

THE PATH OF THE JUST - CHAPTER 11:18

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

This completes the longest chapter of "The Path of the Just", Ch. 11, which has been a compendium of sage advice and stark warning, and has laid out the particulars of innocence.

This chapter has been daunting, frankly. After all, almost the entire human situation and very much of the Jewish day-to-day experience has been explored, and we've been invited to catch sight of ourselves in all of this, and to find out just where we've been successful or had failed.

Well aware of that, Ramchal offers this most unusual aside. "I can't deny that one would have to struggle a good deal to achieve this kind of innocence" he acknowledges, "nonetheless I must say that it's not as difficult as it seems" he adds almost provokingly. "In fact," he says, "the idea of doing it (i.e., of actually following through on the recommendations here) is more intimidating than actually carrying it out".

For, "when you have it in mind and firmly set it in your heart to be one of those people who has achieved this good trait" that is, when you not only want to live this sort of life, but you accept it upon yourself to, that "it will actually come to you with much more ease than you might have imagined".

The process seems to be, then, to envision yourself actually being the sort of person who lives this way quite naturally, day after day; to really take the role to heart; and to resolve to do your best at it time and time again.

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