

BIBLICAL LOVE

I. LOVE AS EXPRESSED IN HEBREW

The words having to do with love in the OT are from the אָהַב (*ahab*) word group.

It derives from a root with a meaning like ‘breathe’...or ‘pant after’...and thus it means ‘desire.’

Jer 31:3 - ...I have loved you with an everlasting love...

Hos 3:2–3 - 2 So I bought her for myself for fifteen shekels of silver and a homer and a half of barley. 3 Then I said to her, "You shall stay with me for many days. You shall not play the harlot, nor shall you have a man; so I will also be toward you."

T.H. ROBINSON: *He was a man possessed and dominated by his love. It went to the very roots of his being, and so fully did it absorb him that no sin or folly or her part could shake it. It kindled in his life, it was a consuming fire shut up in his bones, which no rejection could weaken and no suffering quench. In all the world's literature there is no record of human love like his.*

*Hos 2:14, 16 - 14 "Therefore, behold, I will allure her,
Bring her into the wilderness And speak kindly to her. ... 16
"It will come about in that day," declares the LORD, "That
you will call Me Ishi And will no longer call Me Baali.*

1 God's love is unmerited.

2. God's love could involve discipline.

Prov 3:11–12 - 11 My son, do not reject the discipline of the LORD Or loathe His reproof, 12 For whom the LORD loves He reproofs, Even as a father corrects the son in whom he delights.

II. LOVE AS EXPRESSED IN GREEK

- *STORGE*...natural affection (*astorgos* in Rom 1:31 and 2 Tim 3:3)
- *EROS*...romantic love
- *PHILIA*...love of friendship (James 4:4)
phileo...philos
- *EPITHUMIA*...strong desire (Luke 22:15; Phil 1:23)
lust - 1 John 2:16; James 1:14...*evil desire* - Col 3:5

II. LOVE AS EXPRESSED IN GREEK

- *AGAPE*...unselfish giving

John 3:16 - For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life.

1 John 4:7 - ...let us love one another, for love is from God...

1 John 4:8, 16 - 8 The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. ... 16 We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

1 Cor 13:4-7

1 Cor 13:4 – *love is patient...*

Exo 34:6 - Then the LORD passed by in front of him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger..."

Patience in respect to PERSONS.

Doesn't retaliate...and doesn't revile (1 Pet 2:22).

Rom 12:21; Eph 4:32

1 Cor 13:4 – *love is kind...*

Phil 2:3–4 - 3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

J. R. MILLER: *Do not keep the alabaster boxes of your affection sealed and laid away until your friends are dead. Fill their days with tenderness. Speak your words of commendation while their ears can hear them.*

***Rom 2:4** - Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

#1 – Is God's love still unmerited today? What New Testameent passages come to mind?

***Eph 1:5–8** - 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. 7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace 8 which He lavished on us...*

***Eph 2:8–9** - 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.*

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

#2 – Does God's love still involve disciplining His people? What New Testament passage comes to mind?

Heb 12:6–11 - 6 FOR THOSE WHOM THE LORD LOVES HE DISCIPLINES, AND HE SCOURGES EVERY SON WHOM HE RECEIVES." 7 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? 8 But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. 9 Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? 10 For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness. 11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

#3 – How does our culture define love?

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Love is a feeling you feel when you feel you are going to have a feeling you've never felt before.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

#4 – How should understanding biblical agape impact marriage?

