

## LOVE FOR MAN

### 1. Definitions.

#### a. Four biblical terms.

##### (1) אהב:

(a) **Ge 22:2** 2 He said, Take your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love (אהב), and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains of which I shall tell you.

(b) **Ge 24:67** 67 Then Isaac brought her into the tent of Sarah his mother and took Rebekah, and she became his wife, and he loved (אהב) her. So Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

##### (2) אהבה:

(a) **Ge 19:19** 19 Behold, your servant has found favor in your sight, and you have shown me great loyal love (אהבה) in saving my life. But I cannot escape to the hills, lest the disaster overtake me and I die.

##### (3) φιλέω:

(a) **Mt 6:5** 5 And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love (φιλέω) to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward.

(b) This term is used only four times outside the gospels.

##### (4) αγαπάω:

(a) **Mt 5:43-48** 43 You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy. 44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. 46 For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? 47 And if you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? 48 You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

#### b. Four terms for love in Greek.<sup>1</sup>

(1) Storge: affection between members of a family.

(2) Eros: romantic love between people who are “in love.”

(a) Picture two lovers staring at each other.

(b) “Love begins to be a demon the moment he begins to be a god.”<sup>2</sup>

(3) φίλος: friendship love, based on affinity.

(a) Picture two friends tramping side by side on a trail.

(b) “Love does not consist in gazing at each other but in looking outward together in the same direction.”<sup>3</sup>

(4) ἀγάπη: care and concern for the ultimate wellbeing of another, even to the point of laying down one's life for the other.

<sup>1</sup> See C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. Lewis.

<sup>3</sup> Antoine de Saint-Exupéry.

- c. Personal and impersonal love.
  - (1) Personal love emphasises the object and is conditional. It corresponds with אהב, eros, and φίλος.
  - (2) Impersonal love emphasises the subject and is unconditional. It corresponds with אהבה and ἀγάπη.

## 2. The Corruption of Love.

- a. Love is a cheap word, if not carefully defined.
  - (1) “I love my wife. I love my dog. I love working out. I love when it rains. I love chocolate ice cream. I love Seinfeld reruns.”
- b. “We have a critical need for a biblical, rather than cultural, understanding of love.”<sup>4</sup>
- c. “There is no action so evil that it cannot and will not be said to be motivated by love.”<sup>5</sup>
- d. “Christian love, says Scheler, does not help the weak, sick, and helpless because it values those attributes but because of concern for the person who lies beyond them. There is none of ‘the exposure of social misery, the description of little people, the wallowing in the morbid—a typical resentment phenomenon.’ The fake love of altruism perverts the sense of values so that sickness and poverty approach the status of virtues.”<sup>6</sup>
- e. “Christian love is directed toward persons who need help and not at abstractions such as humanity or the general welfare.”<sup>7</sup>

## 3. The Boundaries of Love.

- a. The good, the true, and the beautiful.
- b. Consider the four Cs of discipleship development: conviction, character, competence, and chemistry. Truth (conviction) is prior to love (character), and love (character) is prior to activity (competence).

I could not love thee, dear, so much  
Loved I not honour more.<sup>8</sup>

## 4. Agape Love.

- a. It’s for every believer.
  - (1) Love isn’t just for the Francis of Assisi’s and Mother Teresa’s of the world. Paul asked the Corinthians to love.
- b. It is impersonal, depending on the subject, not the object.

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<sup>4</sup> Dallas Theological Seminary, Spiritual Formation curriculum.

<sup>5</sup> Herbert Schlossberg, *Idols for Destruction*, 47.

<sup>6</sup> Herbert Schlossberg, *Idols for Destruction*, 53. See Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, “Max Scheler,” <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/scheler/>.

<sup>7</sup> Herbert Schlossberg, *Idols for Destruction*, 53-54.

<sup>8</sup> Richard Lovelace.

- (1) We are to possess impersonal love toward all people, including obnoxious believers, unbelievers, and even our enemies. Through impersonal love our attitude toward everyone is basically the same, manifested in courtesy, thoughtfulness, sensitive, tolerance, and flexibility.<sup>9</sup>
- (2) "...Divine Gift-love—Love Himself working in a man—is wholly disinterested and desires what is simply best for the beloved. Again, natural Gift-love is always directed to objects which the lover finds in some way intrinsically lovable—objects to which Affection or Eros or a shared point of view attracts him, or, failing that, to the grateful and the deserving, or perhaps to those whose helplessness is of a winning and appealing kind. But Divine Gift-love in the man enables him to love what is not naturally lovable; lepers, criminals, enemies, morons, the sulky, the superior, and the sneering."<sup>10</sup>
- c. There is no law against it.
- d. It goes the extra mile for one's neighbour.
- e. It seeks the highest wellbeing of another.
  - (1) "Love is commitment to the highest good of yourself and others."
- f. It considers the best interests of another.
  - (1) "People who can put themselves in the place of other people, who can understand the workings of their minds, need never worry about what the future has in store for them."<sup>11</sup>
  - (2) "If there is any one secret of success, it lies in the ability to get the other person's point of view and see things from that person's angle as well as from your own."<sup>12</sup>
  - (3) I.e., it considers the predicament of vulnerable, unmarried pregnant women after the overruling of *Roe v. Wade*.
- g. It involves both giving unconditional love and receiving unconditional love.
  - (1) For some, it is more difficult to receive love than to give love.
- h. It is the fruit of the Holy Spirit in our lives.
  - (1) "Jesus is the root. Love is the fruit."<sup>13</sup>
- i. It moves us to suppress our grievances.
  - (1) "No assurance of orthodoxy in the face of contentious questions is so powerful as a single act of charity. The real unity which lies at the back of external agreement is common participation in the Spirit of Christ, the spirit of charity. One sign of that Spirit moves men to suppress their grievances and to recognize the rightness of others more than many assertions of orthodox practice."<sup>14</sup>

## 5. Examples.

- a. Trinity.

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<sup>9</sup> R. B. Thieme, Jr., *Christian Integrity*, 34.

<sup>10</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*, 164.

<sup>11</sup> Dale Carnegie, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

<sup>12</sup> Henry Ford.

<sup>13</sup> Charles Price.

<sup>14</sup> Roland Allen, *Missionary Methods: St. Paul's or Ours?*, 106.

- (1) “The validity and meaning of love rest upon the reality that love exists between the Father and Son in the Trinity.”<sup>15</sup>
- b. Jesus.
  - (1) **Jn 15:12-17** 12 This is my commandment, that you *love* one another as I have *loved* you. 13 Greater *love* has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. 14 You are my friends if you do what I command you. ... 17 These things I command you, so that you will *love* one another.
- c. Good Samaritan (Lk 10:29-37).
- d. Hēni.
  - (1) “Hēni Te Kiri Karamū has been remembered in written history primarily for her involvement in the battle at Pukehinahina, or the Gate Pā, on 29 April 1864. The women who had helped construct the fortification at Pukehinahina had been ordered to leave by Rāwiri Puhirake before the British force attacked. Hēni Te Kiri Karamū, however, stayed, as she was recognised as a woman warrior, and refused to leave her brother Neri. She was nearly killed by the first shot of the bombardment but was saved by the tohunga Tīmoti Te Amopō, who saw the cannon fire and pulled her down into a trench. When the British troops were repelled, their wounded, left behind in the pā, were treated with kindness and humanity by the defenders, in accordance with a code of conduct drawn up before the battle by Rāwiri Puhirake and Hēnare Taratoa, a former mission teacher. Hēni Te Kiri Karamū, at risk to her own life, gave water to Colonel H. J. P. Booth and several other wounded men.”<sup>16</sup>
- e. Foster parents.
- f. A nation’s treatment of its most vulnerable tells you everything you need to know.

## 6. Importance.

- a. “One is, in proportion as one can love.”<sup>17</sup>
- b. “Has anybody told you I love you today? Has anybody told you I love you today? Has anybody I told you I love you today? Let me be the first, put me on your list, I love you today!”<sup>18</sup>
- c. “Love is the circulatory system of the body of Messiah.”<sup>19</sup>
- d. Love is to be the prime motivation in all our actions.<sup>20</sup>
- e. What kind of church do we want to be?

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<sup>15</sup> Francis A. Schaeffer, *The God Who Is There*, 123-24.

<sup>16</sup> Te Ara, “Te Kiri Karamū, Hēni,” <https://teara.govt.nz/en/biographies/1t43/te-kiri-karamu-heni>.

<sup>17</sup> Christina, Queen of Sweden (d. 1689).

<sup>18</sup> Marcia Berg.

<sup>19</sup> Dr. Thomas Constable, Dallas Theological Seminary.

<sup>20</sup> John Calvin.

## 7. Practice.

- a. Love is a wonderful idea, but is it practical?<sup>21</sup>
- b. Love can't be micromanaged. It must be decentralised.
- c. It is easy to love in the abstract, but hard to love in the concrete.
  - (1) "It is nobler to give yourself completely to one individual than to labor diligently for the masses."<sup>22</sup>
- d. "We can do no great things—only small things with great love."<sup>23</sup>
- e. "Good and evil both increase at compound interest. That is why the little decisions you and I make every day are of such infinite importance. The smallest good act today is the capture of a strategic point from which, a few months later, you may be able to go on to victories you never dreamed of. An apparently trivial indulgence in lust or anger today is the loss of a ridge or railway line or bridgehead from which the enemy may launch an attack otherwise impossible."<sup>24</sup>
- f. "Christian Love, either towards God or towards man, is an affair of the will."<sup>25</sup>
- g. "[L]ove, in the Christian sense, does not mean an emotion. It is a state not of the feelings but of the will; that state of the will which we have naturally about ourselves, and must learn to have about other people."<sup>26</sup>
- h. "Do not waste time bothering whether you 'love' your neighbour; act as if you did. As soon as we do this we find one of the great secrets. When you are behaving as if you loved someone, you will presently come to love him."<sup>27</sup>
- i. Make yourself vulnerable.
  - (1) "To love at all is to be vulnerable. Love anything, and your heart will certainly be wrung and possibly be broken. If you want to make sure of keeping it intact, you must give your heart to no one, not even to an animal. Wrap it carefully round with hobbies and little luxuries; avoid all entanglements; lock it up safe in the casket or coffin of your selfishness. But in that casket—safe, dark, motionless, airless—it will change. It will not be broken; it will become unbreakable, impenetrable, irredeemable. The alternative to tragedy, or at least to the risk of tragedy, is damnation. The only place outside Heaven where you can be perfectly safe from all the dangers and perturbations of love is Hell. I believe that the most lawless and inordinate loves are less contrary to God's will than a self-invited and self-protective lovelessness. ... We shall draw nearer to God, not by trying to avoid the sufferings inherent in all loves, but by accepting them and offering them to Him; throwing away all defensive armour. If our hearts need to be broken, and if He chooses this as the way in which they should break, so be it."<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>21</sup> Charles Price.

<sup>22</sup> Dag Hammarskjold.

<sup>23</sup> Mother Teresa.

<sup>24</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 132.

<sup>25</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 132.

<sup>26</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 129.

<sup>27</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 131.

<sup>28</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*, 155-156.

- j. “The invitation to turn our natural loves into Charity is never lacking. It is provided by those frictions and frustrations that meet us in all of them....”<sup>29</sup>
  - (1) Who in your life is the most difficult to love? Thank God for that person, because...
- k. “Decide in God’s power to love the people of the church no matter what.”<sup>30</sup>
- l. “Let my heart be broken by the things that break the heart of God.”<sup>31</sup>
- m. Put people before projects. People are our mission.

**He aha te mea nui o te ao**

What is the most important thing in the world?

**He tangata, he tangata, he tangata**

It is the people, it is the people, it is the people.<sup>32</sup>

- n. “Attention is the first act toward loving someone.”<sup>33</sup>
- o. Do the little things for love.
  - (1) “All the activities (sins only excepted) of the natural loves can in a favoured hour become works of the glad and shameless and grateful Need-love or of the selfless, unofficious Gift-love, which are both Charity. Nothing is either too trivial or too animal to be thus transformed. A game, a joke, a drink together, idle chat, a walk, the act of Venus—all these can be modes in which we forgive or accept forgiveness, in which we console or are reconciled, in which we ‘seek not our own’. Thus in our very instincts, appetites and recreations, Love has prepared for Himself ‘a body’.”<sup>34</sup>
- p. Learn your love language, and the love languages of those closest to you.
  - (1) Our love tendencies will look differently according to our God-given personality.
  - (2) “To a child, love is spelled T-I-M-E.”<sup>35</sup>
- q. Ask, “How can I help you?”
- r. Don’t draw attention to your acts of love.
  - (1) “Who would not rather live with those ordinary people who get over their tantrums (and ours) unemphatically, letting a meal, a night’s sleep, or a joke mend all? The real work must be, of all our works, the most secret. Even as far as possible secret from ourselves. Our right hand must not know what our left is doing. We have not got far enough if we play a game of cards with the children ‘merely’ to amuse them or to show that they are forgiven. If this is the best we can do we are right to do it. But it would be better if a deeper, less conscious, Charity

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<sup>29</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*, 173.

<sup>30</sup> Thom Rainer, *Breakout Churches*, 200.

<sup>31</sup> Bob Pierce, quoted in H. T. Blackaby and C. V. King, *Experiencing God*, 244.

<sup>32</sup> Maori proverb.

<sup>33</sup> Dallas Willard.

<sup>34</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*, 171-172.

<sup>35</sup> John Mark Comer, *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, 136.

threw us into a frame of mind in which a little fun with the children was the thing we should at that moment like best.”<sup>36</sup>

- s. Say, “Can you help me with something?”
  - (1) “God, as it seems to me, bestows two other gifts; a supernatural Need-love of Himself and a supernatural Need-love of one another. By the first I do not mean the Appreciative love of Himself, the gift of adoration. What little I have to say on that higher—that highest—subject will come later. I mean a love which does not dream of disinterestedness, a bottomless indigence. Like a river making its own channel, like a magic wine which in being poured out should simultaneously create the glass that was to hold it, God turns our need of Him into Need-love of Him. What is stranger still is that He creates in us a more than natural receptivity of Charity from our fellow men. Need is so near greed and we are so greedy already that it seems a strange grace. But I cannot get it out of my head that this is what happens. Let us consider first this supernatural Need-love of Himself, bestowed by Grace. Of course the Grace does not create the need. That is there already; ‘given’ (as the mathematicians say) in the mere fact of our being creatures, and incalculably increased by our being fallen creatures. What the Grace gives is the full recognition, the sensible awareness, the complete acceptance—even, with certain reservations, the glad acceptance—of this Need.”<sup>37</sup>
  - (2) “But God also transforms our Need-love for one another, and it requires equal transformation. In reality we all need at times, some of us at most times, that Charity from others which, being Love Himself in them, loves the unlovable. But this, though a sort of love we need, is not the sort we want. We want to be loved for our cleverness, beauty, generosity, fairness, usefulness. The first hint that anyone is offering us the highest love of all is a terrible shock.”<sup>38</sup>
- t. Don’t do for others what they are able and should be doing for themselves.
- u. Love means we will sometimes have to say no to those around us.
- v. Don’t forget to love yourself with ἀγάπη love.

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<sup>36</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*, 172-73.

<sup>37</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*, 165-166.

<sup>38</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Four Loves*, 168.

## 8. Categories of Persons to Love.

- a. Loving our spouse.
- b. Loving our family members.
- c. Loving our friends.
- d. Loving man in general.
- e. Loving our enemies.
  - (1) We imitate the love of God by loving others the way God loves them.
  - (2) “Then there’s the compulsory love: You must love someone, the Supreme Father, who you must also fear—you’re also told you ought to fear. Actually, that is many people’s relationship to their fathers. But that means that the divine doesn’t improve on what the human mammalian family has already discovered for itself. And then the third, perhaps the most immoral of all, is the injunction to love your enemies. That I will not do. I know who my enemies are. At the moment the most deadly ones are Islamist theocrats with a homicidal and genocidal agenda. I’m not going to love them. You go love them if you want; don’t love them on my behalf. I’ll get on with killing them and destroying them, erasing them and you can love them. But the idea that you ought to love them is not a moral idea at all. It’s a wicked idea and I hope it doesn’t take hold, especially on any of you seemingly serious, decent, young people. What a disgusting order to love those people.”<sup>39</sup>
- f. Loving believers.

## 9. Power.

- a. “The church is intended by God to be a sign of his kingdom, that is, an indication of what human community looks like when it comes under his rule of righteousness and peace. As with individuals, so with churches, the gospel has to be embodied if it is to be communicated effectively. It is through our love for one another that the invisible God reveals himself today, especially when our fellowship is expressed in small groups, and when it transcends the barriers of race, rank, sex, and age which divide other communities.”<sup>40</sup>
- b. “Love is the only way to win the free response of men, and this is possible only by the presence of Christ within the heart.”<sup>41</sup>
- c. Agape love is attractive, and it does influence people, as Dale Carnegie well knew.
  - (1) PRINCIPLE 1 Begin with praise and honest appreciation.
  - (2) PRINCIPLE 2 Call attention to people’s mistakes indirectly.
  - (3) PRINCIPLE 3 Talk about your own mistakes before criticising the other person.
  - (4) PRINCIPLE 4 Ask questions instead of giving direct orders.
  - (5) PRINCIPLE 5 Let the other person save face.
  - (6) PRINCIPLE 6 Praise the slightest improvement and praise every improvement.
  - (7) PRINCIPLE 7 Give the other person a fine reputation to live up to.
  - (8) PRINCIPLE 8 Use encouragement. Make the fault seem easy to correct.

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<sup>39</sup> Christopher Hitchens, “Hitchens vs. Wilson, The King’s College,” <http://hitchensdebates.blogspot.com/2010/07/hitchens-vs-wilson-kings-college.html>.

<sup>40</sup> Lausanne Movement, *The Manila Manifesto* (1989).

<sup>41</sup> Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, 65.



(9) PRINCIPLE 9 Make the other person happy about doing the thing you suggest.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Dale Carnegie, *How To Win Friends and Influence People*, 268-269.

### *Your Beautiful Image Remains in My Heart<sup>43</sup>*

Nguyen Nguyet Anh was a teenage Youth Volunteer, helping to build an air base north of Hanoi, when she met Tran Cong Thang in 1965. “It was in a very rural area where there was nothing to do,” she recalled, and when a troupe of traveling entertainers turned up at a nearby army camp she and her friends resolved to go and see them perform. A guard stopped them. “I noticed Anh right away,” Thang remembered. “She was tall and striking.” He convinced the guard to let her and her friends in, managed to get her address, and began calling on her every other week at her barracks. “She seemed a very likable and attractive young woman, a girl from the countryside,” he said. “When I met Thang for the first time,” she recalled, “I found him kind and helpful. He showed up a couple of weeks later, asked about the location of my squad, and came in to talk to me.

From that point on he used come to visit me. We gradually became close to each other.” “But both of us were shy,” Than remembered. “We didn’t know anything about kissing. We saw each other every two weeks for two years, but when I just held Anh’s hand, my hands were shaking. Of course, I felt in my heart that I really wanted to know what kissing a young woman would be like. Later, I felt that it would be a great loss if I went to the front, a man in love, if I died without finding out what a kiss is like.”

In 1967, Thang received orders to go south to work on the Ho Chi Minh Trail. “He came to see me,” Anh recalled, “and said, ‘My unit is going to the southern front.’ He wanted to make it clear he hoped we could wait for each other if we could promise to find each other after the war. I said to him, ‘Okay, please don’t worry and go to fight. I’ll wait for you. If both of us survive, we’ll get married.’ Even if he came back handicapped, if he were wounded, I’d definitely wait for him because I loved him. And I’d marry him.” “At that moment,” Thang remembered, “I really wanted to hug and kiss my sweetheart, but I didn’t dare to show my emotions, I was shaking. It was sad, but I just kept silent. Anh cried, just cried. She didn’t say anything to me. We couldn’t say anything to each other. So we shook hands....I ran back to my unit, which departed at midnight.”

Thang found himself on the Laos section of the trail, part of a combat engineering brigade, moving from one bomb-battered choke point to another, filling bomb craters in the road, getting damaged trucks rolling again, doing his best to stay alive under relentless bombing. One day, while he was at work elsewhere on the road, an American bomb destroyed the bunker in which he had slept the night before. Everything he owned was obliterated, including the only photograph he had of Nguyen Nguyet Anh.

Eight months after Thang came under fire in Laos, Anh became a truck driver on a section of the trail far to the north. Communication with Thanh was almost impossible. Still, whenever he could, he sent her messages with soldiers traveling north and she did the same with troops heading south. “I got two or three letters from him. No more,” she recalled. “The other letters were lost. The distance was very far, the roads were unsafe, so letters were often lost.” Through it all, she thought of him constantly. “I was worried for him every single day.

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<sup>43</sup> Geoffrey C. Ward and Ken Burns, *The Vietnam War*, 376-378.

Whenever I saw a truck that was carrying wounded soldiers to the North, I would ask whether there was anyone from Hanoi on the truck, and if there was, I would look for him. It was a very difficult time because if I worried too much, I might not be able to fulfill my duties.”

Month after month went by. In 1972, Thanh wrote Anh an anguished letter:

My darling! ...I have carried your love in my heart through the long years of our being far from each other. Four years are the measurement of your faithful love for me. We love each other so much, but are unable to see each other, to say gentle words to each other which cannot be written in a letter....I love you with all my heart and mind....I understand that as a soldier, my life is full of hardships and may bring you many sorrows. The distance between us makes our life so miserable that I have to try to understand why life is so unfair to us. One year went by, two years went by, three years went by, and now we have not seen each other for almost four years. My belief is that I can endure all of it because I am a soldier who is...encouraged by your love. I have spent many nights without sleep...thinking of you, thinking of your future. I do not want to lose you, but I do not want to be selfish either....I say your name to myself at the most serious moments in battle. Your name, Anh, always makes me happy....I do not want to lose such a generous love as your love for me. However, your generous love requires me to make a great sacrifice. I do not want to bind your life with the life of a soldier. You should find another man. You deserve to be happy. You cannot wait for me forever. Our love for each other has made us better. I do not want your young years to go by in your waiting for me. If you are happy, I will be happy, too. The year of 1972 has arrived. Spring brings hope to people, including me. I wish you a Happy New Year. I cannot say exactly when we will see each other again, but I believe we will get together someday in our homeland. Your beautiful image remains in my heart. Yours,  
Thang

“I never got that letter,” Anh remembered. “If I had, I couldn’t have forgotten him. I wanted to wait for him because I believed that we would see each other again. It wouldn’t be possible for me to give up on him and love someone else.”

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Tran Cong Thang and Nguyen Nguyet Anh remained apart but faithful to one another for nine years. At the end of 1973, Thang was ordered to Hanoi. Anh happened to be there. “The feeling was like that at the moment when we said goodbye to each other,” Thanh recalled. “I had thought that when seeing her again, I would leap to her and kiss her. All the time at the front I dreamed of kissing her when we saw each other again. But at first I didn’t dare to do that either. We looked each other in the eyes, and we were crying. We were sitting next to each other, so I held Anh’s shoulder and then her neck and I kissed her. I was extremely happy because I had the feeling that it was a kiss I was given by God.”

When the war finally ended two years later, they married and had two children. “We tell our children today what it was like when their mother and father fell in love,” Thang recalled. “Not like what they do today!”

### *Hal Kushner and the Old Man<sup>44</sup>*

“I thought that I would receive different treatment because I’d seen all these war movies where doctors had hospitals and treated their own patients and had instruments and got Red Cross packages. My father had given me a medallion before I left—a Star of David on one side and St. Christopher’s medal on the other. The [North Vietnamese] squad leader tore that off and he took my dogtags and my watch. I had a wedding ring and he tried to take that too. I fought for the wedding ring. He made a motion like he was going to cut my finger off if I didn’t give it to him. But he finally let me keep it.

“So then they took my boots and we started marching. I was weak and I was sick and I was hurting and I was burned. It was bad. And they took me to this little village. The squad leader told me that the American airplanes had bombed this village, and there’d been many people killed there. The people came out and they tied me to a big block of wood, like a door. And this kid, a teenager, beat me with a bamboo stick.

“We stayed that night in that village. They fed me. And then we walked for a month, almost always at night. I was barefoot and my feet were just lacerated. I had maggots infesting my wounds. I had a fever. I was really sick. We kept going always higher in the mountains. I was weak and I asked to stop a lot. And most of the time they didn’t let me stop. I didn’t think I could possibly survive, I just didn’t think I could. And I didn’t care.”

Hal Kushner and his captors kept walking deeper and deeper into the Central Highlands, moving at night so as not to be spotted from the air. . . .Kushner spent the daylight hours at a series of way stations, a day’s march apart. “We stopped at this one place and this old man came out and he took my fatigue jacket. And I thought he wanted it. I kind of resisted him taking it. But he just pulled it away from me. And he went over and he washed it in the river and dried it. He dried it over a fire. And he brought it back to me. It was such an act of kindness that I get emotional thinking about it because it was just an island of kindness in this sea of cruelty.”

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<sup>44</sup> Geoffrey C. Ward and Ken Burns, *The Vietnam War*, 250.

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