

DA'AT TEVUNOT - SECTION 2: CHAPTER 6

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

Da'at Tevunot 1:6 (# 36 [cont.] - 37)

1.

What believing in G-d's *Yichud* -- His supreme sovereignty -- comes down to is having faith in the fact that nothing whatsoever can thwart Him, as He alone reigns supreme. Among other things that implies that not only is there no opposing deity to Him who controls wrong and injustice, but that in fact He Himself created both good and evil ¹.

Unlike the ancient idolaters, we believe that nothing under Him -- no "ruler" or "governor" -- has command of the world. In point of fact, G-d Himself oversees each and every created entity personally. And nothing comes about without His willing it and bringing it about, as nothing happens by chance or as a consequence of nature or "fate"; everything is on purpose and on target, and G-d's own idea ².

We also believe that G-d is the lone Judge over everything celestial as well as the most mundane of things ³. Since He's compelled to do nothing, He needn't even comply with His own edicts and requirements if they disagree with His ultimate will ⁴. That's not to say that He hasn't granted us the freedom to do what we will ⁵, yet He can decide to *not* take our actions into account and to be benevolent to whomever He cares to ⁶.

That in fact has always been our people's consolation and has allowed us hope for our ultimate future. For we've been taught that G-d will always abide by the vow He made with our ancestors and will never abandon His people despite our failings, and that He will indeed bring on the long awaited redemption when He sees fit. For "He is the L-rd", as Ramchal reiterates, "so He can do that whenever He wants to".

And the other point to be made is that no one can oppose G-d, even if he uses the very supernatural or natural mechanisms that G-d set up to challenge Him. For since He allowed for those mechanisms He can undo them all the same or change the "rules" as He wills.

2.

In point of fact, the only reason why we don't realize all of this viscerally and must accept it on faith

is because G-d's utter sovereignty has been hidden away from us⁷. But there'll come a time when G-d will openly display His absolute sovereignty, His *Yichud*. For as Ramchal asserts, *it was toward that end alone that G-d established the world and all of its ways*⁸.

Indeed, everything but *everything* will prove to have played a role in the great drama of the revelation of G-d's *Yichud* in the end. And once it's revealed, we'll be able to understand in retrospect the singular role that each and every element of the cosmos *en toto* has played in that reality. For each thing and every moment will prove to have served as a clue and solution to the great and dazzling fact of G-d's absolute sovereignty⁹.

And we'll also learn that our having been created imperfect and having been granted a way to perfect ourselves, of being rewarded, and of drawing closer to G-d in the process will also all prove to be an offshoot of the phenomenon of the revelation of G-d's *Yichud*¹⁰.

Footnotes:

¹ See Isaiah 45:7.

This and the following affirmations are intended to countervail the mistakes cited in 1:5.

² This is what's referred to as "radical monotheism" -- the belief that G-d is the lone cosmic protagonist.

³ And that He's also the sole administrator of His judgments.

⁴ That is, if they disagree with His ultimate goal. For, in G-d's eyes the ultimate end justifies *all* means.

⁵ Which would seem to expose us to disobedience. And by the way, free choice will itself be undone in the end: see 1:11 below.

⁶ As it's said in G-d's own name, "I will be gracious unto whomever I care to be, even if he isn't worthy of it" (*Berachot 7a*). Also see Job 35:6, Jeremiah 50:20, Isaiah 43-25 and 48:11, and Zachariah 3:9, all of which underscore the fact that G-d can undo the rules, so to speak, if He cares to.

Thus it could be said that rather than enabling humans to possibly rebel, G-d *Himself* can rebel, if you will, against the very system He has set in place, and do as He will whenever and in whatever instance He cares to. This is once again an indication of the radical and thorough-going nature of G-d's sovereignty, His *Yichud*.

⁷ This harkens back to the point the Soul made in Ramchal's Introduction that while he accepts certain principles of the religion on faith, he nonetheless doesn't actually *sense* them to be true on

his own. Ramchal's point here is that he -- and we -- will indeed sense the truth of all of them in the end.

⁸ Put plainly, everything is as it is because G-d wanted it to be so, so as to allow for the revelation of His *Yichud* which is the point of it all.

This revelation will begin in the Messianic Era (see *Klach Pitchei Chochma* 49) and will conclude in the Great Day of Judgment (Ibid. 79, 87 and *Da'at Tevunot* 170.)

⁹ Given that, we can now grasp something of the depth and breadth of the eventual revelation of G-d's *Yichud*. It will entail an infinite and utterly unearthly series of revelations of the meaning behind and the processes embodied in this world which will go deeper and deeper, wider and wider *ad infinitum*.

What that means to say is that we'll each come to understand G-d's ways in this world on an endlessly more and more profound level. So for example while we might at first understand how we'd been influenced by our parents' actions and how we'd influenced our own children's actions in the great course of things (which is no small feat), we'd then perhaps come to realize the role our grandparents played on our beings, and how we'd influenced our own grandchildren's lives, etc. We might then transcend that too by understanding our parents' *thoughts* and *motivations*, as well as our children's, etc.; then what instigated those motivations, etc., and so on. And then we'd go past all that to the point where we'd understand G-d's role in all that by degrees.

¹⁰ He's referring to the questions raised back in 1:2:1 about why we were created imperfect to begin with; his assertion here is that that, too, will become manifest once G-d's *Yichud* is revealed.

There very are many references to the fact, centrality, implications and revelation of G-d's *Yichud* in Ramchal's writing. See for example *Klach Pitchei Chochma* 1, 4, 16, 30, 39, 47-49, 79-80, 92, 113, and 138., *Adir Bamaron* pp. 197-199, 210, 225-227, *Ma'amar Sod HaYichud*, etc.

Refer to the following for discussions of G-d's *Yichud* in Ramchal's thoughts: R' Shriki's *Rechev Yisrael* pp. 167-228 and his essay *HaYichud* in his edition of *Da'at Tevunot* pp. 61-66; R' Yoseph Avivi's *Zohar Ramchal* pp. 178-191, 213-216; and R' Friedlander's edition of *Klach Pitchei Chochma* pp. 35-37.

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.