

THE DUTIES OF THE HEART, GATE 2:1

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

But just how do we catch sight of G-d in the world, as we said we should? By spotting the clues He leaves behind. And what that comes to is taking stock of the many signs of G-d's wisdom throughout.

To do that we'd have to slowly and deliberately reflect upon the makeup of everything about us. And to allow in the fact that we're seeing G-d's wisdom in action. Understand of course that we're not just recommending that you look at things under a microscope, though that would certainly open you up to wonder. We're asking you to allow yourself the time and patience to discern the Divine wisdom in place everywhere, and to realize that *it* is what's giving everything its oomph and heft.

There'll be many different manifestations of G-d's wisdom, of course. Sometimes it will express itself loudly in the sheer size, content, volume, color, depth, shine, intensity, etc., of things. While other times it will be found off to the side, sitting discreetly and out of reach, when it would take us a while to realize just what we're seeing.

But no matter how differently and originally it manifests itself throughout the world, we mustn't ever forget that everything we see derives from a single source: G-d's wisdom.

Nonetheless the fact that G-d's wisdom manifests itself so differently and that it isn't always discernible has us wonder. Wouldn't it have been fairer in a way for G-d to have demonstrated His wisdom the same way, so we'd know exactly Who was behind it all?

But the case could be made that if G-d's wisdom always manifested itself the same way that that would utterly undo our free will. After all, how could anyone dare deny G-d's presence when it's right before our eyes in bold print, if you will? The other point to be made is that only lowly subordinates or machines produce the same thing again and again. G-d Almighty would only be expected to be utterly creative and variable. After all, as Ibn Pakudah puts it, "G-d is free to do whatever He wants to, whenever He wants to, without restrictions.... So, He created things that are as varied as His wisdom decided they should be, to allude to His Oneness and His freedom to act."

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