

From the Rabbi's Desk  
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## Stories with a Twist [212]



### You are Both Completely Righteous Sages!

Insights into Babylonian Talmud Sota 31a

#### Background to Our Story

##### Rava



[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rava\\_\(amora\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rava_(amora))

Abba ben Joseph bar Ḥama (c. 280 – 352 CE), who is exclusively referred to in the [Talmud](#) by the name Rava (רבא), was a fourth-generation rabbi (*amora*) who lived in Mahoza, a suburb of [Ctesiphon](#), the capital of [Babylonia](#). He is one of the most often-cited rabbis in the [Talmud](#). He studied at the [Talmudical Academy](#) at [Pumbedita](#), site of modern-day Falluja, Iraq. There he, traditionally, became famous for his debates with his study-partner [Abaye](#). The debates between Abba ben Joseph and [Abaye](#) are considered classic examples of Talmudic dialectical logic. Of their hundreds of recorded disputes, the law is decided according to the opinion of Abba ben Joseph in all but six cases. His methodology greatly influenced not only his students, but the [stammaim](#), as well.

Rava married the daughter of third-generation amora Rav Hisda after she'd been widowed from Rami bar Chama. In TB Bava Batra 12b, Rav Hisda's daughter is sitting in her father's classroom, while his students, Rava and Rami bar Chama, stand before them. When Rav Hisda asks her which of the two she wants to marry, she replies "both of them," and Rava adds, "I'll be the last one" (commentators let us know that she indeed married Rami first and Rava second). They had five sons, the eldest of whom, Joseph, died during his parents' lifetime.

When [Rabbah bar Nahmani](#), the head of the [yeshiva](#) of [Pumbedita](#), retired, the position went to [Abaye](#). At that point, Abba ben Joseph returned to [Mahoza](#), in [Babylonia](#), where he established a yeshiva. After the death of Abaye, many of his students moved from Pumbedita to Mahoza, to join Abba ben Joseph's Yeshiva, which had become one of the intellectual centers of the Babylonian Jewish Community. Rava died ca 355.

Rava apparently had to reply to a deep-seated skepticism toward rabbinic authority and to defend the authenticity of the rabbinic oral tradition. The skepticism of Mahozan Jewry was fueled in part by the acceptance of the [Manichaeen](#) polemic against [Zoroastrianism](#) and its insistence on oral transmission, and by a strong concern with the problem of [theodicy](#), encouraged by a familiarity with Zoroastrian theology. Rava's creativity was fueled by his cosmopolitan urban environment.

## Love and Fear of God

<http://www.mesora.org/LoveFearGod.htm>

*Moshe Ben-Chaim*

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***A friend of mine asked me if I could direct him to any article on the Love and Fear of God. I then realized I hadn't thoroughly investigated this essential area. I thank him.***

When initially pondering these two commands to Love and Fear God, we are overcome with a preponderance of questions: What are the precise requirements of the commands to Love God, and to Fear God? How does one accomplish these goals? Are they requirements to simply emote ourselves towards God? Would such an act be meaningful? Can one accomplish Loving or Fearing God in thought alone, or do we require action? Is one more important than the other? Can anyone fulfill these commands, that is, can one achieve Love of God and Fear of God prior to obtaining wisdom?

### **The Text: Babylonia Talmud Sota 31a**

What difference is there between one who performs commandments out of love and one who performs the commandments out of fear?

The Gemara answers: There is that which is taught in a *baraita* that Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar says: Greater is the one who performs commandments out of love than the one who performs commandments out of fear, as with regard to this one who acts out of fear, his merits endure for one thousand generations, and with regard to that one who serves God out of love, his merits endure for two thousand generations.

Proof of this assertion is that here it is written: *"And showing mercy unto thousands of generations of those who love Me and keep My commandments"* (Exodus 20:5), indicating that merits can last for thousands of generations for those who act out of love, and there it is written: *"Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God; the faithful God, Who keeps the covenant and mercy with those who love Him and keep His commandments for a thousand generations"*

(Deuteronomy 7:9). The first verse indicates that those who act out of love retain their merits for thousands of generations, whereas the second verse, which mentions only one thousand generations of merit, is referring to the merits of those who keep God's commandments out of fear.

...

It happened that there were these two students who were sitting before Rava, and one said to him: It was read to me in my dream: *"How abundant is Your goodness, which You have laid up for those who fear You"* (Psalms 31:20). And one said to Rava: It was read to me in my dream: *"So shall all those who take refuge in You rejoice; they will forever shout for joy, and You will shelter them; let them also who love Your name exult in You"* (Psalms 5:12).

Rava said to them: You are both completely righteous Sages. One Sage, the second dreamer, serves God out of love, and one Sage, the first dreamer, serves God out of fear.



### Explaining the Story

What is the sequence of events in the story?

### Comprehension and Analysis Questions

**?** Why do you think the Sages wish to discuss which approach to performing God's commandments is more meritorious?

Answer 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Answer 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Answer 3 \_\_\_\_\_

**?** What proof do the Sages bring to show that performing God's commandments out of love is more meritorious?

**?** In which regard is the proof convincing?

**Bonus ?** In which regard is the proof not so convincing?

**?** Why do the two students tell Rava what was read to them in their dreams?

Answer 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Answer 2 \_\_\_\_\_

**Bonus Question ?** Why doesn't Rava reply to the two students with the exposition of Rabbi Shimon ben Elazar, on the supremacy of love over fear in the way of performing God's commandments, and instead tells them that they're both completely righteous Sages?

Answer 1 \_\_\_\_\_

Answer 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Answer 3 \_\_\_\_\_

**Bonus Question ?** At the beginning of the last part of our story, the two individuals are referred to as "students," but at the end Rava calls them "completely righteous Sages?" Why?

### **"The Twist" – Or the Lessons We Can Learn from the Text**

- ! If there is a winner....

## EPILOGUE

What difference is there between one who performs commandments out of love and one who performs them out of fear? The Sages embarked themselves in a theoretical discussion and concluded that it is more meritorious to serve God out of love than to serve Him out of fear. However, for the particular two students who were sitting before Rava, the question became a very personal one: Does God approve of my innate way of serving Him? Does my Rabbi approve of my distinct approach to serving God? Am I a winner in God's and my Rabbi's eyes, or am I a loser?

Rava understands that declaring only one of the students a "winner" will automatically make the other one a "loser." Not only would that hurt him but it would distance him from God. Rava also knows that both approaches to serving God are meritorious and that the theoretical difference between one thousand and two thousand generations of merit is not enough reason to hurt another human being. Rava also recognizes that the approaches of love and fear in the service of God are very difficult to change since they respond to deep personality traits and psychological fixations. Therefore, as a teacher and mentor, he must validate each of his students' legitimate approaches.

At the end of our story, Rava elevates these two particular students to the category of "completely righteous Sages," sending a strong message to the rest of his

students that a discussion that ends with winners and losers doesn't have a place in his Academy.

***A friend of mine asked me if I could direct him to any article on the Love and Fear of G-d. I then realized I hadn't thoroughly investigated this essential area. I thank him.***

When initially pondering these two command to Love and Fear G-d, we are overcome with a preponderance of questions: What are the precise requirements of the commands to Love G-d, and to Fear G-d? How does one accomplish these goals? Are they requirements to simply emotive ourselves towards G-d? Would such an act be meaningful? Can one accomplish Loving or Fearing G-d in thought alone, or do we require action? Is one more important than the other? Can anyone fulfill these commands, that is, can one achieve Love of G-d and Fear of G-d prior to obtaining wisdom?

### **Love of G-d**

Maimonides does not agree with this last opinion, as he writes in his Laws of Repentance, 10:6:

*"In accordance with one's knowledge will be the love – if much (knowledge), then much (love), and if little (knowledge) then little (love)."*

Based on this last quote, I would ask: if love of G-d is impossible without knowledge, how is the law to study Torah distinct from this law to Love G-d? I will explain: it seems that once one obtains wisdom, he will naturally love G-d, as the source of that profound wisdom. If such a love is a natural result, he already loves G-d, without the command to Love G-d. What more, then, can the command to Love G-d impose on us? Asked in the reverse fashion: if love of G-d cannot exist without knowledge, then it is impossible to have a free-standing command to Love G-d, independent from the law to study Torah. Again, the laws of Torah study and Loving G-d appear inseparable. How then can we describe fulfilling the law to Love G-d, independent from Torah study? If there are two separate laws, there must be two separate means of fulfilling each, but it does not appear to be so!

In Maimonides' second chapter in his Laws of the Fundamentals of the Torah, he writes:

**2:1:** *"This honorable and awesome G-d, it is a command to love Him and to fear Him, as it states, "And you shall love Hashem your G-d. And it states, "Hashem your G-d you shall fear." (Deut. 6:5, and 6:13 respectively)*

**2:2:** *"And what is the path to His love and His fear? At the time that man comprehends His actions and His creations that are wondrous and great, and he sees from them His wisdom that has no measure or end, immediately he loves and praises and glorifies and desires a great desire to know the great G-d. As David wrote, "My soul thirsts for G-d, the living G-d." And when one considers these matters alone, he immediately recoils backwards, and trembles, and knows that he is a small low, dark creation, standing with slim, little knowledge, before (He with) perfect knowledge, as David said, "When I see Your heavens, the works of Your fingers, what is man that You should be mindful of him?" And in accord with these matters, I will explain great categories from the works of the Master of the world, so that there may be an opening to understand, to love G-d. As the wise men stated in the matter of*

*love, "that because of this, you will recognize Who spoke and the world came into existence."*

For what reason does Maimonides group these two commands together? Why are these two commands not treated separate from each other? What is Maimonides' proof from David's words?

It is interesting that the two verses commanding Love and Fear of G-d, are close by one another, just eight verses apart. Love of G-d is derived by Maimonides from a verse that we recite twice everyday, the second verse of the Shema prayer:

1. *"Hear Israel, G-d is Our G-d, G-d is One.*
2. *And you shall love Hashem your G-d, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might.*
3. *And these words shall be, that I command you today, on your heart."*

The Rabbis taught that the second verse's command of Loving G-d, is only fulfilled by following the instruction of the third verse: "placing the Torah's words on our hearts" is indispensable for our fulfillment of Loving G-d. Devoted study is the sole course to arrive at Love of G-d. One cannot love an object, if he is unaware of that object. Similarly, our relationship to G-d is purely based on our knowledge of G-d. We cannot love Him if we are ignorant of Him. For this reason, Maimonides states that our love of G-d is in direct proportion to our knowledge of Him - "knowledge of Him", refers only to His creations, and His actions. Maimonides made this clear: *"At the time that man comprehends His actions and His creations..."*

From G-d's response to Moses that "man cannot see me while alive" we learn that it is impossible to possess direct knowledge of G-d's essence. Not even the greatest mind, Moses, could comprehend G-d's nature. All of our thoughts are connected to some sense perception, and all sense perception, by definition, is physical. G-d is not physical, thus, we will always be unable to understand His essence. The only knowledge we may attain in relation to G-d, is knowledge of His actions, and His creations: all of G-d's 'actions' in relationship to man, display His absolute knowledge - omniscience. All of G-d's 'creations' display His absolute power - omnipotence. These two aspects, G-d's omniscience and omnipotence, are the exact two aspects on which we focus our High Holiday prayers. Under these two categories, all else we know in relation to G-d may be subsumed. As a Rabbi once wrote in his article on Rosh Hashanna prayers, we focus on knowledge of G-d during Rosh Hashanna, not ourselves. In his article, Rabbi Ruben Gober explained well, that Rosh Hashanna, New Year, is a *"chance to reflect on the true ideas behind the physical universe and give our souls real existence. It is only in this way that we may warrant a favorable verdict."* These true ideas are of G-d's omniscience and omnipotence - they are the base categories of truth of G-d. Therefore our study of these categories will bring us to a love of G-d.

### **Creator vs Lawgiver**

We now understand that man's love of G-d depends on his knowledge of G-d. And in direct proportion to one's knowledge, is his love of G-d. The Minchas Chinuch states that Love of G-d is achieved when one "considers and understands, both, G-d's laws, and His works, as much as he is able, until he arrives at an utmost state of joy in that knowledge." Some texts have it as, "until one rejoices in G-d's providence." (You may discern the difference.) However, in his formulation of Love and Fear of G-d, Maimonides omits any mention of Torah laws. Amazing! He does not require one to study Torah to arrive at Love and Fear of G-d:

***Laws of the Fundamentals of the Torah, 2:2:*** *"And what is the path to His love and His fear? At the time that man comprehends His actions and His*

*creations that are wondrous and great, and he sees from them His wisdom that has no measure or end, immediately he loves and praises and glorifies and desires a great desire to know the great G-d. As David wrote, "My soul thirsts for G-d, the living G-d." And when one considers these matters alone, he immediately recoils backwards, and trembles, and knows that he is a small low, dark creation, standing with slim, little knowledge, before (He with) perfect knowledge, as David said, "When I see Your heavens, the works of Your fingers, what is man that You should be mindful of him?"*

It would appear from Maimonides' omission, that he understands Love and Fear of G-d, to be Love and Fear of the "Creator". Loving or fearing G-d based on Torah knowledge is not identical to loving and fearing G-d as "Creator". Maimonides' theory is that true Love of G-d demands we love G-d in His role as Creator. Why must this be? I believe Maimonides to be teaching that "Creator" is the most accurate understanding of G-d available to man. G-d as "Giver of Torah" does not encompass all, as does G-d, the "Creator". I find this to be a profound concept. Maimonides is consistent. Look at his quote in support of his theory:

*"When I see Your heavens, the works of Your fingers, what is man that You should be mindful of him?"*

Maimonides quotes David, in as much as David is pondering the cosmos, the works of G-d's "fingers". Meaning, David's love of G-d is a love for the One Who created the heavens. To appreciate the precision and genius of Maimonides, look at his closing words:

*"And in accord with these matters, I will explain great categories from the works of the Master of the world, so that there may be an opening to understand, to love G-d. As the wise men stated in the matter of love, "that because of this, you will recognize Who spoke and the world came into existence."*

What stands out is, *"I will explain great categories from the works of the Master of the world"* and also, *"That because of this, you will recognize Who spoke and the world came into existence."* Two more times, Maimonides underlines his own goal: to enlighten us, to the recognition of the "world's Creator". To Maimonides, Love of G-d must be "Love of the Creator."

The Minchas Chinuch cites the Sifre:

*"Since (the Shema) says "you shall love (G-d)", I do not know how to Love G-d, therefore we are taught (by the following words) "and these words that I command you today shall be on your heart", and due to this, you will recognize He Who spoke and the world came into being."*

The Sifre combines the two, as it says that due to Torah study (placing them on our hearts implies study, not fulfilling commands) one will love G-d, but he too says a love for the "One Who spoke and the world came into being". Both Maimonides and the Sifre agree. Our recognition, or Love of G-d, is of G-d as "Creator". They only differ in terms of the path: Maimonides says studying the cosmos is how to fulfill the command to Love G-d, while the Sifre states it is Torah study. Maimonides view also favors the state of affairs pre-Torah. How could Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob love G-d, without Torah, unless Torah is not essential? According to Maimonides, these great individuals were not bereft of the means to love G-d: they had the cosmos.

## **Fear of G-d**

What is Maimonides' view on the law to Fear G-d? Let us review his words:

*"And what is the path to His love and His fear? At the time that man comprehends His actions and His creations that are wondrous and great, and he sees from them His wisdom that has no measure or end, immediately he loves and praises and glorifies and desires a great desire to know the great G-d. As David wrote, "My soul thirsts for G-d, the living G-d." And when one considers these matters alone, he immediately recoils backwards, and trembles, and knows that he is a small low, dark creation, standing with slim, little knowledge, before (He with) perfect knowledge."*

"And when one considers these matters alone, he immediately recoils backwards, and trembles, and knows that he is a small low, dark creation, standing with slim, little knowledge, before (He with) perfect knowledge." This is Maimonides' formulation for the fulfillment of Fearing G-d. I say, "this is his formulation", as I see no other place in this section where Maimonides follows up his introductory statement that it is a command to Fear G-d. This is the only further description. I am hesitant here, and for good reason: had Maimonides not discussed Fear of G-d in any other area, I would rest assured; this is how he formulates the fulfillment of Fearing G-d. However, Maimonides does in fact discuss Fear of G-d in a few other areas. Before examining those, let us understand this present formulation.

Fear of G-d is much like Love of G-d: they are both results of man's recognition of creation, "he immediately recoils backwards, and trembles". This is a result of recognizing G-d's creation. But Maimonides adds something more: *"...and knows that he is a small low, dark creation, standing with slim, little knowledge, before (He with) perfect knowledge."* What does this add? Maimonides teaches that man does not fulfill Fear of G-d, unless he has a great sense of humility. The recognition, which results in a fear alone, is not the goal in the Fear of G-d. No. Man must then go one more step, and reflect on himself. Fear of G-d must, by definition, be accompanied by our diminished self-image. This makes sense. How may one possess true recognition for another's greatness, while retaining his ego? If one is to possess a true Fear of G-d, he must have a greatly reduced sense of self. Our great teachers verbalized this, and in proportion to their perfection, did they perceive themselves: David referred to himself as a worm, small, but still an animate being. Abraham said of himself that he was dust, lower than a worm as dust is inanimate. Thus, Abraham was greater than David in this respect. But Moses, the chief of all prophets, who spoke to G-d "face to face", referred to himself as "nothing". Moses, who possessed the greatest intellect, saw the greatest contrast, and was called by G-d, "more humble than all man." Maimonides, again, is so precise. He records David's words, *"When I see Your heavens, the works of Your fingers, what is man that You should be mindful of him?"* Maimonides teaches us another beautiful lesson. (I cannot help but to remark that the more we see the brilliance of one as Maimonides, in even this single law, the more we laugh at those other forms of Judaism claiming to have the "true" Judaism. Where are their Maimonides, Rambans, Sfornos, and Rashis? And I refer to both extremes; the over and under religious. And those so disgracefully haughty who say, "I don't agree with Maimonides on such and such a point". I feel two may argue when the playing field is equal. No one today is in Maimonides' league.)

Now, let us look at another source. In his Laws of Repentance, chapter 10, Maimonides contrasts one who follows the Torah out of love, to one who performs out of fear. He ridicules one whose performance is from fear. The problem is, we are commanded in fearing G-d! We must then ask: what type of fear is Maimonides ridiculing? He cannot be ridiculing the Torah's commanded Fear of G-d. Additionally, why is Maimonides discussing Fear of G-d in his section of "Repentance"? Also, is Maimonides of the opinion that Fear of G-d is temporary, that is, until we arrive at

the higher level of Love of G-d? Let us be mindful of these questions as we look at one more source.

***Maimonides' Guide for the Perplexed, Book III, Chapter LII***

*"We do not sit, move, and occupy ourselves when we are alone and at home, in the same manner as we do in the presence of a great king; we speak and open our mouth as we please when we are with the people of our own household and with our relatives, but not so when we are in a royal assembly. If we therefore desire to attain human perfection, and to be truly men of G-d, we must awake from our sleep, and bear in mind that the great king that is over us, and is always joined to us, is greater than any earthly king, greater than David and Solomon. The king that cleaves to us and embraces us is the Intellect that influences us, and forms the link between us and G-d. We perceive G-d by means of that light that He sends down unto us, wherefore the Psalmist says, "In Thy light shall we see light" (Ps. xxxvi. 9): so G-d looks down upon us through that same light, and is always with us beholding and watching us on account of this light." Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him ?" (Jer. xxiii. 24). Note this particularly.*

*When the perfect bear this in mind, they will be filled with fear of G-d, humility, and piety, with true, not apparent, reverence and respect of G-d, in such a manner that their conduct, even when alone with their wives or in the bath, will be as modest as they are in public intercourse with other people. Thus it is related of our renowned Sages that even in their sexual intercourse with their wives they behaved with great modesty. They also said, "Who is modes? He whose conduct in the dark night is the same as in the day." You know also how much they warned us not to walk proudly, since "the fullness of the whole earth is His glory" (Isa. vi.3). They thought that by these rules the above-mentioned idea will be firmly established in the hearts of men, viz., that we are always before G-d, and it is in the presence of His glory that we go to and fro. The great men among our Sages would not uncover their heads because they believed that G-d's glory was round them and over them; for the same reason they spoke little. In our Commentary on the Sayings of the Fathers (chap. i. 17) we have fully explained how we have to restrict our speech. Comp. "For G-d is in heaven and thou upon earth, therefore let thy words be few" (Eccles. v. i).*

*What I have here pointed out to you is the object of all our religious acts. For by [carrying out] all the details of the prescribed practices, and repeating them continually, some few pious men may attain human perfection. They will be filled with respect and reverence towards G-d; and bearing in mind who is with them, they will perform their duty. G-d declares in plain words that it is the object of all religious acts to produce in man fear of G-d and obedience to His word-the state of mind which we have demonstrated in this chapter for those who desire to know the truth, as being our duty to seek. Comp. "If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name, the Lord thy G-d" (Deut. xrvffi. 58). Consider how clearly it is stated here that the only object and aim of "all the words of this law" is to [make man] fear "the glorious and fearful name?" That this end is attained by certain acts we learn likewise from the phrase employed in this verse: "If thou wilt not observe to do . . . that thou mayest fear?" For this phrase clearly shows that fear of G-d is inculcated [into our hearts] when we act in accordance with the positive and the negative precepts. But the truths which the Law teaches us-the knowledge of G-d's Existence and Unity create in us love of G-d, as we have shown repeatedly. You know how frequently the Law exhorts us to love G-d. Comp. "And thou shalt love the Lord thy G-d with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might." (Deut. vi. 5). The two objects, love and fear of G-d, are*

*acquired by two different means. The love is the result of the truths taught in the Law, including the true knowledge of the Existence of G-d; whilst fear of G-d is produced by the practices prescribed in the Law. Note this explanation."*

### **Three Types of Fear**

We end up with three statements by Maimonides, all on the Fear of G-d, and all indicating something quite different:

- 1) In his Laws of the Fundamentals of the Torah, Maimonides describes Fear of G-d as resulting from recognizing G-d's creation - we are struck with an immediate awe of this Creator.
- 2) In his laws of Repentance, Maimonides ridicules one who worships G-d from fear, and not love.
- 3) And in his Guide, Maimonides praises Fear of G-d as produced by the commandments. (According to Ibn Ezra, fear of G-d mentioned in Deuteronomy 6:13 is, "One shall not commit one of the negative commands." Ramban says on this verse, "one shall not sin." Minchas Chinuch holds a similar view.)

What is Maimonides view on Fear of G-d? We must be clear.

- 1) In his Laws of the Fundamentals of the Torah, Maimonides describes the "command" to Fear G-d. This is a result of one's recognition of G-d's creation. This is the "mitzvah", a positive command, and a desirous state. However, there is more than one manifestation of "fear of G-d" - not all are preferable.
- 2) For example, the fear ridiculed in Laws of Repentance is not discussing the "command" to Fear G-d. Here, Maimonides describes man's "worship" of G-d. Such worship must be an attachment to the positive, and not an "avoidance of the negative". If one serves G-d out of fear, or for any other motive, like honor, or to inherit the next world, man is ridiculed for not following the Torah out of an intelligent recognition that it is a good - unto itself. This second form of "fearing G-d" is not acceptable.
- 3) The final form is described in the Guide for the Perplexed. Here, Maimonides again described a good type of fear. But this is not the "command" mentioned in the Fundamentals of the Torah. This latter fear is a product of our adherence to G-d's words in general. As Maimonides stated, "*... fear of G-d is produced by the practices prescribed in the Law.*" He also wrote, "*G-d declares in plain words that it is the object of all religious acts to produce in man fear of G-d and obedience to His word.*" This latter fear is a result of man's adherence to the Torah. Besides the first form of fear, where we recognize G-d's creation and stand in awe, there is the need for the person to be subjugated to G-d's word. This is only achieved by our having been commanded in Torah in general.

The Torah is a two-pronged system in this respect: we must realize the Creator, and arrive at a Love of G-d, through understanding greater and greater ideas. But, as Maimonides observed, "some few pious men may attain human perfection". Man is deviant, and only the few reach the optimum. Man requires much training to arrive at such a perfected state, thus, the Torah commands. The commands subjugate us into a service to G-d, by which we may be tempered towards a restraint of the emotions, to enable more freedom for our developing intellects, uninhibited by emotional surges.

The reason Maimonides' ridicule of the second form of fear is placed in Laws of Repentance makes sense: one must repent from this poor way of life. G-d is not to be served from fear, but from recognition of His truth, and that Torah is a pleasant, perfect system. Additionally, the "command" to Fear G-d is taken from the section of

Torah warning against other gods. This fits in perfectly with Maimonides' definition: the "command" to Fear G-d should be based on recognizing His role as Creator, ipso facto, all other gods are impostors. Thus, laws against following alien gods follows in that section of the Torah.

We must return to our first, glaring question: How is the law to Love G-d distinct from the law of Torah Study? According to Maimonides, it is clear, as he does not require Torah study for the fulfillment of Loving G-d. This we said is achieved through studying creation. But according to the Minchas Chinuch, the answer is as follows: although Torah study results in Love of G-d, and Love of G-d is impossible without Torah study, they are not one and the same: Torah study is an 'action'. It affords us great appreciation for the wisdom G-d possesses, certainly, when we see that it is endless. And Maimonides points this out "*...and he sees from them His wisdom that has no measure or end...*". So the command on our 'action' is to study Torah, not to Love G-d. However, "Loving G-d" is not an action, but a 'result', a 'state' in the person. We are to study Torah, and this is one, distinct command. But the command to Love G-d is not a command we fulfill through action, but through a 'state that results from our study'. That is, we are to study, until we reach a state that we are enamored with G-d's wisdom, and we have a longing for the "Source of all wisdom", i.e., G-d. As Maimonides stated, "*immediately he loves and praises and glorifies and desires a great desire to know the great G-d*". Maimonides made it clear at the outset, that he was describing a "path" to loving and fearing G-d. Meaning, it is not accomplished in one action. A path means that arriving at Love and Fear of G-d is at the end of a journey - it takes time. As Maimonides said, "*And what is the path to His love and His fear?*"

Love and Fear of G-d are essential requirements – throughout our lives – as seekers of truth.