

The Creation of Man

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House of David
MINISTRIES

Created by God

The first Hebrew word in the Bible is *Be-reisheet*. This word signifies the very act of creation—God brought “being” into existence from “non-being,” something from nothing. In the beginning (*Be-reisheet*), the Lord God made all things perfect. Each living organism on earth was divinely planned and woven into the most remarkable fabric of creation, a living tapestry of God’s artwork. Every detail, carefully and methodically executed by the wisdom of God, for a creation without wisdom would be chaos.

But the universe is far from that. It is intelligently designed by His hand. Each star and speck of dust moved into place, every planet in our solar system carefully aligned, and the earth delicately cloaked in a firmament of water and oxygen, a biosphere capable of sustaining all life.

But the pinnacle of God’s creation was man, his body formed by God’s hands from the dust of the earth, as a potter sculps a vessel (*Va’yitser* in Hebrew), and the breath of God breathed into man so that he became a living being.ⁱ These two gifts from God reveal our physical and spiritual nature. And while we begin life here on earth as a vessel of clay, our eternal destiny is to dwell in the presence of God in an incorruptible glorified body.ⁱⁱ But even now, we are taught to respect and honor our bodies as God’s Creation. We read, *“Whoever sheds man’s blood, By man his blood shall be shed; For in the image of God He made man” (Genesis 9:6, NKJV).*ⁱⁱⁱ

The study of man is called anthropology, from the Greek *Anthropos*, meaning “man,” and *logos*, which means “account” or “reason.” Scientific anthropology strictly deals with man’s physical, cultural, social, and emotional conditions. On the other hand, Biblical anthropology addresses man’s created condition, his fallen nature, and God’s redemptive plans for humanity.^{iv} The Psalmist continues his declaration about man: *“For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. You have made him to have dominion over the works of Your hands; You have put all things under his feet” (Psalm 8:5-6).*

But in Christ, the writer of Hebrews, quoting Psalm 8, adds: *“You have put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that He put all in subjection under him, He left nothing that is not put under him. But now we do not yet see all things put under him. But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone” (Hebrews 2:8-9).*

As we have been teaching about the nature of God, His work, attributes, and characteristics, so also with man, made in God's image, we see the exact divine blueprint. We read, *"What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him?" (Psalm 8:4)*. And yet, God did not just say that the creation of man was good; He said it was "very good"—a most excellent and perfect work of God.^v As such, we are not like any other creature but unique and special to God, created for His Glory as we read, *"Everyone who is called by My name, Whom I have created for My glory; I have formed him, yes, I have made him" (Isaiah 43:7)*.

The sages explain this concept using a parable: "In the usual practice of the world, when a king of flesh and blood builds a palace, he does not construct it based on his knowledge but based on the knowledge of a craftsman. And the craftsman likewise does not construct it based on his knowledge; rather, he has papers and diagrams from which to know how to make the rooms and how to make the wicket doors. So too did the Holy One, blessed is He, peer into the Torah (the written word) and thus created the world."^{vi}

As we previously learned, Jesus is the blueprint for creation. We read, *"God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began, but has now been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Timothy 1:9-10)*. But more, Jesus is the master craftsman, the carpenter whom the Father sent forth to build the living tabernacle of God. As Jesus only did what He saw the Father doing, He laid the foundation for and continues to build this tabernacle according to His Father's design.^{vii} The word *reisheet* is a reference to the *Torah* (the books of Moses). Hence our parable is saying that with the *Torah*, i.e., with Jesus—the word made flesh as His tool—God created the heavens and the earth. The apostle John states this clearly when he says, *"All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made" (John 1:3)*.

So when we read in Genesis that man was made in the image of God, we need to understand that Adam and Eve initially bore the image of Christ. He is the blueprint for creation and the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.^{viii} We read, *"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them" (Ephesians 2:10)*.^{ix} Yet, Adam and Eve defiled this image by their sin and were cast into the world separated from God.

The Sages tell us that the root of the word used by the Bible to say that God *banished* (*va'yigrash*, ויגרש) Adam from the Garden of Eden is the same as the root of the word for *divorce* (*gerushin*, גרושין).^x They compare Adam's state to that of "a Jewish divorcee," whereby the husband is permitted to remarry her former husband. As the Lord declared: *"Where is the certificate of your mother's divorce, Whom I have put away? Or which of My creditors is it to whom I have sold you? For your iniquities you have sold yourselves, And for your transgressions your mother has been put away" (Isaiah 50:1)*. This is the same verb that the Bible uses for divorce—*"And he will send her away from his house (mevito ve'shelcha, מביתו ושלחה)"*^{xi} Remarriage is only conceivable when there is repentance (*teshuvah*). In scripture, we find repentance depicted as

the reconciliation of a divorced couple, culminating in remarriage.^{xii} And this Jesus said: *"Unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).*

When Jesus officiated the New Covenant, He was sanctified by the blood He shed.^{xiii} The Hebrew word for sanctified is *Kadsheinu* (קדשנו), which shares a common root with the word for marriage or betrothal, *Kadusin* (קדושיך).^{xiv} Jesus, having sanctified us with His blood, parallels what a man declares when betrothing a wife: *"You are hereby consecrated unto me."*^{xv} Jesus said, *"Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3).* Paul reaffirmed this by saying: *"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17); "For I am jealous for you with godly jealousy. For I have betrothed you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ" (2 Corinthians 11:2).*

Because of our sin, Humanity broke God's covenant, and so did Israel. As we read: *"The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, Because they have transgressed the laws, Changed the ordinance, Broken the everlasting covenant" (Isaiah 24:5); "Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce" (Jeremiah 3:8).* Therefore, our betrothal to God will only occur with repentance, leading us to Christ's sanctification. And this betrothal is akin to a new marriage rather than a renewed one. Every marriage is a covenant, and God required the shedding of blood in His New Covenant of marriage. The Lord declared, *"Because of the blood of your covenant, I will set your prisoners free from the waterless pit" (Zechariah 9:1).* And Jesus said, *"For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Mathew 26:28).*

Even before we were born, the Father had already promised the Son, Jesus, the redemption, and eternal life of man. And despite our disobedience, humanity created in God's image would justify His purpose once redeemed by the blood of Christ. Redeemed humanity, the object of God's love, would become His inheritance, as we read: *"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints" (Ephesians 1:17-18).* This is an unfathomable mystery.

Created in God's Image

The Bible attributes the creation of man to a sovereign act of God, planned and designed in the triune council of the Godhead, making humanity in His image for His glory. Man, alone, of all creatures, has received the breath of God. And even though we have fallen away, God has redeemed mankind by the blood of Christ. Not the angels who have seen God's face and rejected Him. No, we alone are the recipients of God's unmerited grace.

We could spend countless pages arguing against the theory of evolution. And it is still a theory, a supposition of ideas.^{xvi} Instead, we will embrace the inerrancy of scripture and accept man as a purposefully created being. In Genesis, we read: *"Then God [Elohim] said, 'Let Us make [Na'aseh in Hebrew] man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.' So God created [Va'Yivrah] man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Genesis 1:26-27).*^{xvii} Here we see scripture revealing the plurality of God's nature associated with the creation of man. However, while plural, it takes on a singular verb—a plurality of one.

The clear indication is that man has both a physical and spiritual part. Paul said, *"There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body" (1 Corinthians 15:44)*. While certain basic instincts and emotions chemically derive from our physical bodies, our God-breathed souls contain the more profound essence of who we are. For this reason, we are not like any other creature. Our physical being is intricately connected to something new that never existed, a physical realm. But our inner being, the core of who we truly are, is that breath of life that came directly from God.^{xviii} In so, we are not merely copies of the creator but are a part of Him. And these spiritual qualities comprising the soul of man are of divine origin.

Man's physical and spiritual bodies are indivisible and function as one organism, and our immaterial life and personality derive from both. The material and spiritual are incomplete and cannot operate to their fullness without each other. Man's immaterial attribute comprises his life, soul, spirit, mind, heart, strength, self, will, and affections.^{xix} Several of these terms are interchangeable. For example, the Greek word *psyche* is translated as "life," "soul," and "heart." Soul and spirit are the most frequently used words to describe the immaterial self. The spirit of man is the exact image of who we are but lacks any physical attributes unless housed within a physical body. All the parts of man work together as *one* complex being. Our physical side comprises our brain, which processes our thoughts, memories, emotions, and feelings. Our spiritual nature contains our soul, giving us volition and consciousness and bringing life to our inner man.

The human brain is the most remarkable organism in existence. Without the brain, we are unable to think and reason. But even more importantly, we cannot feel and express the deepest emotions of the human heart. Therefore, the brain acts as the portal that connects our physical and spiritual natures, processing and feeding the heart with the things we experience in the natural. And it expresses in the physical realm that which is felt deep inside our soul from the spiritual.

Think of our brain as a complex computer, but remember, we are far more than machines. We are sentient beings, acting, with free will, on our discretions. And our brains can learn, adapt, store, program, and be reprogrammed. Thus, our brains are not artificial intelligence. Instead, they are the pinnacle expression of God's *unbound* intelligence within His creation that He has deposited into mankind. When our spirit responds to something physical, the brain chemically

produces our reactions and feelings. But conversely, when our body reacts to something spiritual, these reactions and feelings are again processed in the brain so we can experience it.

The Hebrew word *Nefesh* (נֶפֶשׁ, Greek *psuche*) is commonly translated as "soul," and the Hebrew word *Ruach* (רוּחַ, Greek *pneuma*) translates as "spirit." The basic meaning of *Ruach* is both "wind" and "breath," but neither is recognized as essence; instead, it is the power encountered in the breath and the wind, yet its origins are mysterious. Jesus said, *"The wind [pneuma] blows [pneo] where it wishes, and you hear the sound of it, but cannot tell where it comes from and where it goes. So is everyone who is born of the Spirit"* (John 3:8). Wind and breath are a force in motion with the power to set other things in motion.^{xx} And the divine designation (*Ruach Elohim* and *Ruach YHVH*) has an intensifying power, as we read in Genesis 1:2 and Isaiah 59:19, to bring life out of nothingness and life from the dead.

Nefesh (soul) and *Ruach* (wind) both refer to the "created aspect of life." The Hebrew term *Nefesh* indispensably relates to a created being. Rather than having a soul, a creation of God is a soul. Genesis 2:7, the text does not read that Adam was given a soul; instead, we are told that man "became a living soul." We read: *"All the persons [Hebrew Nefesh, souls] who went with Jacob to Egypt, who came from his body"* (Genesis 46:16). Numbers 6:6 speaks of a dead body which in Hebrew is a *nephesh met* (נֶפֶשׁ מֵת), a dead soul.

Even though we breathe, God sees us as already dead because of our sin, as we read: *"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins"* (Ephesians 2:1). And Jesus said, *"Let the dead bury their own dead"* (Luke 9:60). Therefore, *Nefesh* (soul) is better translated as a "person" or "being," with a literal meaning of a "living being," and it is only God who gives and sustains life. God breathed life into Adam, and now that life continues in the procreation of life. As we read, *"Now Adam knew Eve his wife, and she conceived and bore Cain, and said, 'I have acquired a man from the LORD'"* (Genesis 4:1).

Judaism teaches that our soul is comprised of three parts: The breath of God (*neshama*, נִשְׁמָה), the wind or Spirit of God (*Ruach*), and the soul itself (*Nefesh*).^{xxi} *Neshama* can mean "soul" or "spirit."^{xxii} Humankind made in the image of God is only distinguished from the animal kingdom by the quality of our immaterial attributes, not the number.^{xxiii} The term *Nefesh* (soul), as with *Ruach* (spirit), when put with another word, can define the meaning of that word, namely the immaterial part of man, like our mind, emotions, will, intellect, personality, and conscience.^{xxiv} Both humankind and animals are described as having a soul (*Nefesh*). However, we are not an evolution of the animal kingdom but a uniquely created being within it.

Our soul and spirit are attributed directly to God but also to Adam.^{xxv} Among conservative scholars and according to traducianism, the human race was created in Adam, and the body and soul were procreated by natural generation from him.^{xxvi} Similarly, Judaism teaches that Adam's soul was a comprehensive one, called a *neshamah klalit*, in that it contained all the souls of subsequent generations.^{xxvii} In contrast, Catholicism and Reformed Theology teach that God creates each new soul directly at conception or before birth.^{xxviii} The problem with these later

theories is that we only see one recorded act of God breathing into a man. After that, God rested on the seventh day.

If all souls preexisted in the creation or were newly created at conception, none of these souls would have Adam's sinful nature. Nor would they require that we become a *new* creation in Christ to enter the Kingdom. Yet, David said: *"Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me"* (Psalm 51:5). Perfect souls would be given the same test and opportunity as Adam to obey God; if they did, these souls would not require a Savior.

Traducianism is the preferred theory and holds that "man, as a species, was created in Adam. In Adam, the substance of humanity was yet undisturbed. We derive our immaterial as well as our material being, by natural laws of propagation, from Adam—each man after Adam possessing a part of the substance that was originated in him."^{xxxix} We read, *"Adam lived one hundred and thirty years, and begot a son in his own likeness, after his image, and named him Seth"* (Genesis 5:3); *"Even Levi, who receives tithes, paid tithes through Abraham, so to speak, for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him"* (Hebrews 7:9-10).

As God is the sustainer of all life, our souls were created by God through Adam, meaning a part of Adam's soul is now within us. But in Christ, we have been given a new Spirit. Hence Paul said: *"As we have borne the image of the man of dust [Adam], we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man [Jesus]"* (1 Corinthians 15:49). We are a new creation that retains the image of Adam but without the sinful nature; our souls redeemed; we are being transformed into the image of Christ.^{xxx}

Created a Living Being (Soul)

The word *Nefesh* comes from the root *nafash*, which means *rest*. In scripture, the soul of man is called the "heart."^{xxxi} The heart of man is the seat of our emotional and intellectual life, and out of the heart flows our moral, spiritual, and physical beings. The heart is also the seat of thought, emotion, feeling, volition, and consciousness. These attributes are called *mahshebot libbo* in Hebrew. Therefore, amongst conservative Jewish and Christian scholars, man's mind, heart, and soul are considered one and function as one singular and indivisible unit.^{xxxii} And while these scholars recognize man's physical and immaterial nature, they do not teach in the trichotomy or dichotomy of man but in his oneness.^{xxxiii}

Unlike the Greeks, who considered the soul in the afterlife a disembodied spirit, we believe that our immaterial attributes can never be fully realized as their parts, only their whole. We anticipate the reunion of our spirit with a new resurrected body.^{xxxiv} Paul said: *"We know that if our earthly house, this tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens... If indeed, having been clothed, we shall not be found naked"* (2 Corinthians 5:1-3). In other words, the soul is naked without the body. Therefore, as God is one in Himself, so was man created to be one being. But unlike God, we are not separate and

independent creatures. Mankind, sustained by the grace of God, was designed to be one with Him.

In other words, if we believe—by faith—that God created the universe *ex nihilo* (out of nothing), which is irrational and impossible to comprehend, then we can also conclude that humanity cannot continue to exist apart from the One who created it. Jesus said: *“I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing”* (John 15:5). And when Jesus said, *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind”* (Matthew 22:37), He instructed His disciples to love God with our whole created being—our body and soul. And He told us that everything within our created being (our thoughts, emotions, feelings, volition, and consciousness) was to love God first and primarily above anything else.

Our mortal bodies will one day return to the dust from which they were made.^{xxxv} And while our physical bodies in God’s hands are wonderfully made, they are only a temporary covering for our spiritual being that God breathed into us.^{xxxvi} The final redemption of mankind will occur in two parts, a new creation of our inner spiritual being and the resurrection of our physical body into a new, glorified, and incorruptible one.^{xxxvii} As Jesus had a resurrected body of flesh and bones, we also will have a resurrected body that bears a relationship to our earthly ones.^{xxxviii} Paul said: *“As we have borne the image of the man of dust, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly Man”* (1 Corinthians 15:49).

In Christ, God has given us a new heart and spirit and made us a new creation in Him.^{xxxix} So, while we now have a new spirit connected to God that sets our hearts on the things of His Kingdom, the brain and mind that process the deeper aspects of man’s soul must still be renewed daily.^{xl} While our bodies will one day return to the earth, until that time, they are a Temple of God’s indwelling.^{xli} Even before the resurrection, God will quicken, strengthening us so we will have victory over the flesh.^{xlii} Our bodies are to be dedicated to Christ’s service, a living and holy sacrifice, and not an instrument for sin because we will be judged (not condemned) and rewarded at the *bema* seat of Christ for the things we have done in the body.^{xliii} And when Jesus returns, our resurrected bodies will be wholly united with our new spiritual nature—the new creation—to become one perfect being fully transformed into the image of Christ.

Divine Purpose

There are differing opinions about what it means “to be made in the image, the likeness of God.” The Hebrew is *be’tzal-meynu*, in Greek is *eikon tou theou*, and in Latin is *imago Dei*. As God is Spirit and has no bodily form, there is conjecture that we are patterned after the physical image and glorified body of Christ.^{xliv} Romans 5:14 tells us that Adam was a type of Christ. Yet we are also told that Jesus took the form of a bondservant and came in the likeness of men.^{xlv} As God is uncreated and there is no created substance in Him, the implication is that Christ, the Son of

God, condensed from His heavenly form, appearing in created flesh.^{xlvi} But we are reminded that Jesus is not created; He is the only begotten of the Father. Born in the flesh, He came from the Father.

God had already envisioned the creation within Himself, and Jesus, the Son, is God's template for all that was made. Hence, we see theophanies scripture, which are "visible manifestations to humankind of God."^{xlvii} And most frequently, these manifestations are in the form of a man. God walked in the Garden of Eden with Adam, appeared to Abraham as a man, and showed Moses His back. And so, it is not that God has a corporeal form, but chose the form of a man to reveal Himself to His creation and formed us in this physical image. But more than a physical form, man was given dominion over the creation and its creatures. Man was created with intelligence, rationality, reason, emotion, sentience, will, conscience, and volition. We were given creativity, art, music, language, and the ability to commune with God. And the first man, Adam, was created as holy, righteous, and moral nature of body, soul, and spirit. These are all attributes of God's nature and character.

God is personal and possesses personal feelings, and he thinks, plans, and acts according to His will, volition, and emotions.^{xlviii} God is love, but He also hates those who commit evil. God is gentle but full of jealous wrath and indignation towards those who reject Him. These divine attributes within the creation have produced dichotomies, for example, strictness versus kindness, masculinity versus femininity, and freedom of choice versus God's sovereignty. However, good and evil are not dichotomies, as God did not create evil. We know that God is good, and there is no darkness in Him.^{xlix} But the paradoxes He created allowed for evil to exist and the presence of sin. This makes for choice because our decisions would have no moral accountability without it.

To be made in God's image means we also possess the exact nature and characteristics and hold these same dichotomies. We are capable of love and anger, kindness and severity, good and evil; each requires a cognitive decision. The Lord said, "*Come now, and let us reason together*" (*Isaiah 1:18*). This God-given ability was exclusively endowed to humanity. We alone can reason abstractly, create, innovate, choose whom we will communicate with, and choose what or whom we will worship. We are curious to pursue the unknown realms, such as our exploration of space and the dark underworld of the oceans. We have harnessed the forces of nature and now the power of the sun—fusion.¹ But all these attributes alone fail to convey what it means to be created in God's image.

Babies and children to a certain age lack self-awareness the way adults do. Through the teen years, young men and women cannot often reason cognitively and make sound, intelligent decisions. Even society recognizes an age of accountability between eighteen and twenty-one years of age. Therefore, to be made in the image of God must go beyond any God-given attribute.

If we study the Hebrew grammar, recognizing it uses a verb or function for its preposition of “imaging,” the text would read “as the image of God” or “as God’s image.”^{li} Unlike any other creature, humanity was explicitly created to bear the image of God. We are His image bearers or imagers, not an attribute or ability, but a status. We are God’s representatives on earth, to replicate His image and have dominion over His temporal world. And if created as God’s image, we were also purposed to reflect it. Jesus said, “*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven*” (Matthew 5:16); “*The lamp of the body is the eye. If therefore your eye is good, your whole body will be full of light*” (Matthew 6:22). Thus, even an unborn baby or an intellectually compromised adult with dementia, while lacking any self-awareness or cognitive ability, still bears the image and likeness of God.

Man was created as a moral agent with a conscience and the ability to know right from wrong.^{lii} Appearing thirty-one times in the New Testament, Webster defines conscience as “A knowledge of sense of right and wrong, with a compulsion to do right; moral judgment that opposes the violation of a previously recognized ethical principle, and that leads to feelings of guilt if one violates such a principle.”^{liii} And because the creation was made through Christ, humanity is born with the natural law of God in their hearts.^{liv} But to Israel, God further gave His written law—the Torah. Thus, we are held accountable to God for our actions. Paul said: “*For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law*” (Romans 2:12); “*For the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life*” (2 Corinthians 3:6). Therefore, the consequence for breaking either is the same—death and eternal separation from God.

Humanity has fallen short of God’s natural and written law.^{lv} Therefore, the Lord declared: “*The earth is also defiled under its inhabitants, Because they have transgressed the laws, Changed the ordinance, Broken the everlasting covenant*” (Isaiah 24:5). Yes, the earth has broken the everlasting covenant, who is Christ, and in whose image we were created. But God, foreknowing man’s condition, created a path for our redemption. And this path was predetermined even before we were conceived. Hence, we read: “*The Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*” (Revelation 13:8).

God’s essential nature is love, and man was created with the same attribute; a social creature that loves and receives love. Even in our fallen, sinful condition, we naturally love our parents, spouses, and children. Jesus said: “*For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?*” (Matthew 5:46). Much of the Law given to Israel addresses the civil and relational aspects of their society. These were laws governing the affairs of men, challenging them to love their fellow man. Jesus declared: “*Therefore, whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets*” (Matthew 7:12). Some have called this “the golden rule,” although most often, it is applied in the negative.

The one thing that all people crave is love, and the lack of it causes more pain than any other human condition. If our primary created attribute is love, then in our redeemed, born-again condition, the loving nature of God Himself should flow through us like rivers of living water—

the fruit of the Spirit.^{lvi} And while the Law requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves unconditionally, the Law of love in Christ requires us to love even our enemies.

Jesus gave a new commandment when He made the New Covenant, saying: *“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another” (John 13:34). “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him” (John 14:21). And when Jesus defined the standard of this commandment, He said: “Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends” (John 15:13).*

The Old Covenant required us to love our neighbor as ourselves.^{lvii} This was difficult, although not impossible. Just as we love ourselves unconditionally, we must also love our neighbor unconditionally. However, the new commandment requires us to love our neighbor more than ourselves. Paul said: *“In lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself” (Philippians 2:3).*

This principle can be illustrated in a parable: You venture with a friend on a journey into the wilderness, but you only bring one jar of water. Surrounding you for miles are parched hills—no trees or shade, no water, only hot scorching sun. Your map shows a well halfway to your final destination. However, when you arrive, the well is dry. If you drink the water, you will live, and your friend will die. If you give the water to your friend, he will live, and you will die. And if you share the water equally, you will both die.

The sages tell us that since you hold the water in your hand—which is life—it is yours to drink so that you might live. However, if Jesus were on this journey with you, He would give you His water so that you would live, and he would die. That is the standard that Christ set for us in the giving of the New Covenant, and it is a higher standard than the old.

The Old Covenant was not without purpose, nor was the Law beyond our ability. The Lord said: *“The word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it” (Deuteronomy 30:14).* However, the Law of atonement was simply unattainable for us given our sinful and rebellious predisposition. At some point, every person would sin and require a perfect, unblemished substitutionary sacrifice. Only Jesus, the Son of God, would meet those requirements; only He could fulfill the Law perfectly.

Amen!

ⁱ Genesis 2:7. Job 32:8, 33:4.

ⁱⁱ John 4:1-3.

ⁱⁱⁱ All Scripture quotations are taken from the New King James Bible (NKJV) unless otherwise noted, Thomas Nelson Inc., 1982.

^{iv} Duffield, Guy P. and Van Cleave, Nathaniel M. *Foundations of Pentecostal Theology*. Foursquare Media. 1910.

^v Genesis 1:27, 1:31.

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- ^{vi} Kleinman Ed Midrash Rabbah: Vayikra Vol 1 Parshiyos Vayikra—Metzora.
- ^{vii} John 5:19, 6:44, 1Peter 2:5.
- ^{viii} John 1:14.
- ^{ix} Ephesians 1:4-5. Titus 1:2. John 17:24.
- ^x Genesis Rabbah 21:8, 3:24. A religious text from Judaism's classical period, written between A.D. 300 and 500.
- ^{xi} Deuteronomy 24:3.
- ^{xii} *Lesson in the Tanya*. The Tanya of Rabbi Schneur Zalman of Liadi, elucidated by Rabbi Yosef Wineberg. Translated from Yiddish by Rabbi Levy Wineberg and Rabbi Sholom B. Wineberg. Edited by Uri Kaploun. Published and copyrighted by Kehot Publication Society. Chabad.org.
- ^{xiii} Hebrews 10:29.
- ^{xiv} From the liturgy, *passim*.
- ^{xv} Ch. 46; further explained in Ch. 10.
- ^{xvi} Oxford Dictionary.
- ^{xvii} Genesis 5:1-2, 6:7. Deuteronomy 4:32. Isaiah 43:1, 43:7, 45:12.
- ^{xviii} Genesis 2:7.
- ^{xix} Mark 8:35-36. Psalm 31:5. Romans 7:25. Ephesians 6:6. Luke 10:27. 1 Corinthians 4:3-4, 7:37. Colossians 3:2.
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- ^{xxiv} Job 7:11.
- ^{xxv} Matthew 12:18, 26:38. Isaiah 42:1, 53:11-12. Luke 23:46.
- ^{xxvi} Job 14:4, 15:14. Psalm 51:5, 58:3. John 3:6. Ephesians 2:3.
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- ^{xxix} Hopkins Strong, Augustus. *Systematic Theology*. Philadelphia: Griffith and Rowland Press. 1907-09. 494.
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- ^{xxxii} Kaufmann Kohler, Tobias Schanfarber, Executive Committee of the Editorial Board., Adolf Guttmacher. *Heart (Hebrew Leb or Lebab)*. Jewish Encyclopedia.
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- ^{xxxiv} Romans 8. 1 Thessalonians 5:23. Mark 12:30.
- ^{xxxv} Genesis 3:19, 18:27. Psalm 104:29.
- ^{xxxvi} Psalm 139:14-16. 2 Peter 1:14. 2 Corinthians 5:1.
- ^{xxxvii} Colossians 3:10. 1 Timothy 2:13. Romans 9:20. 1 Corinthians 15:44-45, 53. James 3:9. John 5:25. 1 Thessalonians 4:16.
- ^{xxxviii} 1 Corinthians 15:44. John 20:27. Luke 24:39.
- ^{xxxix} 2Corinthians 5:17.
- ^{xl} 2Corinthians 4:16.
- ^{xli} 1 Corinthians 6:19-20.
- ^{xlii} Romans 8:9-12.
- ^{xliii} Romans 6:13, 12:1. Matthew 8:16-17. Mark 16:18. James 5:14-15. 1 Corinthians 11-15.
- ^{xliv} Colossians 1:15. 1 Timothy 1:17. Hebrews 11:27. John 5:37. James 3:9. Genesis 9:6. Isaiah 6:1.
- ^{xlv} Philippians 2:17.
- ^{xlvi} Philippians 2:7-8.
- ^{xlvii} Oxford Dictionary. John 1:18, 6:46. Hebrews 11:3.
- ^{xlviii} Genesis 1:26-3:1.
- ^{xlix} 1 John 1:5.

ⁱ Genesis 1:28-31. Psalm 8:4-9.

ⁱⁱ Heiser, Michael S. *The Unseen Realm*. Lexham Press, Bellingham, WA. 2015.

ⁱⁱⁱ Leviticus 5:3. 1 John 3:20. Romans 8:1.

ⁱⁱⁱⁱ Webster's Dictionary, s.v. "conscience."

^{lv} Romans 2:14.

^{lv} Romans 3:10.

^{lvi} John 13:34-35.

^{lvii} Leviticus 19:18.