

CHAPTER 5:6 HOW DIVINE PROVIDENCE WORKS

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

Derech Hashem - The Way of G-d 2:5:6

1.

Yet, G-d can change the laws of nature at any time ¹. An example of that would be His formation of miracles ².

Miracles can be set in place at any time and affect anything; and they're formulated according to specific circumstances and for the overall and ultimate well-being of things ³.

2.

Now, we're taught that G-d had originally established the fact that He wouldn't change the natural course of things ⁴, yet miracles do just that. So what's the implication of that?

The point of the matter is that G-d can certainly change things as He sees fit. It's just that at the moment of creation He informed the celestial roots of things ⁵ what their essential nature and over-all purpose would be, what they'd bring about in the world and would encounter, and they were informed of their ultimate destiny ⁶. And they understood that all would be for the good for all in the end, which pleased and gratified them ⁷.

When G-d informed them of all of that He also let them know that their need to facilitate perfection would involve there being miracles either for our people's sake or for the sake of specific righteous people ⁸.

3.

While that information was given to the celestial roots, the reality of all that would need to be come about. So, certain angels were appointed to allow those miracles to occur within the natural course of events ⁹. Yet if G-d so wills it,, He can also order those angels to suspend their duties, which would then affect the laws of nature accordingly.

The decree for a miracle can be issued in different ways. It could come about much like a routine royal statute, or perhaps like a tirade that an angry potentate would display, depending on time and

circumstances¹⁰.

Footnotes:

¹ After all, they're only "laws" because they were instituted as such by The Lawgiver who can abrogate them as He sees fit.

² See Ramchal's *Ma'amar Haikkurim, Inyan Hanisim*, on the whole subject of miracles.

³ Hence, a miracle is a purposeful decree on G-d's part -- an alternative Divine option -- that transcends the natural course of events and is based on a specific need to "fine tune" things in order to achieve ultimate perfection.

⁴ See *Breishit Rabbah* 5:4.

⁵ As was pointed out, behind every entity in the world stands a transcendent force that's linked to it on a vital, mystical level (see 1:5:2 above).

⁶ Aren't these the very things that we would love to know about ourselves? The point seems to be that we'd lose our free will if we knew much of this.

⁷ That's true despite the fact that there'd need to be miracles from time to time which would seem to lessen the efficacy of these celestial roots.

⁸ Hence, the reality of and need for miracles was implanted into the laws of nature from the first in their innermost roots.

⁹ That is, though miracles are exceptions to the laws of nature, they nonetheless manifest themselves in the physical world that functions according to those laws for the most part.

¹⁰ That is, miracles would not only be unusual but they could likewise be benign or disruptive.