

# CHAPTER 1:1 DIVINE PROVIDENCE IN GENERAL

*by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman*

It's clear that every single being -- celestial or earthly -- was created to play a specific and important part in the ultimate goal of the universe, Ramchal assures us <sup>1</sup>. Thus, everything's makeup was specifically formulated by G-d to fulfill its role in that <sup>2</sup>.

Since everything was created for a reason, it follows then that everything continues to exist specifically in order to benefit the whole <sup>3</sup>. That's why when G-d created everything He decided to oversee each thing, in order to keep it on the specific course He wanted it to follow <sup>4</sup>.

Footnotes:

1. That goal is to attach unto G-d in the world to come, which was discussed above in 1:2:5 and elsewhere. and will be reiterated in 2:1:2. Also see Da'at Tevunot 124.

One of the points made here -- among many others too numerous to cite -- is that not only do celestial beings contribute to that ultimate goal, as one would expect, but the more earthly, lower things do too, as one might not expect. Conversely, not only do earthly, more mundane things contribute to that ultimate goal, as one might hope, but more celestial things do too -- even though they won't ultimately determine it since they only support the earthly and mundane, as we've learned.

2. Thus, nothing is by accident or unintentional; everything's existence is calculated and deliberate; and each and every thing as well as each and every one of us is a player.

Reality as such is a great "cholent" (stew) with each and every element adding to the rich flavor, and whose absence would somehow or another detract from the final product's success. It would also help to see G-d as the great Conductor and Composer, and ourselves as instruments in a great orchestra playing His own composition our unique way.

After all, a purposeful G-d would never allow for anything superfluous in His world. Everything would either have to serve His purposes or simply cease to exist. There's no room for happenstance in G-d's creation.

See Ma'amar Halkkurim ("b'Torah u'Mitzvot" and "b'Inyan haNissim").

3. That is, whatever exists must exist and whatever no longer exists no longer has to and was

replaced by another thing that is now vital for the goal. That might perhaps help us to understand the reality and necessity of death.

4. The sorts of supervision that come into play and the definition of the term itself will be explicated later on in chapters 2,4,5 below. In short, though, the term refers to the process that G-d uses to fulfill His will in the world and to manage it.

The idea is that G-d continually oversees each and everything to make sure it fulfills its intended role and to maintain those that do. Would that we all understood the profundity of this reality! Could anyone knowing this ever wonder if he or she mattered ? Dare anyone take anything for granted in light of that?

Also see Ma'amar Halkkurim ("b'Hashgacha").

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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.