

THE DUTIES OF THE HEART, GATE 4:4 - PART 7

by Rabbi Yaakov Feldman

And finally on to the seventh area in which we're to trust G-d, which touches upon our visions of true spiritual excellence.

Those of us indeed in search of spiritual excellence have our "heroes" just as others do. Our heroes are the righteous and holy individuals in our midst and in the past. Trusting G-d's decisions about how successful we'll be in our own spiritual quest comes down to emulating our heroes, and trusting in G-d's decisions about how successful we'll be in that. (Recall that as we pointed out it's G-d who determines outcomes, not we; what's expected of us are the right decisions and the follow-through.)

So, what do our spiritual heroes do to earn closeness to G-d? Among other things, they "replace the love and preference for the world" that *we* tend to have "with the love of G-d". That's to say that they make closeness to G-d their aim and life-goal, and allow everything else to fall into place on its own (much the way anyone who hones all of his or her energies toward one end would do).

And they "surrender (themselves) to G-d and enjoy nothing else but Him". We'll delve into surrendering ourselves to G-d at a later point in this work, but in short it comes to realizing the truth and acquiescing to it. So when the righteous and holy ones surrender to G-d, they surrender to the reality of His presence which pleases them on all levels. I ask you -- could there be a higher realization than that or a greater reward?

Indeed, those are the perspectives we're to emulate in our own search for spiritual excellence.

And finally, you'll know if you'd in fact attained them, according to Ibn Pakudah, if you find yourself inspiring others to worship G-d, too; if you face trial and tribulation with aplomb; if your primary daily objective is to serve G-d through the mitzvah system; and "if you're willing to submit yourself to G-d's judgment and to accept His decrees" which is to say, if you trust Him in this area just as much as you'd trusted Him in the others.

[Subscribe](#) to *Spiritual Excellence* and receive the class via e-mail.