

Unfailing Love (H2617) **טוֹן**

(khesed)

-denotes zeal towards one, usually in the positive sense

Synonyms: *steadfast love, kindness, lovingkindness, ardent love, 'abounding in love', mercy*

Exod 34:6 - The LORD passed before him and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in **steadfast love** and faithfulness... (ESV)

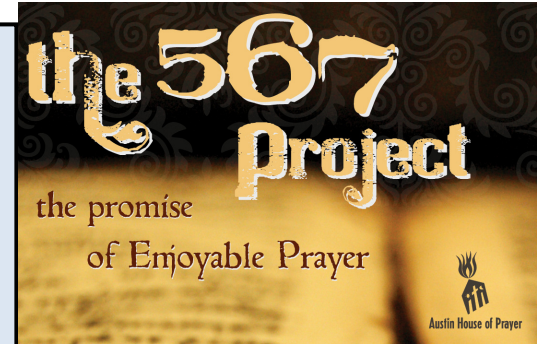
*This is a revealing passage, placing (Khesed) alongside other Hebrew words for **merciful** and **'slow to anger'**. Mercy and compassion are fairly well expressed already, so what could this third descriptive term mean? Steadfast love is used here, and one could perhaps also use 'ardent' love. Kindheartedness seems apt, though it misses the aspect of 'zeal'.*

Num 14:19 - Pardon, I pray, the iniquity of this people according to the greatness of Your **lovingkindness**, just as You also have forgiven this people, from Egypt even until now." (NASB)

1 Chron 17:13 - I will be his father and he shall be My son; and I will not take My **lovingkindness** away from him, ^(B)as I took it from him who was before you.

Joel 2:13 - Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and **abounding in love**, and he relents from sending calamity.

God's 'unfailing love' is His inclination or predisposition to love. Like inertia in physical objects, with a rock that is set at the top of a slope, it will inexorably begin to roll downward. God is such that His primal inclination is to love, to be merciful and to long for the good and perfection of all. We do need to understand, as C.S. Lewis reminds us – that God's love is more than mere kindness. He is not some 'senile benevolence' who merely desires that his creatures 'enjoy themselves' or 'avoid suffering'. Because He is *love*, He desires the fullest perfection of our being and will not stop short of achieving that goal. If we let Him, He will make us perfect – though the road to that end will often be marked with such suffering and 'inconvenience' to us that we may at times even come to spurn this love which demands so much. But then, as Lewis says, "we are asking for less love, not for more."



Word Study
Psalm 62:11-12

One thing God has spoken, two things I have heard: "**Power** belongs to you, God, and with you, Lord, is **unfailing love**;" you **reward** everyone according to what they have done.

power (H5797) **יָצַח** ('oz)

Synonyms: *strength, firmness, securness, vigour, heroism, 'ability to prevail'*

Judg 9:51 - Inside the city, however, was a **strong** tower, to which all the men and women—all the people of the city—had fled.

2 Sam 6:14 - Wearing a linen ephod, David was dancing before the LORD with all his **might**.

Isa 62:8 - The LORD has sworn by his right hand and by his **mighty** arm...

Ezek 33:28 - I will make the land a desolate waste, and her [proud **strength**] will come to an end, and the mountains of Israel will become desolate so that no one will cross them.

('oz) Power: that power which belongs to heroes. Often this word is applied to beasts. Also used of towers and strongholds – perhaps this strength is applied to the warrior inasmuch as his 'core' is quite strong and he is not easily moved by blows or by force. He does not bend, sway or crumble.

('oz) comes from a root which has the connotation of firmness, hardness, or 'secure'. The root can also mean 'prevail'.

