

HALACHIC AND HASHKAFIC ISSUES IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY

22 - MASHIACH AND THE WORLD TO COME: PART 3 OU ISRAEL CENTER - SUMMER 2016

A] 'TECHIYAT HAMETIM' AND 'OLAM HABA'

1. ראו עתה כי אני הוא ואין אלהים עמדי אני אמית ואחיה מחציתי ואני ארפא ואין מידי מציל דברים לב-לט

In Shirat Ha'azinu we see God describe Himself as the God who 'kill and brings back to life'.

2. וישב העפר על הארץ פשהיה והרוח תשוב אל האלקים אשר נתנה

קהלת יב:ז

A verse in Kohelet clarifies that death is not the end of the soul, only the body. The soul returns to God.

3. ורבים מישיני אדמת עפר יקיצו אלה לחיי עולם ואלה לתרפות לדראון עולם

דניאל יב:ב

Daniel appears to refer explicitly to the physical resurrection of the dead for a future Judgement Day.

4. כל ישראל יש להם חלק לעולם הבא. שנאמר (ישעיה ס') ועמך כולם צדיקים לעולם יירשו ארץ..... ואלו שאין להם חלק לעולם הבא: האומר אין תחיית המתים מן התורה.....

משנה מסכת סנהדרין פרק י משנה א

The Mishna lists 3 categories of those who have no place in the Next World. The first is those who deny the Torah source for Techiyat Hametim. But what does תחיית המתים mean? Traditionally, it has been understood as referring to the bodies of the dead coming back to life. But is there any chance that it is actually referring to the Life after Death - the survival of the soul after the death of the body? In any event, what would be the purpose of resurrecting the body?

5. אין בערפך ה' אלקינו בעולם הזה. ואין זולתך מלכנו לחיי העולם הבא. אפס בלתיך גואלנו לימות המשיח. ואין דומה לך מושיענו לתחיית המתים:

סידור תפילה - שחרית בשבת

Our tefillot appear to indicate that (i) Olam Hazeah; (ii) Olam Habah; (iii) Yemot Hamashiach and (iv) Techiyat Hametim are different periods in time.

B] THE RAMBAM'S POSITION

6. העולם הבא אין בו גוף וגויה אלא נפשות הצדיקים בלבד בלא גוף כמלאכי השרת, הואיל ואין בו גויות אין בו לא אכילה ולא שתייה ולא דבר מכל הדברים שגופות בני אדם צריכין להן בעולם הזה ... אלא צדיקים יושבים ועטרותיהם בראשיהן ונהנין מזיו השכינה ... וזה שאמרו צדיקים יושבין דרך חידה אמרו, כלומר הצדיקים מצויין שם בלא עמל ובלא יגיעה, וכן זה שאמרו עטרותיהן בראשיהן כלומר דעת שידעו שבגללה זכו לחיי העולם הבא מצויה עמהן והיא העטרה שלהן... **כשנת הראב"ד** א"א דברי האיש הזה צעניי קרובים למי שאומר אין תחיית המתים לגופות אלא לנשמות בלבד, וחיי ראשי לא היה דעת חז"ל על זה שהרי אמרו כתובות (ק"א) עתידין לדיקים שיעמדו בלבושיהן ... ויהיו בעטרת כמשמען וכפשוטן ולא יהיה משל!

רמב"ם הלכות תשובה פרק ח הלכה ב

The Rambam's view of the World to Come was that it is a purely spiritual eternal experience. The Ra'avad and other rabbis of the time regarded such comments as close to a heretical denial of the Resurrection!

7. ואלו הן שאין להן חלק לעולם הבא אלא נכרתים ואובדין ונידונין על גודל רשעים וחטאתם לעולם ולעולמי עולמים: והכופרים בתחיית המתים ובביאת הגואל ...

רמב"ם הלכות תשובה פרק ג הלכה ו

The Rambam does however rule in the Mishne Torah that someone who denies Techiyat Hametim is a heretic who has no place in the World to Come but there is little elaboration on this. Why was this not good enough for the Ra'avad to show the Rambam's true belief in Techiyat Hametim. Did the Ra'avad doubt what the Rambam meant by Techiyat Hametim? Interestingly, the Rambam lists Techiyat Hametim here BEFORE the coming of Mashiach. Is this meant to be a chronological order?

8. והיסוד השלושה עשר - תחיית המתים - וכבר בארנו

רמב"ם - הקדמה לפ' חלק, משנה סנהדרין

9. ותחיית המתים - יסוד מיסודות תורת משה, אין דת ולא דבקות בדת יהודית למי שלא יאמין זה. אבל היא לצדיקים - ולשון בראשית רבה¹ "גבורות גשמים לצדיקים ולרשעים, ותחיית המתים לצדיקים בלבד". ואיך יחיו הרשעים, והם מתים אפילו בחייהם!! וכך אמרו ע"ה (ברכות יח.) רשעים אפילו בחייהם קרואים מתים, וצדיקים אפילו במיתתן קרואים חיים". ודע כי חאדם ימות בהכרח, ויפרד למה שהרכב ממנו

רמב"ם - הקדמה לפ' חלק, משנה סנהדרין

The Rambam's comments in the list of Ikarim are very brief. He refers to an earlier discussion (in that Introduction) in which he describes Resurrection as a foundational Jewish belief. It will however be limited to tzaddikim only. More radically, the Rambam seems to write that the Resurrection will be temporary and that all people are ultimately destined to die again.

The Rambam was severely criticized during his life for failing to commit to the idea of a physical resurrection. It was a commonly held philosophical position, including amongst Islamic philosophers such as Avicenna (980-1037), that the ultimate eternal life was non-physical and that belief in a physical resurrection was a concession to the weakness of the masses who could not conceive of a non-physical existence. There is practically no reference to the Resurrection in the Moreh Nevuchim.²

Proofs were brought from Chazal that physical resurrection was indeed a fundamental Jewish principle

10. אמר ליה אנטונינוס לרבי: גוף ונשמה יכולין לפטור עצמן מן הדין, כיצד? גוף אומר: נשמה חטאת, שמיום שפירשה ממני - הריני מוטל כאבן דומם בקבר. ונשמה אומרת: גוף חטא, שמיום שפירשתי ממנו - הריני פורחת באויר כצפור. אמר ליה, אמשול לך משל, למה הדבר דומה: למלך בשר ודם, שהיה לו פרדס נאה, והיה בו בכורות נאות, והושיב בו שני שומרים, אחד חיגר ואחד סומא. אמר לו חיגר לסומא: בכורות נאות אני רואה בפרדס. בא והרכיבני ונביאם לאכלם. רכב חיגר על גבי סומא, והביאום ואכלום. לימים בא בעל פרדס. אמר להן: בכורות נאות היכן הן? - אמר לו חיגר: כלום יש לי רגלים להלך בהן? - אמר לו סומא: כלום יש לי עינים לראות? מה עשה - הרכיב חיגר על גבי סומא ודן אותם כאחד. אף הקדוש ברוך הוא מביא נשמה וזורקה בגוף, ודן אותם כאחד. שנאמר (תהלים נ) יקרא אל השמים מעל ואל הארץ לדין עמו. יקרא אל השמים מעל - זו נשמה, ואל הארץ לדין עמו - זה הגוף

סנהדרין צא

This gemara is seen as a support for the position that the ultimate day of Judgement will come when the body and soul are reunited. The Soul World that the neshama inhabits after death is simply a 'holding zone' pending Techiyat Hametim.

Outside pressures mounted on the Rambam. In particular, the Ramah (R. Meir b. Todros ha-Levi Abulafia) was shocked at the implication that Maimonides did not subscribe to physical Resurrection as a central principle.

The Rambam eventually (in 1191) publicized his belief in the Resurrection and deny the claims of heresy. He wrote a specific essay on Techiyat Hametim. After seeing that essay many, including the Ramah became satisfied that the Rambam indeed affirmed the traditional belief

1. Our text of Bereishit Rabba does not have this wording, but see Taanit 7a.

2. Other than an oblique reference in 3:23 which does not shed any light on the Rambam's position.

11. And I will state that the resurrection of the dead - which is widely known and recognized among our people, which is accepted by all groups among us, which is mentioned on numerous occasions in the tefillot, Aggadata, and supplications that were composed by the Prophets and the great Sages who fill the pages of the Talmud and the Midrashim - refers to the return of the soul to the body after it had departed. Concerning this, there has never been heard any disagreement in our nation, nor does it have any [allegorical] interpretation [other than its literal meaning]. Nor is it permissible to rely upon any individual who believes otherwise. ... In conclusion, we have been informed prophetically [concerning Techiyat Hameitim], whether on one or on many occasions, and it has been mentioned countless times by Sages of Israel, both of earlier and of recent times, and it has become widely publicized in our nation, and there is universal consensus that the human soul will return to the body. And this is the proper approach concerning the resurrection of the dead.

From Ma'amar Techiyat Hametim of the Rambam

The Rambam clearly defends a literal understanding of a miraculous Techiyat Hametim in his Ma'amar. However, even after its publication, others - opponents and supporters - insisted either that the Rambam didn't really mean it (and that it was only written for the masses) or even that there is an esoteric meaning hidden in the Ma'amar itself!

12. תנו רבנן: הרואה קברי ישראל אומר: ברוך אשר יצר אתכם בדין וזן אתכם בדין, וכלכל אתכם בדין, ואסף אתכם בדין, ועתיד להקימכם בדין ברוך מחיה המתים

ברכות נח:

Chazal introduced a beracha to say on entering a Jewish graveyard - it clearly refers to Techiyat Hametim.

13. הרואה קברי ישראל מברך ברוך אתה יי' אלהינו מלך העולם אשר יצר אתכם בדין וזן אתכם בדין וכלכל אתכם בדין והמית אתכם בדין והוא עתיד להקים אתכם בדין לחיי העולם הבא ברוך אתה יי' מחיה המתים

רמב"ם הלכות ברכות פרק י הלכה י

The Rambam brings the wording of the Gemara but then adds in the words 'לחיי העולם הבא'. Does he intend to make an equation between Techiyat Hametim and Olam Haba? The Rambam may however be stressing that the ultimate goal is the non-physical World-to-Come.

14. I explained that we find men concerned only with the Resurrection; asking if the dead will rise naked or in their garments, and others such problems. But the World-to-Come is entirely overlooked. I thereupon announced very clearly that the Resurrection is a fundamental of the Torah of Moses our master, but that it was not the ultimate goal, and that the ultimate goal is life in the World-to-Come. I engaged in this long discussion so that I dispelled the serious skepticism that contends that the Torah knows of no reward that is not in this world, and that it makes no mention of reward or punishment in the afterlife.

From Ma'amar Techiyat Hametim of the Rambam

Thus, even after Resurrection, the Rambam understands that those resurrected will eventually die again. Most authorities today take the Rambam at his word in the Ma'amar Techiyat Hametim and understand that he did indeed subscribe to a miraculous physical Resurrection³.

C] THE RAMBAN'S POSITION

15. והנה אריכות הרב ז"ל בהרבותו דברים להכריע שבני העוה"ב אינם גוף, לשני ענינים, כי הוא יודע שאנשי קבלתנו יאמינו שאין אחרי התחיה מיתה, על פי מה שדרשו בבלע המות לנצח ואמרו (סנהדרין צב). מתים שעתיד הקב"ה להחיות שוב אינן חוזרין לעפרן, ולזה הדעת בני העוה"ב אחרי התחיה יחיו בעולם ההוא בגופותם, והרב ז"ל מבטל זה הדעת בכל יכלתו, ועל זה חלקו עליו רבים מחכמי הדורות האלו על הכונה הזאת כמו שימצא בדבריהם

ספר תורת האדם להרמב"ן - אות קכד שער הגמול

The position of the Ramban and the kabbalists is that Techiyat Hametim is the ultimate state of man - an eternal rejoining of body and soul, reaching the level of Adam pre-Sin, whereby the body can become ever more and more refined by the impact of the spiritual soul for all eternity. For the Ramban, this eternal physical-spiritual state is 'The World to Come' - Olam Haba. For the kabbalists, Olam Haba is not merely the world of souls that a person reaches after death, but the ultimate eternal world of the Resurrection.

3. For some interesting exceptions to this rule see *Shapiro, The Limits of Orthodox Theology pp154-6*, in particular the views of Rabbi Joseph Hertz (former British Chief Rabbi) and Rav Yosef Kapach.

What function does Resurrection have in Rambam's understanding of the ultimate World to Come as a purely spiritual existence? For the Rambam, Tachiyat Hametim is not directly connected to Yemot Hamashiach or to Olam Haba. One possible answer is that even a temporary Resurrection will of enormous benefit in order to gain the ultimate Olam Haba. Presumably, those resurrected will use their time wisely!

16. תני ר' ישמעאל משל למלך שהיה לו פרדס והיה בו בכורות נאות והושיב בו המלך שומרים אחד חיגר ואחד סומא תני ר' חייא לע"ל הנפש והגוף עומדין בדין מה הקב"ה עושה מניח הגוף ומדיין עם הנשמה והיא אומרת לפניו רבון העולמים שנינו כאחת חטאנו מפני מה אתה מניח את הגוף ומדיין עמי, אמר לה הגוף מן התחתונים הוא ממקום שהן חוטאין אבל את מן העליונים ממקום שאין חוטאין לפני לפיכך אני מניח את הגוף ומדיין עמך.

ויקרא רבה פרשת ויקרא פרשה ד סימן ה

In fact the Rambam also has explicit support from Chazal. The Midrash brings the mashal of the blind and lame watchmen in the name of R' Yishmael. It then brings a contrary opinion - of R. Chiyah - that only the soul will be judged in the ultimate judgement.

D] THE ORDER OF YEMOT HAMASHIACH AND TECHIYAT HAMEITIM

17. I said that the Mashiach would not be required to do wonders, like miraculously splitting the Red Sea, or resurrecting the dead But from this analysis it does not follow that God will not revive the dead by His will and wish when He desires and whomever He desires to resurrect. It will happen in the lifetime of Mashiach, or before him, or after he dies.

From Ma'amar Tachiyat Hametim of the Rambam

SUMMARY 1: THE DESTINY OF THE WORLD

Rambam: THIS WORLD » NATURAL YEMOT HAMASHIACH » TEMPORARY RESURRECTION [BEFORE, DURING OR AFTER MASHIACH] » SPIRITUAL OLAM HABA

Ramban: THIS WORLD » SUPERNATURAL YEMOT HAMASHIACH » ETERNAL RESURRECTION = PHYSICAL/SPIRITUAL OLAM HABA

SUMMARY 2: THE PATH OF THE INDIVIDUAL SOUL

Rambam: LIFE » DEATH » SOUL WORLD/GAN EDEN » TEMPORARY RESURRECTION » DEATH » ETERNAL SPIRITUAL OLAM HABA

Ramban: LIFE » DEATH » SOUL WORLD/GAN EDEN » ETERNAL RESURRECTION/OLAM HABA

E] A NON-MIRACULOUS RESURRECTION?

18. The Resurrection, however, is a miraculous event. Its sense is easily grasped and nothing more is needed than to believe in it as the authentic tradition teaches us. It is something outside the nature of existence and no rational proof of it exists. It simply follows the pattern of all miracles; it is to be accepted and that is that

From Ma'amar Tachiyat Hametim of the Rambam

The Rambam's position seems clear, but see the following extract from R. Aryeh Kaplan's sefer Immortality, Resurrection and the Age of the Universe for a more technological approach to the matter

there is a tradition that the resurrection will take place through the righteous.³⁸

An even clearer picture of the resurrection is provided by another passage in the Zohar. Here we find Rabbi Phinehas quoting the opinion of the School of Shammai that the resurrection will parallel that of Ezekiel. Rabbi Simeon replies:

This was already disputed in earlier generations. But God will perform miracles and unusual wonders with these bones. It is thus written, "Remember that You fashioned me like clay, and will bring me into dust again" (Job 10:9). After that, Scripture states, "You will pour me out like milk and curdle me like cheese. You will clothe me with skin and flesh, and knit me together with bones and sinews" (Job 10:10).

After man decays in the ground, and the time of the resurrection comes, God will take the bones that remain and process them like dough, just as cheese is made from milk. The process will be like the fermentation of milk, which is a very purified fermentation.

The bone will be separated into very small pieces and ground until it is a liquid like milk. It will then be curdled and given a form, just as cheese is curdled out of milk. It will then be formed into skin, flesh, sinew, and bone. Thus it is written, "You will pour me out like milk."³⁹

The remains regenerate: first they will have to be liquified or dissolved until they form a liquid like milk. This will have to take place under very "pure," or sterile, conditions. The resulting liquid will then "curdle" into an embryo, which will in turn grow to form the new body.

As we shall see, we already find ourselves discussing a process that verges on scientific possibility. Before we go into this in detail, however, let us look into the question of just how miraculous the resurrection is meant to be.

In defending his view that the resurrection is only temporary, and that the resurrected dead will live but a short while and then die again, the Rambam states that many sources in our sacred literature prove that a miracle can only produce a temporary result.⁴⁰ This appears to be an unbroken rule—no

has already been successfully tried with animals, the chromosomes of an unfertilized ovum are replaced with those of the cell to be cloned. If this ovum is then implanted in a womb, it will grow into a precise genetic carbon copy of the chromosome donor.

What if an amount of genetic material sufficient to reproduce a full set of chromosomes were to survive in a grave? Cloning could then be done not only from a living person but even from one long dead.

Furthermore, there is no reason why this process should have to take place in a natural womb. There has been much experimentation with artificial wombs, and it is certainly conceivable that a clone could be grown in an artificial womb.

Taking this one step further, the process could also be carried out with an artificial ovum, or with some other mechanism where the genetic material could first develop into a cellular structure and then into a growing embryo.

All this would be the wildest conjecture if it did not fit our traditions so very well. Thus, we speak of the dew of resurrection, which might very well be some sort of nutrient solution or, more probably, some substance that can extract and reassemble the genetic material from human remains. We find the bones being dissolved in this dew. The Zohar clearly states that this will take place under sterile conditions. The allusions to fermentation may refer to some sort of genetic viruses that may conceivably be employed in this process. The final result is the structuring of the genetic material and its development into an embryo, also clearly alluded to in the last quotation from the Zohar.

The only problem would then be to locate the remains of all the people to be resurrected. This, however, could be done prophetically. We have the precedent where Rabbi Isaac Luria, the holy Ari, located the graves of many Zaddikim through divine inspiration.⁴¹ We furthermore find a tradition that one of the requirements for the resurrection is prophecy: "Divine inspiration (*ru'ah ha kodesh*) brings the resurrection."⁴²

miracle can result in anything permanent. Nature follows its normal course, and a miracle can only temporarily abrogate it. An interesting consequence of this may be that no permanent record is left of miracles, and therefore we should not expect to find any archaeological evidence for them.

The Rambam argues that since the resurrection is patently a miracle, its effects can only be temporary. This is one of his strongest proofs that the resurrected dead will eventually have to die.

However, as we have seen, there is still a majority opinion that the resurrected dead will live forever. According to this opinion, the Rambam's objection remains a glaring question. This objection remains unanswered unless we say that the resurrection does not involve the alteration of any of the laws of nature.

Whether the resurrected dead will live forever or not may be related to the dispute between the School of Shammai and the School of Hillel. Shammai derives the details of the resurrection from Ezekiel's vision, where the dead were revived miraculously and eventually died. Hillel's School, on the other hand, derives the details from embryonic development, which does not involve any manifest miracle. It is logical to assume that the Hillelites hold that the resurrected dead can live forever. Indeed, in the Talmud, we find that those who maintain that the resurrected dead will live forever also hold that the story in Ezekiel was only a vision and cannot be applied to the final resurrection.

Now, although we must qualify our remarks as conjectural, the lessons that we can learn from this are quite remarkable.

Instead of viewing this matter from a traditional viewpoint, let us for a moment explore the possibility of bringing a dead person back to life as a purely technological problem. The newly developed science of cloning comes into play here. As is well known, almost every cell in the body contains a full set of chromosomes, with all the genetic material needed to reconstruct the entire body. In the standard method of cloning, which

Bodily resurrection may also be possible even when no remains exist. There are many cases where a body is completely destroyed and no genetic material remains. The main thing necessary to reconstruct a human body, however, is information—namely, the information contained in the genetic code.

If one had a record of the genetic code of any individual, whether recorded in a book or in any other manner, one would, in theory at least, be able to make a perfect carbon copy of this individual's body. No actual remains would be needed. All that a sufficiently advanced technology would need would be a precise record of the individual's genetic code.

Using this information, seed molecules of DNA could be produced, and these in turn could be built up into a complete set of artificial genes and chromosomes. Once these existed, the process of cloning could take place the same as with natural chromosomes.

Only one question would remain. How do we recover this information? How do we obtain the genetic code of someone who has been dead for thousands of years?

There is one obvious answer: information can be transmitted verbally. When no other method exists, the information contained in the genetic code of any individual could be revealed prophetically. This indeed may be another reason why prophecy is a necessary precondition for the resurrection.

Indeed, this may even be alluded to in the Midrash that says, "It is prophecy that will grant flesh, sinews, and bones to the dead. This is also true of all flesh and bones that have been eaten by animals and birds."⁴³ What this Midrash may be telling us is that when all the genetic material has been destroyed, as when a person is eaten by a wild animal, it will be restored prophetically.

The missing genetic coding could be supplied prophetically and would then be used to construct artificial chromosomes. A more fascinating possibility, however, is that the very process of prophecy could be used to reconstruct the chromosomes by a telekinetic process of some kind. Indeed, the Scripture may

have been referring to just such a process when it says that Ezekiel "prophesied" over the dry bones.

In all of this discussion, we speak only of the body. Even the most perfect clone, no matter how exact a carbon copy of the body it may be, does not contain the memories of the original donor.⁴⁴

The same is true here. All that we would be able to reconstruct technologically is the body. The memories that were in the dead person's brain are beyond the power of any technology to reproduce—this is guaranteed by the second law of thermodynamics. Thus, even if the body could be reconstructed technologically, the soul and its memories would have to be supplied by God Himself. This is also clearly stated in all our traditions.

As we noted above, this technological interpretation of the resurrection is entirely conjectural, even though it fits into our traditions very well. There are many other Talmudic and Midrashic statements that could be illuminated by this interpretation, but they were not included in this paper because of its limited scope.

In another sense, the interpretation proposed here can give us a new outlook on modern scientific developments. Without question, some of the most exciting discoveries have been made in the life sciences, especially in the fields of molecular biology and genetic engineering. As with everything new, we must ask, How does this serve God's purpose? For indeed, an important fundamental principle states that everything must ultimately serve this purpose. And if so, to what end has God given man the ability to understand the genetic code and to develop the technology to produce such things as artificial clones? If these discoveries do nothing more than provide us with insight into the resurrection, then they serve the lofty purpose of helping us to understand the Torah. If this technology should actually be used to bring about the resurrection, and ultimately the world-to-come, then we will openly see science in the service of God.

F] REINCARNATION

19. י. עוד שורש אחר נמצא להנהגה בעניני העוה"ז, והוא שהחכמה העליונה סידרה להרבות עוד ההצלה כמ"ש, שנשמה אחת תבא לעוה"ז פעמים שונות בגופים שונים, ועל ידי זה הנה תוכל לתקן בפעם אחת את אשר קלקלה בפעם אחרת, או להשלים מה שלא השלימה. ואולם בסוף כל הגלגולים, לדין שלעתיד לבא, הנה הדין יהיה עליה כפי כל מה שעבר עליה מן הגלגולים שנתגלגלה ומן המצבים שהיתה בהם. והנה אפשר שיגיעו ענינים לאדם שנשמתו מגולגלת, כפי מה שיוגרם לה מצד מה שעשתה בגלגול קודם, וינתן לאדם ההוא בעולם מצב כפי זה, וכפי המצב שינתן לו יהיה המשא אשר יוטל עליו וכמש"ל.

דרך ה' בגי'

The Zohar is filled with teachings re-enforcing the concept of reincarnation. It is accepted by all kabbalistic thinkers - here Derech Hashem sees reincarnation as a fundamental part of the workings of hashgacha in the world. The Ari z'l wrote the Sha'ar HaGilgulim and R. Chaim Vital wrote Sefer HaGilgulim - each outlining the mechanics of reincarnation, including: which Biblical figures are gilgulim of which others, what forms gilgulim can take i.e. across gender/species or inorganic life, how gilgul applies differently to men and women, the concept of 'ibbur' - temporary grafting of another neshama during a person's life, either positively or negatively (as a dibbuk)

20. והנני אומר כי אנשים ממי שנקראים יהודים מצאתים מאמינים בגלגול וקורים אותו ההיעתקות, וענינו לדעתם רוח ראובן תהיה בשמעון, ואחר כך בלוי, ואחר כך ביהודה. ומהם או רובם סוברים שיש שתהיה רוח האדם בבהמה ורוח בהמה באדם, ודברים רבים מן ההזיות הללו והבלבולים. ונתברר לי מה שמדמים שהוא הביאם לידי דבר זה, ומצאתים ארבע טעויות, וראיתי להזכירם ולהשיב עליהם ...

ספר אמונות ודעות של ר' סעדיא גאון ויח

Rav Saadia Gaon rejected entirely the concept of gilgulim, as did the Sefer Haikarim of Rav Yosef Albo. It is not mentioned by the Rambam.

21. וכונתם כי האדם חושב כמה פעמים לייאש א"ע שאין יכול לתקן בשום אופן וע"כ יתנהג תמיד באופן א' ואם יגזור עליו הקב"ה למות ימות אבל טעות הוא שסוף דבר יהיה כל מה שהקב"ה רוצה מנפשו שיתקן מוכרח הוא לתקן ויצוא עוד פעם ופעמים לעוה"ז ובע"כ יוכרח לתקן וא"כ למה לו כל העמל למות ולסבול חיבוב הקצר ושאר נרות ולחזור עוד הפעם ...

משנה ברורה - שער הציון תרכ"ו:

But the Mishna Berura clearly accepts the concept. Although belief in reincarnation is not one of the 13 Ikarim of emuna, it seems to be the generally accepted view today.