

SEDER AND LOVE

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

SOURCES

R. Shneur Zalman of Liady, *Likkutei Amarim* 46

What is the meaning of the verse:

“As in water, face to face, so is the heart of man to man?”

כמים, פנים לפנים, כן לב האדם אל האדם.

There is good way, which is suitable for all and is “very close” indeed, to arouse and kindle the light of the love that is implanted and concealed in one’s heart, so that it may shine forth with its intense light, like a burning fire, in the consciousness of the heart and mind - with all his heart, his soul and might - from the depth of the heart, in absolute truth.

This way is: to take to heart the meaning of the verse: “As in water, face to face, so is the heart of man to man.”

This means that the face which a person presents to the water – the same identical face is reflected back to him from the water. So also with hearts of people. Loving awakens a loving response from another. Cementing their mutual love and loyalty for each other. Such is the common nature in the character of every person, when they are equal in status.

How much more so when a great and mighty king shows his great and intense love for a commoner who is despised and lowly among men . . . yet the king comes down to him from the place of his glory, together with all his retinue, and raises him and exalts him . . .and brings him into his palace, the royal palace, in the innermost chamber, a place such as no servant nor lord ever enters, and there shares with him the closest companionship with embraces and kisses and spiritual attachment with heart and soul - how much more will the love be aroused and doubled in the heart of this most common and humble individual for the person of the king. Even if his heart be like stone it will surely melt and become water, and his soul will pour itself out, with soulful longing for the love of the king.

In a manner corresponding in every detail but to an infinitely greater degree, has the Lord our God dealt with us . . . For the Holy One, blessed be He, forsakes the higher and lower creatures

choosing none of them but Israel His people, whom He brought out of Egypt . . . in order to bring them near to Him in true closeness and unity, with a truly soulful attachment on the level of “kisses” of mouth to mouth...

GUIDING QUESTIONS

1. What line or idea in this section resonates with you?
2. What does the idea that loving God “is implanted and concealed in a heart” reflect about human nature?
3. Have you ever experienced people responding in love after you conveyed your love to them - “As in water, face to face, so is the heart of man to man”?

EXPERIENTIAL EXERCISE

Draw abstractly this moment of spiritual connection between God and the Jewish People.

SPIRITUAL CHEVRUTA

1. Share something from the drawing exercise.
2. Think of “small moments” in your daily life that bring you to sense God’s love.
Think of a significant moment in your life that brought you to sense God’s love.
3. Is there anything that makes you resistant to God’s love?
4. What is a comfortable way for you to express your love for God?