

THE PATH OF THE JUST - CHAPTER 21:2

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

We claim to like peace and quiet, stillness, and the times when our minds are purposely slowed down and left uncluttered, but we really do not.

For if we did, and if we used those times to "sequester ourselves in our room and collect our thoughts for the introspections and considerations of these truths" (the fact of "G-d's exalted nature", of "the infinite nature of His perfection", and of "the great and unfathomable difference between His loftiness and our lowliness" that we spoke of before), then we could hardly help but be pious, Ramchal contends.

So we'd need to commit to doing just that and to "stealing" some time away from this and that for it.

But not every life is that amenable. Family needs call out to us, as do our jobs, and our scheduled times for Torah study (which would seem to be right in line with this sort of concentration but often isn't, the truth be told), so deep reflection upon God and His ways very, very often go by the wayside.

So Ramchal offers an alternative that's less demanding: reflecting upon and reciting from Sefer Tehillim ("The Book of Psalms"). As the sentiments expressed there by King David, who was known as "the sweet singer of Israel" (2 Samuel 23:1) because he was best able to express the deepest yearnings of the Jewish heart, will surely inspire you. In fact, Ramchal depicts David's words there as being "full of love, reverence and all manner of piety". So if you recite them, he assures us, "you cannot help but be moved ... to follow in David's footsteps".

And he then adds that "it also helps to read the stories of the pious found in the Aggadot" where their many great feats of piety and self-sacrifice are recorded, as you'll likely be roused to follow their example if you do.

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