

2.

Noach

The Buck Stops Here

Preserving Principles in a World of Shifting Values



*Dedicated in loving memory of
Leah bas Shlomo Zev HaKohen Brenner,
מרת לאה בת שלמה זאב הכהן ע"ה,
marking her yahrtzeit on 24 Tishrei*

*May the merit of the Torah study worldwide accompany her soul
in the world of everlasting life and be a source of blessings to her
family with much health, happiness, nachas, and success.*

PARSHAH OVERVIEW

Noach

G-d instructs Noah—the only righteous man in a world consumed by violence and corruption—to build a large wooden *tevah* (“ark”), coated within and without with pitch. A Great Deluge, says G-d, will wipe out all life from the face of the earth; but the ark will float upon the water, sheltering Noah and his family as well as two members (male and female) of each animal species.

Rain falls for forty days and nights, and the waters churn for 150 more days before calming and beginning to recede. The ark settles on Mount Ararat, and from its window Noah dispatches a raven, and then a series of doves, “to see if the waters were abated from the face of the earth.” When the ground dries completely—exactly one solar year (365 days) after the onset of the Flood—G-d commands

Noah to exit the *tevah* and repopulate the earth.

Noah builds an altar and offers sacrifices to G-d. G-d swears to never again destroy all of humankind because of their deeds, and He sets the rainbow as a testimony of His new covenant with the human race. G-d also commands Noah regarding the sacredness of life: murder is deemed a capital offense, and, while people are permitted to eat the meat of animals, they are forbidden to eat flesh or blood taken from a living animal.

Noah plants a vineyard and becomes drunk on its produce. Two of Noah’s sons, Shem and Japheth, are blessed for covering up their father’s nakedness, while his third son, Ham, is punished for taking advantage of his father’s debasement.

INTRODUCTION

Question for Discussion

Can you suggest a third option?

I. ONE GENERATION, TWO LEADERS

Noah the Righteous

TEXT 1

GENESIS 6:9

נח איש צדיק תמים הָיָה בְּדוֹרְתָיו.

Noah was a righteous man. He was perfect in his generation.

TEXT 2

RASHI, AD LOC.

לפי דורו היה צדיק, ואלו היה בדורו של אברהם לא היה נחשב לכלום.

He was considered righteous relative to his generation. However, had he lived in the generation of Abraham, he would not have been considered of any importance.

Question: But They Did Live in the Same Era!

TEXT 3

RABBI AVRAHAM IBN EZRA, AD LOC.

ואברהם אבינו בן נ"ח כאשר מת נח.

Abraham was fifty-eight years old when Noah passed away.

**Rabbi Shlomo Yitzchaki
(Rashi)**
1040–1105

Most noted biblical and Talmudic commentator. Born in Troyes, France, Rashi studied in the famed *yeshivot* of Mainz and Worms. His commentaries on the Pentateuch and the Talmud, which focus on the straightforward meaning of the text, appear in virtually every edition of the Talmud and Bible.

Rabbi Avraham ibn Ezra
1092–1167

Biblical commentator, linguist, and poet. Ibn Ezra was born in Toledo, Spain, and fled the Almohad regime to other parts of Europe. It is believed that he was living in London at the time of his death. Ibn Ezra is best known for his literalistic commentary on the Pentateuch. He also wrote works of poetry, philosophy, medicine, astronomy, and other topics.

II. ABRAHAM'S GENERATION

The Early Days

TEXT 4A

MAIMONIDES, *MISHNEH TORAH*, LAWS OF KINGS AND WARS 9:1

עַל שֵׁשֶׁה דְּבָרִים נִצְטָוָה אָדָם הָרִאשׁוֹן: עַל עֲבוּדָה זָרָה, וְעַל בְּרִיכַת ה',
וְעַל שְׂפִיכוֹת דָּמִים, וְעַל גְּלוּי עֲרִיזוֹת, וְעַל הַגָּזֵל, וְעַל הַדִּינִים.

G-d gave Adam six commandments: the prohibitions against (1) idolatry, (2) blasphemy, (3) murder, (4) incest and adultery, and (5) theft; and (6) the commandments to establish laws and courts of justice.

TEXT 4B

MIDRASH, *PIRKEI RABBI ELIEZER* 8

אדם מסר לחנוך . . . וחנוך (מסר למתושלח, ומתושלח) מסר לנח.

Adam transmitted [these teachings] to Enoch . . . , and Enoch (transmitted to Methuselah and Methuselah) transmitted to Noah.

Rabbi Moshe ben Maimon (Maimonides, Rambam) 1135–1204

Halachist, philosopher, author, and physician. Maimonides was born in Córdoba, Spain. After the conquest of Córdoba by the Almohads, he fled Spain and eventually settled in Cairo, Egypt. There, he became the leader of the Jewish community and served as court physician to the vizier of Egypt. He is most noted for authoring the *Mishneh Torah*, an encyclopedic arrangement of Jewish law; and for his philosophical work, *Guide for the Perplexed*. His rulings on Jewish law are integral to the formation of Halachic consensus.

Pirkei Rabbi Eliezer

A Midrash bearing the name of Rabbi Eliezer ben Hyrcanus, a prominent rabbinic sage living during the 1st and 2nd centuries. *Pirkei Rabbi Eliezer* commences with the story of the early days of Rabbi Eliezer's life and then chronologically narrates and expounds upon events from the Creation until the middle of the journeys of the Children of Israel in the wilderness.

The Introduction of Paganism

TEXT 5A

MAIMONIDES, *MISHNEH TORAH*, LAWS OF IDOLATRY 1:2

צור העולמים - לא היה שום אדם שהיה מכירו ולא יודעו אלא יחידים
בעולם, כגון חנוך ומתושלח, נח שם ועבר. ועל דרך זה היה העולם הולך
ומתגלגל עד שנולד עמודו של עולם, והוא אברהם אבינו.

[G-d] the Eternal Rock was not recognized or known by anyone worldwide, with few exceptions, such as Enoch, Methuselah, Noah, Shem, and Eber. The world continued this way until the pillar of the world—the Patriarch Abraham—was born.

G-d Reintroduced

TEXT 5B

MAIMONIDES, *MISHNEH TORAH*, IBID. 1:3

כִּי־נֶחַם לִבּוֹ מִשׁוֹטֵט וְיִמְבִּין.
 וְהָיָה לֹא מִלְמֵד וְלֹא מוֹדִיעַ דְּבָרָה, אֲלֵא מִשְׁקַע בְּאוֹר פְּשׁוּדִים בֵּין עוֹבְדֵי
 כּוֹכָבִים הַטְּפָשִׁים. וְאָבִיו וְאִמּוֹ וְכָל הָעָם עוֹבְדֵי כּוֹכָבִים, וְהוּא עוֹבֵד
 עִמָּהֶם, וְלִבּוֹ מִשׁוֹטֵט וְיִמְבִּין.
 וְלֹא יִהְיֶה לוֹ מְנַהִיג, וְיִמֵּי יִסְבֵּב אוֹתוֹ? כִּי אֵי אֶפְשָׁר שְׂיִסְבֵּב אֶת עֲצָמוֹ.
 בַּיּוֹם וּבַלַּיְלָה, וְהָיָה תָמִיד: הֵיאֵךְ אֶפְשָׁר שְׂיִהְיֶה הַגִּלְגַּל הַזֶּה נוֹהֵג תָמִיד
 כִּי־נֶחַם לִבּוֹ מִשׁוֹטֵט בְּדַעְתּוֹ וְהוּא קָטָן. וְהִתְחִיל לַחֲשֹׁב

After this mighty one was weaned, he began to explore and think. Though he was a child, he began to think, day and night, wondering, “How can the sphere revolve continually without anyone controlling it? Who causes it to rotate? It cannot turn itself.”

He had no teacher, nor was there anyone to inform him. He was mired in Ur Kasdim among foolish idolaters. His father, mother, and all the people [around him] were idol worshippers, and he would worship with them. [However] his heart was exploring and [gaining] understanding.

TEXT 5C

MIDRASH HAGADOL, NOACH 11:28

ראה הלבנה שאורה מבהיק בלילה מסוף העולם ועד סופו, ופמליא שלה מרובה. אמר: זה הוא אלוקה! עבדה כל הלילה.
 בשחרית, כיון שראה זריחת החמה בעת זריחתה, נחשכה הלבנה ותשש כוחה. אמר: אין אור הלבנה אלא מאור החמה, ואין העולם מתקיים אלא על מאורה של חמה! ועבד החמה כל היום.
 לערבית, שקעה החמה ותשש כוחה, ויצאת הלבנה והכוכבים והמזלות.
 אמר: בודאי יש אדון, ויש אלוקה לאלה!

Midrash Hagadol

A Midrashic work on the 5 books of the Pentateuch. Midrash is the designation of a particular genre of rabbinic literature usually forming a running commentary on specific books of the Bible. *Midrash Hagadol* quotes widely from Talmud and other earlier Midrashic works, serving as a valuable resource to reconstruct lost sections of Midrash. A traveler, Yaakov Sapir, first discovered the anonymous Midrash in Yemen in the middle of the 19th century. Some ascribe it to Rabbi Avraham, son of Maimonides.

He observed the moon; her light illuminated the night, shining from one end of the world to the other, and her retinue of glistening stars was enormous in number. He told himself, “This is G-d!”—and he worshipped the moon all night.

Then, in the morning, he observed the rising sun’s rays. As its light conquered the skies, the moon rapidly faded, weakening her strength. He told himself, “The moon’s light is but a reflection of the sun. Indeed, the entire world is sustained by the sun’s radiance!” He then worshipped the sun the entire day.

As evening fell, the sun set, its strength steadily weakening, until the moon, stars, and planets emerged. He declared, “There must be a Master—a G-d—over all of these!”

TEXT 5D

MAIMONIDES, *MISHNEH TORAH*, LAWS OF IDOLATRY 1:2

עַד שֶׁהִשְׁיִיג דֶּרֶךְ הָאֱמוּנָה וְהִבִּין קוֹ הַצְּדִק מִתְּבוּנָתוֹ הַנְּכוֹנָה. וַיֵּדַע שִׁישׁ
שֶׁמֶּאֱלֹהִים אֶחָד, וְהוּא מְנַהֵיג הַגְּלִגְלִים, וְהוּא בְּרָא הַכֹּל, וְאֵין בְּכֹל הַנִּמְצָא
אֱלֹהִים חוּץ מִמֶּנּוּ, וַיֵּדַע שֶׁכָּל הָעוֹלָם טוֹעִים.

Ultimately, he mastered the path of truth and understood right from wrong through his accurate comprehension. He realized that there is One G-d Who controls the sphere and Who created everything. That there is no other G-d in all of existence. And he knew that all of humanity had erred.

TEXT 5E

MAIMONIDES, *MISHNEH TORAH*, IBID.

וּבֶן אַרְבָּעִים שָׁנָה הִפִּיר אַבְרָהָם אֶת בּוֹרְאוֹ.
 כִּיִּן שֶׁהִפִּיר וַיֵּדַע, הִתְחִיל לְהַשִּׁיב תְּשׁוּבוֹת עַל בְּנֵי אוּר כַּשְׁדִּים וְלַעֲרָךְ
 דִּין עִמָּהֶם, וְלֹאמַר שֶׁאֵין זֶה דֶּרֶךְ הָאֱמֶת שֶׁאַתֶּם הוֹלְכִים בָּהּ.
 וְשִׁבַר הַצִּלְמִים, וְהִתְחִיל לְהוֹדִיעַ לָעַם שֶׁאֵין רְאוּי לַעֲבֹד אֱלֹה אֲלוֹקָה
 הַעוֹלָם, וְלוֹ רְאוּי לְהִשְׁתַּחוּוֹת וּלְהַקְרִיב וּלְנַסֵּךְ, כִּיִּי שִׁכְּרִירוּהוּ כָּל
 הַבְּרוּאִים הַבָּאִים.
 וְרְאוּי לְאַבֵּד וּלְשַׁבֵּר כָּל הַצְּדוֹת כִּיִּי שֶׁלֹּא יִטְעוּ בָּהֶן כָּל הָעַם, כְּמוֹ אֱלוֹ
 שֵׁהֶם מִדְּמִים שֶׁאֵין שָׁם אֲלוֹקָה אֲלֹה אֱלוֹ.

Abraham was forty years old when he became aware of his Creator.

When he recognized and knew Him, he began to formulate replies to the inhabitants of Ur Kasdim and debate with them, telling them that they were not following the proper path.

He shattered their idols and began to debate and explain to the people of Mesopotamia that it is only proper to serve the G-d of the universe. To Him [alone] is it fitting to bow, sacrifice, and offer libations so that the people of future [generations] would recognize Him.

[Conversely,] it is fitting to destroy and break all the idols, to prevent others from making the same error as those who thought that there is no other G-d besides these [idols].

Abraham Stamps His Generation

TEXT 6

MAIMONIDES, IBID.

עד שהגיע לארץ פנען והוא קורא, שנאמר: "ויקרא שם בשם ה' קל
עולם" (בראשית כא, לג).

וכיון שהיו העם מתקבצין אליו ושואלין לו על דבריו, היה מודיע לכל
אחד ואחד כפי דעתו עד שיחזירהו לדרך האמת, עד שנתקבצו אליו
אלפים ורבבות, והם אנשי בית אברהם, ושתל בלבם העקר הגדול הזה.

He came to the land of Canaan proclaiming G-d's existence, as the passage states, "And he called there in the name of G-d, the eternal G-d" (Genesis 21:33).

When the people would gather around him and ask about his statements, he would explain to each according to their understanding until they turned to the path of truth. Ultimately, thousands and myriads gathered around him. *These are the men of the house of Abraham in whose hearts he implanted this critical concept.*

TEXT 7

THE REBBE, RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSON, *LIKUTEI SICHOT* 20, P. 21

זייער הכרת הבורא איז געווען ניט (נאר) דורך דעם וואס אברהם האט זיי מנצח געווען, "גבר עליהם בראיותיו" און אפילו אויך ניט (נאר) אין אן אופן וואס זיי האבן מקבל געווען בשכלם די הסברות והוכחות פון אברהם, ובמילא איז זייער הכרה אין אלוקות געווען ווי א צוגעקומענער ענין (פון דעם וואס אברהם האט אין זיי אריינגעגעבן). נאר "שתל בליבם", ער האט אין זיי איינגעפלאנצט די הכרה און ידיעה באלוקות, דאס איז בא זיי געווארן אן אייגענע זאך, על דרך ווי בא אברהם - זיי האבן מכיר געווען אלוקות (אויך) מצד זייער שכל גופא. און דעמולט איז מתאים צו זאגן אז דאס איז "דורו של אברהם" - אברהם'ס דור, אז דער דור איז געווען דורגענומען מיט הכרה פון אלוקות, על דרך ווי אברהם.

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson 1902–1994

The towering Jewish leader of the 20th century, known as "the Lubavitcher Rebbe," or simply as "the Rebbe." Born in southern Ukraine, the Rebbe escaped Nazi-occupied Europe, arriving in the U.S. in June 1941. The Rebbe inspired and guided the revival of traditional Judaism after the European devastation, impacting virtually every Jewish community the world over. The Rebbe often emphasized that the performance of just one additional good deed could usher in the era of Mashiach. The Rebbe's scholarly talks and writings have been printed in more than 200 volumes.

Their acceptance of G-d was not (just) a product of Abraham defeating them in debate with resounding arguments. It was not even (just) because they agreed with Abraham's intellectual explanations and proofs. In that case, it would mean that their acceptance of G-d was foreign to them—something Abraham injected into them.

Instead, he planted the recognition and knowledge of G-d in their hearts. It became their recognition as it was Abraham's recognition. Their minds embraced the truth of G-d.

At that point, it was appropriate to call them the generation of Abraham because, like Abraham, they were permeated with the recognition of G-d.

III. ON G-D'S TERMS

The Next Failure

TEXT 8

MAIMONIDES, *MISHNEH TORAH*, LAWS OF IDOLATRY 1:3

וְהוֹדִיעוּ לְיִצְחָק בְּנוֹ, וַיֵּשֶׁב יִצְחָק מִלְמַד וּמְזַהֵיר. וַיִּצְחָק הוֹדִיעַ לְיַעֲקֹב
וּמְנַהֵג לְלַמֵּד, וַיֵּשֶׁב מִלְמַד וּמְחַזֵּיק כָּל הַנְּלוּיִם אֵלָיו. וַיַּעֲקֹב אָבִינוּ לָמַד
בְּנָיו כֻּלָּם . . . וְהָיָה הַדְּבָר הוֹלֵךְ וּמִתְגַּבֵּר בְּבְנֵי יַעֲקֹב וּבְנִלְוִיִּם עָלֵיהֶם,
וְנַעֲשִׂית בְּעוֹלָם אֲמָה שֶׁהִיא יוֹדֵעַת אֶת ה'.

עַד שֶׁאָרְכוּ הַיָּמִים לְיִשְׂרָאֵל בְּמִצְרַיִם, וְחָזְרוּ לְלַמֵּד מִעֲשִׂיהֶן וּלְעַבֵּד
כּוֹכָבִים כְּמוֹתֵן . . . וְכִמְעַט קָטַתְהוּ הָעֵקֶר שֶׁשִׁתַּל אַבְרָהָם נֶעְקַר, וְחָזְרוּ
בְּנֵי יַעֲקֹב לְטָעוֹת הָעוֹלָם וּתְעִיּוֹתֵן.

[Abraham] taught it to Isaac, his son. Isaac also taught others and turned [their hearts to G-d]. He also taught Jacob and appointed him as a teacher. [Jacob] taught others and encouraged all who accompanied him. He also instructed all his children. . . . This movement gathered strength among the descendants of Jacob and those who joined them, until a nation formed in the world that knew G-d.

After an extended stay in Egypt, the Jews learned from the Egyptians and reverted to worshipping the stars as they did. . . . Within a short time, the fundamental principle that Abraham had planted was nearly uprooted. The descendants of Jacob almost all returned to the errors of the world and its crookedness.

On G-d's Terms

TEXT 9

MAIMONIDES, IBID.

וּמֵאַהֲבַת ה' אוֹתָנוּ, וּמִשְׁמֵרוֹ אֶת הַשְּׁבוּעָה לְאַבְרָהָם אָבִינוּ, עָשָׂה מֹשֶׁה
רִבֵּנוּ רִבֵּן שֶׁל כָּל הַנְּבִיאִים, וּשְׁלָחוֹ.
כִּיּוֹן שֶׁנִּתְּנָא מֹשֶׁה רִבֵּנוּ וּבָחַר ה' יִשְׂרָאֵל לְנַחֲלָה, הִכְתִּירָן בְּמִצְוֹת וְהוֹדִיעָם
דְּרַךְ עֲבוֹדָתוֹ, וּמָה יְהִיָּה מִשְׁפֹּט עֲבוֹדַת כּוֹכָבִים וְכָל הַטּוֹעִים אַחֲרֶיהָ.

Out of love for us and to uphold the oath G-d made to Abraham our patriarch, G-d designated Moses our teacher, the master of all prophets, and sent him [to redeem the Jews].

After Moses our teacher prophesied, and G-d chose Israel as His inheritance, He crowned them with *mitzvot* and taught them how to serve Him, [teaching them] the rules prescribed for idol worshippers and those who stray after it.

TEXT 10

THE REBBE, RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSON, *LIKUTEI SICHOT* 20, P. 22

מוֹז מַעַן וּוִיסָן, אִז מ'קַעַן נִיט פֿאַרלאַזן זיך, בויען אויף דעם אליין. אז
זיין שכל זאל זיין דער איינציקער יסוד צו אפהאלטן זיך פון עבודה זרה
און צו האבן די הכרה אין מציאות הבורא און דינען אים . . .
כדי צו באווארענען פון חטא עבודה זרה האבן זיי געדארפט אנקומען
צו דעם וואס "מאהבת ה' אותנו . . . עשה משה רבינו רבן של כל
הנביאים ושלחו . . . הכתירן במצוות והודיעם דרך עבודתו כו" - דאס
הייסט, אז דער קיום איז געווען מצד ציווי ה'.
און ניט נאר די הכרה אין מציאות הבורא נאר אויך עבודתו, וואס אויך
דאס איז אן ענין צו וועלכן מ'איז צוגעקומען (בזמן אברהם) דורך דער

אייגענער הכרה - "שאין ראוי לעבוד אלא לאלוקה העולם ולו ראוי להשתחוות ולהקריב ולנסך כו".
 דארף מען וויסן אז אויך דאס איז פארבונדן מיט דברי ה', נבואת משה רבינו, דער אויבערשטער "הודיעם דרך עבודתו".

We must know that we can't rely on ourselves or build [our relationship with G-d] on our cognition. Our minds can't be our only bulwark against idol worship, nor can they be our only reason to embrace and serve G-d. . . .

To shield them from the sin of idol worship, our ancestors required a key factor—"Out of love for us . . . G-d designated Moses our teacher, the master of all prophets, and sent him [to redeem the Jews]. . . . *He crowned them with mitzvot and taught them how to serve Him*" (Laws of Idolatry 1:3). This means that they served G-d because G-d had commanded them to.

Not only was their acknowledgment of G-d inspired by G-d but so was their worship of G-d, unlike in Abraham's day when they worshipped G-d because *they* learned that G-d is the only one worthy of worship and that it is proper to prostrate before Him, offer sacrifices, and pour libations to Him, etc.

[The secret to Jewish endurance is to] know that we worship G-d because He instructed it when He prophesied to Moses and taught us how to serve Him.

*The Foolproof Bulwark***TEXT 11**

THE REBBE, RABBI MENACHEM MENDEL SCHNEERSON, IBID., PP. 23-24

איז ניט מספיק צו האבן בלויז די ידיעה אין אלוקות, ווארום היות אז דער מענטש איז דאס מכריח בשכלו הוא - און מיטן שכל קען מען "נעמען" נאר די בחינה פן אלוקות וואס ווערט נמשך בבחינת "מצוי ראשון והוא ממציא כל נמצא", דאס הייסט, ווי דער אויבערשטער כביכול איז זיך מצמצם צו האבן א שייכות צו מציאות העולם.

אבער די הכרה אין "אמיתית המצאו" פון אלוקות, דער אור האלוקי ווי ער איז העכער פון האבן א שייכות צו וועלט - דאס קען מען "נעמען" נאר מיט אמונה, וואס איז למעלה מהשכל . . .

שכל האדם איז א מציאות - א מציאות נבראת מוגבלת, דעריבער האט שכל ניט בכח צו שולל זיין די מציאות הנבראים בתכלית השלילה. דוקא ווען דאס קומט מצד הציווי פון דעם אויבערשטן, ובדרך אמונה, דעמולט דערהערט ער באמת, אז יעדע מציאות זולתו יתברך איז מושלל בתכלית.

Our knowledge of G-d doesn't suffice. Inasmuch as our convictions are compelled by our intelligence, we can only reach the dimension of G-d that extends downward to relate to us—[the element of G-d that extends downward to become] the primordial cause of all existence.

However, our minds can't grasp [or reach] the pinnacle of G-dliness that transcends any form of association with creation. This can only be embraced with faith because faith transcends intelligence.

Human intelligence is a created finite being and is, therefore, incapable of utter dissociation from existence. It is only G-d's commandment to us to accept His transcendental reality on

faith that empowers us to embrace this truth, namely, that G-d is the only real existence, and nothing can exist without Him.

Often Misunderstood

TEXT 12

GEOFFREY ALDERMAN, *RABBI SACKS, FAITH, AND CERTAINTY*, WWW.THEGUARDIAN.COM

During his TV duel with assorted sceptics Sacks was asked (by novelist Howard Jacobson) whether he—Sacks—could be certain of G-d’s existence. Sacks replied: “I believe faith is not certainty but the courage to live with uncertainty.”

Really? Is this what Rabbi Lord Sacks’ faith amounts to? Is this the sum total of his Orthodoxy? It certainly isn’t mine. My Orthodoxy—my faith—is rooted in certainty. I cannot speak for Rabbi Sacks, but I can tell you—and him—that every morning, in the course of my prayers, I recite, from my prayer book, the Principles of Faith as set down by Moses Maimonides. Each verse of these 13 principles begins with the celebrated formula *Ani ma’amin be-emunah shelemah*—“I believe with perfect [or total] faith.” Not just faith. Not even qualified faith or relative faith. But perfect faith. The faith in which I believe—my faith (for example) that “the Creator, blessed be His name, is the Creator and guide of everything that has been created; He alone has made, does make, and will make all things”—is total, without qualification.

KEY POINTS

- » When we are children, we embrace G-d wholly and purely. We don't know Him or understand Him. We accept Him.
- » This faith falters as we mature, and our minds begin to question. At this point, we must develop an intellectual relationship with G-d based on sound reasoning and irrefutable logic.
- » The next step is to transition from the mind to the heart and develop an emotional relationship with G-d. At this point, G-d is as real to us as the people we love. We sense His presence palpably in our world.
- » Both of these steps are not foolproof. Ideas or emotions can be supplanted by contrary ideas or emotions. When our reasons to accept G-d come from within ourselves, other motivations can thwart us.
- » The only way for our relationship with G-d to be enduring is when it originates with G-d. When our reason to accept G-d originates with G-d, it can't be countered because G-d can't be countered.
- » When we accept G-d because He commands us to accept Him, no argument or temptation can lure us away from Him.