

CHAPTER 4: THE PROPHETIC EXPERIENCE □ PARAGRAPH 10

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

There's something of a counter-agenda in the world. And it's that of the transcendent forces of evil and wrong which we'd spoken of before (see 1:5:8). Their *G-d-given* task in life is to sometimes thwart G-d's intentions -- but only when it suits His ultimate agenda.

But let's explain. While G-d does indeed have an overarching benevolent agenda for the universe, He nonetheless allows for things that *seem* to prevent that agenda from actuating. (And as we'd explained, evil and wrong exist to allow for free choice.)

So, one of the things the forces of evil and wrong were allowed to do was to obfuscate G-d's prophetic messages, in order to test people's beliefs. That's part of the dynamic behind prophets saying things that sometimes mislead the people who depended upon their revelations.

Other things were allowed to go wrong as far as that's concerned, too. Some so-called "prophets" actually expressed utterly false notions -- and even performed miracles at the same time to prove them! Again, all in order all to test their listeners' faith.

(Understand of course that miracles are "merely" supernatural, extraordinary wonders and they needn't be rooted in truth or goodness whatsoever. They need only be wondrous. Just know, then, that not everything "miraculous" is evidence of truth!)

In any event both seeming- or near-prophets sometimes advanced false ideas. Near-prophets did so inadvertently when they misread the messages sent them, as we'd cited before. But seeming-prophets did so purposefully, by communing with the transcendent forces of evil and wrong in an attempt to arrive at something akin to prophecy and thus achieve a degree of notoriety, status, power, and control.

Now, while the seeming-prophets weren't under any delusion that their powers were coming from G-d (though their adherents were), the same sort of misleading experience could also come upon legitimate near-prophets who weren't trained well enough to know the difference. That was one of the reasons why it was so important for a disciple to study under a master prophet.

But once someone would have achieved full-prophecy, there'd be no way for him to be influenced by the forces of evil. All his messages would have come from G-d.

This series is dedicated to the memory of Yitzchak Hehrsh ben Daniel z"l, and Sara Rivka bas Yaakov Dovid, z"l.

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