

## How to Get Into Olam Haba:

### 1- Believe in Olam Haba:

1. One of the requirements to earn Olam Haba is to believe in Olam Haba.
2. A person must work to acquire an actual, tangible picture of Olam Haba. It should become part of your world orientation.
3. After a while, you should be able to look at this world as a lobby to prepare to enter the very great banquet hall, Olam Haba.
4. Of course, you must live in a certain way. You must do mitzvos. But the very first requirement is to be aware that there is such thing.
5. It is very important to have Kavana when you say the second Berachah in the Amida, where you praise Hashem for *Techiyas Hameisim*. We must think : "We trust you, Hashem, to bring the dead to life."
6. Train yourself when walking in the street and say to Hashem, "Please give me Olam Haba!" For example: When walking past gardens filled with beautiful flowers, think the following: "I am walking in Gan Eden right now." Hashem put that street in your path to remind you to work on your belief in Olam Haba.
7. Any happiness or success in this world should be utilized to make us think about Olam Haba. When you receive any honor, you should thank Hashem and say, "I know this is not it yet, but it's a mashal to help me think of the happiness in Olam Haba."
8. Think about your Seder as a mashal to the "great banquet" in Olam Haba.
9. If you have beautiful children and /or grandchildren, kiss them and think, "What nachas to see my beautiful grandchildren, and that this is only the beginning !"
10. All simcha in this world is only for one purpose: to serve as a mashal for the very great simcha that awaits those who believe in Hashem.

### 2- Identify With the Jewish People:

11. Olam Haba belongs to the Jewish people collectively - it is one corporation, so to speak. Only an individual who identifies with and connects to the Jewish people have a portion in Olam Haba. If he does something that disconnects him, he loses his connection with Olam Haba.
12. At a minimum, that means living in a neighbourhood of Torah-observant Jews. A Jew must identify with the covenant that Hashem made with the Jews.
13. A Jew should say with the greatest pride, "I belong to Yisroel!" He should be proud because Hashem chose us to be "a kingdom of priests and a holy people."
14. Your heart should swell with pride when you see blocks and blocks of houses with Mezuzos on them, and dozens of people walking around dressed in overtly Jewish ways.
15. You must be devoted to your nation - not merely in a patriotic sense - but in the Torah sense. Your head should swell with pride when you read in the torah that we all stood at Har Sinai. You should be inspired when reading our great Jewish history. You should realize that the holiness of a plain, ordinary Jew - who keeps mitzvos - is so great that it is compared to Hashem. As the Pasuk says, " Be holy because I, hashem, am holy."

### **3 - Study Halacha:**

16. **Talmud Nida 73a:** תנא דבי אליהו כל השונה הלכות בכל יום מובטח לו שהוא בן העולם הבא The school of Elijah taught: Anyone who studies halachos every day is guaranteed that he is destined for the World-to-Come, as it is stated: "His ways [halichos] are eternal" (Habakkuk 3:6). Do not read the verse as halichos; rather, read it as halachos.
17. **Rav Elyashiv:** "that it should be visible in his walking on the road and sitting in his house and lying down and getting up that - *there is a shulchan aruch and that he lives according to its word*". (torah study without living the halacha is not true torah and one merits Olam Haba primarily through torah.)
18. **Mesilas Yesharim** brings down Zehirus (watchfulness) as the second step in the spiritual ladder. The first step, namely, torah study (for a few years minimum) should arouse a person as to the preciousness of the mitzvos and also strengthen him spiritually so that he has sufficient spiritual powers to be able to work on Zehirus. Zehirus is training oneself to not lifting a finger or saying a word without first weighing it according to the torah, i.e. aligning all of one's ways with halacha.

### **4 - Shabbos:**

19. **Talmud Shabbos 118a:** כל המקיים שלש סעודות בשבת ניצול משלש פורעניות מחבלו של: Anyone who **fulfills** the obligation to eat three meals on Shabbat is rescued from three punishments: From the pangs of the Messiah, i.e., the suffering that precedes the advent of Messiah, and from the judgment of Gehenna, and from the war of Gog and Magog.
20. **Bach on Tur 291:** The three parts of Shabbos correspond to a different special Shabbos. Therefore, each one of these rewards parallels the essence of the meal of that time.
- Friday night corresponds to Shabbos *B'reishis*, when Hashem caused His Glory to dwell in this world. Therefore, during this part of Shabbos we work on strengthening our *emunah* and becoming more aware of His presence. The *Mishna* in the end of *Sotah* describes the different ways society will deteriorate before Moshiach comes. It ends with, "And we do not have anyone to rely on besides Hashem." The point of all these trials and tribulations is to help us realize that Hashem is our true master. A person who not only strengthens this awareness on *leil* Shabbos but also celebrates it through a lavish feast will not need to be taught this same lesson through *chevlei Moshiach*.
  - Shabbos morning corresponds to the Shabbos when we received the Torah. On that Shabbos, through the great revelation of Hashem's Glory, we understood the purpose of Creation and received His Torah, which tells us exactly how to live our lives. By celebrating *Matan Torah* we instill in our hearts that Torah is not just theory – it's reality, and we live according to its dictates. This saves us from *Gehinom*, the place created for those who have not accepted this great truth and require rectification for their sins. Furthermore, Shabbos is a day designed for learning torah, which mitigates the heat of Gehinnom, since Torah is compared to fire.

- The end of Shabbos corresponds to the Shabbos of the World to Come. We say in *Mincha*, “*Ata echod, v’shimcha echod, u’mee k’amcha Yisroel, goy echod ba’aretz* – You are One, Your name is One and who is like Your people *Yisroel*, one nation on earth!” In the World to Come it will be just Hashem and us, making the meal that corresponds to that time the most special part of Shabbos, the “*Ravah d’Raavin*” (see “A Time Of Favor,” 11-7 for elaboration on this idea). The Maharal writes (*Netzach Yisroel* chapter 38) that the war of *Gog* and *Magog* will occur after Moshiach comes. Moshiach will declare the Oneness of Hashem and all the nations of the world will gather together to try to prove otherwise. After their grand downfall, it will be unequivocally clear that Hashem is truly One. *Seudah shlishis* is an intimate time with Hashem, and thus, there is no need for an abundance of food. When we eat this meal, we celebrate the fact that Hashem is One and that He chose us to be His only nation. Since that is so clear to us, we will be saved from this war that will prove that Hashem is One.
- **Imrei Emes:** it is called “*shalosh seudos*” because it has the power to sanctify all three Shabbos meals. Until a person eats the third meal, we do not necessarily know why he ate the other two – maybe it was just his Friday night supper and Saturday lunch! But when even on a short winter afternoon a person sets the table in an honorable manner and sits down to a meal only a few hours after he finished lunch, he shows that his three meals were for the sake of Heaven, not merely to fill his belly.
- **Sefer Tikunei Shabbos:** When we eat in the winter it also elevates the *seudah shlishis* of the summer, for we demonstrate that we ate this meal for the sake of the *mitzvah* during the summer as well.

### What is the Minimum for Olam Haba?

**21. Rambam Laws of Teshuvah 3:5:** All of the *reshayim* (evil ones) whose transgressions are great, are judged according to their transgressions, but they will still have a portion in *Olam Haba*, because all of *Yisrael* has a portion in *Olam Haba*, even though they transgressed. And similarly, the pious among the nations of the world also have a portion in *Olam Haba*.

**22. Rambam Laws of Teshuva 3:6:** The following individuals do not have a portion in the world to come. Rather, their [souls] are cut off and they are judged for their great wickedness and sins, forever:

- *Minim* (deniers of some essential aspects of G-d),
- *Apikorsim* (denying prophesy or G-d’s knowledge of man’s actions),
- Deniers of Torah,
- Deniers of *Techiat HaMeitim* (the revival of the dead) or of the coming of *Mashiach*,
- *Mumarim* (openly violating one mitzvah, or all of the *mitzvot*),
- Causing many to transgress,
- Separating oneself from the community,
- Brazenly transgressing,
- Handing Jews or Jewish property over to their enemies,
- Placing fear upon the community improperly,
- Spilling blood,
- Habitual Gossipers and Slanderers, and

- Trying to undo one's circumcision.
3. **Rambam Laws of Teshuva 3:14:** All the twenty four individuals listed above will not receive a portion in the world to come even though they are Jewish. There are other sins which are less severe than those mentioned. Nevertheless, our Sages said that a person who *frequently commits them* will not receive a portion in the world to come and [counseled] that these [sins] be avoided and care be taken in regard to them. They are:
- one who invents a [disparaging] nickname for a colleague; one who calls a colleague by a [disparaging] nickname;
  - one who embarrasses a colleague in public;
  - one who takes pride in his colleague's shame;
  - one who disgraces Torah Sages;
  - one who disgraces his teachers;
  - one who degrades the festivals; and
  - one who profanes sacred things.
- When does the statement that these individuals do not have a portion in the world to come apply? **When they die without having repented.** However, if such a person repents from his wicked deeds and dies as a Baal-Teshuvah, he will merit the world to come, for nothing can stand in the way of Teshuvah.
- Even if he denies God's existence throughout his life and repents in his final moments, he merits a portion in the world to come as implied by [Isaiah 57:19] "Peace, peace, to the distant and the near," declares God. "I will heal him."
- Any wicked person, apostate, or the like, who repents, whether in an open, revealed manner or in private, will be accepted as implied by [Jeremiah 3:22] "Return, faithless children." [We may infer] that even if one is still faithless, as obvious from the fact that he repents in private and not in public, his Teshuvah will be accepted.
4. **Rav Dessler, Michtav M'Elياهو pg. 290:** Hashem promises His nation that even one that went down very far, as long as he keeps some connection to *Yisrael*, his spiritual spark will not be severed. This internal spark is actually the essence of the person, which he will take with him to *Olam Haba*.
5. "And even the Jews who lost their *chelek* (portion) in *Olam Haba*, and are no longer fit to earn **their designated portion** of *Olam Haba* through their service of G-d, still have the treasury of *matnas chinam* (free gifts). This internal spark of *kedusha*, which was given to us as a *matnas chinam* when we were first created, still exists inside of us [even] after we transgress, and it will remain within us [even] when we leave this world. However this person is [certainly] different from one who is a true *ben Olam Haba*.
6. "The one who earned *Olam Haba* through his good choices in his service of G-d can still continue to grow and develop, both himself and his understandings, while the one who got there through the treasury of *matnas chinam* has no ability to continue to grow in his understanding or elevation."
7. **Rabeinu Bachya, Vayikra 18,29:** Those people that the *Mishnah* in Sanhedrin (90a) told us have no portion in *Olam Haba* — this means that there is no *chelek* which is **specific** to them. However, they can [still] have pleasure and nourishment from the many treasure houses of *tzedaka* (charity) that have been hidden away for those who did not merit [on their own].

8. "This is like a poor person who has nothing in his hand to eat and relies on the table of his friend. Even those complete rebels whom we are supposed to pull down and [certainly] not pick them up, will have *menuchah* (a rest and tranquility) on Shabbat and the holidays.
9. "Therefore, we can explain that it is impossible for the *nefesh hasichlit* (the intellectual force) to be nullified completely. When the verse says — "that soul (*nefesh*) shall be cut off from its nation," it means that it will be cut off from the place that had been carved out [specifically] for it. After all, how would it be possible to make a decree to nullify the *nefesh* completely?
10. "Behold, it says in the *Gemara Rosh Hashanah* (17a) — "It will be judged there for all generations." The intention is not for nullification, but rather to be kept in existence — for an eternal *onesh* for all generations.
11. "And certainly, there were never evil people who caused destruction (*mach'chishim*) in terms of Hashem and His servant Moshe more than Korach and his group, who were banished from *Olam Ha'zeh* **and** *Olam Haba*. And even so, they were not nullified, since they are living in *Gehenom*, and existing with their *onesh*.
12. "And, in the future, they will merit *Techiat HaMeitim* (the revival of the dead) along with the other souls that are in their nation. Their *nefesh* will derive pleasure from *ziv haShechina* (the splendor of G-d's presence), away from their proper place, once they have accepted that they are cut off from the particular place that was carved out for them, and this is the opinion of the Ramban."
13. **Rikanti:** Every case where *Chazal* told us that one has no *chelek* in *Olam Haba*, it means that they will have no separate place in *Olam Haba*, no treasure house in their own area, which they can rule over. That would all be [part of] having a dignified place.
14. "One with no merit, however, will still be able to stand in the place of the masses. He will not have the *chelek* which was known, and was shown to him before he came into this world. But G-d will [still] give it to him as *tzedaka* once he has received his punishment. And in terms of what *Chazal* say that this person has no portion in the world to come, the meaning is that this transgression destroyed the person's *chelek* which he would have had independently. However, there is still a place for him where the masses are standing.
15. **Talmud Sanhedrin 110b:** a Jew who says "Amein" - who consents to the truth - has the gates of *Olam Haba* opened for him. This statement applies to any Jew, provided that he means it ! The same can be said for attending a proper Seder.
16. **Talmud Sanhedrin 110b:** Children of Jews, who actively persecute their fellow Jews as their parents did , have no portion in the world to come.
17. Contemporary assimilated Jews, who are devoid of torah learning, and were never given the opportunity to learn the importance of torah life : Is a question that only hashem can answer regarding their being held accountable for their actions.

#### **NON-JEWS:**

1. **Rambam Laws of Kings 8,11:** Anyone who accepts upon himself the fulfillment of these seven mitzvos and is precise in their observance is considered one of 'the pious among the gentiles' and will merit a share in the world to come.

2. "This applies only when he accepts them and fulfills them because the Holy One, blessed be He, commanded them in the Torah and informed us through Moses, our teacher, that Noah's descendants had been commanded to fulfill them previously.
3. "However, if he fulfills them out of intellectual conviction, he is not a resident alien, nor of 'the pious among the gentiles,' nor of their wise men."
4. **Derech Hashem:** However nations besides Israel will not be found at all in the world to come. Existence will be given to the pious ones of the nations of the world by way of being an addition and appendage of Israel itself. And they will be secondary to them like clothing is secondary to a person. That which is coming to them from the good will come to them in this way; and it is not in their condition to attain more than this at all.
5. **POINT:** A Jew by birth is entitled to Olam Haba - and must avoid losing it . A non-Jew must earn Olam Haba.
6. **Talmud Sanhedrin 96b** lists non-Jews from the worst origins became worthy of the highest rewards, such as : Na'aman [ an Aramean general], Nevuzradan [a Babylonian general], descendants of Sisera, Sancheriv, and descendents of Haman. We learn from this that there is good in all nations.
7. A Jew should be familiar with the halachos that apply to a non-Jew since it is forbidden to cause a non-Jew to transgress his mitzvos. This is included under the Torah's violation of "lifnei iver lo sitein michshol," "Do not place a stumbling block before a blind person." In this case, this means do not cause someone to sin if he is blind about the seriousness of his violation (Gemara Avodah Zarah 6b).

#### **SEVEN NOAHIDE LAWS:**

1. AVODAH ZARAH - It is forbidden for a non-Jew to worship idols in any way. Most religions of the world are idolatrous, particularly the major religions of the East.
  - Although Christianity constitutes idol worship for a Jew, there is a dispute whether it is idolatry for a ben Noach. Some poskim contend that its strange concepts of G-d do not violate the prohibition against Avodah Zarah that was commanded to Adam and Noach. However, most later poskim contend that Christian belief does constitute Avodah Zarah even for a non-Jew.
  - Every branch and type of Christianity includes idolatrous beliefs.
2. GILUY ARAYOS - which prohibits many illicit relationships.
3. MURDER - including abortion (Gemara Sanhedrin 57b), suicide, and mercy killing. It should be noted that capital punishment, when halachically authorized, does not violate this mitzvah because the Torah requires it to guarantee observance of the Seven Mitzvos of Bnei Noach.
4. EIVER MIN HACHAI - eating flesh taken from a live animal. This prohibition includes eating a limb or flesh removed from an animal that is still halachically considered alive even if the animal is now dead.
5. BLASPHEMY - cursing Hashem.
6. STEALING - This prohibition includes taking even a very small item that does not belong to him, eating something of the owner's on the job without permission, or not paying employees or contractors. According to some opinions, it includes not paying workers or contractors on time.

7. DINIM - literally, laws. This mitzvah includes the application of civil law code, including the laws of damages, torts, loans, assault, cheating, and commerce. Furthermore, there is a requirement to establish courts in every city and region to guarantee that people observe their mitzvos.

### IN CLOSING:

1. **Rav Dessler, Michtav M'Elياهو pg. 390:** In the earlier generations, before the *churban* (destruction) of the first *Beit HaMikdash*, when there was *nevuah*, (prophesy), the *Shechina* (G-d's presence), and open miracles, people felt in their hearts that there was really only a single world. They saw a spiritual world in the present. For that generation, *Olam Ha'zeh* was merely a hidden *Olam Haba*. For them, therefore, there was no need to imagine *Olam Haba* as a separate world. However, when the hearts became smaller, *nevuah* was removed, and there was no *Shechina* during the second *Beit HaMikdash*, people needed to speak about two different worlds — *Olam Ha'zeh* and *Olam Haba*. They then described *Olam Haba* as a separate world, spiritual and complete, in order to connect it to their heart.
2. "In the times of the second *Beit HaMikdash*, the *Tzedukim* (a group of heretics) saw only one world — *Ha'Olam Ha'zeh*, like the widespread *hashkafa* (perspective) of our present generation. The perspective of the *ben Torah* [today] is exactly the opposite. The *ben Torah* [also] sees only one world, but it is a spiritual world. And if he relates to two different worlds, it is only to distinguish himself from the *Tzedukim*, and for the sake of conceptualizing it better. There is, however, a danger of laxity with this. The *yeitzer [hara]* (negative inclination) can manipulate this to prevent our connection to spirituality, and to say that *Olam Ha'zeh* is also a world. The essential point is that inside [ourselves] there must be only one world, of only *ruchniyut*. Besides this world of spirituality, there can be no other world, except as a tool to connect with the world of spirituality alone."
3. "**Rav Chaim m'Volozin** beginning of *Ruach Chaim*: One who does a mitzvah finds himself instantly in *Olam Haba*, even though he may not be aware of this. The *rei'ach* (scent) of *Gan Eden* enters within him and his life, and orients him to do more *mitzvos*. In other words, the *s'char* of the mitzvah is the mitzvah itself.
4. "One of the *Gedolei haChasidim* wrote that **it is not the *tzadik* who is in *Olam Haba*, but rather *Olam Haba* which is in the *tzadik*.**
5. "And similarly, at the end of the *Zohar*, it is written that *Olam Haba* already existed before the six days of creation, i.e., the *ohr haganuz* (the light that was set aside) for the *tzadikim*."

### WHO IS A BEN OLAM HABA ?

1. **The Gemara Taanis 22a:** Rabi Beroka Hoza'ah used to frequent the market at Bei Lapat where Eliyahu HaNavi often appeared to him. Once he asked [Elijah], "Is there anyone in this market who is a 'Ben Olam HaBa?'" He replied, "No."
2. Meanwhile Eliyahu caught sight of a man wearing black shoes (which was not the Jewish manner of dress) and who had no thread of blue on the corners of his garment (i.e. he was not wearing Tzitzit) and Elijah exclaimed, This man is a "Ben

Olam HaBa," has a share in the world to come. Rabi Beroka ran after him and asked him, What is your occupation? And the man replied: "Go away and come back tomorrow." Next day he asked him again, "What is your occupation?" And he replied: "I am a warden and I keep the men and women separate and I place my bed between them so that they may not come to sin; when I see a Jewish girl upon whom the Nochrims cast their eyes I risk my life and save her. Once there was amongst us a betrothed girl upon whom the Nochrims cast their eyes. I therefore took lees of [red] wine and put them in her skirt and I told them that she was unclean." [Rabi Beroka further] asked the man, "Why have you no fringes and why do you wear black shoes?" He replied: "That the non Jews amongst whom I move may not know that I am a Jew, so that when a harsh decree is made [against Jews] I inform the rabbis and they pray [to God] and the decree is annulled." He further asked him, "When I asked you, 'What is your occupation,' why did you say to me, 'Go away now and come back tomorrow?'" He answered, They had just issued a harsh decree and I said I would first go and acquaint the rabbis of it so that they might pray to God.

3. When [they were conversing] two [men] passed by and [Elijah] remarked, "These two are also Benei Olam HaBa." Rabi Beroka then approached and asked them, "What is your occupation?" They replied, "We are jesters, when we see men depressed we cheer them up; furthermore when we see two people quarrelling we strive to make peace between them."
4. **QUESTION:** Doesn't all *Klal Yisrael* have a portion in the World to Come?
5. **QUESTION:** How can Eliyahu guarantee these jesters and the man wearing black shoes will keep their portion in *Olam Haba*?
6. **ANSWER #1:** The afterlife is nothing more than eternally basking in the light of G-d's goodness. Those who have worked on themselves on becoming "good" will find the light blissfully pleasurable. While those who didn't will find it painfully disturbing. Eliyahu Hanavi pointed out that these two jesters, who spent their lives helping others, are people who enjoy *Olam Hazeih* to the extent that they have "*Olam Haba*" in *Olam Hazeih*. Only by focusing on others can people live a truly happy existence, the concept of *Olam Haba*.
7. **ANSWER #2:** While all of Israel have a share in Olam HaBa, many of them require a one year period of rehabilitation in Geihinom to rectify the serious wrongs they did in this world (see Rosh HaShanah 17a). Rabi Beroka, on the other hand, was inquiring as to who will be eligible to enter immediately without the need for temporary rectification.
8. **LESSON #1:** Appearances can be deceiving and sometimes the least expected individual can be the one of the highest spiritual rank.
9. **LESSON #2:** Every Jew can excel in spirituality, not only those blessed with the talent and opportunity to become Torah scholars.
10. **LESSON #3:** One can earn his Olam HaBa from his efforts to earn a living for his family and not only from more predictable spiritual endeavors such as Tefilah and Talmud Torah. One would hardly think that serving as a prison warden or town jester could serve as a means to earn a prominent place in Olam HaBa. Our story teaches us not to view our professional endeavors as a time out or break from his spiritual

pursuits. Rather, if conducted properly, one's professional life can constitute an integral part and extension of his spiritual life.

11. **LESSON #4:** Our story is similar to a Gemara (Bava Batra 10b) which relates what transpired when Yosef the son of Rav Yehoshua died and was restored to life. His father asked him what he saw during the time he was dead. Yosef answered, "He saw an upside down world; those who were prominent in this world were the least prominent in Olam HaBa while those who were on the lowest rungs of society in this world were on the highest rungs in Olam HaBa." In our story as well, it is difficult to imagine that the warden and the jesters were regarded as high ranking members of society. Nonetheless, they advance first and furthest in Olam HaBa.
12. **Lesson #5:** The warden made great efforts to help the least regarded in society, the ones condemned to prison. The jesters helped those who were depressed, who are not necessarily the most highly respected members of society. The warden and the jesters were eager to help anyone regardless of their stature.