

DA'AT TEVUNOT - SECTION 1: CHAPTER 13

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

Da'at Tevunot 1:13 (# 46 - 47)

1.

There's another thing about G-d's interactions with us we'd do well to explain now ¹. It's that we're only able to grasp the *effects* of G-d's actions -- not the means and processes He uses to bring them about, because they touch upon things about Him that we can't fathom ², given that we can only comprehend things that touch upon us ³.

And so while G-d is said to "know", "remember", "reflect upon", "sympathize with", "anger", or to "want" one thing or another ⁴, in truth He doesn't at all experience those the way we do. All we can say is that He experiences certain ineffable thought processes that are somehow and mysteriously analogous to what we'd experience in certain circumstances, but that they're nevertheless utterly removed from ours.

The point of the matter, in any event, is that we experience the kinds of interactions and effects He'd want us to ⁵.

2.

It's also true that what He's said to *refrain* from doing ⁶ is beyond our ken. For, He just has to "say" something for it to come about -- albeit in ineffable ways -- in our realm to the extent He'd wants it to ⁷. A classical example of this ineffable ability was the time He was able to say something and have it heard by Moses and concurrently *not* be heard by the Jewish Nation right beside him ⁸.

The fact of the matter is that G-d is omnipotent ⁹ and no "rule" ¹⁰ or "limitation" ¹¹ could ever thwart Him, for while our actions are finite and have their limitations, His are infinite and boundless.

And now that we understand just how perfect, exalted, omnipotent, and unimpeded G-d actually is we can begin to comprehend some of the otherwise unfathomable and bewildering aspects about life, history and the course of things we're often thrown by ¹².

Footnotes:

¹ See *Clallim Rishonim* 6 "V'Kav" for a discussion of this.

There's some seeming redundancy here and 1:12 since both discuss G-d's interactions with us. Nevertheless while Ramchal discussed G-d's use of *character traits* there he'll be concentrating on His *thoughts* and *actions* here.

² I.e., His thoughts and processes.

³ I.e., our material thoughts and processes.

⁴ Which involve thoughts and processes beyond us.

⁵ When He deploys those thoughts and processes.

⁶ Or what He does to a limited extent, as we'll see below.

⁷ That is, He can bring two contradictory phenomena about at the same time.

⁸ Ramchal is referring to what's said in *Torat Cohanim*, *Parshat Vayikra* 2:10 here.

⁹ And thus ineffable.

¹⁰ Of logic or of some other theoretical lawgiver.

¹¹ Which could theoretically be placed on His abilities.

¹² Which will be discussed next.