

Bereishis 22:2

וַיֹּאמֶר קַח-נָא אֶת-בְּנִיךָ אֶת-יְחִידְךָ אֲשֶׁר-אַהַבְתָּ, אֶת-יִצְחָק, וְלֶךְ-לְךָ, אֶל-אֶרֶץ הַמִּרְיָה; וְהַעֲלֵהוּ שָׁם, לְעֹלָה,  
עַל אֶחָד הַהָרִים, אֲשֶׁר אָמַר אֱלֹהִים

RSRH, אֲשֶׁר-אַהַבְתָּ - (The root word is) אהב - (from the 2 letter root) הַב, give, with a prefixed א, referring to the active personality - means: both to *give oneself up* to another and to seek to draw the other exceedingly close *to oneself*; that is, to strive to attain a *most intimate association* with someone. The opposite of אהב is שָׂנֵא, related to סָנֵה, meaning essentially: to be a thorn, to fend off the other and keep him as far away from oneself as possible. For *ahava*, another's *presence* is required; for *sinah*, his complete *removal* is desired."

Onkelos on Chumash

א.ה.ג. = ר.ח.ם.

Bereishis 29:18

וַיֹּאֲהָב יַעֲקֹב אֶת-רַחֵל וַיֹּאמֶר אֶעֱבְדְךָ שִׁבְעַ שָׁנִים בְּרַחֵל בְּתוּךָ הַקְּטָנָה

Bereishis 24:67

וַיְבָאָה יִצְחָק הָאֱלֹהִים שָׂנֵה אִמּוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת-רַבֵּקָה וַתְּהִי-לוֹ לְאִשָּׁה וַיֹּאֲהָבָהּ וַיִּנָּחֶם יִצְחָק אַחֲרֵי אִמּוֹ

R' Joseph B. Soloveitchik, the Rav, zt'l, "Yes, man possesses an angelic quality, man must at certain times act, laugh, rejoice, grieve, cry, beg, pray, dream like a child. If man matures completely, intellectually, emotionally, if soul, mind, will, sentiment ripen and reach the stage of adulthood abandoning the angel or the child along along the highway they travel to maturity, man loses one of the basic attributes of humanity, and the image is impaired. No matter how high a man rises, however mature the intellect becomes, however sophisticated one is, regardless of the thorough, complex training one received, however sharp, analytical and comprehensive his mind is, the non-critical, naïve, miserable and at the same time happy child must never be forsaken. He must never die with the arrival of adulthood. *Man must be able to give sometimes friendship unselfishly; the adult is too practical to do things which don't benefit him.* The mature person is pragmatic, too self-centered. What he does must make sense; friendship is at time nonsensical from a utilitarian (practical, useful) perspective.

"אהבה is not sanctioned by a mature mind. But what is man if he cannot give friendship, devotion? In such situations, the child in man takes over the controls; he, the child, not the adult, is capable of giving unselfish loyalty. The adult cannot admire greatness totally, without any limitation, or condemn iniquity and injustice without any reservations. The mature mind is analytical, is skeptical by its very nature. In greatness, he will always find smallness; in the genius, dullness; in the beautiful, ugly spots; in the saintly, hypocrisy; in the noble, meanness. In a word, the adult is too much of a cynic to admire without 'buts', to love with a great excessive and 'mad' love. In order to do all this, one must turn into a child.

“The same is true of faith... Only the child can do it. Only a child has trust unlimited, faith unconditional, peace undisturbed by suspicions. הָבֵן יָקִיר לִי אֶפְרַיִם, אִם יֶלֶד שֶׁעָשָׂעִים--כִּי-מֵדִי זָכַר אֶזְכְּרֶנּוּ עוֹד *Ephraim is a darling son, a playful child, that is why I love him and have compassion with him.*”<sup>1</sup> G-d loves Israel because Israel in certain respects has never grown up. וְאֵלֶּיָּהּ. וְאֵלֶּיָּהּ. <sup>2</sup>כי נער ישראל, וְאֵלֶּיָּהּ. They quite often act like children with unmitigated ecstasy, with an absurd indomitable faith. Is not our commitment to (and our love of) E”Y a result of childish thinking? From the viewpoint of the practical adult the entire Yisrael affair (the existence of the State) belongs in the realm of adventure. 2.5 million people took on 100 million Arabs and half a billion Moslems. Quite often, an adult with all his computations and practical consideration loses, and a child, a naïve believer in miracles, wins the race. Yes, the angelic quality in man, the image of man-child is perhaps the most unique grant G-d gave us.”<sup>3</sup>

What is the root word of Ahava? הב - to give

### Bereishis 30:1

וַתֵּרָא רַחֵל, כִּי לֹא יֵלְדָה לְיַעֲקֹב, וַתִּקְנָא רַחֵל, בְּאֶחָתָהּ; וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל-יַעֲקֹב הֲבָה-לִי בָנִים, וְאִם-אֵין מִתָּה אֲנֹכִי

### Medrash Bereishis Rabbah 71:6

וַתֹּאמֶר אֶל יַעֲקֹב הֲבָה לִי בָנִים וְאִם אֵין מִתָּה אֲנֹכִי, אָמַר רַבִּי שְׁמוּאֵל אַרְבָּעָה חֲשׂוּבִים כְּמֵתִים, מִצָּרַע, וְסוּמָא, וְמִי שֶׁאֵין לוֹ בָנִים, וְמִי שֶׁיֵּרֵד מִנְכָסָיו. מִצָּרַע, דְּכָתִיב (במדבר יב, יב): אֵל נָא תְהִי כְּמֵת. סוּמָא, דְּכָתִיב (איכה ג, ו): בְּמַחְשָׁכִים הוֹשִׁיבֵנִי, כְּמֵתִי עוֹלָם. מִי שֶׁאֵין לוֹ בָנִים מִנֵּיוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: הֲבָה לִי בָנִים וְאִם אֵין מִתָּה וְגו'. וְמִי שֶׁיֵּרֵד מִנְכָסָיו מִנֵּיוֹ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר (שמות ד, יט): כִּי מֵתוּ כָּל הָאֲנָשִׁים הַמְּבַקְשִׁים אֶת נַפְשָׁהּ, וְכִי מֵתִים הָיוּ וְהָלֹא דָתוֹן וְאֲבִירָם הָיוּ, אֶלָּא שֶׁיֵּרְדוּ מִנְכָסֵיהֶן

“R’ Chaim Shmulevitz zt”l (Sichos Mussar 5732:31) maintains that in equating the sufferings of these four and death, the Medrash is identifying a tribulation common to all of them. To wit, all these four suffer from being cut off from other human beings. A blind person cannot perceive others; a *metzora* is banished from the camp; a poor person cannot bestow largesse upon others; one without children has no one to nurture. Being separated from the society of others, and being unable to benefit others, is the equivalent of death, for the only life worth living *is a life of sharing and giving.*”<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Jer.31:19 - הָבֵן יָקִיר לִי אֶפְרַיִם, אִם יֶלֶד שֶׁעָשָׂעִים--כִּי-מֵדִי זָכַר אֶזְכְּרֶנּוּ עוֹד; עַל-כֵּן, הֵמוּ מֵעַי לוֹ--רַחֵם - אֶרְחַמֶנּוּ, נֹאֵם-ה'

<sup>2</sup> Hoshea 11:1

<sup>3</sup> R. Soloveitchik and R. Shubow: *A Eulogy Rediscovered, a Friendship Reexamined*. Hakirah, v.30, Summer 2021, p.48-50

This eulogy was presented by the Rav in Sept.1969/Elul 5729, during the sheloshim for R. Shubow.

<sup>4</sup> Artscroll Elucidated, Medrash Bereishis Rabbah, 71:6, Insights A