

CHAPTER 2: THE SPIRITUAL WORLD □ PART 1

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

Each and every thing is a phenomenon unto itself, a world of its own. Yet each and every thing also has a relationship with everything else both near and far, by degrees. Let's take a simple pea in a pod for example. Each one has its own dimensions, a character of its own, a unique history, a personal destiny, and each has a special and distinctive relationship to every other pea there too, as well as to everything out of its sphere. The same is true of each pea-pod also; each has its own makeup and a relationship with everything else near and far, pea-pod or not.

Now, if that's true of each and every pea and pea-pod, it goes without saying that it's true of each one of us. We too each have distinct dimensions, characters, histories, destinies, and relationships. But as we all know, our beings reach farther and deeper yet. For we have inner lives; our relationships to other people and things are more complex and tangled, and touch upon many, many other factors; and we go on to exist in other dimensions once we leave this one.

But it goes beyond all that too. Because there are realms and dimensions far beyond our physical one with greater depth, that touch upon far more distant dominions, and that likewise have distinctive qualities, histories, and roles to play in the great and vast cosmic theater. Yet all were created by G-d Almighty alone, whose abilities are infinite.

For as Ramchal put it, "Just as G-d created physical beings with His infinite capacity ... He likewise deliberately created other beings that are wholly superior to them And just as He granted each physical being its own boundaries and properties, He likewise granted the superior entities the sort of particular and specific properties He saw fit to bestow upon them."

The crux of the matter, though, is that belief in personal uniqueness, in a spiritual realm, and in the idea that everything interacts with everything else (as will be laid out later on) is deep-rooted in the Jewish Faith. And assuming that the whole is physical alone, and that things haven't their own makeup, destiny, and role to play in the whole, is simply anathema to us.

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