

# DA'AT TEVUNOT - SECTION 1: CHAPTER 8

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

*Da'at Tevunot* 1:8 (# 40 [continued] )

1.

Indeed, "all flaws" like evil, injustice and the like "will be undone once G-d's *Yichud* is fully displayed, and everything will be rectified by virtue of the fact that His goodness alone will reign supreme" in the end <sup>1</sup>.

But let's consider the ramifications of that. It means, among other things, that all such flaws are and have always been meant to be "temporary" <sup>2</sup> and to be undone.

2.

It's explained that they're derived from the phenomenon known as G-d "hiding His countenance" from the world or an individual: from His not wanting to "reveal His countenance" initially so that the world not be perfected from the first but rather in the end <sup>3</sup>.

But it was never G-d's intention to keep His countenance hidden – He always intended to reveal it eventually and to undo the wrongfulness brought on by it <sup>4</sup>. So He established a structure to accomplish just that: the mitzvah-system. Follow it and you'll enjoy eternity, we're assured, the "obscured light" will shine upon you, you'll "bask in the light of life" <sup>5</sup>, and you'll witness the revelation of G-d's countenance for yourself.

There are other options, though, if one doesn't take advantage of that, since G-d's *Yichud* will inevitably be made manifest, one way or another. One option is to experience the consequences of one's own sins <sup>6</sup> and the other is to repent <sup>7</sup>.

3.

There's yet another implication to the fact that G-d's *Yichud* will inevitably manifest itself. It's that free will -- which enables us to decide to either perfect ourselves or not -- will *be* undone, Ramchal points out, at the end of the six-thousand years given humanity to serve G-d <sup>8</sup>. We'll thus be angelic <sup>9</sup> and freed from the ties of the *yetzer hara* and everything associated with it.

Indeed, the whole point of manifesting G-d's rule will be to show just how all-encompassing it has always been. For while life is stormy, and evil and injustice seems to reign without impediment and in full throttle, in the end G-d will be proven to reign supreme.

This in fact is the foundation of our faith as Jews and what has always kept our hearts strong in the long and bitter course of exile -- the idea that while wrongdoing and injustice has had the wherewithal to do what it will, it will ultimately be undone and G-d's *Yichud* will eventually manifest itself <sup>10</sup>.

Footnotes:

<sup>1</sup> As Ramchal put it elsewhere, "wrongdoing will actually turn back into good ... all harm will be rectified, and all evil turned back into actual good ... (once) G-d's *Yichud* is revealed".

We've grown so used to wrongdoing and injustice that we tend to take it in stride. Children, on the other hand, are flabbergasted by it and say things like, "That's not fair! It shouldn't be like that!" They know that wrong is just ... wrong and that things shouldn't be that way. They'll have been proven to be right when G-d's goodness and fairness will have full reign -- when we sad, weathered adults will have been proven too cynical.

See *Klach Pitchei Chochma* 4, and refer to R' Shriki's thorough treatment of the role and undoing of evil in pp. 314-328 of his edition.

<sup>2</sup> I.e., a "passing phase". See 3:20 below.

All wrongdoing will prove to have been nothing other than a straw-man -- a huge and daunting artifice *apparently* given the power to oppose G-d Almighty Himself, but not actually so.

<sup>3</sup> See Numbers 6:25-26: "May G-d shine His countenance upon you and favor you, (and) may G-d raise His countenance toward you and grant you peace".

The contrast between G-d's hiding and revealing His countenance will factor into other phenomena as well, as we'll see in 1:14 and 3:3 below. Also see *Derech Hashem* 1:4:10.

<sup>4</sup> Understand of course that G-d didn't disclose His *Yichud* from the first for a good reason: it would have foiled His intentions for us to perfect ourselves, as we'd seen in 1:1:2. So He held Himself back, if you will, and granted us the opportunity to allow Him to reveal His countenance on our own.

<sup>5</sup> I.e., in G-d's own light. See Ch. 1 of *Messilat Yesharim* and *Derech Hashem* 1:4:10.

<sup>6</sup> Either in life or afterwards.

<sup>7</sup> There's a world of things to be said about these three options (mitzvah-observance, repentance, or

retribution) whose implications are vast, but we'll limit ourselves to the following.

The most important implication is that each and every one of us is sure to experience the Divine up close; no one will be forsaken (see 1:15 below, *Adir Bamarom* p. 211, and Ramchal's *Peirush HaZohar Reish Mishpatim* pp. 277-278). Some of us will come to it willingly while others will come to it "kicking and screaming", if you will, but all will be accommodated.

<sup>8</sup> Don't underestimate the primordial shift involved in the undoing of free will. After all, as Rambam puts it, "the human species is unique in the world and unlike any other (in this way specifically) ... in that man, of his own volition, consciously and with his own mind, can distinguish between good and evil, and can (freely) do whatever he wants to do, either good or evil, without anyone stopping him" (*Hilchot Teshuva* 5:1); and, "the ability to willfully do either good or bad things at any time *is an essential part of our beings*" (*Sh'mone Perakim* Ch. 8). So in a sense, we'll no longer be human when G-d's *Yichud* is revealed; we'll be "angelic", as Ramchal words it in our text.

Notice, too, that the *necessity* for free will was brought up just before this, in 1:7. The point is that, indeed, it will be necessary for the meanwhile, but not forever: like evil, it too will prove to be "temporary".

<sup>9</sup> I.e., given that angels don't have free choice.

<sup>10</sup> The revelation of G-d's *Yichud* will be the instance par excellence of everything falling into place and of all vexing contradictions being solved in one fell swoop undoing all chaos.

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