

DA'AT TEVUNOT - SECTION 2: CHAPTER 12

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

Da'at Tevunot 2:12 (# 91 - 95)

1.

Now, from another perspective, all of reality can be broken down into three epochs of time rather than the five we cited ¹. There's the current state of reality that will last for a total of six millennia which will be followed by a seventh millennium that will culminate in the utter undoing of the universe as we know it, and then a point at which G-d will eventually create an entirely new order of reality (see *Sanhedrin* 97b). So, let's expand on that ².

We're taught, Ramchal offers as illustration, that G-d will provide the righteous with "wings" at a certain point in time with which they'll soar over the seas (Ibid. 92a). Now, setting aside the particular details we can derive from this statement that there'll indeed be three epochs of time: the sixth millennia which we know of now, a seventh, and one in which an entirely different order of reality -- known as the era of the resurrection of the dead -- will come about, in which it will somehow be possible for the righteous to develop "wings" ³.

2.

As such, the way things stand now, the body ⁴ reigns supreme much like "a lord of the manor", given that this world is its "home". But at a certain point in the seventh millennium the righteous will ascend upward and the body will be like someone who's suddenly somehow out of his element and away from home ⁵. The body will have some sort of presence then, but only the very subtle sort that Moses' unearthly body had when he ascended to heaven while yet alive.

Our sages depicted the seventh millennium as one long Shabbos (Ibid. 97a) characterized by eternal rest without any labor. The implication we can derive from this is that the body will serve some sort of function there since there won't yet be a total overturning of reality, but that once the new reality in which we'll earn our heavenly rewards (see *Eruvin* 22) comes about, the body won't reign any longer -- given that it could only do that in the first place in order to enable us to earn that reward -- and it will be subsumed to the rule of the soul which will eventually "bask in the celestial Goodness forever", as Ramchal depicts it.

3.

Now, some would actually argue that we really shouldn't discuss the seventh millennium and the new reality at all, since it will all be so arcane. But Ramchal asserts that we *may* speak of them to a point since we know something of their makeup as we saw when we discussed the interplay of the body and the soul. It's just that since we couldn't ever fathom the *specific details* we shouldn't bother to try to go that far, Ramchal says.

As such, while we understand the sixth millenium and many of its details, we only dare speak about the epochs to follow that one -- in which bodies will lose their reign, and souls will regain their original celestial status -- in broad terms ⁶.

Footnotes:

¹That is, reality in all of its phases can be depicted from the perspective of the ongoing relationship of body and soul as was done in 2:11, or from the larger perspective we'll be offering here.

²See *Ma'amar Haikkurim*, *B'Geulah* and *Clallim Rishonim* 9.

³Ramchal spoke of an eighth, ninth, and tenth millennium (based upon the teachings of *Sefer Brit Menucha*) in *Klach Pitchei Chochma* 97, though he somehow didn't seem to think it necessary to cite that here or in *Adir Bamarom* p. 191.

⁴Once again see our several references in this section to the fact that the "body" in this context also refers to the sense of self, etc.

⁵That will come about in the course of the aforementioned undoing of the world.

⁶This completes section 2 of *Da'at Tevunot* which focused upon man's role, his rewards and punishments, and on the resurrection of the dead.