

CHAPTER 5: MOSES AS A PROPHET □ PARAGRAPH 7

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

We'll now conclude this chapter on prophecy as well the whole third part of this work, which had focused upon such vast and recondite themes.

Make no mistake about it -- each and every prophet not only understood what he was envisioning, he also understood every nuance and implication, each of its mystical underpinnings, every grand theme it touched upon, its intentions, and why it was depicted to him the way it was. But he *also* understood that the image he'd envisioned was a created entity -- and that it hadn't anything to do with G-d Himself.

For while the melange of prodigious and awesome abilities the prophets accrued had indeed enabled them to understand how G-d interacts with the world, the rock-bottom truth is that no one could ever grasp G-d Himself.

For G-d's essence can't be envisioned on any level whatsoever, as He's utterly above and beyond all visualization and conceptualization. That's why our sages referred to prophetic visions as "visions of speech" -- even the exalted and authoritative ones that Moses was granted, and the ones bestowed upon our people at Mount Sinai. For what they all experienced weren't visions of G-d's Himself so much as Divine *statements* about Him and His intentions which were *depicted* as visions.

Thus this limitation served as one of the "veiled lenses" we cited before that obstructed the prophets' views. Understand, though, that without such lenses (including the clear one that Moses saw through) the prophet would simply be *annihilated* by the sheer majesty and radiance of the revelation much the way we'd be blinded staring at the sun.

That being said, don't think the prophets' visions were prosaic or little more than poetic inspiration. They were anything but that. For the prophets were granted insights into the mysteries of the universe outright and into the point of it all. They were not, though, granted insight into the makeup of their Author Himself; and therein lies the difference.

We come now to the final section of "The Way of G-d", termed "Divine Service". In it we'll touch upon the mitzvah-life and the effects each mitzvah has upon Heaven and Earth -- as was unveiled by prophetic revelation.

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