



February 2014

אחד - One

$$4 + 8 + 1 = 13$$

אהבה - Love

$$5 + 2 + 5 + 1 = 13$$

Dear Family in the Beloved!

Love in the Old Covenant

Dr. Louis Goldberg, in **God, Torah, Messiah**, explains that the doctrine of the love of God is the same in the Tanach as in the New Covenant. There are those who think, erroneously, that the God of the Tanach is a stern, unforgiving God, while the God of the New Covenant is a forgiving God of love. This is not true. A God of love is found from Genesis to Revelation. He chose Israel out of love (Deut. 7:7), and promised to never give her up entirely, no matter what she did. *"How can I give you up, Ephraim? How can I hand you over, Israel?"* Hear the heart of God as He says, *"...My heart churns within Me; My sympathy is stirred"* (Hosea 11:8).

What is love in a biblical sense? According to Dr. Goldberg, "Love...is not classed as primarily emotional. Love is a settled purpose of will involving the whole person in seeking the well-being of others." In other words, love is a decision. The highest form of love includes an "unwavering determination to do good." This reflects God's determination to do the greatest possible good to all. It is love that moves God "to give Himself and His gifts voluntarily, righteously, and eternally for the good of personal beings, regardless of their merit or response." God's love is unselfish and unconditional.

God's love, as seen through the prophet Jeremiah, is also constant and everlasting. He says to His people Israel, *"Yes, I have loved you with an everlasting love (ahavat olam in Hebrew); therefore with lovingkindness I have drawn you"* (Jer. 31:3).

Hashem (God) is Love

We found an interesting definition of love on the internet by Rabbi Hirsch, a traditional Jewish rabbi: "The birth of creation is love, the existence of every creature is love, the maintenance of the world is love, its ordering and advancement is love, love for the whole, love for every individual, for you. In this spirit, an Aramaic name for Hashem (Adonai), used by the sages, is *Rachmana*—the Loving One."

Yes, God is "The Loving One." The concept of God as Love is alluded to in a veiled fashion, in the Shema, the supreme confession of Judaism when it says, *"Here, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one!"* (Deut. 6:4). To understand the allusion, we need to remember that each Hebrew letter is also a number. The numerical value of each word in the Torah is believed to connect to a deeper meaning or insight. So...The Hebrew word "*echad*" means "one" or "unified." Its letters add up to 13. The letters of the Hebrew word for love—*ahavah*—also add up to 13. The rabbis consider that this alludes to a deep connection between oneness and love. Therefore, when we say, "Hashem or God is One," we are also saying, "Hashem is Love." How appropriate that the next verse in Deut 6:5 says, *"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength."*

God is love. He loves us. We should love Him. (#13 can be a blessed number.)

Love Suffers

The suffering love of God is a trail of tears from Genesis to Revelation. We hear it in His voice when He calls out, *"Adam, where are you?"* (Gen. 3:9) after the fall of man. The God of Abraham,

Isaac, and Jacob suffers when His people suffer. He bears our burdens, our grief and our sorrow. He suffered when His people were in bondage in Egypt (Is. 63:9). He suffered when His people made a golden calf while His servant Moses was on the Mount with Him.

It was prophesied that one day God would send a Messiah who would also suffer. Consider Isaiah 53:3: *"He is despised and rejected by men, a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him."*

In an excellent devotional, **Devoted to Israel**, our friend and fellow Messianic Jew, Murray Tilles, reminds us that the concept of a suffering Messiah is not foreign to Jewish thought. Orthodox rabbis teach that there are actually two messiahs, the son of David (Messiah ben David), and the son of Joseph (Messiah ben Yosef). Messiah ben David is a conquering messiah, who will usher in a reign of world peace. Messiah ben Yosef is a suffering Messiah, like Joseph of the Old Covenant, who will suffer and die prior to the reign of Messiah ben David.

We know that instead of two messiahs and two comings, God sent one Messiah who came once and is coming again. Yeshua of Nazareth came the first time as the suffering Messiah, and is returning as the conquering Messiah, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He came the first time to usher in a kingdom of the heart, a kingdom of love. He came to suffer and die for the sin of mankind. He suffered for mankind in spite of our indifference. Rom 5:8 says it succinctly: *"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Messiah died for us."*

The Messiah suffered emotionally as well as physically when His own people rejected His love: *"O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!"* (Matt. 23:37). But unlike our love, Yeshua's love withstands rejection after rejection. It is a love that, according to 1 Cor. 13:4, suffers long.

We see suffering love as Yeshua died on the tree. His Father suffered, having to turn from His dearly loved Son. Yeshua suffered as He became sin for each of us. He suffered "father rejection" (Mark 15:34) for all of mankind, so that we might be *"accepted in the Beloved"* (Eph. 1:6).

The Yoke of Love

Many of you are aware that the Messiah Yeshua spoke of a yoke—His yoke that is an easy one (Matt. 11:30). He was contrasting that yoke with one that His Jewish listeners knew well—the Yoke of the Commandments (observing all 613 mitzvot of them). This is quite a heavy yoke, yet, the ancient rabbis said that it was as if it were "woven of roses" because of another yoke, the Yoke of the Kingdom (*malkut shamayim*). This yoke is found in the Shema and the Great Commandment: *"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength"* (Deut 6:5). When God's unity is declared, and He is loved with all one's being, no yoke is considered too heavy.

Is it possible to love God with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength? Yeshua must have thought so! He reiterated this commandment in Luke 10:27. The word "soul" in Hebrew, *"nefesh"* means "life" as well as "soul." This is understood to mean that we should love God every moment of our lives. He is supposed to be our number one priority, our first consideration in any given situation.

Ahavat HaShem (love of God) is foundational in both Judaism and Christianity. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob longs for pure love from His people. Our love should be the natural response to who God is, and what He has done for us. Friedlander, in **The Jewish Religion**, in commenting on love for God says, "Love of God...means the constant longing for communion with Him, feeling happy and joyful when with Him, but unhappy and miserable when without Him. Such yearning for fellowship with God is expressed in Psalm 42: *"Just as a deer longs for running streams, God, I long for you."*

Irene Lipson, in **The Greatest Commandment**, makes an interesting observation on loving God "with all your heart," *"B'kol l'vav'cha."* The heart in the Holy Scriptures is the essential center or core of our being. We think, feel, and make decisions with the heart. The heart includes the "will." When we speak of "a change of heart," we are really referring to a change of mind, a decision to alter direction.

To love God with all one's will means making a conscious decision to love God with everything, holding nothing back. It doesn't matter what we "feel." We make a decision to listen to God. The Talmud describes a heart that listens and responds when God speaks as a "tender heart."

We know ourselves. Sometimes we choose to ignore the Lord when He is reaching out to us. We can even harden our hearts like the Israelites did so many times. That is why the Lord promised that one day their heart of stone would be one of flesh (Ezek. 36:26). What about us?

Love Knocking

Shir Hashirim, the Song of Songs, is the most excellent love song in the Holy Scriptures. Jamie has been teaching a weekly study on chapters 3-5 in preparation for a sequel to **A Kiss A Day** (Prayer appreciated). A verse from chapter 5 seems to accurately depict the current status of much of Messiah's bride: *"I sleep, but my heart is awake; It is the voice of my beloved! He knocks, saying, 'Open for me, my sister, my love, my dove, my perfect one; for my head is covered with dew, my locks with the drops of the night' "* (Song. 5:2).

The Bridegroom is knocking. The Bride hears His voice, but she is already in bed, and doesn't want to get up. She offers foolish excuses, delays in arising, and her Lover quietly withdraws.

This knocking at the door of a sleeping bride's heart reminds us of Revelation 3:20 in the Brit Hadasha, *"Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me."* The bride's heart in the Song of Songs is still awake. She loves the Beloved. She is still sensitive to His voice. But, there is a spiritual laziness drowsiness, a dulling of the spirit that has overtaken her. *"The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak."* (Mark 14:38) It has been said that a believer has two opposite natures: the carnal and sleeping "I," and the renewed and waking "heart."

The Bridegroom would love to hear the Beloved say in response to His knock, *"Baruch haba,"* Hebrew for "welcome!" The words He uses should stir the Bride to repent of her spiritual lethargy. They are words of love and passion that our Yeshua is speaking to us today: "my sister," "my love," "my dove," "my undefiled (perfect one)." With great tenderness Yeshua tries to rouse us from our slumber to enjoy His fellowship.

"My sister"— indicates a blood relationship. Yeshua is our elder brother, the Firstborn of our family. "My dove"—includes the ideas of faithfulness, singleness of eye, gentleness, committed for life, and the dove-like Spirit residing in the Bride. "My undefiled"—one who is clothed in the righteousness of the Beloved, forgiven, spotless, redeemed, holy. How could the bride resist so many words of love? How is such heartless indifference possible? It is. We do the same. Often days on end. We have our excuses: housework, jobs, children's schedules, appointments, exercise classes, even ministry assignments. But Yeshua wants us! His desire is for us (Song. 7:10). He wants our fellowship, and our obedience when He calls. His love is constantly reaching out to us.

Robert Murray McCheyne (early 1800's) (a distant relative of Jamie's) said it well in one of his sermons on the Song of Songs: "It is true that Christ is seeking unconverted souls. He stretches out his hands all the day to a gainsaying and disobedient people—he is the Shepherd that seeks the lost sheep; but it is as true that he is seeking his own people also—that he may make his abode with them—that their joy may be full." He goes on to say that Messiah pays visits to the believing soul through the daily reading of the Word, in daily prayer, in gatherings of believers, and at the Lord's Table.

Yeshua is a seeking Messiah. He patiently waits to be gracious to us. Wade Taylor, in **The Secret of the Stairs**, one of Jamie's favorite books, comments on the God who seeks and knocks: "Throughout the Scriptures, the Lord is revealed as a seeking God (2 Chronicles 16:9; 1 Peter 3:12). Sometimes we may feel that the Lord does not notice us, or that He is not interested in us as an individual. However, He is far more interested in us and in revealing Himself to us, than we are in having Him do so. He intensely desires to bring us into an abiding experience of communion, that we might become "one" with Him in the outworking of His purposes for mankind. Also, beyond this, He desires to draw us apart to Himself, within His chambers, where He can reveal to us the eternal things of the Spirit."

Thank you, Abba, for the amazing, wonderful, patient, condescending love of our Messiah Yeshua! Melt our hearts with love for Him, and help us watch with Him in this last hour before His return.

Our Response to a Great Love

"Are we secure in God's love for us?" "Do we allow Him to shower us with His love?" "Are we good at receiving the love of God?" "Do we rest confidently in His love, or do we find ourselves doubting it?" "Do we limit the Holy One of Israel as His people did in the wilderness?" (See Ps. 78:41.)

This is the month, today is the day, to open our hearts to receive more love from God, and respond to His unconditional, everlasting love for us! God is no respecter of persons. If you are His child, He is passionately in love with you. His love is extravagant. It is deep, wide, high and beyond knowledge. But it is real, and it is for each one of us! We really believe that God is more willing to give than we are to receive: Let God love you!

Our giving, loving God desires to bless us, to meet our needs, and empower us to serve Him. He wants to give us far more than we have received from Him this far. In this sense, we are all sleeping. Remember the 10 virgins of Matthew 25? While the Bridegroom delayed they all slumbered and slept. When we get to Heaven, we will probably find out that there was so much more that God had for us here on earth. More love. More power. More authority. More provision. More influence for His Kingdom.

Pray with us: "Lord, I want all of You and all that You have for me. I want to receive so that I can give. I want to hear Your voice. I do not want to limit You in any way. I need a greater revelation of Your Love and a greater impartation of it in my life." In Yeshua's Name. Amen!

Praying for Love to envelope you and yours!



P. S. **Devoted to Israel** will keep you praying for the peace of Jerusalem.
The Secret of the Stairs will give you deep bridal revelations.
Weight of Glory will usher you into the presence of God.

Check out our offers this month.

Jewish Jewels Television Airtime Schedule - February 2014

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AIRTIME:	STATE:	CITY:	STATIONS:
TUE 6:00 PM	AK	North Pole	KJNP TV 4
MON 10:00 PM	FL	Tampa/St. Pete.	WCLF TV 22
THU 11:30 AM	FL	Miami/Ft. Laud.	WHFT TV 45
SUN 1:30 PM	FL	Tallahassee	WVUP TV 45
SAT 10:30 PM	FL	West Palm Beach	WFGC TV 61
SUN 2:30 PM	GA	Columbus	WYBU TV 16
SUN 1:30 PM	IA	Dubuque	KFXB TV 40
THU 6:30 AM	ID	Twin Falls	KJCY TV 38
SUN 1:30 PM	MO	New Bloomfield	KNLJ TV 25
THU 8:30 AM	NC	Goldsboro	WHFL TV 43
SUN 4:00 PM	NJ/NY	NYC/New Jersey	WMBC TV 63
THU 5:30 AM	OR	The Dalles	KRHP TV 14

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DirecTV

SUN 4:00 PM Ch. 93 or 900 - WMBC
 MON 8:30 PM Ch. 376 - CTN (Christian Television Network)
 MON 11:30 PM Ch. 371 - Church Channel

Dish Network

MON 8:30 PM Ch. 376 - CTN (Christian Television Network)
 MON 11:30 PM Ch. 258 - Church Channel



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