

THE DUTIES OF THE HEART, GATE 3:2

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

But why would we need to be induced to worship G-d either from the "inside, out" or the "outside, in" (or a combination of the two), as we said? Because each has its up-and downsides. We'll discover the truth of that in the following few chapters. But let's first focus on coming to worship G-d from the "inside, out".

We're moved to worship G-d from the "inside, out" after realizing on our own just how right, vital, and important it is to worship Him. And the process usually comes on the heels of a sudden, striking, and intuitive understanding. Yet despite the intensity of the feeling and the depth of the subsequent commitment, it does have its drawbacks, as we indicated. Those of us who often feel we're not serving G-d at all, for all intents and purposes, unless and until it comes "from within" would do well to hear out the points made here.

There are three primary reasons why it isn't enough to depend upon inner-motivation. The first is based on a fact of life -- that we're inconsistent. For as everyone knows, a part of us tends to hallow and extol the physical and practical while another part prefers to remove ourselves from the world, rebuff the physical, and to strive for spiritual achievement.

Our physical "bias", if you will, is dominant, though. Because it asserts itself from birth, and thus feeds and informs our sense of just who we are more potently from the very beginning. As a consequence, it tends to overshadow our "bias" toward the spiritual, no matter how important the latter is.

It follows then that we'd need to be *externally* induced to serve G-d in light of this dynamic, since we're mostly not inclined toward it. So we'd do best being "sold" on the idea from an outsider (i.e., the Torah) who can see things we cannot, and can best and more objectively advise us for our own good.

The second reason why it isn't enough to depend upon inner-motivation is based upon the make-up of our spiritual bias. It's rather estranged from this world, isolated, out of synch, and on it's own here, because it's rooted in the transcendent worlds. While our physical bias, on the other hand, is "right at home" in the world, and is rather well nourished, fortified, and emboldened here.

Hence, we'd need the externally induced disciplines that the Torah places on our physical bias -- like the ones touching on the sorts of food we're to eat, clothes we're to wear, sensuality we're to express, as well as the charity we're to give, the kindness we're to express, the time we're to spend

in prayer, and the like -- if we're ever to achieve spiritual excellence and worship G-d.

And finally the third reason why we really can't depend on inner-motivation is because we employ, exercise, and thus *affirm* our physical bias all the time -- day after day, year after year. Whereas we only express our spiritual bias from time to time and in spurts, as the sensitive soul knows only too well. Hence our spiritual "muscles" would grow flabbier and weaker, and would begin to atrophy in time if they didn't have the demands made upon them by Torah to immerse themselves in Torah study and engage in mitzvot.

So it only follows that we'd do best to be induced to serve Gd by means of the Torah.

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