

THE DUTIES OF THE HEART, GATE 1:4

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

In order to truly accept G-d's Oneness in our hearts as we're expected to do, we'd first need to accept the reality of G-d **Himself**. So in this chapter we'll lay out what we'd have to do to start the process. Then we'll go through it later on.

Whenever we set out to understand anything at all we're not sure even exists we're obliged to first determine whether in fact it does. Then, once we determine that, we're obliged to establish just what that thing is, how it exists, and why it exists.

So, to use an example, if I wanted to understand the make-up of a particularly unique star somewhere in another galaxy, I'd first have to see if it exists in fact. Then I'd have to determine just what it is-- what it's comprised of; how it exists-- how it functions; and why it exists-- what unique functions it serves.

When it comes to G-d, though, we certainly couldn't establish what He is. Since no human being could ever hope to fathom G-d's essential Being. For as we'll learn, the best we can do is understand how He represents Himself in a world of time and space that He Himself far surpasses. We also couldn't establish just how He exists for much the same reason.

Nor could we determine just **why** He exists for two reasons. First, because He exists simply because He's G-d. And second because delving into that would either draw us dangerously close to heresy if handled the wrong way, or magnificently close to absolute truth if handled the right way (which we're simply not prepared for). Suffice it to say though that the subject itself is far beyond our discussions here.

So we'll first set out to discover whether G-d exists after all (the short answer is of, of course) in the following chapters, then we'll determine whether there's only one of Him (and the short answer is again yes), then we'll delve into the concept of His oneness itself until we're clear about it.

Only then will we be in a position to wholeheartedly accept G-d's Oneness as spoken of in the verse, Hear O Israel! G-d is our L-rd; G-d is One (Deuteronomy 6:4). Because only then will we know what we're saying in fact.

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