

# CHAPTER 5: THE DIFFERENT REALMS AND THEIR SPECIFIC SITUATIONS □ PARAGRAPH 5

*by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman*

We pointed out last time that there are two major thrusts in the universe: "From up above, downward", and "from down below, upward".

We explained that to mean that there are times when the spiritual backdrop behind everything physical (known as "the transcendent forces") holds sway in the universe and affect us as well as everything else commandingly. And there are times when **we hold sway in the universe and affect everything (the transcendent forces included!) commandingly-- when we willfully obey or defy G-ds biddings.**

Ironically, then, it can be said that we have great and manifest power in the universe when we willfully "surrender" ourselves to G-d's wishes. And that while we still do have great and manifest power when we willfully defy G-d, nonetheless the sort of power rooted in complying with G-d is affirmative and constructive, while the kind that's rooted in defying Him is negative and destructive.

Lest we forget let's re-affirm, though, that while the transcendent forces are indeed the backdrop of everything we know of, and while we ourselves are capable of great authority, G-d Almighty still and all rules, and utterly so. It's just that He uses various tangible and intangible things-- ourselves included-- to accomplish His ends in the physical world.

That having been said, it follows then that G-d has placed limits on the degree that we can affect the transcendent forces. And that he has enabled certain of the things we do to affect them, and others not to.

Hence, my innocuously laying a cup of coffee to the side after having sipped from it doesn't do very much to change the machinations of the universe. (Though everything has its consequences, no matter how minor. In this instance, my having put the cup one place forces me to go there again when I want it the next time rather than somewhere else, which certainly sends off ripples, no matter how small.)

But my setting aside a Kiddush cup on the Sabbath after using it (i.e., after having sanctified the Sabbath with the wine in it), on the other hand, has global (albeit invisible) ramifications aside from the sort of everyday ripples we mentioned.

One point remains. Not only do our **actions** have ramifications-- what we say and think do also, to

some degree. In fact, since our words and (even more so) our thoughts are 'closer to the bone', their effects are deeper yet than our actions. And they can do more harm or good.

Hence it would be wise to be on top of our thoughts, words, and deeds in light of that. But how so? Perhaps the way a perceptive and sensitive parent watches what he or she does, says, and indeed thinks about his or her children, in light of the effect they have upon them, however subtle.

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