

# THE DUTIES OF THE HEART, GATE 4:2

*by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman*

Now, to really trust someone -- especially when it comes to the most important things in your life -- the person you'd hope to trust would have to exhibit some extraordinary qualities. He'd certainly have to be compassionate, sympathetic, and loving towards you.

You'd want to be sure that he'd never desert you, or put off doing what you're hoping he'll do. You'd want him to make every effort he could, and to do what he's doing for you willingly.

You'd expect him to be strong enough to balk any distractions or threats. You'd want him to know what's *\*really\** good for you and what's not -- and not only on a surface level at that.

And it would be ideal if he knew and tended for you on this level your whole life long, and most especially if he were extraordinarily, consistently, and unendingly generous and kind to you -- whether you deserved it or not.

As you've no doubt come to realize by now, no single person could be trusted to be all those things or to know you so intimately (not even your spouse, your parents, or your deepest and truest friend).

But G-d Almighty indeed fits that description. The person of full faith and deep spiritual yearnings would know that in his heart. The rest of us, though, can always depend upon the Torah's own assurances.

For G-d's termed "compassionate and kind" (Psalms 103:8); we know He never neglects us because it's written, "Behold, the Guardian of Israel neither sleeps nor slumbers" (Psalms 121:4); He's depicted as being truly "wise and mighty" (Job 9:4); and we're taught that "greatness, might, glory, victory and splendor are all.. G-d's" (I Chronicles 29:11).

He indeed cares for us our whole lives long, as it's said, "Is He not your Father...? Has He not formed and established you?" (Deuteronomy 32:6); we know that He alone is in control of the universe, for it's said, "Who can say something G-d has not commanded? Do not both evil and good come from the mouth of The Most High?" (Lamentations 3:36-37); and we're assured that G-d's generosity is all-inclusive and that His kindness is all-embracing, as it's said, "G-d is good to all and compassionate to all His works" (Psalms 145:9).

Ibn Pakudah ends this chapter with the statement that once all this becomes clear to you, and you come to recognize how truly kind He is, you'll learn to "trust only G-d, give yourself over to Him, leave yourself in His care, have no questions about his judgments, and never grow angry at His

decisions". For you'd indeed have achieved a high degree of spiritual excellence.

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