

# THE REMEMBRANCE □ CHAPTER 13

*by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman*

Having laid-out the battle between the forces of right and wrong, of good and evil, of Jewish destiny and the countervailing forces that would have us remain in exile and never be redeemed, Ramchal then set out to explain the role that wrong and evil play in G-d's world.

Clearly, this is a vast and core-central subject that doesn't lend itself to easy explication and that's in fact explained at great length in many of Ramchal's other works. But he apparently saw the need to bring the subject up here because of the unsettling feeling that some of us might have with the whole idea of our having been thrust into exile in the first place, and why G-d would allow for all our pain and suffering in the long course of the galut.

So let's observe "the order of things -- how things developed from the day mankind appeared on Earth to the end of days" and follow the interplay of good and evil in order to see just "how deep G-d's thoughts are".

We're taught that "G-d ... allotted a place for the husk (i.e., evil) when He created the world". But, why? What \*good\* could \*evil\* ever do? G-d allowed for it to exist, Ramchal explains, "so as to test mankind and to grant him a goodly reward for his efforts".

At bottom what that means is that evil and wrong were introduced into creation so as to allow reward to be instituted in its wake. Now, the reward for goodness and righteousness is so great and luminous, so blissful, that one would be expected to have accomplished a world of things to have earned it. And indeed, the good and righteous \*would\* have to do a lot to earn their reward: they'd have to overcome evil and wrongdoing. And as those of us who struggle with our countervailing urges all the time know, that's hard to do. So because the struggle determines the reward, and the reward is so great, evil can be said to exist to allow for great good to exist as well. But let's go back now to the beginning of time and learn more about the interplay of good and evil.

At first, good and evil were quite separate and distinct from each other. We don't experience that now, as our reality is perhaps best defined as the era of "Yes, but ...", in that everything good in our world is touched with some wrong, and everything wrong is touched with some good. In any event, that wasn't always so.

Evil actually wanted to conjoin with good at the beginning -- but not so as to destroy it or for any other wrongful reason. Only because it wanted to "attach itself to it" in a selfless way. But while that will occur in the end, the task of bringing it to fruition was to be left to humankind, as we'll see.

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