

DISCOVERING THE BIBLE & OUR BIBLICAL HERITAGES

Providing factual information about the Bibles, beliefs, movements, institutions, events and people of historical Christianity & Judaism.

2015 • NUMBER 6

The Bible's First Lessons on Love

By Jim Myers

The Bible opens with the famous creation accounts, but few probably realize that these are also the Bible's first lessons about **love** ó *the love of the Creator*. These are lessons that are well worth learning and sharing with others, because if there is one thing our lives and world urgently need now ó *it's the presence of the Creator's love*.

The First Account

In the beginning the Creator created the Heavens and the Earth.

The lessons on love begin on the first page of the Bible, with the introduction of a mysterious being that we know absolutely nothing about except that It creates. It is important to know that in this ancient text *create* means ó *to change things that exist*.ö So, this mysterious being is ó *a changer of things that exist*ö ó *the Creator*. The text opens by revealing the two things that are available for the Creator to change ó *darkness and a deep primordial ocean*. What does He want to create? His primary goal is to create a kingdom of humans that He will be able to love -- *and who will love each other like He loves them*. It will be through His acts of love that humans exist.

Before humans are even created, the Creator is busy doing acts of love that will affect them in many ways. His very first act is to create the thing that is often called öthe spark of life.ö He creates it when He creates light. Light and life are often used synonymously in this ancient culture. *When He spoke and light came into existence, life entered the dark lifeless environment through the Creator's breath*. Today, when a baby is born, the first breath signals the beginning of life and the last breath of a person signals the end of life.

It is my contention that no being understands the value of human life more than the Creator. However, anyone witnessing death understands the power of the mysterious öspark of lifeö -- and its connection to a last breath. As long as the person is breathing the spark is there and felt, but that changes with the last breath. If the person is someone you love deeply, you clearly understand the value of that spark of life. There is nothing that can be done to bring it back. It is a moment in which we truly understand the gift of life that was given by the Creator ó *life is truly the most valuable gift of love*.

How important is human life to the Creator? He created the Heavens and the Earth to sustain and protect it. Think about everything that He created over the first six days ó *dry ground, air, water,*

plants and trees for food, water creatures, flying creatures, and animals. They all play a role in providing the basic physical requirements of human life ó these are acts of the Creator's love.

The Creator created two people ó *a man and a woman* ó and then He blessed them. His blessing empowered them to do the things they were created to do. It also provided them with important instructions about what their roles and relationship would be. *Two very important revelations are that they were created as equals and the presence of the Creator will be with them.* They are created as gender and spiritual equals ó *two more acts of the Creator's love.*

The word **TOV** appears seven times in this account, and anytime a word appears that many times in a specific context, it means it is a very important word that the ancient author uses to make a very important point. In this context, **TOV** is the standard the Creator uses to measure His acts of creation. The **TOV Standard** teaches us a great deal about the Creator's love. As a matter of fact, it could also be called **The Creator's Love Standard**. It gives us an overview of what love means to the Creator:

- (1) *To love is to do acts that protect life.*
- (2) *To love is to do acts that preserve life.*
- (3) *To love is to do acts that make life more functional.*
- (4) *To love is to do acts that improve the quality of life.*

I am sure you noticed that **love is an action** for the Creator ó *not a feeling or emotion*. It is important to note that the focus of the first account is entirely on the acts of the Creator. The man or woman did not say or do anything.

The Second Account

In the day Yahweh the Creator made the Earth and the Heavens.

The primary lessons of this account aren't usually associated with love. The events are very different from those in the first account. This time the Creator is called Yahweh and He wants to plant a garden, but can't do it because of a lack of rain and there was no man to work in it. This time Yahweh only creates a man and then plants His garden ó *with two very special trees in the middle*. Yahweh does not bless the man ó *He gave him a commandment that concerned one of the trees*. He was prohibited from eating fruit from one of the trees. *Interestingly, Yahweh did not point out that the other tree just happened to be the **Tree of Life** and that if the man ate its fruit he would become immortal.*

For a while, it was just the man and Yahweh living alone in the garden. The idea of being alone with God is often viewed as a really good thing in religious circles, but here Yahweh declares that this was not TOV ó *the man needed a woman equal to and adequate for him in every way*. Yahweh finally got around to creating her after making all of the animals. He does not bless the man and woman, nor did he provide them any instructions about their humanness or what their relationship should be. By the way, one of the wild animals Yahweh created before He created the woman was *a walking talking bewitching serpent*. So, the garden has four creatures that could speak ó *Yahweh, the man, the woman, and the walking talking bewitching serpent*. Sound like the beginning of a joke doesn't it.

One day the serpent decided to start a conversation with the woman. We aren't told whether this was their first conversation or if they often spoke to each other. On this day, however, the serpent calls Yahweh a liar and fills her mind with new thoughts about what would happen if the humans ate the forbidden fruit. It told her that the human would become like Yahweh when they ate it. She began to imagine what it would be like to be creatures like Yahweh. Before long, she began to desire it. She wanted to eat the forbidden fruit. It is at this point that we discover that the man was standing there witnessing the whole scene -- *and he did nothing to protect her*. And, he also ate the fruit!

This brings us to the next lesson on love. Look at the situation through Yahweh's eyes. What act of love could He do that will protect and preserve human life?

*The man and woman were **examined** by Yahweh, **held accountable** for their actions, and received in-kind **punishment designed to correct** what they did wrong.*

*Yahweh's act of love is called **justice**. It is through the acts of justice that the man and woman will produce the next generation of human life ó and they also learned that they had been created to be equals and co-rulers. It is through acts of justice that things which do not measure up to the TOV Standard are brought in line with it. Without equal justice, human life is not be protected or preserved.*

The Third Account

*Noah was a righteous man, blameless among the people of his time,
and he walked with the Creator.*

This account begins with the exile of the man and woman from Yahweh's garden. Yahweh made the decision that the humans should no longer have access to the *Tree of Life*. At some point the man and woman will die, but they will have children and human life will continue. But then their oldest son did an unexpected thing ó *he murdered his younger brother Abel*. Once again Yahweh does justice, but this time Cain is sent away from his homeland and away from his parents.

This is where we learn about the next lesson about love ó *faithfulness*. Think about how much pain the man and woman had experienced in their lives. They had been kicked out of Yahweh's garden and forced to live with the thoughts of the luxurious life they had in the past. They had to also live with the memories of their roles in the acts that led to their exile. How many times do you believe they pondered their rolls or blamed the other one for what ultimately happened.

And now, they had lost both of their sons. They could have just given up and died, but they didn't. What could be more painful than knowing one son murdered their other son? How many times did memories of their sons' childhood go through their minds? Did they search through those memories looking for things they could have done differently that would have prevented the murder? The text doesn't reveal what happened, but what they did next does reveal that some significant changes were made ó *and it appears that Yahweh played an important role*.

We know something changed because of the *genealogy of Seth*, the son born after Cain left. Seth never knew Cain, but there is little doubt that he knew a lot about Cain and Abel. Seth's parents had changed and they taught him lessons about the Creator's love. Seth taught them to his son, who taught them to his son ó they were passed down from generation to the next ó *all the way to Noah*. In the genealogy is

evidence of Yahweh's faithfulness. It reveals that two of Seth's descendants "walked with the Creator" ó **Enoch and Noah**. Because of the faithfulness of Seth's descendants to the Creator and the Creator's faithfulness to them – human life was saved from extinction by the Great Flood.

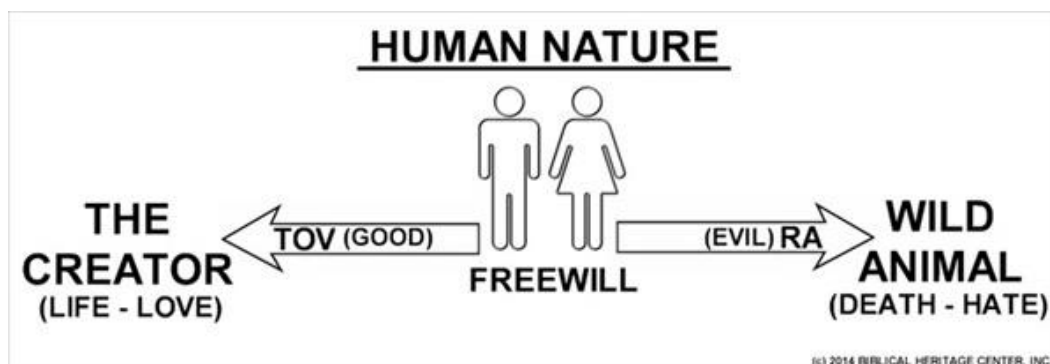
Lessons about the Creator's Love

Today, love is viewed as an emotion by most people. Love is thought to be a "feeling." However, that feeling is usually linked to the latest ads, movies, products, fads, etc. that they have been bewitched by. "Feeling loved" is something that has become something "all about me" and "how you make me feel." If the Creator had followed that model of love, none of us would probably be here.

The Creator's view of love is all about doing what is required to protect "the sparks of life." He placed within every human being. Each of us has been entrusted the same mission during the very short periods of time we inhabit His Earth. He created "us" in "His image" to reveal His image through our acts in the generation in which we live. How do we reveal His image?

- (1) *By doing acts that protect life.*
- (2) *By doing acts that preserve life.*
- (3) *By doing acts that make life more functional.*
- (4) *By doing acts that improve the quality of life.*
- (5) *By doing acts of justice.*
- (6) *By being faithful as we live according to His Standard.*
- (7) *By teaching others in whose image they have been created.*

This is what love meant to the Creator and we have the ability to unleash that power in our generation. But, we must also understand that we are creatures *who have the ability to reveal the image of the walking talking bewitching serpent* through our actions. The choice is ours.



Recently, we discussed the salvation message of the Jesus ó *the Real Yeshua*. Do you see the Creator's love and Standard in his words?

The Real Yeshua's Salvation Message

All the nations will be gathered before him:



To the ones on the right he said:
"I was hungry and you gave me food.
I was thirsty and you gave me a drink.
I was a stranger and you invited me in.
I needed clothes and you clothed me.
I was sick and you cared for me.
I was in prison and you visited me.
Come, you are blessed by my Father,
take your inheritance."

To the ones on the left he said:
"I was hungry and you gave me no food.
I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink.
I was a stranger and you did not invite me in.
I needed clothes and you did not clothed me.
I was sick and you did not care for me.
I was in prison and you did not visit me.
Depart from me."



Matthew 25:34-44



Did you notice
NO ONE WAS ASKED
WHAT THEY BELIEVED --
about me or anything else?

Which is more important to your God -
the lives of people
or
someone's version of correct beliefs?

Learn more about the Real Yeshua
<http://therealyesua.blogspot.com>

I thought you would also enjoy and understand two of the new memes we created for our blogs to emphasize lessons we learned from the Genesis accounts above.

Something may be LEGAL
that is absolutely EVIL
but it will never be TOV.

MAKE THE TOV STANDARD
YOUR STANDARD



tovcenter.org



*is not a product or a brand;
it cannot be bought or sold;
it cannot be voted into existence --
it can only be lived!*



tovcenter.org

Reveal the Image of the Creator in your part of the world:

- (1) *By doing acts that protect life.*
- (2) *By doing acts that preserve life.*
- (3) *By doing acts that make life more functional.*
- (4) *By doing acts that improve the quality of life.*
- (5) *By doing acts of justice.*
- (6) *By being faithful as we live according to the TOV Standard.*
- (7) *By teaching others in whose image they have been created.*

-- and you will make the world a little better & safer!

PLEASE DONATE & HELP US DO THIS WORK.

<http://biblicalheritage.org/BHC/donate.htm>