

The End Days

The End Days – Point by Point

1. Fundamentals of Faith – Final Four – Reward and Punishment
2. Religion tells a story that explains and makes sense of the world
3. Our chaotic world makes no sense – theodicy
4. Answer: Our world is only a preliminary stage – Olam Hazah – Olam Haba
5. The overall scheme – Leheitiv
6. Messianic Age
7. What is Olam Haba? Rambam
8. Where does Techiyas Hamesim (Resurrection of the Dead) fit in? Return to Olam Hazeh!
8. Ramban/Ramchal – Addressing the problem of Adam Living Forever
9. One moment of Torah and Mitzvah

1) Rambam, Commentary to the Mishnah, Sanhedrin, Chapter 11

The Tenth Principle of Faith: That He, the Exalted One, knows the works of men and is not unmindful of them...

The Eleventh Principle of Faith: That He, the Exalted One, rewards him who obeys the commands of the Torah...

The Twelfth Principle of Faith: The days of the Messiah. This involves the belief and firm faith in his coming...

The Thirteenth Principle of Faith: The resurrection of the dead...

2) Mesilas Yesharim, Chapter 1

The foundation of piety and the root of perfect service [of G-d] is for a man to clarify and come to realize as truth what is his obligation in his world and to what he needs to direct his gaze and his aspiration in all that he toils all the days of his life. Behold, what our sages, of blessed memory, have taught us is that man was created solely to delight in G-d and to derive pleasure in the radiance of the Shechina (divine presence). For this is the true delight and the greatest pleasure that can possibly exist. The place of this pleasure is, in truth, in Olam Haba (the World to Come). For it was created expressly for this purpose. But the path to arrive at the "desired haven" (Ps. 107:30) of ours is this world. This is what our sages of blessed memory said: "this world is like a corridor before the World to Come" (Avot 4:16). The means that lead a person to this goal are the commandments which the blessed G-d commanded to us. The place of the performance of these commandments is only in this world. Therefore, man was first placed in this world so that through these means prepared for him here, he will be able to reach the place prepared for him, namely, the World to Come, there to be sated with the good which he acquired through these means. This is what our sages of blessed memory said "today to do them, and tomorrow to receive their reward" (Eruvin 22:1).

3) Rambam, Laws of Kings 11:1

The King Messiah will arise and re-establish the monarchy of David as it was in former times. He will build the Sanctuary and gather in the dispersed of Israel. All the earlier statutes will be restored as they once were. Sacrifices will be offered, the Sabbatical and Jubilee years will be observed, as commanded in the Torah.

4) Rambam, Laws of Kings 11:3

It should not occur to you that the King Messiah must bring wondrous signs or perform marvels or invent new things or revive the dead or anything like what the fools say. It is not so.

5) Rambam, Laws of Kings 12:1-2

It should not occur to you that during the days of the Messiah a single thing from the "ways of the world" will be canceled nor will there be something novel in the Creation. Rather, the world will

continue in its customary way... Our Sages have said that there is no difference between This World and the Days of the Messiah except (our) subservience to the kingdoms of the world alone...

6) Rambam, Laws of Kings 12:4

The Sages and the Prophets did not long for the days of the Messiah because they wanted to rule the world or because they wanted to have dominion over the non-Jews or because they wanted the nations to exalt them or because they wanted to eat, drink and be merry. Rather, they desired this so that they would have time for Torah and its Wisdom. And there would be no one who would oppress them or force them to be idle (from Torah). This, in order that they may merit the World to Come, as we have explained regarding the Laws of Repentance.

7) Rambam, Laws of Repentance 8:1

The hidden good in store for the righteous is, life in the World to Come, which is a life connected with no death and a kind of good connected with no evil; such as is described in the Torah: "That it may be well with you, and you may prolong your days" ([Deut. 22.7](#)), which was traditionally deducted to mean, "That it may be well with you" in a world which is entirely good; "and that you may prolong your days"—in a world existing forever; and this is the World to Come. The reward of the just is, that they will acquire the sweetness thereof, to be in such goodness...

8) Rambam, Laws of Repentance 8:2

The World to Come harbors neither body nor a concrete form, save only the souls of the righteous divested of body as are the ministering angels. Inasmuch as it harbors no concrete forms there is no need there for eating, drinking, or other of the bodily necessities of the sons of man in this world; neither will any of the many things which happen to bodies in this world come to pass there, as, for instance, sitting down, standing up, sleep, death, sadness, mirth or the like. Thus did the ancient sages say: "In the World to Come there is no eating, no drinking, and no family life, save that the righteous are sitting, graced with garlands upon their heads, and indulge in feasting upon the luminousness of the Shekinah"...

9) Rambam, Laws of Repentance 8:5

Perhaps you will consider this Good lightly, and imagine that no reward for observing the precepts and for man to be following wholly the paths of truth is of any worth save if he be eating and drinking good food, enjoying beautiful faces, dressing in garments of embroidered linen, lounging in tents of ivory, being served in dishes of gold or silver, and similar things, as these stupid, silly, licentious Arabs imagine. But scholars and sensible people should know that all such things are idle and vain, wherein there is nothing consequential, and if they are considered of the greatest good by us in this world, it is because we are owners of bodies and concrete forms, and all such things are bodily necessities, and the soul neither craves nor desires for them save because of bodily necessity, so that it may satisfy its desire and remain normal. But when there is no body, all these things are found to be completely nullified. But as to the great Good in which the soul will be in the World to Come, there is no way in this world to attain or know it, for in this world we know of no other good, save that of the body, for which we crave; but that Good is exceedingly exalted and has no estimate alongside the good of this world save as a figure of speech; but by the way of truth to draw a comparison between the Good in store for the soul in the World to Come and the good of the body by eating and drinking in this world is impossible. In truth, that Good is so great that by no search can it be grasped, and by no form of estimate and comparison can it be comprehended, even as David said: "Oh how great is Your goodness which You have treasured up for those that fear You" (Ps. 31.19).

10) Derech Hashem, Part 1, Chapter 2

The change in man's conditions with the change of time periods: However according to the change in the time period, so is it fit that his condition and his other circumstances change. For in all of the time of striving, he surely needs to be in a situation in which all the things that he needs for this

process of striving can be found...But at the time of receiving the reward, it is surely fitting that the situation be the opposite of this. For behold, all that the material would rule at that time was surely only to darken [man's awareness] and prevent the soul from cleaving to the Creator, may He be blessed...And indeed two worlds were therefore created - this world and the next world. The place and the natural conditions of this world are what is fitting for man all the time of his striving. And the place and the natural conditions of the next world are what is fitting for him at the time of receiving the reward...

The human species changed: Behold that at the time of his formation, the first man was completely in the situation that we have mentioned until now. This means that he was surely joined from the two opposite parts that we mentioned - which are the soul and the body. And there were the two [possibilities] in the world - the good and the evil, and he stood between them evenly, to cleave to the one of them that he would want. And it was surely fitting for him to choose the good that his soul should win over his body and his spirit over his materiality; and then he would have been perfected immediately and stayed in his perfection forever...

The outgrowths of the sin of the first man: But once he sinned, a great change happened to things. And that is that at first there were surely sufficient deficiencies in the creation that the first man would be in the equal condition that we mentioned, so there would be room for him to earn perfections through the 'effort of his [own] hands.' With his sin, however, deficiencies were added; and they grew in the essence of man and in all of the entire creation. Moreover the redress became more difficult than before. The explanation of this is that surely at the beginning it was easy for [man] to go away from the deficiency planted in him and to acquire perfection. For the Supreme Wisdom set up the things like this according to the traits of good and fairness. And since man was not the cause of the evil and the deficiency within him - but it was rather planted in him in his creation - when he removed himself from the evil and turned to the good, he was surely immediately able to go away from deficiency and acquire perfection. However with his sin - since it was through him that perfection became more hidden than it was and the deficiencies grew, and he was the one that caused evil to himself - it would no longer be as easy for him to return and to go away from deficiency and acquire perfection as it was at the time that he was not the cause of his deficiency, but was rather [just] created like that from his beginning, as I have written. All the more so [would it be harder], as the striving required of him now to reach perfection would perforce be doubled: For he would first need that man and the world return to the condition that existed at the beginning before the sin; and then afterwards to rise above that condition to a condition of perfection to which it was fit for man to rise....

Death and resurrection: However besides all of this, His trait of [strict] judgement, may He be blessed, decreed that from now on, man and the world could not reach perfection so long as they are in a corrupted state - meaning, the form they have now, in which evil grew. Rather they perforce need a transformation beyond the perdition - meaning, death for man and destruction for all of the other things in existence that became corrupted with him. And the soul can [no longer] purify the body until after it first goes out of it and the body dies and decomposes. And then [the body] returns and is built [as] a new structure, and the soul enters it and purifies it. And likewise the whole world will become destroyed from its current form, and it will return and be built in a different form that is fitting for perfection. And therefore it was decreed upon man that he die, and [then] come back and live [again]. And this is the matter of the revival of the dead. And [it was decreed] about the world that it will be destroyed and [then] come back and be renewed - and this is the matter that they, may their memory be blessed, said (Sanhedrin 97a), "The world will [exist] for six thousand years, and be destroyed for one [thousand]; but at the end of a thousand years, the Holy One, blessed be He, returns and renews the world.