

THE 13 IKARIM

יג עקרי אמונה של הרמב"ם

(4) THE FIRST IKAR - G-D AS CREATOR - PART 2

סמנר מדרשת רחל וחייה

A] YEDIYAH AND EMUNAH

A1] Knowledge

1. שנאמר בתחילת נתינת התורה, אנכי ה' אלהיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים וגו', ופירושו כאלו אמר, תדעו ותאמינו שיש לעולם אלוה

ספר החינוך מצוה כה

There is a significant debate between the Rishonim as to whether 'Anochi' is a mitzvah or a reality which underpins the mitzvot. As we saw in shiur 3, Rambam understands it as a mitzvah. So too does the Sefer Hachinuch, who states that the mitzvah is to know (yedyiah) and 'believe' (emunah) that there is a G-d

2. א: יסוד היסודות ועמוד החכמות לידע שיש שם מצוי ראשון

רמב"ם הלכות יסודי התורה פרק א

*At the start of the Mishne Torah, the Rambam rules that there is a mitzvah to **know** that G-d exists*

3. המצוה הראשונה היא הצווי שנצטוונו להאמין באלוהות: והוא שנאמין שיש (שם) עלה וסבה

ספר המצוות לרמב"ם מצות עשה א

In the Sefer Hamitzvot, the Rambam describes the first mitzvah as to have 'emunah' in G-d.¹ What is the difference?

4. ואתה שלמה בני דע את אלקי אביך ועבדהו בלב שלם ובנגפש חפצה פי כל לבבות דורש ה' וכל יצר מחשבות מבין אם תדרשנו ימצא לך ואם תעזבנו יזניחה לעד

דברי הימים א' כח:ט

Shlomo is commanded by G-d to "know" Him

5. רק דע - אם באמונות ודעות לא די שתסמך על הקבלה בלבד רק דע את אלקי אביך - ע"פ הידיעה שתשכיל בדרכיו ואמתיותיו ע"פ ידיעת השכל

מלבי"ם דברי הימים א' כח:ח - באור הענין

*The Malbim explains that, when it comes to matters of understanding G-d, it is not sufficient to rely **solely** on tradition. One must also try to understand these issues in a logical and rational way*

ידיעה = knowledge² based on rationality and intellectualism

The mitzvah of 'Anochi', according to the Rambam and Chinuch is not just to 'believe' in G-d but to come to an intellectual awareness of the NATURE of G-d - as First Cause etc etc . We will see in the Second and Third Ikar that our actual positive awareness of the essence of G-d will be very limited

1. Although we saw in the last sheet that use of the word אמונה in this translation of the Sefer Hamitzvot is questionable

2. See also Bereishit 4:1 for an indicator of the potential intimacy of such knowledge

A2] Emunah

6. (א) אחר הדברים האלה הִיָּה דְבַר ה' אֶל אַבְרָם בְּמַחְזָה לֵאמֹר אֵל תִּירָא אַבְרָם אֲנֹכִי מִגֵּן לְךָ שְׂכָרְךָ הַרְבֵּה מְאֹד: (ב) וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם אֲדֹנָי יְקֹוֹק מַה תַּתֵּן לִי וְאֲנֹכִי הוֹלֵךְ עֲרִירִי וְבֵן מְשֻׁק בֵּיתִי הוּא דְמַשְׁק אֶלְיֵעֶזֶר: (ג) וַיֹּאמֶר אַבְרָם הֵן לִי לֹא נִתְּנָה זָרַע וְהִנֵּה בֵן בֵּיתִי יוֹרֵשׁ אֹתִי: (ד) וְהִנֵּה דְבַר ה' אֵלָיו לֵאמֹר לֹא יִירָשְׁךָ זֶה כִּי אִם אֲשֶׁר יֵצֵא מִמֶּעֶיךָ הוּא יִירָשְׁךָ: (ה) וַיֹּצֵא אֹתוֹ הַחוּצָה וַיֹּאמֶר הֲבֵט נָא הַשָּׁמַיְמָה וְסִפֵּר הַכּוֹכָבִים אִם תּוּכַל לִסְפֹּר אֹתָם וַיֹּאמֶר לוֹ כֹּה יִהְיֶה זִרְעֶךָ: (ו) וְהָאֱמוּנָה בְּה' וַיַּחְשְׁבֶהָ לוֹ צְדָקָה:

בראשית טו-א-ו

Avraham had 'Emunah' in G-d. This was not a cognitive act of awareness or even a declaration of faith in G-d existence. It is a expression of **confidence** in and commitment to G-d

7. (יב) וַיְדִי מִשָּׁה כַּבָּדִים וַיִּקְחוּ אֶבֶן וַיִּשְׁלִמוּ תַחְתָּיו וַיִּשָּׁב עָלֶיהָ וְאַהֲרֹן וְחֹר וְתַמְכוּ בְּגֵדֵי מִזָּה אֶחָד וּמִזָּה אֶחָד וַיְהִי יָדָיו אֱמוּנָה עַד בֹּא הַשָּׁמֶשׁ:

שמות יז-ב

Moshe's hands were 'Emunah' - ie **faithful** to the task that they were given

8. וַיֹּאמֶר ה' אֶל מֹשֶׁה עַד אָנֹכָה יִנְאַצְנִי הָעַם הַזֶּה וְעַד אָנֹכָה לֹא יֶאֱמִינוּ בִּי בְּכָל הָאֹתוֹת אֲשֶׁר עֲשִׂיתִי בְּקִרְבּוֹ

במדבר יז-א

G-d complains to Moshe that the Jewish people have no Emunah. This is not belief in G-d's existence but **faithfulness** to 'carry through' G-d's mission

9. א-ל אֱמוּנָה וְאִין עוֹל צְדִיק וְיִשְׁרָה הוּא:

דברים לב-ד

G-d is described as 'Emunah' - ie **faithful** to His promises to the Jewish people

אמונה = "faithful commitment", not cognitive or intellectual, but not anti-intellectual or irrational

10. אֲנֹכִי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ - הַדְּבוּר הַזֶּה מִצְוַת עֲשֵׂה, אָמַר אֲנֹכִי ה', יוֹרָה וַיִּצְוֶה אוֹתָם שִׂדְעוּ וַיֹּאמִינוּ כִּי יֵשׁ ה', וְהוּא אֱלֹהִים לָהֶם, כְּלוֹמַר הוּוֹה, קִדְמוֹן, מֵאֲתוֹ הִיָּה הַכֹּל בַּחֶפֶץ וַיְכוּלֶת, וְהוּא אֱלֹהִים לָהֶם, **שְׁחִיבִים לַעֲבוֹד אוֹתוֹ** כִּךְ אָמַר הַמְּקוֹם לְיִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנֹכִי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ לֹא יִהְיֶה לְךָ, אֲנִי הוּא שֶׁקְּבַלְתֶּם מִלְּכוּתִי עֲלֵיכֶם בְּמִצְרַיִם? אָמְרוּ לוֹ הֵן! כִּשְׁקַבַּלְתֶּם מִלְּכוּתִי **קִבְלוּ גוֹרוֹתֵי**, כְּלוֹמַר אַחַר שֵׁאתֶם מִקְּבָלִים עֲלֵיכֶם וּמוֹדִים שֵׁאֲנִי ה' וְאֲנִי אֱלֹהֵיכֶם מֵאַרְצְ מִצְרַיִם קִבְלוּ כָל מִצְוֹתַי

רמב"ן שמות כ-ב

The Ramban (like the Rambam) understands the expression Anochi as a mitzvah. However, according to Ramban, the mitzvah is to accept of the IMPLICATIONS of G-d's existence and involvement in the world - ie acceptance of the responsibility of following the mitzvot

Our relationship with G-d must be based (i) on rational understanding - yediyah; and (ii) deep commitment and **faithfulness** to live by the knowledge that we have - emuna.

Yediyah is 'belief that', implying the knowledge of facts. This does not however prevent 'cognitive dissonance' - I believe that the chocolate fudge cake is bad for me yet I eat it anyway! Emunah is 'belief in' implying a relationship, as in - 'I believe in my wife'. In this case, there is no room for cognitive dissonance. I cannot make the statement - 'I believe in my wife' whilst at the same time hiring private detectives to check on her movements. That would mean very clearly that I did NOT believe in my wife!³

3. For a more detailed analysis of the 'belief that'/'belief in' issue see Kellner - Must a Jew Believe Anything pp12-13 and notes there

B] BEYOND 'PROOF'**B1] Is philosophical speculation a "Jewish" approach**

11. Know that the many sciences devoted to establishing the truth regarding these matters that have existed in our religious community have perished because of the length of the time that has passed, because of our being dominated by the pagan nations, and because, as we have made clear, it is not permitted to divulge these matters to all people. You already know that even the legalistic science of law was not put down in writing in the olden times because of the precept which is widely known in the nation: Words that I have communicated to you orally, you are not allowed to put down in writing. This precept shows extreme wisdom with regard to the Law. For it was meant to prevent what has ultimately come about in this respect: I mean the multiplicity of opinions, the variety of schools, the confusions occurring in the expression of what is put down in writing, the negligence that accompanies what is written down, the divisions of the people, who are separated into sects, and the production of confusion with regard to actions. All these matters should be within the authority of the Great Court of Law, as we have made clear in our juridical compilations and as the text of the Torah shows. Now if there was insistence that the legalistic science of law should not, in view of the harm that would be caused by such a procedure, be perpetuated in a written compilation accessible to all the people, all the more could none of the mysteries of the Torah have been set down in writing and be made accessible to the people. On the contrary they were transmitted by a few men belonging to the elite to a few of the same kind, just as I made clear to you from their saying: The mysteries of the Torah may only be transmitted to a counsellor, wise in crafts, and so on. This was the cause that necessitated the disappearance of these great roots of knowledge from the nation. For you will not find with regard to them anything except slight indications and pointers occurring in the Talmud and the Midrashim. These are, as it were, a few grains belonging to the core, which are overlaid by many layers of rind, so that people were occupied with these layers of rind and thought that beneath them there was no core whatever.

Moreh Nevuchim I:71⁴

The Rambam understands that philosophical analysis was a classical Jewish methodology but fell into disuse due to (i) passage of time; (ii) influence of the Exile (reaction against non-Jewish culture?); (iii) the halachic restrictions on whom this information may be passed on to. For the Rambam, such matters constitute Ma'aseh Bereishit and Ma'aseh Merkava - the philosophy and science of the physical and metaphysical

B2] What is the purpose of philosophical analysis in the Ikarim⁵?

How far do philosophical proofs take us? The Cosmological Proof, more or less in the form outlined by the Rambam, has been critiqued over the last few centuries, particularly by Kant in the Critique of Pure Reason (1787). Does that detract from the purpose of this philosophical approaches to G-d's existence?

12. וַיֹּאמֶר אֱלֹקִים נַעֲשֶׂה אָדָם בְּצַלְמֵנוּ כְּדְמוּתֵנוּ

בראשית א'כז

Man is created in 'tzelem' and 'demut' of G-d

13. Some have been of opinion that by the Hebrew *tzelem*, the shape and figure of a thing is to be understood, and this explanation led men to believe in the corporeality [of the Divine Being]: for they thought that the words "Let us make man in our *tzelem*" (Gen. i. 26), implied that God had the form of a human being In this chapter it is our sole intention to explain the meaning of the words *tzelem* and *demut*.

I hold that the Hebrew equivalent of "form" in the ordinary acceptance of the word, viz., the figure and shape of a thing, is *to'ar*. This term is not at all applicable to God. The term *tzelem*, on the other hand, signifies the **specific form**, viz., that which constitutes the essence of a thing, whereby the thing is what it is; the reality of a thing in so far as it is that particular being. and in the phrase "Let us make man in our *tzelem*" (Gen. i. 26), the term signifies "the specific form" of man, **viz., his intellectual perception**, and does not refer to his "figure" or "shape."

Demut is derived from the verb *damah*, "he is like." This term likewise denotes agreement with regard to some abstract relation

4. Translation Shlomo Pines edition (Chicago, 1963)

5. Based on an analysis by Rabbi Meir Triebitz - see <http://hashkafacircle.com/shiurim/ikarim/13-ikarim-02-refutation-of-kant/>

As man's distinction consists in a property which no other creature on earth possesses, viz., intellectual perception, in the exercise of which he does not employ his senses, nor move his hand or his foot, **this perception has been compared--though only apparently, not in truth--to the Divine perception**, which requires no corporeal organ. On this account, i.e., **on account of the Divine intellect with which man has been endowed, he is said to have been made in the form and likeness of the Almighty**, but far from it be the notion that the Supreme Being is corporeal, having a material form

Moreh Nevuchim I:1

The first section of the Moreh, the Rambam explains that the creation of Man 'in the image of G-d' means the ability of Man to reach conscious intellectual perception in the way (apparently) that only G-d does

14. Now when it is demonstrated that God is an intellect *in actu* and that there is absolutely no potentiality in Him so that He is not by way of sometimes apprehending and sometimes not apprehending, but is always an intellect *in actu*, it follows necessarily that He and the thing apprehended are one thing, which is His essence. Moreover, the act of apprehension owing to which He is said to be an intellectually cognizing subject is in itself the intellect, which is His essence. Accordingly He is always the intellect as well as the intellectually cognizing subject and the intellectually cognized object. It is accordingly also clear [this] does not hold good with reference to the Creator only, but also with reference to every intellect. Thus in us too, the intellectually cognizing subject, the intellect, and the intellectually cognized object, are one and the same thing wherever we have an intellect *in actu*. **We, however, pass intellectually from potentiality to actuality only from time to time.** And the separate intellect too, I mean the active intellect, sometimes gets an impediment that hinders its act

Moreh Nevuchim I:68⁶

When we exercise our 'active intellect', in so doing we become a tzelem Elokim. Unfortunately, we rarely get to think 'actively' in the way that G-d does. Nevertheless, such thinking constitutes a 'Godly' act

15. ולא עבודת כוכבים בלבד הוא שאסור להפנות אחריה במחשבה אלא כל מחשבה שהוא גורם לו לאדם לעקור עיקר מעיקרי התורה מוזהרין אנו שלא להעלותה על לבנו

רמב"ם הלכות עבודת כוכבים פרק ב

The negative mitzvah - not to hold incorrect views on the Nature of G-d - is the other side of this process and also involves the process of thought

The 13 Ikarim, especially the first 4 which are philosophically oriented, therefore constitute an 'active faith', whereby the process of thinking and analysis (irrespective of the conclusions!) represents an expression of Tzelem Elokim AND the mitzvot of 'Anochi', 'Lo Yihiyeh Lecha' and also 'Ahavat Hashem'

16. דבר ידוע וברור שאין אהבת הקב"ה נקשרת בלבד של אדם עד שישגה בה תמיד כראוי ויעזוב כל מה שבעולם חוץ ממנה, כמו שצוה ואמר בכל לבבך ובכל נפשך, אינו אוהב הקב"ה אלא בדעת שידעהו, ועל פי הדעה תהיה האהבה אם מעט מעט ואם הרבה הרבה

רמב"ם הלכות תשובה פרק י הלכה ו

The mitzvah of loving G-d is inextricably tied to the ability to know G-d

B3] Can we ever 'prove' the existence of G-d?

(a) What level of 'proof' would you require to 'know' the existence of an Infinite Being? Can it be expressed as a percentage? 100%? 80%? 51%?

(b) Where would you look for this 'proof'? There are a number of traditional arguments for the existence of G-d, including :-

(i) The **Argument from Morality** - whether an absolute morality is possible without G-d

6. Translation Shlomo Pines edition (Chicago, 1963)

(ii) The **Teleological Argument** - "argument from design" - what is the probability that the universe with all its fine-tuning evolved randomly - the Goldilocks Principle

17. אם ישפך לאדם דיו פתאום על נייר חלק, שא"א שיצטייר ממנו עליו כתב מסודר ושיטות נקראות כמו שיהיה בקולמוס. ואלו הביא אדם לפנינו כתב מסודר ממה שאי אפשר להיות מבלי מצוע קולמוס, ואומר, כי נשפך הדיו על הנייר, ונעשתה צורת הכתב עליו מעצמה, היינו ממהרים להכזיבו על פניו, שאיננו נמלט מכוונת מכוון. וכיון שזה בעינינו דבר שא"א להיות בצורות רשומות בהסכמת דעתנו, איך יוכל לומר בדבר, שמלאכתו יותר דקה ותקונו יותר רחוק ועמוק בעינינו עד אין תכלית, שיהיה מבלי כוונת מכוון וחכמת חכם ויכולת יכול

ספר חובות הלבבות שער א - שער היחוד פרק ו

Chovot Halevavot⁷ brings the classic argument from design in nature - the mashal of spilling random ink on a page and producing a work of writing. All the more so the incredible depth of design in nature bespeaks a Designer

18. ויאמר ה' אל אברהם לך מארצך וגו', אמר רבי יצחק משל לאחד שהיה עובר ממקום למקום, וראה בירה אחת דולקת אמר תאמר שהבירה זו בלא מנהיג, הציץ עליו בעל הבירה, אמר לו אני הוא בעל הבירה, כך לפי שהיה אבינו אברהם אומר תאמר שהעולם הזה בלא מנהיג, הציץ עליו הקב"ה ואמר לו אני הוא בעל העולם

בראשית רבה פרשת לך לך פרשה לט סימן א

This argument is found in Chazal in the famous Midrash of Avraham discovering the burning tower

(iii) The **Cosmological Argument** - what could be the logical First Cause for the existence of this finite world

19. ומעשה שבא מין ואמר לר' עקיבא העוה"ז מי בראו? א"ל הקב"ה, א"ל הראיני דבר ברור, א"ל למחר תבא אלי, למחר בא אצלו א"ל מה אתה לובש, א"ל בגד, א"ל מי עשאו, א"ל האורג, א"ל איני מאמינך הראיני דבר ברור, א"ל ומה אראה לך ואין אתה יודע שהאורג עשאו, א"ל ואתה אינך יודע שהקב"ה ברא את עולמו. נפטר אותו המין, אמרו לו תלמידיו מה הדבר ברור, א"ל בני כשם שהבית מודיע על הבנאי והבגד מודיע על האורג והדלת על הנגר, כך העולם מודיע על הקב"ה שהוא בראו

אוצר המדרשים (אייזנשטיין) תמורה עמוד 385

Rabbi Akiva presents this argument to a heretic

(iv) The **Historical Argument** - the nature of world/Jewish history

(v) The **Revelation Argument** - G-d revealed himself to us at Har Sinai and our unbroken tradition teaches us this reality

20. כן פתח אלקים דבריו אל המון ישראל: "אנכי ה' אלהיך אשר הוצאתיך מארץ מצרים", ולא אמר: "אני בורא העולם ובוראכם": וכן פתחתי לך מלך הכוזר כאשר שאלתני על אמונתך, השיבותיך מה שאני חייב בו וחיבבין בו כל קהל ישראל, אשר התברר אצלם המעמד ההוא בראות עיניהם, ואחר כן הקבלה הנמשכת שהיא כמראה העין

ספר הכוזרי מאמר א אות כה

The Kuzari brings the classic argument for our commitment to G-d from the mass Revelation at Sinai and the accurate transmission of that message through the generations

C] CONCLUSION

- *Yediyah and Emunah are two separate concepts. Yediyah is intellectual and cognitive knowledge to try and understand the Nature of G-d. Emunah is a lifestyle commitment to the implications of the reality of that knowledge*
- *For the Rambam the very process of Yediyah - active thinking - is a mitzvah on a number of levels - Ahavat Hashem, Anochi, Lo Yihiyeh Lecha. It is not clear whether the Rambam is dealing at all with Yediyah per se*
- *For the Sefer Hachinuch - see shiur 3 - Emunah - commitment and relationship is the mitzvah of Anochi. Yediyah is the icing on the the cake - the mitzvah in its ideal form for those who are capable of it*

7. by R' Bachya Ibn Pekuda (Spain 11C)