

# Weekly Teaching

January 12, 2018

In 1956 the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. taught:

- But the end is reconciliation; the end is redemption; the end is the creation of the beloved community. It is this type of spirit and this type of love that can transform opposers into friends. It is this type of understanding goodwill that will transform the deep gloom of the old age into the exuberant gladness of the new age. It is this love which will bring about miracles in the hearts of men.

And, in 1957 he taught:

- Love is creative and redemptive. Love builds up and unites; hate tears down and destroys. The aftermath of the 'fight with fire' method which you suggest is bitterness and chaos; the aftermath of the love method is reconciliation and creation of the beloved community. Physical force can repress, restrain, coerce, destroy, but it cannot create and organize anything permanent; only love can do that. Yes, love—which means understanding, creative, redemptive goodwill, even for one's enemies—is the solution to the race problem.

We often think of "Dr." King, but we need to recall that first came his earned title: "the Reverend."

The Rev. Dr. King was a Christian preacher, who led the civil rights movement in our country.

And, he most closely identified with Moshe Rebbeinu; Moses, our Teacher.

At the end of our Torah, as Moses was nearing death, God spoke to Moses:

- Go up this mountain of the Abarim, Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, opposite Jericho, and view the land of Canaan, which I am giving to the people of Israel for a possession. And die on the mountain which you go up, and be gathered to your people... For you will see the land only from a distance; you will not enter the land I am giving to the people of Israel. (Deut. 32: 48)

The Rev. Dr. King identified with Moses, and he too climbed up his mountain in order to bear witness to the "Promised Land," he also would not be permitted to enter.

We are presently reading within our Torah cycle the story of our Exodus from Egyptian Bondage.

We re-experience, as we do each Passover, how God freed us in order that we might become a strong and free People, and serve God as His Holy People.

From our own story we know what is right and that we are charged to fight for justice even against an enemy that appears indestructible.

God commands us to stand against oppression.

Moses is who we all should closely identify with.

The Torah records that Moses was "a hundred and twenty years old when he died, yet his eyes were undimmed and his strength unabated."

Moses' strength was unabated because his eyes were undimmed.

He never lost the ideals of his youth; he never lost faith in God.

Moses pursued what was right and good, even to his own personal detriment.

He was a Servant to God his entire life.

Moses Maimonides wrote that “every human being can be as righteous as Moses.”

The Rev. Dr. King took Maimonides’ message to heart.

We can also take Maimonides’ message to heart.

In our world that continues to confront senseless hatred, we can make a difference.

We can help create “beloved community.”

We can build up love and tear down hate.

All it takes is our willingness to do so.

May the memory of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. eternally be a blessing.

Shabbat Shalom,

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