

What is LOVE?



BY
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When the average person comes across the word "love", either in print, in speech, or in imagination, he often seems to lose all sense of proportion, and appears to react in a totally unnatural and uncoordinated manner.

Schoolteachers at boarding schools will tell you that the same reactions and loss of sense of proportion appear in young children when they leave home for the school term. The child feels that he has a moral duty to persuade himself that he is homesick. Homesickness becomes a kind of symbol which the child uses to demonstrate how much he loves his home and his parents, and rather than behave with the maturity that accepts that the parents are doing what they think best for him in helping him to grow up, the child reacts with an emotional inversion in feeling that an outburst of homesickness at such a time is more or less expected of him.

In the same way, as soon as the word "love" is mentioned — in any context — a standard, almost designed, series of reactions, even in the mature minds of supposed adults, appears to be triggered off as a moral duty, and if your reactions do not conform with those of the generally accepted customs and mores of the society in which you move you are made to feel that you are something of a boor, that you have not been properly brought up, that you are not a properly constituted member of that group, that you are not worthy of the company of men of the world, that you are psychologically disturbed, or that you are out-and-out

insane. In order to demonstrate that you deserve your place in the community, as with homesickness, a standard, peculiar and emotional interpretation of "love" is required from you.

What is it about the word "love" that sends people into an emotional spin of upheaval, sends their brains reeling into an intellectual whirlpool of misunderstanding and encourages them, nay induces them, to disregard all that their commonsense, upbringing and tradition has taught them?

Young and old among us, we are far too conditioned to misleading and subversive definitions of "love". These definitions are subversive to the philosophic background to our way of life as Israelites, misleading us by veering us away from the proper course we should be taking. They widen our horizons to make us include many things that the Father has deliberately indicated should be closed to us, when all that we do, study and remember should be closely confined and narrowed into His Way alone.

It is not possible to apply a sensible comparison, for example, between Lady Blank de Blank's statement that she would just "love" another Martini to round off the cocktail party, and King David's prophecy that "the seed also of his servants shall inherit it (Zion); and they that love his name shall dwell therein" (Ps. 69:36). Nor between Gilbert and Sullivan's "love levels all ranks, you know, (*HMS Pinafore*)" and Our Lord's "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15). Nor between the "love" which "is a many-splendoured thing" and the (human) love described in John 15:13: "greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

Even the love that a man bears for his wife, or for his children, can have no sensible comparison with the love expressed and demanded in the Israel-God context. The human love for wife and child will change from decade to decade, from year to year, from month to month, from minute

to minute. It will also change from child to child, from relative to relative, from friend to friend. Indeed, we are more than a little reluctant, because of the wide variety of definitions of "love", to express our relationship with friends in terms of "love". To argue about "love" by taking examples is one of the maddest things we can do, especially when, having taken those examples from an admittedly human framework, we try to transfer them into a godly context. It is no more possible to arrive at a true basis for the relationship in this way than it is to try to describe a certain blue in the sky to a blind man.

Perhaps it is because of the multitude of definitions of "love" and the difficulties that arise from them that the pundits will say that love has to be experienced in order to be understood, but even this is not a good way of forming a basis for judgment, because of the variety of experiences that can be made to sound or feel like "love". Furthermore, it should not be assumed automatically that "love" is an experience that can be felt, nor yet a feeling that can be experienced. When the pundits argue that "love" is an experience or a feeling, what they are really trying to do is to persuade you that "love" is an emotion — and nothing could be further from the truth than that.

Two lovers, falling weeping into each others arms at the conclusion of a long absence, are not experiencing "love", they are experiencing "happiness", which is an emotion.

A group of soccer players, kissing, cheering and jumping, and perhaps weeping as well, around the scorer of the winning goal are not experiencing "love". They are experiencing the release of tension, which, again, is an emotion.

The man — or the woman — or the child — sitting in the church pew, although these days it is just as likely to be a theatre, or a circus tent, or a sports stadium, raising his hands to the roof, weeping and shouting that he has been saved, is not

experiencing "love", no matter how much the showman insists that it is the love of the Father that has saved him. He, she, they, are experiencing group hypnosis, which is brainwashing, and brainwashing can be best conducted by a play upon the emotions.

There are so many feelings and experiences that can be confused with "love". Sometimes they are mistaken for "love" and sometimes they are deliberately taken for "love"! Joy, release of tension, happiness, escape from punishment (which is not the same as forgiveness), sexual excitement, gratitude, relief, greed, jealousy, envy, power, the list is endless. Indeed, there are as many "love" confusions as there are "love" objects, and if it comes to that there are as many "love" objects as there are "love" subjects. This is so because you may be sure that every man, woman and child loves or thinks he loves at least one object as a very minimum — even if the object of that confused and mistaken "love" happens to be his own life.

This confused situation is compounded even further when it is realised that to a greater and greater extent in the modern world "love", particularly as it is expressed towards the general and amorphous "others", is being accepted as the basis for our worship of God. This is very clearly seen in the church teachings of many, if not of all, modern denominations. The concept of "love", raw, undefined and universal pours out of the social gospel like sewage from a conduit, and, looking at the soft, sentimental, sluggish, gooey mess, one cannot be surprised that the results of such out-pourings are equally soft, sentimental, sluggish and gooey.

For true Love, as of the Father, is not soft, it is diamond-hard; decorative and yet able to stand up to the strains and stresses of daily life. It is not sentimental, it is clear-minded, soundly-reasoned and unshakably argued. It is not sluggish, it is fast moving and quick to react to any emergency. It is not raw, it is refined and tried in the furnace.

It is not undefined, it is clearly and objectively stated. It is not universal, it is unalterably and narrowly directed.

And it is not a feeling or an experience, it is a trait of character and personality.

And it is not aroused by circumstances, it is inbred by up-bringing and tradition.

As we read from the fifty-first chapter of Isaiah:

"Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. Look unto Abraham your father, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone and blessed him, and increased him. For the Lord shall comfort Zion: he will comfort all her waste places; and he will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving and the voice of melody."

Surely, no true Israelite can believe that the Father requires mindless, emotional, sentimental, unthinking admirers, on the lines of the latest pop-star, whose "love" will dissipate like the dew in the morn at the end of the week when it is found that his latest hit, raved over four or five days ago, is no longer "top of the Pops".

Equally, the brainwashed hypnosis engendered by the currently most-fashionable faith-healer is something that we, as Israelites, should view with the profoundest circumspection and scepticism. This is not to say that faith-healers do not heal, but the true faith-healer, with his talent bestowed upon him from the Father, will not conduct his sessions after the manner of a raree-show. The marks of an Israelite, touched and gifted by the Father are, essentially, modesty and secrecy. Our Lord Jesus did not stage-manage a magnificent

show in His dealings with the sick and the crippled. He did not conduct a gigantic publicity campaign in the News Media, or in what went for the News Media in those days. No Town Crier rang his bell:

Oyez, Oyez, Oyez, Come and See the Heavenly Healer. Have your ILLS cured by the One, True Doctor. Brought at Great Expense from the Promised Land,

BY OUR DISINTERESTED SPONSOR****

(Put your contribution in the saucer you will find at the door as you go in.)

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Have your SINS forgiven by the Personal Representative of – THE LARGEST SEL-LING AND MOST POPULAR DEITY IN THE WORLD – In YOUR Town NOW, for only a SHORT While.

**HEAR him SPEAK
WATCH him BAPTISE
FEEL him HEAL**

Laying on of hands an OPTIONAL EXTRA

*In the market place and later on the
MOUNT OF OLIVES
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**SPECIAL PERFORMANCE
on
FRIDAY AFTERNOON**

Come early to make sure of your seat.

BRING YOUR FRIENDS

No! The Lord did not – could not – behave like that, and it is not possible that anyone who behaves in that way can truthfully say he is acting under the Lord's instructions. The Lord was very insistent that the people He cured and forgave should not let the word get around. "Say nothing to any man" (Mark 1:44), was His instruction, almost His guarantee of the cure or the forgiveness, and there is no reason to suppose that this same instruction should not have been carried on down the ages by those who seek to do His Will and put into practice the talents He has bestowed upon them.

Modesty and secrecy were His watchwords and in insisting on these He was fulfilling His own tenets. Do you not read so in the sixth chapter of St. Matthew's Gospel? When you do alms (*dikaiousunee* – righteousness; and also *elieemosunee* – mercy, pity) do not cause a trumpet to be sounded before you in the streets and synagogues as the hypocrites do. Verily, they have their reward. When you do alms do not let even your left hand know what your right hand is doing. When you pray do not pray openly in the synagogues and on the street corners as the hypocrites do, so as to be seen of men to be holy. Verily they have their reward. Enter your private room and shut the door when you pray. When you fast do not put on a sad countenance or disfigure your face as the hypocrites do. Verily, they have their reward. When you fast look happy and clean and tidy, not allowing men to see that you are fasting, praying or giving alms. Then your Father who sees in secret will reward you (openly?) Himself in His Own Way. This secrecy, this modesty, this lack of self-presentation, this lack of public show, this lack of conceit, this humility, this refusal to seek or to acknowledge the approval of men of the world is the Hallmark of the Lord Jesus Christ in His work and should be the hallmark of His people in theirs.

These comments on alms-giving, prayer and fasting apply equally to the "love" that it is His

desire that we should express. He does not require a brash, brazen, pushful, self-seeking "love", nor a brainwashed, emotional, fashionable, undefined, "hands raised to heaven", "hallelujah", charismatic "love", for the first of these is directed towards the aggrandisement of the individual demonstrating that type of "love", and the second is directed towards the image-building buffoonery with which, for want of a better word, we may call "the leader" wishes to promote his own publicity – with the object, of course, of gaining money and power for his own purposes.

Speaking as we were a moment or two ago about alms – or what is loosely called "charity" – were you ever made aware that you should *know* – personally, in the flesh – the person to whom the charity, the alms are given? The Book of the Ecclesiasticus appears to have been written by Joshua (Jesus) Ben Sira and translated into Greek by his grandson something in the region of two hundred years before Our Lord was born. It is sometimes known as *Sophia Sierach* – The Wisdom of Sirach. In the prologue the translator writes these words: "For in the eight and thirtieth year coming into Egypt, when Euergentes was king, and continuing there some time, I found a book of no small learning: therefore I thought it most necessary for me to bestow some diligence and travail to interpret it; using great watchfulness and skill in that space to bring the book to an end, and set it forth for them also, which in a strange country are willing to learn, being prepared before in manners to live after the law." Read, now, from Ecclesiasticus 12:1 – "When thou wilt do good, know to whom thou doest it; so thou shalt be thanked for thy benefits." The indication here is that a mindless giving to charitable organisations in which you do not *know* the individual receiver well enough to be able to acknowledge his thanks is not going to do either you (for your good works) or him (as the receiver of the charity) the slightest good in the eyes of God. If

this idea is tied together with the secrecy that is necessary in terms of Matthew 6, it is very clear that a number of our concepts and methods concerned with the giving of charity need to be drastically overhauled if they are to serve as examples of our willingness to find favour under the purpose of God, rather than our desire to make ourselves look right in the eyes of men. No paper flags to pin on our lapel, no lists to show we have given – and given generously, note, more than the Jones' – no replies to challenges on Springbok Radio, no stewardship envelopes placed with a flourish in the collection bag on Sunday. In passing, too, it goes without saying that the charity we give should be of benefit to those members of the Israelite nation who are in depressed circumstances of either body or wealth. The Word of God is written to and about Israelites and therefore even the stricture "love your enemies" is as concerning relationships between Israelites only as are the strictures on alms-giving.

The modern church's philosophy of the social gospel would have you imagine that your alms-giving is an expression of your love (for others). Have you noticed, incidentally, that they speak more and more and louder and louder about "others" these days, and less and less about "your neighbour"? Many of us are becoming sick and tired of this constant emphasis that is being placed upon "others", especially those of us who are having trouble keeping our own body and soul together, to such an extent that the very sound of the word "others" is becoming unnatural and unpleasant to the ear. But if your alms-giving is an expression of the feelings that you think you ought to have either for God or for your neighbour, have a very careful think about the form that your alms-giving should take. Do not sound a trumpet, do not put on a sad countenance, do not let your left hand know what the right hand is doing. No one but you should know what you are doing at all, let alone how much you are giving. It is in the

nature of things that the recipient will know as well as you, but there are ways of indicating to him that the alms will not be repeated if the word gets around to anyone else, and, again, in the nature of things, this should be enough to ensure that your charity is not proclaimed from the roof-tops. Certainly, at no stage should an Israelite allow his name to be placed upon a charity list or be published in any way.

Another modern misconception is to imagine that the tithe is tied up with the giving of charity. Nothing could be further from the truth. The tithe is the fulfilment of an obligation to God, it is part of the Law and the Prophets, and part of the evil the nation has fallen into results from disobedience to that Law. But charity cannot be considered as part of your Ten Per Cent, is not an obligation, does not *have* to be performed, and the non-performance does not entail any degree of punishment.

Actually, it may even be that we are talking about the wrong thing now. We have said that happiness is not the same as "love", nor is the release of tension, nor group hypnosis, nor excitement and so on and so on, and it is doubtful to say the least whether charity and alms-giving can be considered as "love" either. This confusion may well arise, as many of our other difficulties do in the Israel way of life, from an over-emphasis on the chatterings of Paul. In 1 Corinthians 13 he is translated as speaking of "charity" whereas the Greek word he uses is *agape*. "*Agape*" — loving with the head and mind — is the normal Gospel word for "love", which is what we are attempting to define. If Paul had really meant "charity" he would have used the word *Xaris*, which combines the senses of goodwill given and received. Even the harshest critic will agree that this is a very pale definition of "love". If all that is required of you in the laying down of your life for your friends is the giving and the receiving of goodwill, then many of us will

consider that we are chasing after the wrong hare. To put that another way around, can you imagine what Christmas would be like if, in order to express the right degree of goodwill in a Christmas Card, we had to lay down our lives.

Paul, you will note, does not tell us a great deal about "love". Indeed, there are those of our number who consider that Paul does not tell us much about anything. From his passage in 1 Corinthians 13 it is clear that, according to him, speaking in tongues is not "love", prophecy, knowledge and faith are not "love", bestowing our goods and giving our bodies to be burnt are not "love". Well, that's all very well, says the sceptic, but we want to know what "love" *is*, not what "love" *isn't*. "Love", says the saint, ("saint" is "sain" spelt incorrectly) is long-suffering, kind, not envious, nor rash, nor puffed up, is not unseemly in behaviour, is not selfish, nor easily provoked, thinks no evil, does not rejoice in wrong-doing, but does rejoice in the truth, bears, believes, hopes and endures all things, and never fails, being greater than faith and hope. Again, that's all very well, but if you think about these statements *about* "love" you will see that they still do not take us much further in our search for a viable definition of "love".

Another passing thought, a little more facetious this time, is that if Paul says, as he does, that "love believes all things" (*panta pisteuei*), in verse 7, then he is laying himself, and you, open to all sorts of persuasions by all sorts of charlatans whose business it is to lead you away from the truth.

There is far too much alignment between the "love God" and the "love your neighbour" concepts. You will remember that the Lord separates these two concepts with the words "this is the first and great commandment; and the second is like unto it . . ." (Matt. 22:39). He, the Lord, did not imply as the church is very liable to do, that the only expression permissible of man's love for God is through his love for his neighbour. On the con-

trary, it is made very clear in reading the Scriptures that the fullest expression of man's love towards God can only be through obedience to God's Laws. "Walk in my ways", says God. "Keep my commandments." "I set before you a blessing and a curse, choose the good." References in any Concordance, even a mere handful of the many available, will demonstrate this truth without doubt. Indeed, if there can be one isolated truth distilled from the Old as well as the New Testaments it is this: That the man (or woman) who would love God will read, study, learn, obey, put into practice and live by the Commandments of God. It is not by accident that the law enjoining love towards one's neighbour comes second in order, despite the preachings of the prelates and priests of modern times, for love of one's neighbour, like love of God, can only be expressed by adherence to the Word of God.

And if you do not read, study, learn, obey, put into practice and live by the Commandments of God, then there is really no way in which you can even begin to love your neighbour.

You see, no matter how "sincere" you may be, no matter what feelings are aroused in your tender breast, your happiness, your group therapy, your alms-giving, whatever you may call "love", is fruitless, both to you as giver and to your object as receiver, unless that "love" is totally in accordance with the Commandments of God. Worse than that, your self-righteous "sincerity" towards an object that God Himself has debarred from your attention will push you further along the road which diverges from God's Way. It is written in Matthew 19:6 "what God hath joined together let no man put asunder". At the risk of altering Scripture, the reverse is also true "what God hath put asunder let no man join together".

We need a drastic realignment, a renewed definition, of our concept of "love" in the sad and unpleasant world of the present day, if we are to begin to approach The Father with any degree of

confidence. In the harsh world of reality that some of us believe is just around the corner and others of us believe is already here, there is no room for the soft or the sentimental. No reward will be given to those who ascribe to what might be called the "easy" way. Modern church preachers, and others, would have us believe that it is very easy to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, a worshipper of the One, True, Living God. They tell us repeatedly that all we have to do is to offer ourselves to Him, accept His forgiveness and then all will be well. We will then automatically, overnight, and without any further effort, become "born again" Christians, ripe for the heavenly kingdom, and will be able to relax for the rest of our days confident of present and future comfort, peace and security.

They say much the same thing about prayer as well. "God always answers prayers", they say. "Of course", they say, "the answer sometimes is not in the form you would expect or want", when things have not gone quite right, "but prayers are always answered". As with the "love" we have been discussing, which requires obedience to the Laws of God, so, too, with prayer. Answers to prayers depend exclusively upon the degree to which you are obedient to the Laws, and do not let anyone try to persuade you otherwise. Do not let them try to deceive you with this type of nonsense.

You will remember that Karl Marx said that religion is the opiate of the masses – well, these two ideas, "easy" Christianity and "answered" prayer without obedience, constitute exactly the sort of religion he was referring to, something that will take your minds off your present troubles while he and his minions slip the poison of brain-washing, misdirection and dominion into your glass.

No! Reject any message that does not include total obedience to all the Commandments of the Father with all the strength of mind and body that

you have at your command. Convince yourself that it will not be easy to be a true follower and a true worshipper of the One, True Father. Convince yourself that it will be impossible, in any case, unless you are “born from above” which is the correct translation of the “born again” passage in John 3:3 –

“amen, amen, lego soi, ean me tis genneethee anoothern, ou dunatai idein teen basileian.”

‘Truly, truly, I say to you, except anyone is born FROM ABOVE, not he is able to see the kingdom.’

Any idea of being born AGAIN – that is to say a second time, a rebirth – is just not portrayed in this verse of Scripture. There was no justification whatsoever for Nicodemus to query how it was that a man could enter again into his mother’s womb. How it was possible for him not to have seen the significance of being born “from above” and not to have noticed, in the same way that we, as Israelites, can notice today the clear reference to the God-responsively genetic background implicit in the birth of Isaac through the visitation of God upon Sarah, is a matter for conjecture. If the Lord had wanted to say “again” he would have used a word like *palin* or would have prefixed *genneethee* as we prefix to obtain *reborn*. But He didn’t, He used *anoothern* which must be translated as FROM ABOVE.

Perhaps, to that small extent, it is easy to be a follower of the Lord Jesus Christ – all you have to do is to be an Israelite, and then, whether you like it or not, you are one of God’s people, and if you are not an Israelite then you cannot worship Our Father as Your Father, and that is all there is to it. And that, it must be agreed, is easy enough.

But to put into practice that worship, honour and obedience which by your birth and background

you are bound to offer is considerably more difficult, and the difficulties are aggravated by the governmental systems of modern states, not one of which approximate even remotely to the governmental systems of true Israel as promulgated by the Father.

So do not expect that the “love” you are supposed to express towards God, nor the “love” you are supposed to express towards your neighbour, through obedience to the Laws of the Father are going to be easy to fulfil.

It should be noted that the translators of the Greek in both the Old and the New Testaments had tremendous difficulty with the word *agape* which is almost exclusively rendered as “love” in the English text. There were and are very few uses of the word outside what might be called Christian religious writings and even those uses that seem to appear are at best suspect.

Few manuscripts from those days, one thousand eight hundred to two thousand two hundred years ago, are complete, and very often letters and words have to be guessed at and interpolated. A text may read “*d’ eis aga??n*” and the blanks may initially be interpolated to read “*d’ eis agapen*” (concerning one love) when a later study, with more information, shows that it is more likely to read “*d’ eis agathon*” (concerning one virtue). This example, incidentally, is taken from a treatise on dice-playing.

Furthermore, very often the translators are at a loss to render the Greek words into sensible English equivalents, as the very thought processes of the Greek minds operated in a different way to the English. It is a fact that the Hebrew thought process was very much more similar to the English than the Greek, and that is food for thought.

Therefore, to allow Christly, Gospel “love” necessarily to conform with Lukan, Acts “love”, or with Pauline, Epistolary “love”, let alone with Nineteenth Century, Victorian “love” and with Twentieth Century, Social “love”, is deliberately

to set yourself along a path which, although strewn with primroses, may still lead to the everlasting bonfire.

Let us therefore, since we admit to following the Christly interpretation of the Israelite Revelation, study some of the contexts within which Our Lord describes "love", because it will be, after all is said and done, His arm which will be around our shoulders at the Day of Judgment and it will be His Word that will argue for us before the Judgment Seat.

Omitting some references, for example, the "love" that hypocrites have for the best seats, we find that the vast majority of the references in the Gospels to "love" are in the same context as the Commandments. True it is, that only occasionally is it formally stated "if ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15) although this is mentioned more than once, but it is also undeniable that the fact that Love and Commandments in "love God with all your heart and soul and mind" and "love your neighbour as yourself" are so closely related is not merely a coincidence. In other words, the fact that the First *Commandment* is to love, and the Second *Commandment* is also to love demonstrates the juxtaposition of the Command-Love concept embodied in "if ye love me, keep my commandments". This juxtaposition is reversible, in that "if ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love" (John 15:10) is just as enforceable. It is a question of a Mathematical Theorem and its converse. In a Mathematical Theorem there are two premises, one given and one to be proved. In the Converse to that Theorem, the two premises are reversed, so that the one previously given becomes the one that is to be proved, and the one that was previously to be proved becomes the one that is given.

So that if the Theorem states that "LOVING leads to OBEDIENCE" then the Converse states that "OBEDIENCE leads to LOVING".

But we are not talking about Mathematical Theorems that need to be proved, we are talking about the relationship between God and His people, and while this relationship and the actions of His people do not have to be proved, it is obvious that we, as His people, must do what He, as Our God, says, and if He says "if ye love me, keep my commandments" (a definite instruction), then if we stand by our admission of love for Him, then we must also stand by our obedience to Him. Contrariwise, if we say that we love Him and do not obey His Commandments then out of our very mouths are we convicted of being liars.

Another essential to our Israelite well-being, as has been stated above, is that we are right as well as obedient. It will not be good enough to excuse our disobedience by suggesting that we "thought we were right". The excuse that someone else has led us astray will not be accepted. It will be no plea of innocence for us to say that we thought what we were doing was right when in fact we have misinterpreted the Father's instructions. It is our duty to ensure that we are following the correct path and that no deviation either to the right hand or to the left is made, and this duty must be excellently performed and willingly fulfilled. Let it be said again, we will not be able to make the excuse that someone else has led us astray, ignorance will not be bliss and will not be accepted as any excuse. Adam was considered just as guilty as Eve, and his plea that woman had tempted him and therefore he had eaten the fruit was not taken as proof of innocence. Adam was indicted with disobedience to God's Commandment, and was found guilty as charged, with no mitigation of sentence on account of his circumstances. So, too, will it be with ourselves.

Although it is not specifically and clearly stated in the Decalogue, its lack of clarity being perhaps due to our lack of perception, there is one Commandment which is repeated in many places and in many forms.

There is really no space to itemise the more than sixty references in the Scriptures, Old and New Testaments at which God's People are commanded to keep themselves and to remain separate and apart from all other peoples. It may be that our lack of perception has refused to allow us to see that this separation is in fact ordered in the seventh commandment "thou shalt not commit adultery", for the economy of statement that is well known in the Scriptures precludes the repetition of the same idea in the tenth commandment, indicating that "adultery" is quite a lot different from "coveting the wife of one's neighbour".

Therefore, it should be borne in mind that the love that one should bear towards one's neighbour has nothing to do with any relationship with any non-Israelite. It is not possible to keep separate from a person and at the same time "love" him as a neighbour! This naturally includes the "enemy" that we are instructed to "love" in Matthew 5:44. Here, the enemy referred to must be of Israelite stock, he must be one of our own people against whom we have taken a dislike. It is entirely against God's Purpose to transpose this concept of "enemy"-ness out of the context of the Israelite nation and place it in the context of a White-Black confrontation, or an East-West hostility, or a North-South opposition.

The "love" that we are trying to define is only relevant within the Israelite nation. Read John 15:15 to 19 and note that the "chosen"-ness is allied to love and obedience. God's plan is mapped out as

- (1) The Choice of Israel by God.
- (2) Instruction in the Commandments.
- (3) Acceptance in Love.

Israel's response is

- (1) Acknowledgement of being Chosen.
- (2) Obedience to the Commandments.
- (3) Demonstration of Love by Obedience.

The love that we are required to demonstrate in response to the Father's wishes is a sturdy love. It is strong, purposeful and courageous. To love your (Israelite) enemy requires a strength of purpose that is not found in the bottom-waving, sandal-licking attitude that modern preachers would have us adopt in our dealings with the Black man, lying on our backs with our feet in the air like a whipped cur. To lay down your life for your friend requires a sturdy courage that is not found in the ungenerous droppings of two farthings into a jingled collection box or the pinning on to your lapel of the paper flag that indicates that you are proud to have given to today's cause already and do not need to be impertuned again – until tomorrow.

To lay down your life for your friend and to love your (Israelite) enemy require that you should be loyal to the precepts which the nation as a whole should be subscribing to and living by. They require that you should make a stand on these principles, with no expectation of reward, with no desire that your sacrifice should be acknowledged or even heard of, and with no alteration in the way you conduct yourself before men while you are doing so. Modesty and secrecy as before. Not so that when you are hauled up before the Judge you will be let free, but because you know that those principles that God has set before us are the very best that can be made out – indeed, the only ones that could have been made out – for the running of the nation and for the happiness and prosperity of each individual within the nation.

This is why it may be considered that "loyalty" is a better translation of the word *agape* than "love". "Loyalty" gives a better impression of the sort of feeling that we are supposed to show. "Loyalty" is strong, courageous, generous, purposeful, sturdy, self-reliant. It can be shown between man and man, between man and woman, between woman and woman, adult and child, child and child, group and group, Israelite and God. Loyalty is unchanging, based as it is on a considered judgment, a considered summing up of the evidence and a rational and decisive effort of will. You cannot be less loyal to a person or a principle this decade than you were last decade, this year or last year, this minute or next minute.

So when you are next asked to "love" your neighbour, or to "love" God, do not go into an emotional tail-spin, an intellectual whirlpool, disregarding your traditions, your common-sense and your upbringing. Take a deep breath, line up the principles you know you ought to be obeying — and find out about them if you do not know them already — set your judgment to work and act in loyal accordance with the Commandments that God has given to you and to your nation.

That is love.

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