

THE PATH OF THE JUST - CHAPTER 23:3

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

Sometimes we need to be stunned into changing -- and most especially when it comes to fostering true humility, given our inflated sense of ourselves. Here's something Ramchal suggests we draw on: "Try to imagine for just a moment your appearance before the great angelic Court (after your death), when you will stand before the King of kings, the Holy One blessed be He, who is the ultimate in holiness and purity," Ramchal offers, if you truly want to come to pious humility. How daunting that must be!

Then imagine yourself standing smack dab "in thick of the mystery of the holy angels, G-d's mighty servants who are great in power, who do His will without a fault" since they're blameless, as opposed "to you, who is lowly, imperfect and inherently shameful, impure and sullied because of your actions... Could you even lift your head? Is there anything you could say?" he asks. In fact, we'd add, could you even imagine not standing stock-still there in terror, or perhaps passing out full face on the floor of Heaven?

Imagine then "if they were to ask you, 'Where's your tongue? Where's the power and honor you bore in the world?' what would you say? How would you respond to their reproofs?" he adds. After all, you'd know you'd sinned and failed to one degree or another in the mission entrusted to you at birth to grow in your being and to achieve spiritual excellence, and it would be unbearably mortifying to have to respond to each point they'd make.

Ramchal then concludes that "if you were to honestly and convincingly impress this scene upon your mind ... then all of your arrogance would surely flee, never to return" and you will have arrived at pure and simple humility.

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