

# CHAPTER 3:7 HUMANKIND

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

## *Derech Hashem* - The Way of G-d 1:3:7

While we're aware of our soul only thanks to our vitality and our consciousness <sup>1</sup>, it has another, more clandestine function. The soul purifies and uplifts our body and physicality, step by step. In fact, it even elevates it to the point where the body can bask in spiritual perfection just as the soul itself will in the World to Come <sup>2</sup>.

In any event, Adam and Eve would have achieved that instantaneously had they not sinned, and would have brought themselves and the entire universe to that point. But they didn't <sup>3</sup>.

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> That is, we experience our soul when we realize that our being animate and aware isn't simply a fact of life, but actually a product of a higher force beyond it. Otherwise we don't tend to experience it. It can be experienced, though, through fervent prayer and devotional music, and the like, but that's beyond the scope of this discussion.

See last paragraph to note 1 of 1:3:2 above for the various parts of the soul. Also see 1:3:12 below regarding the soul's effect on the body; and Zohar 1, p.80,

<sup>2</sup> This purification process will take place in the course of the Resurrection of the Dead (discussed in 1:3:9, 11, 13; 1:4:2; and 2:2:4 below) and come to full fruition in the World to Come (discussed in 1:3:4, 9; 2:2:-2; 2:4:6; and 2:8:4 below).

See *Da'at Tevunot* 88 for an analysis of the process and *Klallim Rishonim* 9 for a more esoteric explanation.

<sup>3</sup> See *Kuzari* 1:115; Ramban on Genesis 2:17; R' Bachai and Alshech on Genesis 2:15.

---

Rabbi Yaakov Feldman has translated and commented upon "The Gates of Repentance", "The Path of the Just", and "The Duties of the Heart" (Jason Aronson Publishers). His works are available in bookstores and in various locations on the Web.