

THE PATH OF THE JUST - CHAPTER 22:1

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

There is hardly anyone we admire more than powerful, good, and effective people who know just how little they themselves count in their accomplishments, and how much of a role G-d's unfathomable will, and just good mazal play in it. These hard-working humble souls are spiritual giants, heroes of the heart and mind, and they inspire us all to do our best and to then step aside so what will be done can be done after we've played our part.

Having that in mind and moving us on to the next trait, humility, Ramchal acknowledges that he'd "already spoken of the disgrace of arrogance" its opposite (in Ch. 11), "from which you can infer the praiseworthiness of humility". But he declares that wouldn't be enough. We'd need to focus on humility itself, since it's so noble and lofty, and also so as to come to truly understand the base nature of arrogance.

"The general rule when it comes to humility," he asserts, is "that you should never consider yourself important" which means to say, utterly vital and indispensable, "for whatever reason whatsoever". For, the truth be known, while each one of us matters, and every single person involved adds unique skills that carry weight, no one in this world other than G-d Almighty is key; each of us can be replaced with hardly a loss to the whole in the end. (It's kind of a sad reality and sometimes disheartening, to be sure, but it's likewise ennobling and spiritually empowering.)

Knowing and living by that "is the very opposite of arrogance. And what results from it", he promises, "is the exact opposite of what would result from arrogance" -- spiritual excellence.

What would it take to come to true humility? "You'd first need to be humble in thought" and attitude, he offers, "for only then can you act humbly". If you aren't humble in thought but you set out to be, "you'll wind up being one of the ... 'so-called humble'-- a hypocrite", which is "the worst of all things".

So let us now see how Ramchal offers us insight into how to be humble both in thought and in action.

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