

# When LOVE & HATE work TOGETHER.

[PART 2]

(Love-hate #7)

1

## The Big "IF" ...

# IF

IF we are willing to pay attention to the words and context of the Bible verses, **we will be able to learn everything we NEED for life and godliness** (even if we don't succeed in learning everything we WANT to know).



## Academic learning and original language studies:

We can also learn a lot from these; but it will be more like "extra blessings."

God did not make his Word **OBSCURE**, so that our eternal destiny is at the mercy of people who claim to be "experts." He made it **CLEAR**, for the average person to be able to understand the basic requirements (if we are willing). *God normally uses people to teach us (Ephesians 4:11-13), but we have an obligation to find out if what we're being told is true (Acts 17:11).*

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## Last time, we looked at this question:

### What can we learn about love and hate?

⇒ By simply paying attention to what the verses say?

❖ Our focus was on what the "average" person can learn, by simply paying attention to the words and how they relate to each other, and their context.

**Today:** ❖ Our goal is to look at some of the additional blessings we can discover when we look deeper into original language issues.

Either way, we need to be willing to **APPLY** what we learn, before it can have any value in our lives!

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## What can we learn about love and hate?

⇒ Looking at the original languages and scholarly research?

① First, if we don't add to or subtract from Scripture: We will reach the same basic conclusion as when we don't have these things.

Academic scholarship is no guarantee of accurate understanding. People are capable of twisting Scripture *with or without* claiming to be "theological experts" about the Bible.

WHEN PEOPLE TELL YOU SOMETHING, FIND OUT IF THEIR WORDS AGREE WITH THE BIBLE'S MESSAGE!

... they received the word with eagerness and examined the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. Acts 17:11b (CSB)

② Second, we may gain additional insights that are of benefit to us – things that go beyond the "basics."

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## Our focus is on the words commonly translated as "LOVE," and how they relate to the issue of "HATE."

Hebrew\*  
OLD  
Testament  
Greek  
NEW  
Testament

In each testament:  
We find two main words that tend to be translated as "love."

In each case:  
> One of the words tends to be used for the more common expressions of "love."  
> The other tends to have a more special use.

\* (Small portions are in Aramaic, which is similar to Hebrew. Examples include parts of Ezra and Daniel.)

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## The OLD Testament words

Word #1 [אהב **aheb**] – The more common expressions of love.

- ✓ This is the basic word for LOVE. It has many similarities to the English word.
- ✓ This love can have a strong emotional attachment and a desire to be with (or to have) the object of that love.
- ✓ It's range of uses is quite broad:
  - God's love for people.
  - Our love for God and for people – neighbor, friends, spouse, family, extended family, etc.
  - Love for impersonal objects – God's Word, wisdom, righteousness, money, the city of Jerusalem, etc.

✓ **All the verses that connect HATE and LOVE use this word.**

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## Word #2 [חֶסֶד] **chesed** – A specialized expression of love.

- ✓ This is a special word that is so rich in meaning that it goes far beyond our normal understanding of LOVE. Because of this, it can be difficult to translate. (Some of the ways it is translated include: steadfast love, mercy, loving-kindness, unfailing love, covenant faithfulness, loyal love, favor, love.)
- ✓ This is a dynamic love that results in *action*. It involves loyalty and covenant promises; there is a commitment between those involved. There are rights and obligations. There is also generosity and kindness.
- ✓ This commitment is often made between a greater and a lesser – a stronger and a weaker, a king and the citizens of the kingdom, parents and children, etc. It is also used to describe the commitment between God and his people.

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- ✓ This commitment love *does not change*. So it is quite fitting that this word is used to describe the special relationship God has with his covenant people (Israel, under the Old Covenant; the church, under the New Covenant). It is an *unending* love that God has for his people – a love that does *not* exist between God and his enemies.
- ✓ God's **chesed** love is strong and unchanging; our **chesed** love tends to be weak. Because of this, God's **chesed** love is often displayed in mercy and grace.
- ✓ **HATE is never connected to this word.** Even when the other type of LOVE must be replaced with HATE, this special LOVE (which exists *only* between God and his people) remains constant.

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## How do these two types of love work together?

- There are situations in which **aheb** love has to come to an end – such as when Israel rebelled against God.

Because of the wickedness of their deeds  
I will drive them out of my house.  
I will **love [aheb]** them no more; ...  
Hosea 9:15b (ESV)

- However, when **chesed** love exists, it remains, even if **aheb** love has ceased to exist (and judgment is necessary). And in the end, **chesed** love will prevail!

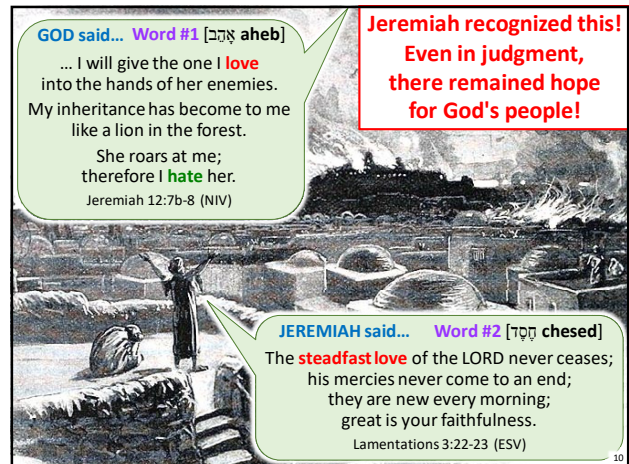
You will not stay angry with your people forever,  
because you delight in showing **unfailing love [chesed]**.  
Mic 7:18b (NLT)

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## GOD said... Word #1 [אהב] **aheb**

... I will give the one I **love**  
into the hands of her enemies.  
My inheritance has become to me  
like a lion in the forest.  
She roars at me;  
therefore I **hate** her.  
Jeremiah 12:7b-8 (NIV)

**Jeremiah recognized this!**  
**Even in judgment,  
there remained hope  
for God's people!**



## JEREMIAH said... Word #2 [חֶסֶד] **chesed**

The **steadfast love** of the LORD never ceases;  
his mercies never come to an end;  
they are new every morning;  
great is your faithfulness.  
Lamentations 3:22-23 (ESV)

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## ❖ These two words for LOVE show us that there is **HOPE** for those who are willing to put their trust in God!

Even if our experience of God's **aheb love** seems to cease for a while,  
we who are God's people can rest assured that his **chesed steadfast love** will remain *and* will ultimately triumph!

I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion;  
therefore I will wait for him."

The Lord is good to those whose hope is in him,  
to the one who seeks him;  
it is good to wait quietly  
for the salvation of the Lord.

Though he brings grief, he will show compassion,  
so great is his **unfailing love [chesed]**.  
For he does not willingly bring affliction  
or grief to anyone.

Lamentations 3:24-26, 32-33 (NIV)

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## ★ These Old Testament concepts are relevant TODAY! ★

- ⇒ **Trials** may come because of random chance – Ecclesiastes 9:11.
- ⇒ God may **discipline** us as *individuals*, because of sin in our lives (James 5:14-6); and if needed, the discipline may be severe (example – 1 Corinthians 11:27-32).
- ⇒ We may experience **judgment** as a *group*. At times, innocent *individuals* within the group may have to suffer – as Jeremiah did. (This is the context in which God used the word "hate.")

## Yet as the New Testament says...

... indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us [= God's people] from **the love of God** that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 8:39 (NLT)

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## The NEW Testament words

Though there are four Greek words available, only TWO are common in the New Testament. (The other two – romantic love and family love – have their legitimate places, but they aren't the focus of the New Testament.)

**Word #1** [φιλέω **phileō**] – The more common expressions of love.

- ✓ This word tends to be used to describe the love people have because of their interaction with each other. It easily applies to family and friends, and can be quite strong.
- ✓ It can be used in a wide variety of situations, ranging from love toward family and friends, to love (hospitality) for those who are strangers. It can be directed toward non-human things, such as a "love for attention."

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- ✓ This word is often found in compound words (two words merged into one). These would define certain expressions of this love.  
Examples:
  - "Love for strangers." (We use the word "hospitality.")
  - "Love for brothers." (Our word "Philadelphia" comes from this.)
  - "Love for wisdom." (We get the word "philosophy" from this.)
  - "Love for people." (We get the word "philanthropy" from this.)
- ✓ This word is occasionally used to describe God's love for people or people's love for God. (The other Greek word for "love" is the one normally used.)

✓ **All the verses that focus on hate (as replacing love) are connected to this New Testament word.**

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**Word #2** [ἀγαπάω **agapaō**]\* – A specialized expression of love.

- ✓ This love is a stronger concept, used to describe the great appreciation and regard a person may have for another. It exists for the sake of the other, whether or not there is any ongoing interaction with them.
- ✓ This love involves commitment and choice – mind, emotion and will. It can be sacrificial, and can be expressed toward those who don't deserve it (and who don't receive the **phileō**-type of love).
- ✓ All the commands to love God, neighbors, enemies, and brothers (i.e., other Christians) use this word.
- ✓ In certain situations, there are prohibitions against having this type of love – such as "do not love the world or the things in the world."
- ✓ **Comments about hate (vs. love) are only indirectly connected to this New Testament word. This love is never to be replaced with hate.**

\* NOTE: Some people may use the *noun* form of this word, ἀγάπη **agapē**, instead of the *verb* form, shown above.

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- ✓ Since this **agapaō** love is not a mere emotional response, it can be consciously done, even when the emotional characteristics commonly associated with **phileō** love are absent.
- ✓ In terms of loving one's enemies, this does NOT mean that we approve of what they do. We can do deeds of kindness, *without accepting the person's evil*.

### A SHORT HISTORY LESSON ABOUT THIS LOVE.

Centuries before the New Testament was written, this word didn't have much significance. But God took what was originally a somewhat neutral (and uncommon) word, and gave it a significance that goes beyond anything the Greeks could have comprehended, *or been capable of having*. (They were not capable, because ...)

Even though this **agapaō** love must influence all of a person's interactions with God and people, *we can't even have this type of love without God initiating a change in our hearts!* (1 John 4:19)

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### ❖ HOW DO THESE TWO WORDS COMPARE TO THE OLD TESTAMENT WORDS?

The fact that each language has two main words translated as "love" does NOT mean that the concepts are exactly parallel.

This can be seen by the words used for the two great commands about love for God and neighbor.

#### Hebrew OLD Testament

The more COMMON type of love. (ahab)

"LOVE GOD AND NEIGHBOR."

The SPECIAL type of "love." (chesed)

#### Greek NEW Testament

The more COMMON type of love. (phileō)

"LOVE GOD AND NEIGHBOR."

The SPECIAL type of "love." (agapaō)

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### O.T. comparison to N.T. words

**O.T. Word #1** [אהב **ahab**] – the more common type of love.

SOMETIMES like phileō: Though not identical, there are some parallels between this word and **phileō**. All verses that focus on hate (as opposed to love) are connected to **ahab** and **phileō**.

SOMETIMES like agapaō: At times, **ahab** may be closer **agapaō**. All the commands about love for God and neighbor are connected to **ahab** and **agapaō**.

**O.T. Word #2** [חָסֵד **chesed**] – the special type of love.

Sometimes, this word may have similarities to **agapaō**. But in general, each of these words has its own special focus, and it would be a mistake to equate the two words. But they do share this feature: Hate is never considered a legitimate alternative (replacement) for either of them.

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### ❖ How do the New Testament words fit together?

ALL verses in which love is replaced by hate are about **phileō** love.

- We must be willing to **hate**, and NOT have **phileō** love for, self and family, etc.

The one who **loves** [**phileō**] his life will lose it, and the one who **hates** his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.  
John 12:25 (CSB)

"If anyone comes to me and does not **hate** his own father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, and even his own life—he cannot be my disciple."  
Luke 14:26 (CSB)

The one who **loves** [**phileō**] a father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; the one who **loves** [**phileō**] a son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.  
Matthew 10:37 (CSB)

- In contrast, we **must** have **phileō** love for Jesus!

If anyone does not **love** [**phileō**] the Lord, a curse be on him.  
1 Corinthians 16:22a (CSB)

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In contrast, we are **never** to stop having **agapaō** love for PEOPLE – even when **phileō** love must cease.

- The two greatest commands (love God/neighbor) are about **agapaō** love! ("Neighbor" includes enemies, Christian "brothers," and everyone else.)

"**Love** [**agapaō**] the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind."  
"**Love** [**agapaō**] your neighbor as yourself."  
Matthew 22:37b, 39b (CSB)

However, **hate** for certain THINGS may be a part of **agapaō** love.

- Even so, if **agapaō** love is in us, there are certain THINGS we **will** hate – such as sin and wickedness – because such things are **incompatible** with love. (They are also incompatible with holiness.)

**Love** [**agapaō**] must be sincere.  
**Hate** what is evil; cling to what is good.  
Romans 12:9 (NIV)

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### ★ How should we respond to all this? ★

- Since different types of love **do** exist, it is possible to replace one with hate, *while continuing to have the other*.
- Love that involves desiring good for others – especially **eternal** good – must ALWAYS exist.
- Love related to friendships and interaction with other people may need sacrificed...
  - if it becomes a snare to following Jesus, or
  - if the people are committed to living for evil.
- Love related to one's "self" will also need to be sacrificed – crucified – any time it becomes a snare to following Jesus!
  - We **can** desire good for ourselves, to whatever extent it involves living a godly life (1 Peter 3:10-12).

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