Rabbi Steinsaltz Video Class 2015: “What is Love?”

Discussion Questions

1. In describing love in general terms, Rabbi Steinsaltz says there are levels of love, and that a high level is to love something “as it is...where it is and what it is.” Is this indeed a high level of love? If so, is it possible to attain? Or is there no such thing as selfless love?

2. Rabbi Steinsaltz expressed his belief that there are soul mates – marriages arranged by a Divine plan. And yet, he also acknowledges that although some couples are not happy together, their marriage is worthwhile because of the “wonderful children they produced.” Do you believe in soul mates? How do you respond to the idea that God’s plan for a couple could involve their being unhappy together?

3. Rabbi Steinsaltz believes that a parent’s love should be measured by asking, “how much do I do which is for the good of the [child]?” Based on your experience as a parent or as a child, do you think this accurately describes ideal parental love? Why or why not?

4. Rabbi Steinsaltz describes love of God as something that can be taught and learned. What does “love of God” mean to you? Is it something that can be taught and learned? If so, how? Have you had experiences that have taught you to love God?

5. Was there something Rabbi Steinsaltz said with which you agree strongly? What was it and why does it resonate for you? Was there something he said with which you disagree strongly? What was it and why do you disagree?