

CHAPTER 3: 9 PERSONAL PROVIDENCE

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

Derech Hashem - The Way of G-d 2:3:9

We've spoken about people succeeding or not ¹ based on their spiritual standing ², but we'll now focus on how it touches on certain aspects of nature we'd cited before ³.

It comes to this: sins just naturally sully and pervade our beings and the world at large ⁴ and they have G-d's light grow dimmer and dimmer ⁵. But that light becomes brighter and brighter again ⁶ the more thoroughly sin is cleansed, and we become purer as a consequence of that cleansing ⁷.

But, what cleanses? It's tribulations that cleanse us and the world overall. And it's the tribulations that the righteous and pious who don't deserve to suffer but who do so nevertheless whom we'd cited ⁸ that manage to cleanse the world on an ongoing basis, and to subsequently lead it to perfection.

Footnotes:

¹ Spiritually or materially.

² Or on that of the righteous people they depend upon, as cited in 2:3:8.

³ See 2:2:5.

⁴ That's to say that aside from having personal repercussions for the sinner based on his ethical standing, sins also affect the tone and quality of his and the world's reality.

⁵ It's important to realize that G-d's light only *appears* to dim as a consequence of our sins, for in fact nothing could ever actually diminish or otherwise affect G-d's light itself which is constant. The point is that we and the world suffer because of the *impression* we have of G-d's light diminishing when we sin which we wouldn't have if we didn't sin.

⁶ To our eyes (see previous note).

⁷ See 1:2:3.

⁸See 2:3:8.