

DA'AT TEVUNOT - SECTION 2: CHAPTER 8

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

Da'at Tevunot 2:8 (# 82 – 84)

1.

We'll soon touch on the epochs of time that the body and soul will experience together that we'd just alluded to ¹. But we'd have to focus on something else beforehand.

Ramchal makes the point that the world is so stunningly awash in systems and processes that it's hard for us mortal souls to capture it all. Didn't the psalmist say, "You have done great things -- You, O L-rd my G-d! Your wonders and Your thoughts are ... too numerous to tell of" (Psalms 40:6); "How great are Your works, O L-rd! Your thoughts (alone) are very deep" (Ibid. 92:6), and, "How great are Your works, O L-rd! You have fashioned them all with wisdom; the (whole) world is full of Your possessions!" (Ibid. 104:24).

So he says that it would be best for us to speak of things in broad rather than in narrow and specific terms in order to be able to grasp this topic -- or just about anything. After all, there are only so many broad categories, and while we can't contend with a lot of specifics we can easily grasp the broad generalizations they fall under.

Indeed, our sages said that we're to "always lay Torah concepts out in broad terms rather than in specific ones" (*Sifrei, Ha'azinu 32:2*) ².

2.

In any event, let's recall that G-d's hiding or revealing His presence are the very root causes of the body and soul respectively. So we'd need to dwell upon those two phenomena if we're ever going to truly understand the makeup of the body and soul.

For in fact these two phenomena play themselves out everywhere, with G-d's presence being alternatively hidden and manifest, manifest and hidden, at one at the same time, as we'd already indicated ³. We'd also need to discuss the consequences of the combination of the two, and the predominance of one over the other.

We'd thus need to concentrate on three ultimate realities and events: G-d's hiddenness versus His revelation of Himself, the reality of their functioning simultaneously, and the consequences of that

combination as well as of the predominance of one over the other.

Footnotes:

¹As we'll see, they include the sixth millennium (which we're in the course of now, and only 200 some odd years away from completing at this point) and the more esoteric seventh, eighth, ninth and tenth millennia to come. The body and soul will interact in different ways in the course of each.

²Ramchal always favored short, over-arching statements to close depictions of details. See his introduction to *Derech Hashem* and his letter 39 in the *Yarim Moshe* edition.

³See 1:17 above.