DA'AT TEVUNOT - SECTION 2: CHAPTER 1

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Da'at Tevunot 2:1 (# 59-68)

1.

We'll now concentrate on humankind, whose existence is the whole point of G-d's actions, and who are the only entities who serve G-d [1]. In fact, understanding humankind will help us to understand all that preceded this discussion, given that humankind was the target of all that was spoken of there.

And we'll concentrate on three things when it comes to that: on man's makeup [2], his actions, and on the consequences of his actions [3]. Then we'll touch on the subject of the resurrection of the dead, which we'd cited early on [4].

2.

The first thing to concentrate on when it comes to that last point is that there'd have to be an eventual resurrection of the dead and a subsequent reconnoitering of body and soul because, given that G-d granted man both a body and a soul to use in his Divine service, it only follows that *both* would be rewarded in the end, not just the soul [5]. After all, isn't it said that "G-d withholds reward from no one" (*Baba Kama* 38A)?

And we'd also need to dwell on the astounding fact of man's body and soul being initially joined [6], then separated, then fully joined in the end, since those phenomena certainly have their effects on a person [7].

Footnotes:

[1] That is, up to now we'd concentrated on G-d's being and His full sovereignty; we'll now concentrate on ourselves and the role we play as the subjects of His sovereignty in the playing out of G-d's great designs. And also, the truth be known, because nothing whatsoever is quite as absorbing, labyrinthine, and evocative to us as humanity.

Ramchal follows this same pattern in the first three chapters of *Derech Hashem* in fact, going from the study of G-d to that of humankind..

[2] I.e., on his being comprised of a body and soul, as well as on…

[3] I.e., on the things that effect his body and soul in life, the Afterlife, and in the World to Come (in fact, Ramchal's real object of interest will prove to be the latter, given that the resurrection of the dead -- the professed subject at hand -- is "merely" a stop along the way to the World to Come).

[4] See our discussion in "Ramchal's Introduction".

[5] Others reasons for the resurrection will be discussed later on in this chapter.

Besides, if only the soul were to be rewarded, then the body would have been nothing more than an indentured servant of sorts who worked long and hard for the soul, who -- while it was indeed fed, clothed, and provided for in life -- would still-and-all have nothing of its own to claim in the end.

[6] He's ostensibly speaking about the simple fact that our bodies and souls are conjoined when we're conceived, but on a more esoteric level he's referring to the idea cited in *Iggrot Pitchei Chochma v'Da'at* 19 about the original and fundamental unity and self-sameness of body and soul.

[7] Now, the whole idea of the dead coming alive -- stepping back into their old bodies as if they were pants and shirts, dusting themselves off, and going on with life again -- is stupendous, though it's actually hardly more astonishing than the phenomenal idea of human beings being conceived and born then dying in the first place. Still and all, the idea of the resurrection of the dead is too out of our experience for us to accept outright. Yet belief in the eventual resurrection of the dead is a tenet of our faith that's cited many times. We're told, for example, that "your dead will be revived" (Isaiah 26:19), and that "many that sleep in the land of dust will awaken" (Daniel 12:2). The most straightforward and lengthy depiction of it of course is the one laid out in Ezekiel 37: 1-14.

In fact, we cite the resurrection of the dead in our daily and special prayers (E.g., *Elokai Neshama Shenanatta Bi*, in *Shemone Esrei*, as *Keil Malei Rachamim*, etc.).

Also
see *Berachot*15b, *Ketuvot* 8b, *Kiddushin* 39b, *Megilah* 7b, *Sanhedrin* 90-91, *Shabbat* 88b, *Yoma* 72; Rambam's Commentary to *Perek Chellek* and *Hilchot Teshuvah* 3:6, 8; *Tosafot*, *Baba Kama* 16b *veHu*); *Emunot v'De'*ot 6:7; Ramban's *Torat ha-Adam* (end of *Sha'ar ha-Gemul*); and *Sefer Halkkurim* 4:30.

Also see Ramchal's own *Ma'amar Halkkurim* "*B'inyan HaGemul*".

In his discussion of the combination of body and soul elsewhere Ramchal harkens to the idea that this refers to the next level of discussion in the Kabbalistic writings after the aforementioned *Tzimtzum* and *Kav* (see note 1 to 1:15 above): the creation of the arcane and largely unfathomable realm known as *Adam Kadmon* ("Primordial Man"). See his remarks

in *Clallim Rishonim* 8, *Klach* Pitchei Chochma 30-31,35,