souls of early *tzadikim,* such as the *nefesh* of our patriarch Abraham*,* or similar souls, to reincarnate. This depends upon the *tikun* and purification of the *nefesh* of the person.

*Gilgulim* (of this type) which occur during the lifetime of a person are called by the rabbis, "*sod* *ibur*." And this is the basic difference between a regular *gilgul* and an *ibur.*

According to what we have learned here, a regular *gilgul* involves reincarnation from one lifetime to another. *Ibur,* on the other hand, is the "impregnation" of a person by the soul of a rectified, righteous *tzadik* because the *nefesh* has completed its *tikun*, but it cannot receive *ruach* without reincarnating since the *tikun* did not take place in its very first *gilgul*.

Chapter Two, Section 4: Ibur of Righteous Souls

Sometimes it is possible, even in this late period of history, for the *ruach* of a righteous *tzadik*, even from one of the Forefathers, to come as an *ibur*. It will all depend upon the level of the *mitzvot* being performed by the person. Some *mitzvot* have the power to draw down the *nefesh* of a righteous *tzadik* into *ibur*, whereas others can draw down the *ruach* of the *tzadik.*

It is also possible for a person to receive the *nefesh* of one righteous person, and after that merit another *nefesh* from another righteous person, even greater than the first. In such a case, he will have his own *nefesh*, the *nefesh* of the first righteous person as his *ruach*, and the second, higher *nefesh,* acting in the place of his *neshama*.

Thus, in one lifetime he can merit a *ruach* and *neshama*, though not his own.

Or, perhaps, the *nefesh* will be perfected to the point that after already receiving the *nefesh* of a righteous person, he will merit the *ruach* of a second righteous person, even possibly the *ruach* of Abraham the Patriarch!

In this case, the *ruach* of the second *tzadik* will act as his *neshama*, and the *nefesh* of the first *tzadik* will act as his *ruach*.

This is the inner meaning of what they wrote in the *Midrashim*, in particular *Midrash Shmuel*: There is no generation in which there is not someone like Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Samuel, etc. (*Bereishit Rabba* 56).

In other words, there are people in every generation who may actually have the *nefesh* or *ruach* of these great people from the past.

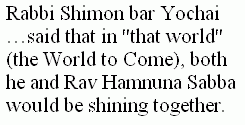
There is no pen that will prove sufficient to record all the details in a book. Nevertheless, an understanding person will comprehend and make the necessary inferences on his own.

In summary, based upon the *tikun* and purification of a particular *nefesh*, it can even merit a *neshama* from the earliest generations, including the most elevated of all; and it can happen even in this generation of ours.

Furthermore, it is exactly the same when a *nefesh* and *ruach* reincarnate together and become rectified, but are unable to acquire their *neshama* without first dying and reincarnating. They can receive the *nefesh*, *ruach*, or *neshama* of a righteous *tzadik* as an *ibur*, and it will act as their *neshama*. All the details that were described in the case of the *nefesh* alone that has completed its *tikun* will apply here also.

On occasion, it can happen that all three levels of soul will reincarnate together and become rectified. Then the *nefesh* or *ruach* of a righteous *tzadik* may impregnate him (as an *ibur*). When he leaves this world he will ascend to the same level as the righteous *tzadik* that came to him as an *ibur*. In the World to Come they will actually be on the same level.

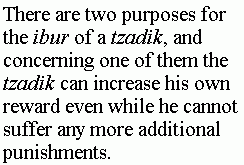
Although his own soul was not originally on the same level as that of the righteous *tzadik*, he has now merited ascending to that level forever.

This is the inner meaning of what is written in the introduction to *Zohar* *Bereishit* (7a): Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai fell on his face and he saw Rav Hamnuna Sabba. He said that in "that world" (the World to Come), both he and Rav Hamnuna Sabba would be shining together.

Since the soul of Rav Hamnuna Sabba was within Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai as an *ibur*, they would be on the same level in the World to Come.

This is enough.

CHAPTER TWO, Section 5: Reason for Ibur of Righteous Souls

*Ibur* occurs for two reasons. First, through the *ibur* of the righteous, the *nefesh* of a person can become rectified to the level of the *nefesh* of the righteous *tzadik*. In the World to Come he will ascend to that level since the righteous *tzadik* will have helped him to add *mitzvot* and holiness to his life. This reason serves the person [receiving the *ibur*] himself.

The second reason is for the sake of the righteous *tzadik* who was the *ibur.* By helping the other person to perform *mitzvot* and rectification, he gains a portion in them. This is the *sod* of what *Chazal* wrote: Great are the righteous people, for even in death they merit children (*Sanhedrin* 47a). In other words, when they cause the person to increase his merit they become like "fathers" who guide and help. This is to his merit.

The righteous *tzadik who* has entered as an *ibur* is like a spiritual, internal navigation system for the host person. For this service the *tzadik* will also receive reward through the *mitzvot* he is helping the person to perform and the holiness he is helping to increase.

The righteous soul which enters a person and assists him during his life, as an *ibur* and not as a *gilgul*, "easily attains reward and is distant from loss."

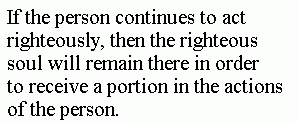
This is an expression used in the Talmud regarding the laws of monetary investments and interest, borrowed here to describe the secure benefit accruing to the righteous soul in the circumstance of *ibur.*

Every time the person does a *mitzvah*, he (the righteous soul) receives reward. This is the secret of what is written, "A righteous person receives his reward and the reward of his friend in *Gan Eden* (the Garden of Eden)" (*Chagiga* 15a). Understand this deep secret well, though now is not the time to discuss it at length.

The righteous person receives the reward for having performed *mitzvot* during his own lifetime, and for those he helps his "friend" perform while an *ibur* inside of him.

On the other hand, if the (host) person does evil, the righteous soul will not suffer any punishment or loss since he only came to help him, not to cause him evil. On the contrary, if this person negates what he rectified, then the righteous soul will leave him.

Thus, the righteous *tzadik* "easily attains reward" for his assistance in the performance of *mitzvot*. At the same time he is "distant from loss" because he will not suffer any detriment or pain from the sins of the host nor need to participate in the host's sufferings.

The *sod* of *ibur* is that it occurs during a person's lifetime and therefore does not bind (the *nefesh* of the righteous *tzadik*) to the body. This is unlike a *nefesh* that reincarnates, that enters as a *gilgul* from the time of birth and is unified and bound with the body without exiting from there until death. On the other hand, the *nefesh* of the righteous *tzadik* enters as an *ibur* willingly and leaves at will. If the person continues to act righteously, then the righteous soul will remain there in order to receive a portion in the actions of the person. It will remain there until the host dies, when they will both go up to the same place, as mentioned previously.

However, if the person does evil, then the righteous soul will become disgusted with this union and leave it. He is not permanently there, but "borrowed," like a guest who remains with his host until he feels it is time to leave.

For the same reason the righteous *tzadik* will not feel any pains that may occur to the host person and he does not have to suffer them, because he is not "attached" to the body; he is only "borrowed."

The rule is that a person who performs a *mitzvah* of great importance can merit an *ibur* of the *nefesh* of a righteous *tzadik* from an earlier generation. As a result, it is possible [for him] to become rectified and purified to the point that his *nefesh* will actually become transposed onto the same level as that of the righteous *tzadik.*

Afterwards, the person will have to rectify his *ruach* and *neshama* to such an extent of purity that they will be worthy to be clothed by this *nefesh*.

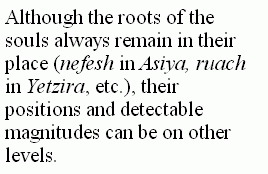
The word translated as "to be clothed" indicates the kabbalistic concept of enclothement, *hitlabshut*, and comes from the root that means "to wear," as when it is said, "He wears warm clothes," or "He wore a new suit." Derived from it, for example, is the Hebrew word *levush*, which means "garment" or "clothing."

The concept of *hitlabshut* is actually a derivative of the concept of *partzufim*, both of which are among the most important and innovative ideas in the Lurianic Kabbala. (For a basic article on these innovations, [click here.](http://www.thirtysevenbooks.com/Arizal/Teachings.1.htm))

*Hitlabshut* refers to the fact that the *partzufim*, or parts of the *partzufim*, are ensconced or enclothed one within the other, or dressed one upon the other. (For more on *hitlabshut*, visit here next week.)

Then he will actually become transposed [in his entirety] onto the level of the righteous *tzadik*, having ascended beyond the original root-level of his soul from whence he came. All of this is the reason for the help and assistance of the righteous soul.

CHAPTER TWO, Section 6: Soul Combinations

It is also possible for the *nefesh* of a person to ascend until his *nefesh* will be from the world of *Atzilut*. Generally speaking, the *nefesh* is from *Asiya*, the *ruach* is from *Yetzira*, and the *neshama* is from *Beria*. However, on a more specific level, each world has its own levels of *nefesh, ruach, neshama (NR"N)*.

This is not something new. As we learned in the first chapter, each world is part of an overall general system, while at the same time it is a smaller version of the same thing.

Hence, it can be that sometimes the *NR"N* of a person is from *Asiya*, *Yetzira*, and *Beria*.

That is, the *nefesh* is from *Asiya*, the *ruach* is from *Yetzira*, and the *neshama* is from *Beria*.

Sometimes, though, his *NR"N* can be from the *malchut,* the *Zeir Anpin,* and the *Imma* of *Asiya*.

That is, all three are from within *Asiya*. What will follow are other possible combinations.

Sometimes, the three of them will be from *Yetzira*, or from the world of *Beria,* or all of them will be from *Atzilut*. (In the latter case,) the *nefesh* will be from the *nukva* of *Zeir Anpin* (*malchut* of *Atzilut*), the *ruach* from *Zeir Anpin* (*Yetzira* of *Atzilut*), the *neshama* from *Imma* (*bina* of *Atzilut*), and the *Chaya* from *Abba* (*chochma* of *Atzilut*).

Another combination can be the *nefesh* from *Asiya*, and the *ruach* and *neshama* from *Yetzira*. Or, the *nefesh* can be from *Yetzira* and the *ruach* and *neshama* from *Beria*. Alternatively, the *nefesh* can be from *Beria* while the *ruach* and *neshama* are from *Atzilut*.

This is possible because the four worlds, *ABY"A* (*Atzilut, Beria, Yetzira, Asiya*), are each comprised of four (sub-)worlds of *ABY"A* and their own set of ten *sefirot*. Those ten, in turn, are comprised of their own ten *sefirot*, and so on.

The general system of ten *sefirot* breaks down into sub-sets of ten *sefirot*, which in turn break down into their own sub-sets of ten *sefirot*, etc.

It is not possible to write down all the details at length since the space is limited. However, the person of understanding will comprehend and make the connections on his own.

Theoretically, sub-categorization can go on *ad infinitum*; and the number of possible combinations is virtually limitless.

However, when we say that sometimes the *NR"N* is from *Yetzira*, or from *Beria*, it does not mean that he lacks a *nefesh* from *Asiya*! After all, even the *Shechina* is called "*Malchut*" and It "nests" in *Asiya*. How much more so the *nefesh* of a person!

In other words, the *Shechina* (Divine Presence) obviously belongs to a very exalted and spiritual place. Yet, this does not stop it from "nesting" and hovering about in the lowest of worlds, in the world of *Asiya*, even in the world that we humans also inhabit. It is the same for souls, and even more so. The *nefesh* of all people comes from the World of *Asiya*, as we learned beforehand, even if it is said about it that it is a *nefesh* of *Atzilut*, or a *nefesh* of *Yetzira*.

Rather, what it means is that the *nefesh* originated from *Asiya*, but that it became so purified that it cannot be sensed in comparison to the (newly acquired) light of the *nefesh* of *Yetzira* within him.

It is like a candle that makes nearly no impression at all when it shines during daylight.

Therefore, it is all called the *nefesh* of *Yetzira*.

He has a *nefesh* from *Asiya* and it remains that. However, it can ascend to the world of *Yetzira* above it so that its light can become almost as bright as its level of *Yetzira.* Consequently, its *Asiya*-light becomes non-discernable, and for all intents and purposes, it is like the *nefesh* of *Yetzira*.

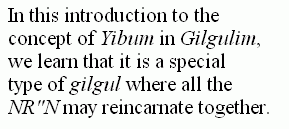
It is the same for all the aspects: when we say that his *NR"N* is from *Atzilut*, really he has a *nefesh*, *ruach*, and *neshama* from *Asiya*, *Yetzira* and *Beria* (respectively)*.* However, they are not referred to by their names, and all of them are considered secondary and referred to as being from *Atzilut*.

Actually, the *NR"N* of *Atzilut* are aspects of a higher and more interior world than that of *Beria, Yetzira* and *Asiya (BY"A)*. Therefore, they are clothed within the worlds of *BY"A* and shine from within them. The light of the higher entities from *Atzilut* may be so revealed that the lower, weaker, exterior lights of *BY"A* are simply non-discernible.

You can apply this concept to any of the other details that have been mentioned.

Thus, the system of levels of souls remains the same for everyone, though within the system different combinations of souls can seem to exist based upon the individual's level of rectification and purification.

CHAPTER TWO, Section 7: Yibum -- A Special Case

Within the concept of *gilgulim* there is a distinction between reincarnation into any body that may be ready for his *gilgul*, and reincarnation through a brother, which is the *sod* of *yibum*.

*Yibum* is the Levirate marriage in which a surviving brother marries his (widowed) sister-in-law whose husband, the man's brother, has died childless.

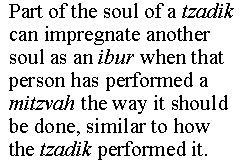
In a normal *gilgul*, the *nefesh, ruach and neshama (NR"N)* do not reincarnate together, or even two at once. Only the *nefesh* reincarnates until it is rectified. Afterwards, in another *gilgul*, the *nefesh* and *ruach* return together until they are rectified. When that occurs, then the entire *NR"N* (reincarnates together) until the *neshama* is rectified, which completes his *gilgulim*. Or, sometimes each of the three reincarnates individually (and achieves *tikun* independent of the others): the *ruach* with another *nefesh* in another body, and the *neshama* with a different *nefesh* and *ruach* in a different body.

However, when a man reincarnates through his brother, the entire *NR"N* may do so together.

Chaim Vital says: It seems from *Sabba* of *Mishpatim* that even with respect to *yibum* all three do not come back together, but only the *nefesh* and the *ruach* without the *neshama*. This requires further investigation.

Thus, it is not clear if just the *N"R* come together in one *gilgul* during *yibum*, or if all three come together at one time. In either case, it is different than a regular *gilgul*.

CHAPTER THREE, Section One: Ibur While Alive

*Ibur* takes place during a person's lifetime, as we have already mentioned.

In Chapter 2, Section 3 it was written: "…There will reincarnate into the body of this person, *while he is still alive,* the *Nefesh* of a righteous tzadik." This is called *ibur*, and more specifically, "*ibur* while alive." The difference between this type of *ibur* and *gilgul* was also explained there.

Normally, *ibur* takes place during a person's lifetime; it involves parts of soul that come to a person years after he is born. *Gilgul*, on the other hand, involves parts of soul that a person is born with. They reincarnate from the time he is born, and they stay with him until the end of his lifetime.

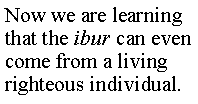
(Later on in this chapter, there will be introduced a new concept of "*ibur* from birth," and it will be explained there, God-willing, when we come to it. The subject of this section, however, is the normal type of *ibur*.)

Sometimes a certain *mitzvah* may come before a person, and he performs the *mitzvah* as it should be done. At that point the *nefesh* of an earlier righteous person who had performed this same *mitzvah* correctly will join the person as an *ibur*, since they are alike with respect to this *mitzvah*.

Thus, the actual *mitzvah* to be performed affects which righteous soul will join a person as an *ibur*.

Not only this, but it is also possible that the righteous person is alive during his lifetime, and still *ibur* can occur.

The one who performed the *mitzvah* and the righteous person are alive at the same time, and still *ibur* can occur.

Thus, if a person performs a particular *mitzvah* or *mitzvot* relevant to a righteous individual who also performed correctly, then the *nefesh* of that righteous *tzadik* can enter the person, even while they are both alive at the same time.

Up until now we knew that *ibur* occurred in a living body after birth, but with the soul of a righteous person who has already died. Now we are learning that the *ibur* can even come from a living righteous individual.

This is the secret meaning of the verse, "The *nefesh* of Jonathan became attached to the *nefesh* of David" (I Samuel 18:1). In other words, even while they were both alive, the *nefesh* of David was joined with Jonathan as an *ibur*.

This accounts for the strong soul bond they had while they were alive.

(The Writer, Chaim Vital, says: It appears that one *mitzvah* performed correctly is enough to initiate the *ibur*. It is not required that he have performed all *mitzvot* to this point).

1. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [2] *Brachot 10b; Bereishit* *Rabba* 14:9; *Tikunei ari 13, 28*. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. [3] It should be noted that even here in “Shaar Hagilgulim” the *Arizal* does not explain the meaning of the five levels of the soul. He merely states that the names are not accidental or incidental. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. [4] The Glassblower Analogy:

   In the Zohar 3:25a we find that “the *Nefesh* is bound to the *Ruach*, the *Ruach* to the *Neshamah*, and the *Neshamah* to the Blessed Holy One.” The three thus form a sort of chain, linking man to G-d. The idea of these three parts is best explained on the basis of the verse (Genesis 2:7), “G-d formed man out of the dust of the earth, and He blew into his nostrils a breath of life.” This is likened to the process of blowing glass, which begins with the breath (*neshimah*) of the glassblower, flows as a wind (*Ruach*) through the glassblowing pipe, and finally comes to rest (*Nefesh*) in the vessel that is being formed. The *Neshamah* thus comes from the same root as *Neshimah*, meaning breath, and this is the “breath of G-d.” The *Nefesh* comes from a root meaning “to rest” and therefore refers to the part of the soul that is bound to the body and “rests” there. *Ruach* means a wind, and it is the part of the soul that binds the *Neshamah* and *Nefesh*. See Nefesh ha-Chaim 1:15…. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)