

THE DUTIES OF THE HEART, GATE 2:3

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

Let's delve now into the actual process of catching sight of G-d's wisdom in the world. First, know that G-d's wisdom actually manifests itself in three broad ways. In bold, "right before our eyes" ways we can't help but notice; In less obvious ways that are nonetheless clear to more reflective souls; and in many esoteric and inscrutable ways.

Be that as it may, the process itself comes down to looking at the fundamental components of the things you're considering, noting how they combine and interact with each other, and how the lot of them play themselves out in the world. Then to realizing the Divine wisdom behind it, and to exploring just what purpose it all serves. We offer examples of this in the chapters to come.

But there's a deeper level of reflection, too. It touches on duly noting the underlying *spiritual* underpinnings of things. For, in truth, everything is a combination of matter and spirit, body and soul. And both elements are inexorably linked with and support each other. We explore the spiritual makeup of things by studying both their immediate and far-reaching causes and effects, their *raison d'etre*, and the special transcendent quality about each thing that alludes to G-d's presence within it.

Now, those of us in search of spiritual excellence would choose to concentrate more on the world's spiritual, more subtle aspects. And we'd use them as direct links to our search for G-d's presence all around us. That would more likely draw us toward Him than reflecting upon the world's material veneer. And it would also remind us even more intimately of G-d's great love and kindness, which would itself inspire us to serve Him more wholeheartedly.

With all that in our midst we couldn't help but think little of the sort of niceties that often distract the heart and draw it toward spiritual mediocrity. Instead, we'd fix our sights on things that would nourish our souls for eternity.

Sad to say, though, many others concentrate on the here and now -- on the sizzle and rush of things rather than their underlying *basso profundo*. And while they too might catch sight of some Divine wisdom shining through, they nonetheless overlook His more clandestine and eternal wisdom.

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