

# Zoom17: Love and Fear of God

## Part 1: Love

Source Sheet by Shmuel Veffer

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### It is a commandment (mitzvah) to Love God and to Fear God

#### Deuteronomy 6:5

(5) You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.

#### דברים ו':ה'

(ה) וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ:

#### Deuteronomy 6:13

(13) Revere only the LORD your God and worship Him alone, and swear only by His name.

#### דברים ו':י"ג

(יג) אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ תִירָא וְאֵתוֹ תַעֲבֹד וּבִשְׁמוֹ תִשָּׁבַע:

#### Mishneh Torah, Foundations of the Torah 2:1

(1) It is mandatory to love and fear this Glorified and Awe-inspiring God, for it is said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God" (Deut. 6,5); and as it is said: "The Lord thy God thou shalt fear." (Ibid. 6, 13).

#### משנה תורה, הלכות יסודי התורה ב':א'

(א) הָאֵל הַנִּכְבָּד וְהַנּוֹרָא הַזֶּה מְצֻנָּה לְאֱהָבוֹ וּלְיִרְאָה אוֹתוֹ שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (דברים ו ה) "וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ". וְנֶאֱמַר (דברים ו יג) "אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ תִירָא":



### How can we be commanded to feel something emotionally?

If God commands us to do it, it must be in our control to feel love  
(if "love" means to feel something)

### HOW DO WE DEFINE LOVE?

What/Whom do you love?



#### Genesis 24:67

(67) Isaac then brought her into the tent of his mother Sarah, and he took Rebekah as his wife. **Isaac loved her**, and thus found comfort after his mother's death.

#### בראשית כ"ד:ס"ז

(סז) וַיְבִאֶהָ יִצְחָק הָאֵלֶּלָה שָׂרָה אִמּוֹ וַיִּקַּח  
אֶת־רֵבְקָה וַתְּהִי־לּוֹ לְאִשָּׁה וַיֵּאָהֲבָהּ וַיִּנְחָם יִצְחָק  
אֶת־רֵי אִמּוֹ: (פ)

#### Genesis 25:28

(28) **Isaac loved Esau** because he had a taste for game (hunted with his mouth); but **Rebekah loved Jacob**.

#### בראשית כ"ה:כ"ח

(כח) וַיֵּאָהֲבָ יִצְחָק אֶת־עֵשָׂו כִּי־צִיד בָּפִיו וְרֵבְקָה  
אֲהָבָת אֶת־יַעֲקֹב:

#### Genesis 27:4

(4) Then prepare a **dish for me such as I love**, and

#### בראשית כ"ז:ד'

bring it to me to eat, so that I may give you my innermost blessing before I die.”

(ד) וַעֲשֵׂה־לִּי מִטַּעַמַּיִם כַּאֲשֶׁר אֶהְבֵּתִי וְהִבֵּיָאָה לִּי  
וְאִכְלָה בְּעֵבֹר תִּבְרַכְךָ נַפְשִׁי בְּטַרְם אָמוּת:

#### Genesis 37:3

(3) Now **Israel loved Joseph** best of all his sons, for he was the child of his old age; and he had made him an ornamented tunic.

#### בראשית ל"ז:ג'

(ג) וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל אֶהָב אֶת־יֹוסֵף מִכָּל־בָּנָיו  
כִּי־בְרִיָּאָה הָיָה לוֹ וַעֲשֵׂה לוֹ כְּתֹנֶת פָּסִים:

#### Exodus 21:5

(5) But if the slave declares, “I **love my master**, and **my wife** and **children**: I do not wish to go free,”

#### שמות כ"א:ה'

(ה) וְאִם־אָמַר יֹאמַר הָעֶבֶד אֶהְבֵּתִי אֶת־אֲדֹנָי  
אֶת־אִשְׁתִּי וְאֶת־בָּנָי לֹא אֲצֵא חֲפָשִׁי:

**LOVE is the emotional response we have when we appreciate someone's or something's virtue.**

- Rabbi Noah Weinberg



#### Mishneh Torah, Foundations of the Torah 2:2

(2) But how may one discover the way to love and fear Him?

When man will reflect concerning His works, and His great and wonderful creatures, and will behold through them His wonderful, matchless and infinite wisdom,

he will spontaneously be filled with love, praise and exaltation and become possessed of a great longing to know the Great Name, even as David said: "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God," (Ps. 42,2);

#### משנה תורה, הלכות יסודי התורה ב'ב'

(ב) וְהִיאָהּ הִיא הַדֶּרֶךְ לְאַהֲבָתוֹ וְיִרְאָתוֹ.

בְּשִׁעָה שְׂתִיתְבוֹנוֹ הָאָדָם בְּמַעֲשָׂיו וּבְרוּאָיו הַנִּפְלְאִים  
הַגְּדוּלִים וְיִרְאָה מִהֶן חֲכָמָתוֹ שָׁאִין לָהּ עֶרֶךְ וְלֹא קֵץ

מִיָּד הוּא אוֹהֵב וּמְשַׁבֵּחַ וּמְפָאֵר וּמְתַאֲנֶה תַּאֲנֶה  
גְּדוּלָּה לִידַע הַשֵּׁם הַגְּדוֹל. כְּמוֹ שֶׁאָמַר דָּוִד (תהילים  
מב ג) "צִמְאָה נַפְשִׁי לֵאלֹהִים לְאֵל חַי".

## Our Soul is intrinsically attracted to perfection

1. Our souls are programmed to want to attach themselves to "perfection."
2. Any and all perfection found in this world is simply a projection of an aspect of God's Perfection.
3. Appreciating perfection in all its forms is a spiritual experience.

When we love something we want to own it.

But more than that we want it to be part of who we are.

We want to attach to it and become one with it.

This is called *Devekut* in Hebrew.

## The Love Game

*You can control how much love you feel in your life.*



## Through Actions the Heart Will Follow

*Story of the hypocrite on Simchat Torah*

### Sefer HaChinukh 16:2

(2) From the roots of the commandment is to remember the miracles of Egypt...

And therefore, as we began to become the chosen of all nations, 'a kingdom of priests and a holy nation' - and in each and every year at that time - it is fitting for us to do acts that show the great stature which we achieved at that hour, about us. And in the act and reenactment that we do, this thing is placed in our souls for eternity.

You must know, that a man is acted upon according to his actions; and his heart and all his thoughts always follow after the actions that he does - whether good or bad.

And even he who in his heart is a complete sinner and all the desires of his heart are only for evil; if

### ספר החינוך ט"ז:ב'

(ב) משרשי המצוה. לזכר נסי מצרים

ועל כן בתחלת בואנו להיות סגלת כל העמים ממלכת כהנים וגוי קדוש (שם יט ו), ובכל שנה ושנה באותו הזמן, ראוי לנו לעשות מעשים המראים בנו המעלה הגדולה שעלינו בה באותה שעה. ומתוך המעשה והדמיון שאנחנו עושין, נקבע בנפשותינו הדבר לעולם.

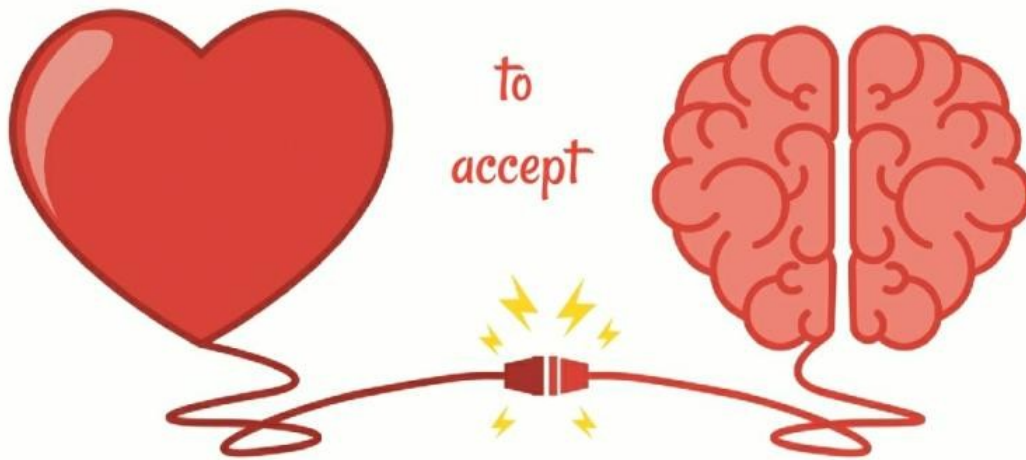
דע, כי האדם נפעל כפי פעולתו, ולבו וכל מחשבתיו תמיד אחר מעשיו שהוא עוסק בהם אם טוב ואם רע,

ואפילו רשע גמור בלבבו וכל יצר מחשבות לבו

his spirit shall be enlightened and he will put his efforts and actions to persist in Torah and commandments - even if not for the sake of Heaven - he shall immediately incline towards the good. And from that which is not for its own sake comes that which is for its own sake [as opposed to being for personal gain]; **for the hearts are drawn after the actions.**

רק רע כל היום, אם יערה רוחו וישים השתדלותו ועסקו בהתמדה בתורה ובמצות, ואפילו שלא לשם שמים, מיד ינטה אל הטוב, ומתוך שלא לשמה בא לשמה, ובכח מעשיו ימית היצר הרע, כי אחרי הפעלות נמשכים הלבבות.

It's okay if your heart needs more time



what your head already knows.

#Lehasig

GALILEE  
green

Love and Giving

Do we give because we feel love?

Or do we feel love because we give?



*"Every positive emotion stems from giving and flows outward from us to others, whereas every negative emotion revolves around taking for selfish motives." Indeed, the root of the Hebrew word for אהבה, love, is נה, to give. In other words, "Giving leads to Love."*

Rav Eliyahu Dessler (*Michtav Me'Eliyahu* Volume 1, *Kuntres HaChesed*)

**How can you give to God? He has no needs... He is infinite?!!!**

What do you get a Father who has everything?



*Korban* - gift offering from something of yours,  
investing in the relationship.

קרבן

*Nachat Ruah (Nachas)* - becoming a good  
independent person reflecting well on your Father.

נחת רוח

*Kavod* - Take him seriously - give weight to the  
wisdom he has to offer to you by acting on it and  
making it yours.

כבוד



"Love your neighbor as yourself" - It doesn't say that.

#### Leviticus 19:18

(18) You shall not take vengeance or bear a grudge  
against your countrymen. Love **toward** your  
**fellow** as **yourself**: I am the LORD.

#### ויקרא י"ט:י"ח

(יח) לֹא־תִקֹּם וְלֹא־תִטַּר אֶת־בְּנֵי עַמְּךָ וְאֶת־בִּתְּךָ  
לִרְעוּתָהּ כַּמִּוֶּדֶד אֲנִי יְהוָה:

Love yourself first

Focus on his virtues

Act towards your fellow as if you love him  
(How you would want to be treated)

Invest in the relationship

Give of yourself to your fellow



#### SUMMARY

1. We are commanded to love God
2. The emotional feeling of love is a gift to make it possible for us to want to bond with Godliness
3. Love is the emotional response when we appreciate someone's or something's virtues
4. The "perfection" that we love is ultimately sourced in God
5. When we appreciate how great God is, we feel love for Him and want to bond with Him
6. Intellectually we may not appreciate God's Wisdom, but if we start acting on it and appreciate it, then it will increase our feelings of love for God
7. Loving others must begin by first loving myself - appreciate the good in me
8. To love my fellow means to appreciate their virtue and ignore their flaws

9. If I give of myself (of my own intrinsic good) to another and now it is in them, if I love myself because of the attribute, I will increase my love for them because of their newly acquired virtue.
10. Tools for increasing my love for God include: Bring a gift - *Korban*, Talk to God and ask Him for my needs, Study God's virtues including His Wisdom, Emulate His Virtues, Enumerate my blessings, Invest in the Relationship



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