SEPARATION ANXIETY  The Chevra Kadisha's Role in Comforting The Soul As It Exits The Body
Rabbi Efrem Goldberg

### (6:51) (0) VA YIKAA (11:17)

the flesh is in the blood \* and I have assigned it for you upon the Altar to provide atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that atones for the soul. 12 Therefore I have said to the Children of Israel. "Any person among you may not consume." blood, and the proselyte who dwells among you may not consume blood."

יי בירנָפָש הָבָשָר בָרֱם הוא הַבָּשֶר בָּרֶם הוא:

וְאָנִי נָתַתִיוֹ לָכֵם עַל־הַמוֹבֵחַ לכַפָּר עַל־נַפּשְׁתִיכִם כִּי־הַדָּם הוֹא בַנִפּשׁ יָּבָפָר: עַל־בָן אָמַרתי לבִנִי ישרָאל כָל־נִפִּשׁ מכֵם לא־תְאַכַל דֶם וְהַגְּר הגר בתוככם לא־יאכל דם:

### (5:7) ~ (k)> (2:7)

י And Hashem God formed the man of soil אָל הוֹם אֶת־הָאָדָׁם 🖟 אַל הוֹם אֱת־הָאָדָׁם from the earth, and blew into his nostnls the soul of life; and man became a living

עָפָר מן־הָאָרָמָה וַיִּפַּח בְּאַפָּיוּ נִשְּמֵת חַיִּים נִיהִי הָאָרֶם לְגֵפֶּש חַיָּה:

#### "() (3) RASHI

7. יצירה – two formings, שתי יצירות – indicates י שתי יצירות – two formings, יצירה a forming for this world, ויצירָה לתחוָת הָמתים – and a forming for the Resurrection – לְעוּלְם הַזה of the Dead, שאינָה שומרת לדין – but regarding the animal, שאינָה עומרת לדין – which does not stand for judgment, שני יוריין – there was not written in its forming – לא נכתב ביצירתה – a double י

#### (13b) ADIN (13b)

The Gemara finally arrives at the correct interpretation: אלא רנסיבי קטנות דלאו בנות אולודי נינהו – Rather, the Baraisa speaks of those who marry young girls that are not yet capable of reproducing. ראָמָר רַבי יוסי – For R' Yose said: אין בן דור דבא ער שיכלו כל הַנְשְמות שַבְגוף – The son of Davidii will not come until all the souls are vacated from guf, אואמר שנאמר יירוח מלפָנֵי וַעְטוף וּנשָמות אָנוּ עְשִיתויי... – as it is stated: For a spirit from before Me shall be late-born, and the souls that I have made.[18]

# (K3) 17770 (S SANHEDRIN (9/6)

Antoninus and Rebbi discuss the precise moment the soul enters the person:

רבי – And Antoninus also asked Rebbi: בּאָרָם - When is the soul placed into man? משעת פקורת – Is it from the moment of "attention"(עו או משעת יצירה - or from the moment of the embryo's formation? אמר לו [Rebbi] said to him: משעת יצירה – It is from the moment of the embryo's formation that it receives a soul. אמר לו – [Antoninus] said to him: אפשר התיכה של בשר עומדת שלשה ימים בלא מלח – Can a piece of meat remain for even three days without salt אינה מסרחת – and not become putrid?[13] אלא משעת פקירה – Must it not be, rather, that the soul enters the person from the moment of "attention"?[14] אמר רבי – Rebbi remarked: דבר זה למדני אַנטונינוס – This matter did Antoninus teach me, מקיעו – and Scripture supports him, יופקרתך שמרה רוחיי – for it is stated: And "Your attention" has guarded my spirit. [16]

The philosophers have already explained that the bodily faculties impede in youth the attainment of most of the moral virtues, and all the more that of pure thought, which is achieved through the perfection of the intelligibles that lead to passionate love of Him, may He be exalted. For it is impossible that it should be achieved while the bodily humors are in effervescence. Yet in the measure in which the faculties of the body are weakened and the fire of the desires is quenched, the intellect is strengthened, its lights achieve a wider extension, its apprehension is purified, and it rejoices in what it apprehends. The result is that when a perfect man is stricken with years and approaches death, this apprehension increases very powerfully, joy over this apprehension and a great love for the object of apprehension become stronger, until the soul is separated from the body at that moment in this state of pleasure. Because of this the Sages have indicated with reference to the deaths of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam that

the three of them died by a kiss. They said 47 that the dictum [of Scripture], And Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab by the mouth of the Lord, 48 indicates that he died by a kiss. Similarly it is said of Aaron: By the mouth of the Lord, and died there. 49 And they said of Miriam in the same way: She also died by a kiss. But with regard to her it is not said, by the mouth of the Lord; because she was a woman, the use of the figurative expression was not suitable with regard to her. Their purpose was to indicate that the three of them died in the pleasure of this apprehension due to the intensity of passionate love. In this dictum the Sages, may their memory be blessed, followed the generally accepted poetical way of expression that calls the apprehension | that is achieved in a state of intense and passionate love for Him, may He be exalted, a kiss, in accordance with its dictum: Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth, and so on. 50 [The Sages], may their memory be blessed, mention the occurrence of this kind of death, which in true reality is salvation from death, only with regard to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. The other prophets and excellent men are beneath this degree; but it holds good for all of them that the apprehension of their intellects becomes stronger at the separation, just as it is said: And thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall be at thy rear. 51 After having reached this condition of enduring permanence, that intellect remains in one and the same state, the impediment that sometimes screened him off having been removed. And he will remain permanently in that state of intense pleasure, which does not belong to the genus of bodily pleasures, as we have explained in our compilations and as others have explained before

## ('7) ) 128 \$ SHABBOS (1520)

The Gemara explores further aspects of the soul's experience after death.

בל שאומרים בפני הָמת - R' Abahu said: אָמֶר רָבּי אָבָהוּ – Everything that [people] say in the presence of a corpse יורץ – is known by that person's soul עד שִּיסָתם הַגוּלִל – until the top of the casket is closed over the body prior to burial Once this occurs, the soul no longer perceives what is said by the living.

A dispute is presented concerning this point:

פליגי בָה רְבִי חוִיא וּרְבי שמעון בּרְבי - R' Chiya and R' Shimon the son of Rebbi disagree concerning this. חָר אָמֵּר עָר שִׁיּסָּתִּם - One says that until the top of the casket is closed, the deceased is aware of what is said in the presence of his corpse. חַרָּ אַמֶּר עָד שִיתעָכל הָבָשִּר - And the other one says that the deceased remains aware of these things until the flesh of his corpse decomposes in the grave.

The Gemara finds a Scriptural allusion to each of these views: אָרָ הַּבְּשִׁר אָר שִׁיתְעָכּל הָבְּשִׁר – The one who says until the flesh decomposes can claim the support of Scripture, ברתיב – for it is written: אַרְ־בּשָּׁרוּ עָלִיוּ יבאָב וּנָפְשׁוּ עַלִיוּ תאָבֶליי – But his flesh will be pained over its [demise], and his soul shall mourn itself. — And the one who says until the top of the casket is closed can likewise adduce Scriptural support, – רבתיב – for it is written: אַיִּישֶׁב הַעְפָּר – דבתיב – The dust shall return to the earth as it was etc., and the spirit returns to God, Who gave it. [13]

The second part of this verse is expounded:

אָרָהְרוּחְ תָּשׁוֹב : תְּנִוּ רְבָּוּן - The Rabbis taught in a Baraisa: תְּנִּי רְבָּוּן - The Rabbis taught in a Baraisa: אָשׁר נִתְנָּהִי - The Rabbis taught in a Baraisa: אַשׁר נִתְנָּהִי - בּעִּנְהִי בְּשִׁר נִתְנָהִי - אַשׁר נִתְנָהִי - אַבּרְיַבְּעִר - אַבּרְיַבְּעִר - אַשׁר נִתְנָהִי - אַבּרְיַבְּעִר - אַבּרְיַבְּעִר - אַבּרְיַבְּעִר - בְּעָהְרָה - בַּעָהְרָה - בַּעָהְרָה - בְּעָהְרָה - בַּעָהְרָה - בְּעָהְרָה - בְּעָהְרָה - בַּעָהְרָה - בְּעָהְרָה - בַּעָהְרָה - בַּעָהְרָה - בַּעָהְרָה - בְּעָהְרָה - בְעָהְרָה - בְּעָהְרָה - בְּעָהְרָה - בְּעָהְרָה - בְּעָהְרָה - בְּעָרְה - בְּעָהְרָה - בְּעָּרָה - בְּעָהְרָה - בְּעָּרְה - בְּעָהְרָה - בּעָהְרָה - בְּעָהְרָה - בְּעָהְרָה - בְּעָהְרָה - בְּעָבְּרָה - בְּעָהְרָּה - בְּעָהְרָּה - בְּעָּרָה - בְּעָּרָה - בְּעָרְה - בְּעָּרְה - בְּעָרְה - בְּעָּרְיִר - בְּעָהְרָּר - בְּעָּרָה - בְּעָרְרָה - בְּעָרְרָה - בְּעָרְרָה - בְּעָרְרָּר - בְּעִרְרָּר - בְּעָרְרָה - בְּעָרְרָּר - בְּעָרְרָּר - בְּעָרְרָּר - בְּעָרְרָּר - בְּבְּרָר - בְּעָרְרָה - בְּעָרְרָה - בְּעָרְרָה - בְּיִבְּרְרָּר - בְּבְּרָר - בְּבְּרְרָּר - בְּרָר - בְּבְּרְר - בְּבְּרְרָה - בְּבְּרְרָּר - בְּבְּרְרָּרְיִי - בְּבְּרָּרְיִי - בְּבְּרְיִי - בְּבְּבְּבְּרְיִי - בְּבְּבְּרְיִי - בְּבְי

the time of death, it is likewise in a state of PURITY, unsullied by sin.

The Baraisa elaborates:

ו משָל למלך בַשָּר וַדָם – IT IS ANALOGOUS TO a situation where A KING OF FLESH AND BLOOD שחלק בגרי מלכות לְעָבְרִיוּ – DIS-TRIBUTED ROYAL APPAREL TO HIS SERVANTS. פקחין שבהן קיפלום THOSE AMONG [THE SERVANTS] WHO WERE WISE FOLDED the clothes and placed them in a box for safekeeping  $^{\rm 151}$ And THOSE AMONG THEM WHO – טפשים שבָהן הָלכוּ וּעְשוֹ בָהן מלָאבָה WERE FOOLISH donned these garments and WENT AND PER-FORMED LABOR WITH THEM. לימים – SOMETIME LATER, ביקש דהמלך את כליו – THE RING REQUESTED that HIS GARMENTS be returned to him. פקחין שבָהן החזירום לו כשהן מגוהָצין – THOSE servants WHO HAD BEEN WISE RETURNED THEM TO [THE KING] clean and NEATLY PRESSED, for they had properly safeguarded these garments and had seen to it that they remained pristine. THOSE WHO HAD BEEN – טפשין שבָהן כשהן מלוכלְכין FOOLISH, however, RETURNED THEM TO [THE KING] SOLLED, for the garments had become dirty while they labored in them. now דהמלך לקראת פקחין — THE KING GREETED THE WISE servants WITH HAPPINESS, וְבָעֵס לקרָאת טפָשין – AND GREETED THE FOOLISH servants with anger. על פקחין אָמָר – concerning the wise servants HE SAID: ינַתנו כלַי לָאוצָר – LET MY GARMENTS that I entrusted to these people BE PLACED directly IN my CHEST, for their royal stature is undiminished; והם ילכו לבֶתיהם לשָלום – AND as for the wise servants themselves, LET THEM GO back TO THEIR HOMES IN PEACE. ועל טפשין אָמָר – BUT CONCERNING THE FOOLISH servants HE SAID: בלִי ינַתנו לכוכס – LET MY GARMENTS that I entrusted to these fools BEGIVEN TO A LAUNDERER, for in their present state they are unbelitting royalty. זהן יתחָבשו בבית האסורים – And as for these servants themselves, LET THEM BE CONFINED IN PRISON for their irresponsible behavior.

The Baraisa concludes:

אומר – SO IT IS WITH THE HOLY ONE. BLESSED IS HE. אָף הַקּרוש בְּרוֹךְ הוּא – CONCERNING THE BODIES OF THE RIGHTEOUS. He is pleased with the way they safeguarded their souls, and HE SAYS: הוֹבּין של ינוחו עלימשכבותם הוֹביי, – LET HIM COME IN PEACE; LET THEM REST UPON THEIR COUCHES; i.e. their bodies shall rest peacefully in the grave. – וְעַל נשמְתוֹן הוּא אוֹמִר – AND CONCERNING THE SOULS [OF THE RIGHTEOUS], HE SAYS: מוֹבְין של הוֹביי, – MAY THE SOUL OF MY של גופן של הוֹביי אוֹביי בצרור הְחִיים על גופן של הוֹביי שלום אָמָר הי לִרשָעים הוּא אוֹמר – However, CONCERNING THE BODIES OF THE WICKED, HE SAYS: הוֹביי היילי – THERE SHALL

BE NO PEACE, SAYS GOD, FOR THE WICKED. ועל נשמתן הוא אומר – AND CONCERNING THEIR SOUL HE SAYS. אואת נפש איביף – AND AS FOR THE SOUL OF YOUR ENEMY, MAY (GOD) SLING IT AS FROM THE HOLLOW OF A SLING!

# ((121) pop) (8) DEVARIM (32:39)

the lat of whose offenings they would eat, they would drink the wine of their libations?

Let them stand and help you! Let them be a shelter for you!

See, now, that I, I am He — and no god is with Me

I put to death and I bring life, I struck down and I will heal, and there is no rescuer from My hand.

אֲשׁׁר חֵלְב זְבָּחִׁימוֹ יֹאכֹׁלוּ יָלְּוֹמוֹ וְיֵעִזרְבְּם ראָר,וּ עַהָּה כִּי אָנִי אַניֹ הוּא אָנִי אַמִית וָאָחַיִּה וֹאָין מִיָּדִי מַצִיל:

ישתו יין נסיבם האין אלהים עמדי מחצתי ואַנִי ארפָא מחצתי באַנִי ארפָא

(((1:1) rillers @ BEREISHIS (3:19)

 $^{\rm 19}$  By the sweat of your brow shall you eat bread until you return to the ground, from which you were taken. For you are dust, and to dust shall you return.  $^{\rm 19}$ 

בועת אַפֵּיךְ תָאבַל לְחם עֵד שִובְךְ אֵל־הָאֶדָמָה כִי ממֶנָה לֹקָחֶת כִּי־עַפְּר אַתָה ואל־עָפָר תָשִוב:

(3,7, ) Nop (B) KOHELES (12:7)

1011:

עָפֵר עַל־הָאָרֵץ כִשְהָיָה והָרוחַ תָשוב אל־הָאַלהִים אָשִר נְתָנֵהּ: עַפֵּר עַל־הָאָרֵץ כִשְהָיָה והָרוחַ תָשוב

Thus

dust returns to the ground, as it was, and the spirit returns to God Who gave it