

CHAPTER 6: THE SYSTEM BEHIND DIVINE PROVIDENCE - PARAGRAPH 4

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

1.

G-d allowed for a prosecutor in His court, famously known as *satan* ¹. His role is to argue against the accused, which then enables the Judge to come to a detailed decision ². After all, G-d's ways are fair and good, so He doesn't arrive at a decision until a prosecutor makes his claims ³ – even though G-d already knows the status of the defendant ⁴.

2.

This phenomenon also has its rules as to how and when it's to come into play. Thus we're taught that *satan* "makes his claims during times of danger" (*Bereishit Rabba* 91:9), for example; that "three things bring a person's sins into focus" (*Ibid.* 55a) ⁵; and the like ⁶.

Footnotes:

¹ See Job 1:6 and 2:1, Zachariah 3:1-2, and Psalms 109:6.

See *Pitchei Chochma v'Da'at* 126 and *Clallei Pitchei Chochma v'Da'at* 8.

² The term *satan* is less heinous than it's assumed to be. Its Hebrew root is טש which means "side". As such, it means one who turns aside or away from, or opposes something or someone; hence his designation as a prosecutor.

³ Indeed, a court would need both a justice for the defense and a prosecutor if the truth were to be determined.

⁴ See Zohar 3:99b1. Also see 2:6:2-3 above regarding G-d's foreknowledge.

⁵ That is, there are three inauspicious instances (among others of course) in which a person's sins are brought into focus by *satan*: When that person stands against "an unsound wall, (when he) examines (the efficacy of his) prayers, and when he asks for someone else to be punished by Heaven".

⁶In times of plenty, for example (*Bereishit Rabba* 38:9).