



February 2010

"Pursue Love..."
1 Cor. 14:1

*Mezuzah on your door,
Yeshua in your heart.*



Dearly Beloved in Yeshua,

God's Love for Us

Last month we mentioned that our focus in February would be the Brit Hadasha, the New Covenant, which was birthed in love and sustained by this same love. The more we studied, the more our focus zeroed in on the word love, *ahavah* in Hebrew. The Brit Hadasha is all about the amazing, everlasting, unconditional love of God.

We can "know" the Bible, either the Old Covenant or the New Covenant, and still not "know" God. You have probably met people who can quote the Bible backwards and forwards, but are often obnoxious, rude, and unloving. They have missed the mark. Our goal must be to know the Author of the Book, not just the Book. If our heart cries out along with Rabbi Saul (Paul), "...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings..." (Phil. 3:10), we will find that our God is first and foremost LOVE, *ahavah*. To be like Him, love must be our greatest goal.

Love always begins with God. He initiates love. We love Him because He first loved us. The Brit Hadasha tells us in Romans 5:8 that "...God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ [Messiah] died for us." God loved us while we were His enemies, going our own way, wanting nothing to do with Him. His love is unconditional. Many people have a hard time relating to and receiving this type of love since they never experienced it as children. God doesn't say, "If you act a certain way, I'll love you." He loves us, in spite of the way we act! If you receive this revelation, deep in your soul, your life will never be the same!

God's unconditional love, as well as His covenant keeping nature, helps explain why His love for Israel has never changed, nor will His love for His Body, His Bride. We fail. God does not. We are faithless. He is not. This is reason to stop, right now, and thank the Lord for His amazing LOVE.

"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:10) Propitiation means atonement or an atoning sacrifice. Since sin separates man from God, and the blood sacrifices of animals prescribed in the Torah could never do away with sin, God made the supreme sacrifice of sending His Son into the world to die for our sin, and reconcile us to Himself. It was all about love!

Our Love For God

When God gave the Torah, the Law, to Moses, He included teaching about love. He instructed the children of Israel about love for Him at least seven times: Deut. 5:10, 6:5, 10:12, 11:1, 11:13, 19:9, and 30:6. Love Me. Keep My commandments. These two concepts resound throughout the Torah. Can LOVE be commanded? Yes. Biblical love is a decision, a commitment. That's the problem in many marriages today. People have accepted the world's definition of love as being an emotion. So, "if I don't 'feel' love for my spouse anymore, I should move on," becomes a common way of thinking. Love is much more than emotion. It is an act of the will. God desired His people to purpose in their heart to love Him, serve Him and obey Him—to decide to follow Him to the exclusion of all other gods.

In Deuteronomy 6:5 the Lord commands: "*You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.*" Loving God with all our heart, *levav* in Hebrew, refers to our thinking and emotions. Loving God with all our soul, *nefesh* in Hebrew, refers to our total being including our will. Loving God with our strength or might (KJV), *me'od* in Hebrew, means loving God with passion, intensity, and everything we have.

Did Israel do this? Were God's people successful at loving Him? No. They committed spiritual adultery, went after other gods, and brought curses upon themselves. Even though they placed the words of Deuteronomy 6:5 on the doorposts of their homes, writing them on a parchment and rolling the parchment inside a case, the love somehow escaped them. [The Hebrew word *mezuzah* literally means doorpost, but came to refer to the case with the parchment.]

Love on the outside failed. Man, not God's Law, was the problem. Even though the Lord told His people, "*Whatever I command you, be careful to observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it*" (Deuteronomy 12:32), they both changed and added laws and traditions that were burdensome.

God saw the heart problem, and as early as Deuteronomy chapter 30, we see God through Moses prophesying the solution to the problem: "*And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart and the heart of your descendants, to love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul, that you may live*" (Deuteronomy 30:6).

Israel could not love God as they should until the time came when they would experience circumcision of the heart through the Brit Hadasha, the New Covenant!

New Covenant: The Love Solution

Yeshua makes it clear in Matthew 5:17 that He did not come to destroy the Law or the Prophets, but rather to fulfill them. The Book of Hebrews gives a beautiful explanation of the New Covenant and the Mediator of that covenant, Yeshua, our *Cohen Gadol* (High Priest). It helps us understand that Yeshua did not do away with the Torah. In fact, He made it possible for man to keep God's commandments. Dr. Stuart Sacks, in his wonderful little book, **Hebrews Through A Hebrew's Eyes**, explains the need for a "new covenant": "An incompleteness was evident in the old covenant, especially in the way the people of Israel related to God. Hebrew religion was characterized by a corporate relationship with God. It was the nation, an extended family, that was in covenant with the Lord. Israel, as a people, was God's son." We read in Hebrews 8:7-8: "*For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second. Because finding fault with THEM, [emphasis ours] He says: 'Behold, the days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah—'*" . Dr. Sacks goes on to say that the fault was not in the agreement: it was with the people. A heart problem, just as the prophet Jeremiah had said in 17:9: "*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?*"

God's solution to the heart (love) problem was to go from the external (tablets of stone) to the internal (tablets of the human heart). He made a way for a personal rather than a collective relationship with Himself. As Dr. Sacks points out, the promise that all who enter the New Covenant will know the Lord, includes the Hebrew word *yada* which means to know intimately. This same word is used in Genesis 4:1: "*Now Adam knew (yada) Eve his wife, and she conceived...*".

This explains why Yeshua is said to have a "more excellent ministry" than Moses, and is the "...*Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises*" (Hebrews 8:6). Certainly God's words, written on the heart, rather than committed to memory, are a "better way." Messiah's once-for-all eternal blood sacrifice that did away with sin, rather than the ongoing sacrifices of bulls and goats that merely covered sin, is a far "better way." The Ruach HaKodesh, as a living comforter and guide inside of the believer, rather than a set of rules to follow, is a "better way." The assurance of eternal

life in the presence of God as promised by Yeshua rather than a vague hope of heaven is a "better promise." The privilege of the individual believer being able to go "within the veil" into the Holy of Holies into the very presence of God 24/7, rather than the High Priest once per year, is a far "better way."

Even though "better" occurs thirteen times in the Book of Hebrews, this does not mean that the Torah is bad. In fact, the Apostle Paul says, *"Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good"* (Romans 7:12). He goes on to say that *"...the law is spiritual..."* (Romans 7:14). By the time Yeshua came to dwell among men, Judaism had become very rigid. Although the Torah emphasizes righteousness through faith (consider Abraham), the performance of *mitzvot* or good deeds (613 in the Torah) had ascended to primacy. "Do this!" "Don't do that!" had replaced "Love God!" The Love of God is not about observance and following rules, although obedience to His commandments is of utmost importance. Law – love = legalism. The Love of God is ultimately found in a person, Yeshua the Messiah, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob clothed in human skin!

A More Excellent Way

We already noted that Yeshua the Messiah has a "more excellent ministry" (Hebrews 8:6). This is related to the "more excellent way" spoken of in 1 Cor. 12:31, referring to LOVE. (Read 1 Cor. 13.) LOVE is the more excellent way. Dan Gruber mentions in his book **Torah and the New Covenant** that some rabbinic writings refer to a new Torah that is related to the Torah given at Sinai but different in some respects: "The Holy One, blessed be He, will sit in Paradise and give instruction, and all the righteous will sit before Him and all the hosts of Heaven will stand on His right and the sun, and stars on His left; and the Holy One, blessed be He, interprets to them the grounds of a new Torah which the Holy One, blessed be He, will give to them by the hand of King Messiah."

Did Yeshua alter the Torah in any way? Yes, He infused it with deeper love. Through love, the Law is established (Romans 3:31). Our faith must operate through love. When we receive the love of God manifested in the sacrificial death of Yeshua, we are freed from the law of sin and death. We are released to serve a higher law, "the law of love." Yeshua's righteousness becomes our righteousness. *"...He condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit."* (Romans 8:3-4)

Love Your Neighbor

When asked which was the greatest commandment, Yeshua quoted Deuteronomy 6:45 concerning loving God with all our being. He then quoted Deut. 19:18 as inseparable from Deut. 6:45. *"...You shall love your neighbor as yourself..."* was actually an extension of loving God. But Messiah added a new, deeper commandment, one birthed out of sacrificial, unconditional love: *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another"* (John 13:34-35).

What kind of love is this? This love is the first fruit of the Holy Spirit. The Bible tells us that *"against such (love and the other fruit of the Spirit) there is no law"* (Galatians 5:23). This love is born of God. We can not manufacture it ourselves. As we love God, and get to know Him more, His own love is shed abroad in our hearts through His Ruach (Romans 5:5). This enables us to love others as we should. We are EMPOWERED TO LOVE. There is nothing greater in the world than this!

Covenant Relationships by Asher Intrater is a powerful book dealing with relationships in the Body of Messiah. It emphasizes that covenant love is foundational and relationship is a key in understanding the Love of God. Asher points out that an essential part of understanding the person of God is to see Him as being in relationship. He is a Father. His primary relationship is with His Son, Yeshua, who said to God, *"...for You loved Me before the foundation of the world"* (John 17:24). Yeshua also said, *"...[You] have loved them as You have loved Me"* (John 17:23). Yeshua also said that all believers in Him should be one just as He is one with the Father (John 17:22).

Fellowship with other believers is a top priority in God's Kingdom. As we relate to one another in love, the world will know that we belong to Yeshua. As we are rooted and grounded in love (Eph. 3:17), and secure in the knowledge of God's unconditional love for us, we are free to love others as Yeshua loved us. The Bible clearly states that God's love is perfected in us through loving one another: *"No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us"* (1 John 4:12). Love does not flourish in a vacuum. God's best is for us to be both in relationship with Him and with our brothers and sisters in the Messiah; His Body is not an organization, but an interconnected body of people who love God and one another.

Covenant Relationships is a 280 page book. We can not even scratch the surface of the deep, life-giving revelation that it contains. We highly recommend it for serious students of God's Word.

Love Strong as Death

We are continually exhorted to love throughout the Brit Hadasha. *"Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart..."* (1 Peter 1:22) *"But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. And above all things have fervent love for one another, for 'love will cover a multitude of sins'."* (1 Peter 4:7-8) *"We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren. He who does not love his brother abides in death."* (1 John 3:14)

Death may be strong, but love is stronger. An example of real covenant love—genuine, faithful, committed, unconditional love—rose to the surface as the great luxury ocean liner, the HMS Titanic, sank in the icy water of the Atlantic Ocean. We share it in closing because it touched our hearts deeply. Isidor and Ida Straus were passengers on that maiden voyage. They were enjoying a much deserved vacation, having worked tirelessly as immigrants to America to build a little store in New York City which they named Macy's. On April 14, 1912, they walked calmly on the deck. They were standing near Lifeboat No. 8 in the company of Mrs. Straus's maid, Ellen Bird, when the officer in charge of the lifeboat offered to have the elderly couple board the lifeboat with Miss Bird. Mr. Straus refused to go along as there were still women remaining on the ship. He urged his wife to board, but she refused, saying, "We have lived together for many years. Where you go, I go." Isidor and Ida Straus were last seen alive sitting together quietly on deck chairs. Their maid survived to tell their story. Covenant love was victorious over death.

TRUE STORY FROM: "TITANIC LOVE STORY DISPLAYS TREMENDOUS COMMITMENT"
BY JIM PRIEST

May the Lord empower us to love deeply!

Neil & Jamie

Jewish Jewels Television Airtime Schedule - February 2010

LOCAL TV STATIONS

STATE:	CITY:	STATIONS:	AIRTIME:
AK	North Pole	KJNP TV 4	TUE 6:00 PM
CA	San Francisco	KTLN TV 47	MON 7:30 AM
FL	Tampa/St. Pete.	WCLF TV 22	SUN 2:30 PM
FL	Orlando/Cocoa	WTGL TV 45	SUN 1:30 PM
FL	Miami/Ft. Laud.	WHFT TV 45	THU 11:30 AM
FL	Tallahassee	WWUP TV 45	SUN 1:30 PM
FL	West Palm Beach	WFGC TV 61	SAT 10:30 PM
GA	Columbus	WYBU TV 16	SUN 2:30 PM
IA	Dubuque	KFXB TV 40	SUN 1:30 PM
IL	Chicago	TLN TV 138	MON 7:30 AM
IL	Peoria	FAITH ALIVE CH 20	FRI 6:00 PM
MO	New Bloomfield	KNLJ TV 25	SUN 1:30 PM
NV	Las Vegas	KEEN TV 17	MON 7:30 AM
NJ/NY	NJ/New York	WMBC TV 63	SUN 4:00 PM
OH	Columbus	GTN TV 23	SUN 2:30 PM
OR	Portland	K26GJ TV 26	SUN 12:00 PM
OR	Salem	K21GX TV 21	SUN 12:00 PM
SC	Greenville	WGGG TV 16	FRI 10:30 AM

SATELLITE NETWORKS

DirecTV

World Harvest TV (WHT) - SUN 3:00 PM (EST) [Ch. 367]
WMBC - Sun 4:00 PM (EST) [Ch. 63 or 900]
Christian Television Network (CTN) - SUN 2:30 PM (EST) [Ch. 376]

Dish Network

Christian Television Network (CTN) - SUN 2:30 PM (EST)
[Ch. 267 & 9399]

God TV - The GOD Channel

WED 4:30 AM (GMT) & 6:30 AM (Jerusalem)

Insight Digital Cable: GTN

SUN 2:30 PM (EST) [Ch. 283]

Digital Satellite Receiver

World Harvest TV (WHT) - C-Band - Galaxy 16 -
Transponder 15 - 99° W - SUN 3:00 PM (EST)

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