

# CHAPTER 4:11 MAN'S STANDING IN THIS WORLD, AND THE SPECIFIC WAYS AVAILABLE TO HIM

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

*Derech Hashem* -- The Way of G-d 1:4:11

So at bottom, the ultimate intention behind all of the mitzvot is to draw close to G-d and to bask in His light. And the whole point of refraining from sins is to avoid drawing away from Him <sup>1</sup>.

While these are the overarching reasons for the mitzvot in general, their specific roles are rooted in deep mysteries that are dependent on man's own and the world's makeup, as we indicated <sup>2</sup>. But we'll address some of that at a later point <sup>3</sup>.

Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> Ramchal concludes this chapter by underscoring the fact that mitzvot serve a deeper, far more compelling role in the world than we imagine. For they're not just "good deeds" or lovely expressions of cultural pride; they're agents of sweeping change and consequence.

See a reiteration of these points in *Messilat Yesharim* Ch. 1 where Ramchal says that "our sages ... taught us that we were created *to delight in G-d and enjoy the radiance of His Divine presence* ..." and that "the means to bring you to this goal are the mitzvot"; and where he also said that "it's only fitting ... that there be no goal in any of your actions, large or small, other than to get close to G-d *and to eradicate the barriers that separate you from Him*".

Let it also be said that we see from here that G-d is both the originator of the mitzvah system and its objective, nothing or no one else. That's to say that it and the Torah itself derive from Him and lead us back to Him as well, thus forming a perfect circle. And that is its most important point.

<sup>2</sup> See 1:4:5. Also see 4:1:5 and 4:4:10 below as well as "*Da'at Tevunot 2*" (6).

<sup>3</sup> See Section 4 below.

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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.