

# THE DUTIES OF THE HEART, GATE 4:3 - PART 1

*by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman*

The truth be known, the only way we'll ever come to trust in G-d will be to realize the truth of the following five premises. But we're not just to realize them on an intellectual level, as we would mathematical truth. We're to know -- and accept -- them on a heart-felt level, the way we'd know that we'd come to love someone who was utterly unlike anyone else we knew, and that he was in love with us.

The first premise we'd have to accept on that level is the fact that, indeed, only G-d could meet the criteria we set out last time for fully trusting someone.

Second, that G-d knows us inside and out -- from our hearts in, our skin out, and in-between. (In fact, He also knows full well if we trust Him or not!)

Third, that He's to be trusted on His own, rather than in "partnership" with anyone else. So, for example, we'd need to realize that it's G-d Himself we're to trust when it comes to our health, rather than our doctor him- or herself. For a doctor is nothing more -- and nothing less! -- than G-d's agent. He or she isn't G-d.

Fourth, that we'd be expected to commit ourselves to the fulfillment of His wishes for us in this world -- which is to say, to the fulfillment of His mitzvot -- if we're to truly trust Him. After all, if we can't be trusted to be close enough to Him to do His bidding and we reject Him instead, how could we expect Him to be close to us? (That's not to say that G-d rejects any one of us outright, G-d forbid! For who could live if he'd been scorned by G-d Almighty? It's just a question of intimacy rather than estrangement, of being a "confidante" rather than a "stranger". Those in search of spiritual excellence would take this premise to heart and realize its implications.)

And fifth, we'd have to realize that everything that gets done in this world only manages to when someone makes the effort -- and G-d complies! I might, for example, decide to take a drink of water, turn on the faucet, allow the water to pour into a glass, take the glass to my lips, and I might drink in the end -- or not. My decision to drink water was obviously \*a\* determining factor in the process. But had G-d not wanted me to have drunken water, the faucet might not have worked, the glass might have fallen from my hands, etc. So, trusting G-d comes to trusting in His decisions as to what He'll actually comply with.

Take these five criteria to heart and you'll indeed come to trust G-d, and G-d alone. Simply because

you'll come to see His will played out right before your eyes.

But now that that's become clear, important questions come up: Why should we bother doing anything on our own if G-d will ultimately determine the outcome? Why do some people succeed in their efforts and others not? And on what should we base our decisions about what to do? We'll touch upon those and other such issues next time.

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