

# THE PATH OF THE JUST - CHAPTER 22:6

*by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman*

Ramchal adds some more words of encouragement about humility by offering our sages' statements that, "Whoever humbles himself for the sake of Torah in this world is to be made great in the World to Come" (Baba Metzhiah 85b); that, "Whoever is great in this world is to be made lowly in the World to Come" (Yalkut Yechezkel 361); and that, "Man should always learn ... from the reasoning of his Maker. The Holy One rejected all the other mountains and hills, and had His Divine Presence dwell on Mount Sinai (because of its humble stature)" (Sotah 5a).

However, he then declares that we'd been rather theoretical till now about humility, so he suggests that it is time we get on to the sorts of things that we'd need to do or demonstrate, both in order to acquire true humility and to manifest it. It comes down to this: we'd need to conduct ourselves humbly; and to accept insult, and to reject power and honor while according it to others.

To express humility we'd first need to speak humbly. As it's written, "The words of sages will (best) be heard when said gently" (Ecclesiastes 9:17), and as our sages said, "One's speech with others should always be gentle" (Yoma 86a). And we'd also need to be deferential, as it's written, "One who castigates his neighbor is heartless" (Proverbs 11:12), and "When a wrongful person arrives, castigation arrives with him" (Proverbs 18:3).

In order to manifest humility we'd need to somehow express it in our step. For, it's written, "The high ones of stature shall be hewn down" (Isaiah 10:33); and as our sages said, "Who is a person of the world to come?-- one who is humble and bent-of-knee, who enters humbly and exits humbly" (Sanhedrin 88b); and that "Whoever walks with a haughty step is considered to be one who pushes away the feet of the Divine Presence" (Kiddushin 31a).

We'd also need to express humility by the way we sit, by placing ourselves "among the lowly ... rather than among the proud" Ramchal explains, as it's written, "Do not give yourself airs before a king, and do not stand in the place of the greats" (Proverbs 25:5-6); and as our sages said, "Move two or three places down from your regular place and then sit there" (Vayikra Rabbah 1:5).

The underlying point, though, is that while it's vitally important to draw inspiration from the wise and to admit that we should be humble, and to realize that we really needn't be convinced too much about it, given what we each know about our hearts, there's nonetheless more. We need to actually

demonstrate humility and reverence, and to act out on our conviction.

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