
Love trumps all...

Rabbi Alon Meltzer

*A New Page of Talmud –
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And you shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart and with all your soul, and with all your means. - **Devarim 6:5**¹ You shall love the Lord, your God, keep His charge, His statutes, His ordinances, and His commandments, all the days. – **Devarim 11:1**² It is a mitzvah to love and fear this glorious and awesome God - Rambam, **Mishneh Torah, Yesodei HaTorah 2:1**³ But how may one discover the way to love and fear Him? When man will reflect concerning His works, and His great and wonderful creatures,¹ and will behold through them His wonderful, matchless and infinite wisdom, he will spontaneously be filled with love, praise and exaltation and become possessed of a great longing to know the Great Name, even as David said: "My soul thirsts for God, for the living God," (Ps. 42,2); and when he will think of all these matters,² he will be taken aback in a moment and stricken with awe, and realize that he is an infinitesimal creature, humble and dark, standing with an insignificant and slight knowledge in the presence of the All Wise, as David said: "For when I see Thy heavens, the wonderful works of Thy fingers, of what use is man that Thou mayest remember him?" (Ibid. 8,4). And, in harmony with these matters, I elucidate great, general principles of the works of the Lord of the universe, so that they might serve as an opening for one who understands by which to love the Name, as some sages said on the subject of love: "Out of it thou wilt recognize the One who spoke, and the universe was called into existence." – **Rambam, Mishneh Torah, Yesodei Hatorah 2:2**⁴ You shall love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.- **Devarim 10:19**⁵ The famous tzaddik of Jerusalem, Rav Aryeh Levin zt"l, related that, in

You shall love
the Lord ...

אַהַבְתָּ אֶת ה'
Devarim 11:1

1929, when news of the Arab massacre in Chevron (sixty-three defenseless Jews, including many yeshivah students from Yeshivat Chevron, were murdered by an Arab mob) reached Harav Kook, zt"l, Rav Kook fainted. After coming to, he cried bitterly and ripped his garments as a sign of mourning. For a while afterwards, he barely ate or drank, and he slept without a pillow under his head. From that point on, old age crept up on him and his health began to deteriorate, leading to the illness to which he finally succumbed. Harav Yechezkel Sarne, zt"l, Rosh Yeshivah of Yeshivat Chevron at the time, was not in

Chevron during the massacre. He related that when he heard of the massacre, he was shocked and filled with pain. After all, he had known the victims well. "But I did not faint!" Rav Kook, who did not

personally know those students, reached such a high level of Ahavat Yisrael that he loved others as he loved himself. He fainted! –**Nancy Morgenstern, Testimonies, a Torah Perspective**⁶

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