

**TOOL # 14**

It is human nature for a person to love, feel close to, and long for whomever he thinks loves him too. We naturally love people who love us. As King Solomon taught in Proverbs 27:19, "Like the reflection of a face in water, so is the heart of one person to another." When you look in the water, you are able to see your reflection in the water. When you look at another person who, you feel, loves you, that love is reflected by you.

You would love such a person all the more if that person who loved you were a VIP - a king or a general. You would love him even more if that person not only loved you, but in fact, also demonstrated his love. (For example, he did acts of kindness toward you, even though he had nothing to gain from them.) Your love would be so strong that you would never be able to take your mind off that person. You would not withhold any effort to fulfill his requests. You would freely give him of yourself – your time, your money, your children.

A person should now be able to make the following deduction: If we act kindly toward a weak human being (who is just like us), how much more enthusiastically should we behave toward the Almighty! Moshe tells us how much Hashem loves us. As it says in Deuteronomy 7:7-8: "Not because you were the most numerous of peoples did Hashem yearn for you and choose you ... but rather because Hashem loved you."

We see many more proofs from our past and present relationship with Hashem that He loves and helps us and has stood by us in every generation. As it says, "When they will be in the land of their enemies, I will not reject them nor become so weary of them that I would utterly destroy them and break My covenant with them..." (Leviticus 26:44), and "Though we are slaves, yet our G-d has never abandoned us in our slavery...." (Ezra 9:9).

There is another logical reason to love Hashem: It is human nature to recall the love that someone else had for our parents or our ancestors, by honoring this person and loving him in turn. Similarly, Hashem reminds us that He made a covenant with our ancestors, and that He protects us in their merit in order to maintain that covenant, as it says, "Because He would keep the oath that He made to your fathers." (Deuteronomy 7:8).

Do we reciprocate this love to Hashem? If a person cannot:

- 1) Trust Hashem or rely on His kindness
- 2) Love Him
- 3) Devote himself to His service
- 4) Pour forth in prayer before Him . . .

then how coarse this person's nature is and how stiff-necked he is! How petty his faith is and how difficult it is for him to pursue truth!

How can a "mentchlich" person not help but

- Recall Hashem's love for his parents and ancestors?
- Recall His love and protection since the day of his birth?

- Do something in return for His promises that He fulfilled?
- Pay attention to His closeness and abundant kindness?
- Be humbled by the fact that He created us and is guiding us entirely for our own welfare?

Today's tool is to realize that you are deeply loved by Hashem and should return that love. Unfortunately, the Yetzer Hara obstructs our vision. How do we repair this fault? We conquer the Yetzer Hara by taking a deeper look at King Solomon's verse comparing love to a reflection in the water, we may be able to understand things a little better. Let us analyze the verse that says, "Like the reflection of a face in water, so is the heart of one person to another."

What do you see when you look into the water? Only your own face. What is King Solomon comparing? He is comparing the water to another person's face. What does water do? Reflect your face. What is the other person's face doing? The same thing. It is reflecting your feelings. If you frown at the water, what will the water reflect? Your frowning face! Similarly, if you sense that your friend is or is not in love with you, he is only reflecting the feeling that you are sending to him. If he reflects love, it is because you are showing love, and vice versa. So don't blame the other person for not loving you, as he is only reflecting the image you are projecting. If you walk around all day long with a frown on your face, everyone you meet that day will reflect that same frown. It all starts with you!

Other people are very significant in our lives. The way they act toward us is generally an indicator of how we are already acting toward them. If someone is not smiling at you, you have the power to change his actions. How? By smiling at him! This is an effective method for transforming someone else's personality, but the real transformation takes place within you.

The most common way for us to understand why we cannot love Hashem after all the love He shows us is as follows: Nowadays, we really don't love Hashem, and He is simply reflecting our own attitude in order for us to realize that we should change. Instead of being upset, get the message and change!

### **Today's Exercise:**

Take a look in your "spiritual mirror" and what do you see? Do you see a person who loves Hashem? Do you perceive that Hashem loves you? How will you know? If you think He doesn't love you, don't blame Him. Realize that you are to blame and start displaying your love for Him. Remember all the reasons why you should love him and show that love. Then you will see His love reflecting back toward you.