

ISRAEL'S RESTORATION

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"For the *restoration* of all things." (Acts 3:21)
"Tikkun" in Hebrew means restoration.

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Five Loves



By Asher Intrater

There are many types of love. I want to point out five of them, as noted in Scriptures, in a certain logical order.

I. Love the Lord

The first is obvious since it is the first commandment, as recognized by Jews and Christians alike.

"You will love the LORD with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might." (Deuteronomy 6:5)

II. Love the Neighbor

This is also obvious as both Jewish and Christian traditions recognize this as the second commandment.

"You will love your neighbor as yourself." (Leviticus 19:18)

III. Love the Foreigner

This is a sub-set of "loving your neighbor" but increases the big moral challenge. (The Hebrew text emphasizes the aspect of social injustice.)

"The foreigner that is living with you will be to you as a citizen among you; and you will love him as yourself; for you were foreigners in the land of Egypt." (Leviticus 19:34)

This commandment directly challenges ethnic pride and racial discrimination. It also addresses the issue of foreign immigrants. They are all to be included in the love circle. There are no excuses. We love people of all ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

Former Israeli Prime Minister Yair Lapid quoted this verse in defending policy of treating Arabs fairly in Israeli law.

IV. Love your Enemy

Here the love commandment is pushed by Yeshua to the extreme. We are to love all people, even those who hate us; who are our enemies.

"Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who falsely accuse you, and persecute you." (Matthew 5:44)

"Loving your enemies" has had special meaning for Israeli Messianic Jews and Palestinian Arab Christians. The political situation has our peoples at enmity. Yet our love for one another in Yeshua overcomes all the surrounding conflicts.

This calls us to a divine kind of love that surpasses all human selfishness. Yeshua was the first to command it and to live by it Himself.

Note: this is not the same as trust, because trust demands a reciprocal action from the other person. We do not trust our enemies (John 2:24-25). We are to show them God's love in the hope that grace can change their hearts; and change ours for that matter.

V. God loves You

These love commandments quite frankly are impossible on our own. They point us to the need for a deeper level of love, a greater source of love. That is God's love.

"God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son..." (John 3:16)

We are able to love because God loves us (1 John 4:7). We would not have even know what love is if Yeshua had not demonstrated it for us (1 John 4:9). It is not that we loved God, but that He loved us (1 John 4:10). It is He who loved first, and then we afterward (1 John 4:19).

So here is the logic of God's love:

1. He commands us to love Him, as He is our maker.
2. Since we love Him, we are to love the rest of His human children.
3. That love includes those of backgrounds foreign to us.
4. It even includes those who treat us badly.
5. Love is only possible because God loved us first and gave us the ability to love others.

Since God's primary character trait is love, when we love others, we become more godly ourselves.



God Doesn't Have Grandchildren



By Hannah Tekle

depositphotos

I couldn't help but stare.

The face in front of me was *impossibly familiar*, but I knew I had never met this tall young man with his wavy blond hair in my life. As he approached the table where I sat, the scene before me played out as if in slow motion. Scanning through my mental contact list at whirlwind speed, I suddenly realized who he was. It was all about the eyes. The man standing before me gazed back at me with eyes just like his father's - a guy I had grown up with, nearly four decades ago, during the most significant years of my childhood. I greeted him fondly, with a silly grin of humor and disbelief.

As teenagers, his father and I had shared some important moments growing up in the same congregation and learning at the same schools. Going to youth group together, we struggled to grasp, believe, learn about and hold onto faith in the Messiah. Second generation Messianic believers, it was our inheritance of faith and Jewish heritage that made adolescence at times even more confusing – yet also offered an anchor which we eventually both chose to cling to.

The ten or so teenagers sprawled out around the room, as only teenagers can do. A few curled up on the cozy recliner, and others nibbled on chocolate chip cookies around the table. They had already been singing Karaoke for hours and were slaphappy with tiredness and dopamine from the joy of easy friendship. In between songs, they foraged for more snacks in the kitchen. One minute they giggled together over goofy videos and the next, they felt heaven open while singing together in true and original worship to the Father.

A few hours into the sleepover, while telling funny stories about their parents, they realized that all of them were daughters and granddaughters of Messianic Leaders. The girls told us later how

much fun they had being together and talking about their faith and what it was like to grow up in Israel as third generation believers. It was precious to hear about the weekend and see the silly and sublime videos they had done together. Knowing the difficult reality of walking in faith as multiple generations, tears came to our eyes.

As a rebellious teenager growing up in the 80s I never would have imagined that 35 years later I would be serving in ministry with my husband alongside my parents and my young adult children.

It was with a certain violence of decision that I chose to walk in the same faith as my parents. Hearing their dramatic testimony while growing up, it was a little embarrassing to feel like I didn't even have one. But the quiet and persistent love of the Father met me time after time – surrounding me as a small girl in His undeniable presence, confronting me as a teenager with the knowledge of His incomparable love, and allowing me in His grace to know the fullness of joy that is found in His presence.

Refusing to give in to adolescent shame, I insisted on choosing what I felt to be true – even though it was exactly what was expected of me. Rebellious against rebellion itself, I chose to embrace Yeshua as my Lord. About 15 years later I would find myself in full-time ministry.

Continued on page 6



Beauty for Ashes?



By **Guy Cohen**



depositphotos

Yeshua, standing in the synagogue in Nazareth, addressed the crowd with Isaiah's words which were a prophecy of Himself!

*"The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me,
because the Lord has anointed Me,
to proclaim good tidings to the humble.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those who are bound;
to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord,
and the day of vengeance of our God;
to comfort all who mourn,
and console those who mourn in Zion,
to give them **beauty for ashes**,
the oil of joy for mourning,
the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.
That they may be called trees of righteousness,
the planting of the Lord, that He may be glorified."*
(Isaiah 61:1-3)

I recently read these words on Holocaust Remembrance Day, and then a week later on Memorial Day, when we commemorate Israel's fallen soldiers and victims of terror.

Isaiah 61:3 hit me the hardest: *"To comfort all who mourn, and console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes."*

The word "ashes" immediately reminds one of the Nazi death camps where the bodies of the gassed Jews were cremated. Within a stretch of 3 years, the ashes of the Nazi Holocaust were turned into a certain type of "beauty" in the newborn nation of Israel.

Throughout Israel's history, both ancient and modern, we have needed to defend ourselves from war and attack. Lives have been lost. The death of Israeli fighters did not begin in 1948 with modern independence. It began thousands of years earlier, among others, with deaths of Saul and Jonathan. In 2 Samuel 1:17-27, King David laments over this father/son duo, killed in battle against the Philistines.

People gave their lives in battle for the rest of us to be able to live a life of quiet, serenity and security. For me, this Independence Day marking 75 years of the Nation of Israel, was one of the most difficult. The crowds of thousands who are demonstrating against the present government, include many people who fought for this nation, and families of those lost in wars and terror attacks - Zionists who helped build this country. Those who experienced the Beauty (*pe'er* in Hebrew) of the founding of the State of Israel in 1948 and in its first decades, are facing a different and depressing reality today.

The only Beauty that will actually, eternally save us from despair and truly pull us from the ashes is the glorious beauty of our divine Creator-Redeemer. Only when the people of Israel recognize Yeshua will the rest of Isaiah 61 come to fruition.



Harvest of Asher Congregation

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A Report from Haifa...



By **Leon Mazin**

"I lift up my eyes to the mountains, from whence shall my help come? My help is from the LORD maker of heaven and earth." (Psalms 120:1)

Congregational Planting...

As a congregation, we have existed since 2001, and in 2004 we planted a congregation that is still functioning effectively in Upper Nazareth. Now we are closer than ever to birthing an additional congregation in a neighborhood on the other side of Haifa. In light of biblical strategy, I think this is a smart move. Seeding each area of our metropolis with believers, and developing new leaders in congregations are favorable steps. Yet, I did not expect the "birth pangs" to be so intense. Please pray for this new, healthy and effective congregation to be brought forth.

Challenges in Israeli Society...

A year ago, Israel was focused on the war in Ukraine. Today, Israelis are more worried by the Israeli constitutional/judicial reform and its pros and cons. There are many challenges, needs and divisions in Israeli society. I made Aliya in 1990 and have never seen such a heated debate before. Additionally, there are economic problems and tensions in the Palestinian, Lebanese, Syrian, and Iranian directions.

How should we react to all of this? How should we perceive this whole situation?

Are these signs of the Last Days? Or just normal recurring events, as the author of Ecclesiastes said, *"Whatever is, has already been; and there is nothing new under the heaven."*

Only time will tell us the full answer, yet it is still important for us to know how to respond. As the leader of a congregation, I can say that this is not an easy season.

Humanitarian Cuisine...

We have been serving through food since 2004 in Nazareth and 2008 in Haifa. Sometimes the love has been expressed with grocery bags, and at other times with hot meals. We have recently completed the renovation of our congregational kitchen, and accordingly, we see a growing need for this ministry. *Thank you so much to all those who donate towards these humanitarian projects!*

Young Adults...

Our young adults survived the COVID 19 restrictions and challenges reasonably well, and now we are restarting one of the projects for them: with God's help, 15 young people will go to Norway in August to unite, study, pray, be filled with the Spirit, and develop into a new level of serving. This is the next phase of the Eagles Project we believe that it is strategically important.

I rarely talk about it, but pastors (like me) also need to hear words of wisdom from Heaven in this intense life that requires clear answers. I ask for your support in prayer.

Thank you to all who stand in support of our ministries to the Jewish people, both in the greater Haifa-Nazareth corridor, and through Internet TV, nationally and beyond. We love you and bless you in the Name of Yeshua.

"But to Him who, by the power that works in us, can do incomparably more than all that we ask or think, to Him be the glory in Yeshua the Messiah throughout all generations, from age to age. Amen." (Ephesians 3:20-21)

Return to Zion Congregation

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It is no coincidence that our God is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Why would *El Elyon* (the Most High God) choose to identify as the God of three generations – three generations who didn't always walk in perfect love and harmony and faithfulness with one another? In fact, this original Israeli dynasty was often beset with drama, scandal, betrayal, jealousy and disappointment. Why would *El Shaddai* choose to be known as the God of a flawed family, fraught with fears and unfaithfulness?

Hebrews 11 tells us the story of Abraham stepping up in faith – leading the way for all humanity to walk in a raw, human expression of trusting – reaching over the divide of eternity to be a picture of familial faith and faithfulness – eventually paving the way for the sacrifice of Yeshua Himself.

It is in this intersection, and in this gap, that we as multiple generations of believers find ourselves desperately walking out the paradox of personal faith and free will. We choose to keep the faith of our fathers while seeking a fresh perspective and an individual touch from *Ribon HaOlam* (The Sovereign of the World).

My own personal experience of growing up in a believing home and as a daughter of congregational leaders has uniquely qualified me to understand what my own children may be experiencing as they grow up. Granted, it is a vastly different generation, and I am painfully aware of how easy it would be to walk away. What a sad but true reality that as children we tend to rebel against and despise the inheritance of our parent's choices. So often, what is radically important to them and what they fought for becomes the polar opposite of what we seek.

It was sweet to meet the son of my childhood friend. But merely reminiscing about that friendship was not really the thing that made the biggest impression on me. What really made a huge impact on me was hearing this young man declare his faith in Yeshua. In this super-fast, super smart, super self-capable generation – to witness him choose to walk in personal faith, against all the odds, where many are choosing other paths – was precious indeed.

No doubt there is a generational inheritance that bolsters him up – with prayer and scripture and godly love–while his own personal encounter with the Messiah emboldens him to stand individually in his faith.

This is our current challenge and blessing – three generations of Messianic believers walking out faith in fear and trembling before a gracious and compassionate but jealous God. We earnestly desire a genuine and true expression of faith. We acknowledge the different needs and styles of the generations, and see the richness of the inheritance we walk in together before God.

God chose to be identified as the God of generations; He gives an inheritance of blessing like the blessings passed down from Jacob to the tribes.

Yet He also meets us individually in the way that each one needs, showing up generation after generation personally.



Feed Tel Aviv - Holocaust Survivors & Holiday Outreaches

By Tiferet Yeshua



depositphotos

This year, our Passover Holocaust survivors' event was especially meaningful for all of us! We all felt a special sense of joy throughout. Many of the guests asked us about our faith, much more than in previous years, and there was a great openness for us to share about our hope in Messiah.



Holocaust Remembrance Day comes one week after the Passover holiday, so it is very meaningful for us to celebrate the victory of life over death with these survivors. We even had the honor of celebrating Yosef's 95th birthday (see photo), a man who has endured unimaginable trials in the Holocaust and in his life afterwards.

Seeing him with a smile on his face, as we honored him, truly delighted my heart! Our sincerest thanks to all of you who support this important outreach!

TEL AVIV Street Outreach

When the weather warms up, we like to head out to the parks of Tel Aviv to share the gospel: we call it our "Gospel Grill Outreach." We bring food and instruments for worship. When planning this outreach, we felt led to head to a specific area on the sea boardwalk in Tel Aviv, a place where there are paths and grassy areas where we could set up our grills. (Little did we know that the very next day, this spot would become the scene of an attack when a terrorist rammed his car into a group of tourists, sadly killing one man.)

Everyone who participated felt that there was a special openness in the people they had the opportunity to speak to, and they felt that there was grace in their conversations with them. There was also a group of Bible students from Glaubenszentrum Bible School in Germany who did a wonderful job of talking with people and sharing the hope they have in the Jewish Messiah. People also approached the group when we were worshipping to ask about who we are.

Quite a few people took home New Testaments and booklets with the biblical prophecies about the Messiah. Several people we spoke to said that they would like to be in touch with us to learn more. Days later, a woman the group witnessed to, came to our main service and was deeply touched by the message. Since then, she has been back every week. Praise God! Please pray for all the people whom God brought into our path during this outreach, that the seeds of the gospel would fall on good soil and that the Holy Spirit would water them to bring forth a harvest of salvation.



How I was Finally Able to See Yeshua in a Different Light



By Raphael Almeida



depositphotos

Love is often described as one of the most powerful forces in the world. It has the ability to bring people together, heal wounds, and change lives. As the Bible tells us in Corinthians 13, “*the greatest of these is love.*” But what does it truly mean to know Yeshua through love?

Like many, I was raised with certain beliefs about love and faith that were instilled in me by my parents and community. I felt the weight of expectation to be a model believer, but at the same time, *I was living a secret life that did not honor God.* My parents were devout believers and leaders in our faith community, and I felt the pressure to be just like them. I kept my bad actions hidden from my parents until they found out, which was an incredibly difficult and painful experience.

At that point, I felt relieved because I no longer had to pretend to be something I wasn't. I thought I could just leave Yeshua and the faith community behind and “move on” with my life. However, my parents' response to the situation was NOT what I expected. *Despite everything I had done wrong, their love for me never wavered.* They accepted me for who I was, flaws and all, and showed me the same love and forgiveness that Yeshua extends to us all.

Through their unwavering love, I was finally able to see Yeshua in a different light.

My attention was no longer focused on following rules and regulations, but on embracing His love and compassion for me, and also for others.

The Bible tells us that “God is love,” and this is evident in everything that Yeshua did during His time on earth. He loved the outcasts and the sinners, and showed them compassion and grace. Through His love, He was able to transform their lives and bring them closer to God. This is the kind of love that we should aspire to embody in our own lives.



As we reflect on the importance of love, we must remember that it is not just about the love that we receive, but also about the love that we give. It is about extending grace and forgiveness to those who have wronged us, and loving others unconditionally. Through our actions, we can show others the love of Yeshua and bring them closer to Him.

When we love a fellow human, we are reflecting Yeshua, and partaking in God's love for that fellow human. This is a great responsibility that carries tremendous power. Therefore, let us take this responsibility seriously and contend to embody the love of Yeshua in our daily lives. Through our actions, we can make a positive impact on others and bring them closer to God.

Revive Israel Discipleship Community

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