

# CHAPTER 2: MANKIND IN THIS WORLD □ PARAGRAPH 1

*by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman*

As we already pointed out <sup>1</sup>, man's goal is to merit attaching himself onto G-d's presence in the World to Come. As such, the ultimate goal of everything that occurs is the World to Come. G-d has nonetheless seen fit to have us start off in this world, dependant on its laws of nature, and He saw to it that that would be the first stage in the ultimate goal <sup>2</sup>.

Everything that occurs in this world is thus rooted in the idea of it being a stage in what's to follow it in the ultimate realm -- the World to Come.

Footnotes:

1. Refer to the entire second chapter of section 1 as well as the first chapter of Messilat Yesharim. That's to say that attaching ourselves onto G-d's presence in The World to Come is our *raison d'être* laid out plain. For it's there that we'll enjoy the sort of repose and tranquility that only someone who had achieved a magnificent, all-encompassing, and long sought-after goal could enjoy. After all, true happiness only comes when one's dreams are realized and his worst fears averted, and the greatest dream of the soul is to cling on to G-d while its greatest fear is that it won't.
2. Given that we were purposefully placed in this world and its contingencies, it's thus clear why it's nearly impossible for us to transcend our physicality. In fact, some might argue that it would seem better for us to have started out in the World to Come so as to have avoided this so very long and seemingly unnecessary excursion into the world with its many snares and risks. But G-d purposefully deemed it necessary for us to start off here and to be bound first by its exigencies.

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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.