

Love in עקדת יצחק: A near-fatal passion

Bereshit Rabbah 55:8 (Theodor-Albeck, 592-593)

וַיִּשְׁכַּם אַבְרָהָם בַּבֹּקֶר וַיַּחְבֵּשׁ אֶת חָמְרוֹ. אָמַר רַבִּי שִׁמְעוֹן בֶּן יוֹחָי: אַהֲבָה מְקַלְקֶלֶת אֶת הַשּׁוֹרָה וְשׂוֹנְאָה מְקַלְקֶלֶת אֶת הַשּׁוֹרָה.

אַהֲבָה מְקַלְקֶלֶת אֶת הַשּׁוֹרָה, דְּכַתִּיב, וַיִּשְׁכַּם אַבְרָהָם בַּבֹּקֶר וְגו'. וְלֹא הָיָה לוֹ כְּמַה עֲבָדִים? אֲלֵא אַהֲבָה מְקַלְקֶלֶת אֶת הַשּׁוֹרָה.

וְשׂוֹנְאָה מְקַלְקֶלֶת אֶת הַשּׁוֹרָה, שְׂוֹנְאָה, וַיִּקָּם בְּלַעַם בַּבֹּקֶר וַיַּחְבֵּשׁ אֶת אֲחִינוּ (בַּמִּדְבָּר כַּב, כֵּא). וְלֹא הָיוּ לוֹ כְּמַה עֲבָדִים? אֲלֵא שׂוֹנְאָה מְקַלְקֶלֶת אֶת הַשּׁוֹרָה.

R. Shim'on b. Yoḥai said: Love upsets normal behavior, and hatred upsets normal behavior. Love upsets normal behavior, as it says, "Abraham woke early in the morning and saddled his donkey." Did he not have a few servants [to saddle his donkey for him]? But love upsets normal behavior.

And hatred upsets normal behavior, as it says, "Balaam rose in the morning and saddled his donkey" (Numbers 22:21). Did he not have a few servants [to saddle his donkey for him]? But hatred upsets normal behavior.

Solomon b. Simson chronicle, in A. M. Habermann, דברי זכרונות מבני הדורות (Jerusalem: Tarshish and Mossad ha-Rav Kook, 1945), 32

Ask and see! Has there ever been an aqedah like this in all the generations since Adam? Were there ever 1100 aqedot on one day, each one like the sacrifice of Isaac, son of Abraham? For the one bound on Mount Moriah the world shook, as it says, 'Behold the angels cried out and the skies darkened'.¹ What have they done? Why did the skies not darken, the stars not collect their light,² the small light and the great light not grow dark because of clouds,³ when on one day – the third day [Tuesday], the third day of Sivan – 1100 holy souls, including children and babies who never sinned or did anything wrong, and the clear souls of the poor, were killed and slaughtered?

R. Eli'ezer b. R. Nathan Mainz (died mid-12th century), in Habermann, גזירות אשכנז וצרפת, 86:

Bound on the sweet mountain, his father tied him tight
For the offering to work, he said, the sacrifice could not fight.
But we without any binding are slaughtered just for His love,
Our souls rejoice in God, revel in the salvation above.

נעקד בהר המור אביו כפתו
נס שלא יבעט ויפגל שחיתתו
נחנו בלי עקד נשחט מאהבתו
נפשנו תגיל בה' תשיש בישועתו

Sifre Devarim §32

רבי מאיר אומר: הרי הוא אומר וְאַהֲבָתָה אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל-לִבְּךָ. אהבהו בכל לבבך כאברהם אביך, כענין שְׂוֹנְאָה, וְאַהֲבָה יִשְׂרָאֵל עֲבָדֵי יַעֲקֹב אֲשֶׁר בְּחַרְתִּיךָ זָרַע אַבְרָהָם אֲהָבֵי (יש' מא, ח). ובכל נפשך, כיצחק שעקד עצמו על גבי המזבח כענין שְׂוֹנְאָה, וַיִּשְׁלַח אַבְרָהָם אֶת-יְדוֹ וַיִּקַּח אֶת-הַמֵּאֲכָלֶת לְשַׁחַט אֶת-בְּנוֹ (בר' כב, י). בכל מאדך, הוי מודה לו כיעקב אביך...

¹ No such verse exists; the chronicler has combined Isaiah 33:7 with something like Joel 2:10 or 4:15.

² Joel 2:10 and 4:15.

³ See Isaiah 5:30.

R. Meir says, Look, it says, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart' – love him with all your heart, like our father Abraham, as it says, 'You, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I chose, the seed of my lover Abraham' (Isaiah 41:8) – and with all your soul – like Isaac, who bound himself on top of the altar, as it says, 'Abraham stretched out his hand and took the knife to slaughter his son' (Genesis 22:10) – and with all your might – acknowledge Him, like your father Jacob....

Aramaic poem from the Byzantine era (שירת בני מערבא) [ed. Yahalom & Sokoloff], p. 126)

Let your anger triumph over your love, Father
Be like a man who has no mercy on his son!
Like a cruel man, take your knife
And slaughter me, do not defile me

יתקוף רוגזך / על רחמך אבא
ותיהוי כגבר / דלא חייס על בריה
כגבר אכזרי / סב סכינך
ותכוס יתי / דלא תסאיבגי

Søren Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling* (tr. Lowrie), 122:

"Abraham keeps silent—but he cannot speak. Therein lies the distress and the anguish. For if I when I speak am unable to make myself intelligible, then I am not speaking. ... Now Abraham is able to say the most beautiful things any language can express about how he loves Isaac. But it is not this he has at heart to say, it is the profounder thought that he would sacrifice him because it is a trial. The latter thought no one can understand, and hence everyone can only misunderstand the former."

Malbim (Meir Leibush ben Yehiel Michel Wisser, 1809-1879), Commentary on Genesis 22:2

ויאמר קח נא את בנך: הנה עקר הנסיון היה אם גדלה בלבו אהבת ה' באופן שכל האהבות שיש לו יהיו בטלים נגד אהבה זו, וכל שהדבר נאהב אצלו יותר והוא מקריבו לה, וכל שישים על לבו מעלות יצחק ואהבתו אליו, ובכל זאת יבוטלו כל רגשות האהבה העזה שיש לו אל בנו יחידו נגד האהבה היותר גדולה – רשפי אש שלהבת יה – אהבת הבורא, כן יבחן אהבתו לאלהיו. ועל כן צוהו שבעת יקחהו לקרבן לא ישכח מלבו שהוא בנו, רק קח נא את בנך, ולא יסיח מדעתו שהוא יחידו, ויחשוב הלא עדיין יש לי בן שני, שהוא ישמעאל, ועל זה אמר את יחידך. ולא יסיח מדעתו שהוא אוהבו ונפשו קשורה בנפשו, על זה אמר אשר אהבת, ולא יסיח מדעתו מעלותיו שהוא בן חכם וצדיק, על זה אמר את יצחק: שבעת שתקריבהו תזכור היטב כל אלה המעלות שיש לו, ובכל זאת תקריבהו בשמחה ותשמח כי יש לך קרבן מובהר, קדוש מרחם משחר יחיד ונאהב לתתו מנחה.

He said, 'take your son...': The essence of the test was to see if the love of God in his heart was great enough to take precedence over all other loves he had, that the rest should all be nullified when compared to this love. Now, the more something is loved by one, if he sacrifices it to God... and the more he would be conscious of Isaac's qualities and his own love for him – and still these feelings of powerful love he possessed for his only son would be nullified by the greater love (sparks of flame, torch of God!) for the Creator: so will his love for his God be tested. Therefore He commanded him that at the moment that he offers him as a sacrifice, he must not forget that he is his son – therefore, 'take your son.' And he must not forget that he is his only son (and think that he does, after all, have another son, Ishmael) – therefore, 'your only one.' And he must not forget how much he loves him, and that his very soul is intertwined with his son's – therefore, 'whom you love.' And he must not forget his character, that he is a wise and righteous son – therefore, 'Isaac': that at the moment you sacrifice him, you focus on all of these characteristics, and yet you sacrifice him with joy, and rejoice that you have some a precious sacrifice, sacred from the womb, from the beginning unique and beloved, to give as a present.

On Love, Hatred and Loyalty

Stanley Rudoff Memorial High Holy Days Lecture Series

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Part I: Interpersonal Love

1. Vayikra – Leviticus 19

- יא** לא תגנבו; ולא תכחשו ולא תשקרו, איש בעמיתו. **11** You shall not steal; neither shall you deal falsely, nor lie one to another.
- יב** ולא תשבועו בשמי, לשקר: וחללת את-שם א-להיך, אני ה'. **12** And you shall not swear by My name falsely, so that you profane the name of your God: I am the LORD.
- יג** לא תעשק את-רעה, ולא תגזל; לא תלין פעלת שכיר, אתך--עד-בקר. **13** You shall not oppress your neighbour, nor rob them; the wages of a hired servant shall not abide with you all night until the morning.
- יד** לא תקלל חרש--ולפני עור, לא תתן מקשל; ויראת מא-להיך, אני ה'. **14** You shall not curse the deaf, nor put a stumbling-block before the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.
- טו** לא תעשו עול, במשפט--לא תשא פני-דל, ולא תהדר פני גדול: בצדק, תשפט עמיתך. **15** You shall do no unrighteousness in judgment; you shall not raise up the person of the poor, nor favour the person of the mighty; but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbour.
- טז** לא תלך רכיל בעמיה, לא תעמד על-דם רעה: אני, ה'. **16** You shall not go up and down as a talebearer among your people; neither shall you stand idly by the blood of your neighbour: I am the LORD.
- יז** לא תשנא את-אחיק, בלבבך; הוכח תוכיח את-עמיתך, ולא תשא עליו חטא. **17** You shall not hate your brother in your heart; you shall surely rebuke your neighbour, and not bear sin because of them.
- יח** לא תקם ולא תטר את-בני עמך, ואהבת לרעה כמוך: אני, ה'. **18** You shall not take vengeance, nor bear any grudge against the children of your people, but you shall love your neighbour as yourself: I am the LORD.

An Endless Cycle

2. Bereshit – Genesis 37

- א וישב יעקב, בארץ מגורי אביו--בארץ, כנען. 1 And Jacob dwelled in the land of his father's sojournings, in the land of Canaan.
- ב אלה תלדות יעקב, יוסף בן-שבע-עשרה שנה היה רעה את-אחיו בצאן, והוא נער את-בני בלחה ואת-בני זלפה, נשי אביו; ויבא יוסף את-דבתם רעה, אל-אביהם. 2 These are the generations of Jacob. Joseph, being seventeen years old, was feeding the flock with his brethren, being still a lad even with the sons of Bilhah, and with the sons of Zilpah, his father's wives; and Joseph brought evil report of them unto their father.
- ג וישראל, אהב את-יוסף מכל-בניו--כי-בן-זקנים הוא, לו; ועשה לו, כתנת פסים. 3 Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age; and he made him a coat of many colours.
- ד ויראו אחיו, כי-אתו אהב אביהם מכל-אחיו--וישנאו, אתו; ולא יכלו, דברו לשלם. 4 And when his brethren saw that their father loved him more than all his brethren, they hated him, and could not speak peaceably unto him.
- ה ויחלם יוסף חלום, ויגיד לאחיו; ויוספו עוד, שנאו אתו. 5 And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told it to his brethren; and they hated him yet the more.

Love as Loyalty

3. Mishlei - Proverbs 9

- ח אל-תוכח לץ, פן-ישנאך; הוכח לחכם, ויאהבה. 8 Reprove not a scorner, lest they hate you; reprove a wise person, and they will love you.
- ט תן לחכם, ויחכם-עוד; הודע לצדיק, ויוסף לקח. 9 Give to a wise person, and they will be yet wiser; teach a righteous person, and they will increase in learning.

4. Mishlei -Proverbs 3

- יא מוסר ה', בני אל-תמאס; ואל-תלקח, בתוכחתו. 11 My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD, neither spurn thou God's correction;
- יב כי את אשר יאהב ה' יוכיח; וכאב, את-בן רצאה. 12 For whom the LORD loves God corrects, even as a father the son in whom he delights.

5. Mishlei - Proverbs 10

18 One who conceals hatred has lying lips, and one who utters slander is a fool.
יח מכסה שנאה, שפתי-שקר; ומוצא דבֵה, הוא קסיל.

6. Manual of Discipline 1QS 9:15–21

15. He should carry out the judgment of each one in accordance with his spirit, and advance each one (לקרבו) according to the cleanness of a man's hands, and according to his insight

16. bring him close (להגישו) and thus (establish) his love along with his hatred (עם אהבתו וכן) (להוכיח לוא אשר) or argue with the Men of the Pit, (שגאתו)

17. but instead conceal the counsel of the Torah (התורה עצת את ולסתור) in the midst of the Men of Deceit. He must reprove (ולהוכיח) with true knowledge and righteous judgment (only) the chosen of

18. the Way, each according to his spirit and according to the norm of the time. He shall guide them with knowledge, and instruct them in the mysteries of wonder and truth in the midst of

19. the Men of the Community, so that they may walk perfectly each one with his fellow in everything which has been revealed to them.

7. Sifra Kedoshim 4 (Commentary to Lev. 19:17)

אמר ר' טרפון העבודה אם יש בדור הזה יכול להוכיח אמר רבי אלעזר בן עזריה העבודה אם יש בדור הזה יכול לקבל תוכחת אמר ר"ע העבודה אם יש בדור הזה יודע היאך מוכיחים אמר רבי יוחנן בן נורי מעידני עלי שמים וארץ שיותר מארבעה וחמשה פעמים לקה עקיבא על ידי לפני רבן גמליאל שהייתי קובל לו עליו וכל כך הייתי יודע שהיה מוסיף לי אהבה:

Said Rabbi Tarfon: By the Temple service! In this generation, there is no one who can administer *Tokheha!*

Said Rabbi Eleazar ben 'Azariah: By the Temple service! In this generation, there is not one who can accept *Tokheha!*

Said Rabbi Yohanan son of Nuri: I call heaven and earth as witness, that more than four or five times was Akiva punished by Rabbi Gamaliel due to me, because I complained about him, yet I knew that nevertheless he increased his love towards me.

8. Albert O. Hirschman, *Exit, Voice and Loyalty: Responses to Decline in Firms, Organizations, and States*

The performance of a firm or an organization is assumed to be subject to deterioration for unspecified, random causes which are neither so compelling nor so durable as to prevent a return to previous performance levels, provided managers direct their attention and energy to that task. The deterioration in performance is reflected most typically and generally, that is, for both firms and other organizations, in an absolute or comparative deterioration of the quality of the produce or service provided. Management then finds out about its failings via two alternative routes:

1. Some customers stop buying the firm's products or some members leave the organization: this is the exit option. As a result, revenues drop, membership declines, and management is impelled to search for ways and means to correct whatever faults have led to exit.
2. The firm's customers or the organization's members express their dissatisfaction directly to management or to some other authority to which management is subordinate or through general protest addressed to anyone who cares to listen: this is the voice option. As a result, management once again engages in a search for the causes and possible cures of customers' and members' dissatisfaction. (3)

...the presence of the exit option can sharply reduce the probability that the voice option will be taken up widely and effectively. Exit was shown to drive out voice...The importance of loyalty from our point of view is that it can neutralize within certain limits the tendency of the most quality-conscious customers or members to be the first to exit...As a result of loyalty, these potentially most influential customers and members will stay on longer than they would ordinarily, in the hope or, rather, reasoned expectation that improvement or reform can be

achieved "from within." Thus loyalty, far from being irrational, can serve the socially useful purpose of preventing deterioration from becoming cumulative, as it so often does when there is not barrier to exit. (76, 79)

9. Babylonian Talmud Ketubot 37b

אי מה להלן בקופיץ וממול עורף אף כאן בקופיץ וממול עורף אמר רב נחמן אמר רבה בר אבוא אמר קרא (ויקרא יט, יח) ואהבת לרעך כמוך ברור לו מיתה יפה

The Gemara asks: If so, just as there, in the case of the beheaded calf, it is beheaded with a cleaver [*kofitz*] and at the nape of the neck, here too the court executes murderers with a cleaver and at the nape of the neck. Rav Nahman said that Rabba bar Avuh said that the verse says: "And you shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18), from which it is derived: Choose for him an agreeable death. It is prohibited to abuse a guilty person while executing him, and chopping off his head with a cleaver is an unseemly death. The murderer is

beheaded from the neck, not with a cleaver, and not by the other methods employed in beheading the calf.

Part II – Love of God

10. Devarim - Deuteronomy 6

ד שְׁמַע, יִשְׂרָאֵל: ה' אֱלֹהֵינוּ, ה' אֶחָד. ה' וְאֵהָבָה, אֶת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ, בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ, וּבְכָל-מְאֹדְךָ. וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה, אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם--עַל-לִבְבְּךָ. ז' וְשִׁנְנָתָם לְבִנְיָךָ, וְדִבַּרְתָּ בָם, בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִקְחֶךָ בְּדֶרֶךְ, וּבְשֹׁכֶבְךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ. ח' וְקָשַׁרְתָּם לְאוֹת, עַל-יָדְךָ; וְהָיוּ לְטָטְפוֹת, בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ. ט' וְכָתַבְתָּם עַל-מַזְזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ, וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ. {ס}

4 Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. 6 And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be upon thy heart; 7 and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thy house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. 8 And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thy hand, and they shall be for frontlets between thine eyes. 9 And thou shalt write them upon the door-posts of thy house, and upon thy gates. {S}

11. Martha C. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (2001) 172-3

Emotions, I shall argue, involve judgments about important things, judgments in which, appraising an external object as salient for our own well-being, we acknowledge our own neediness and incompleteness before parts of the world that we do not fully control (19)...I shall argue that emotions always involve thought of an object combined with thought of the object's salience or importance; in that sense, they always involve appraisal or evaluation. I shall therefore refer to my view as a type of "cognitive-evaluative" view...But by "cognitive" I mean nothing more than "concerned with receiving and processing information." I do not mean to imply the presence of elaborate calculation, of computation, or even of reflexive self-awareness. (23)

The cognitive/evaluative view implies that emotional content is itself part of a creature's pursuit of flourishing. Given the fact that human beings deliberate ethically about how to live, it implies that emotions are part and parcel of ethical deliberation. If we see emotions as impulses, we will think that we can educate or change them only by suppression. Thus Kant thought that virtue must always be a matter of strength, as the will learns to keep a lid on inappropriate inclinations, rather like a good cook holding down the lid on a boiling pot. But in daily life, we more often endorse a different picture: we believe that emotions have an intentional content, and that people can do a good deal to shape the content of their own, and especially of their children's emerging emotions. Thus the recognition of "social construction" should lead to a recognition of space and freedom, rather than the reverse...

12. Devarim – Deuteronomy 10:12-11:1

- יב** ועתה, ישראל--מה ה' אלהיך, שאל מעמך: כי אם-ליראת את-ה' אלהיך ללכת בכל-דרכיו, ולאהבה אתו, ולעבד את-ה' אלהיך, בכל-לבבך ובכל-גפֿשך.
- יג** לשמר את-מצוות ה', ואת-חקותיו, אשר אנכי מצוה, היום--לטוב, לך.
- יד** הן לה' אלהיך, השמים ושמי השמים, הארץ, וכל-אשר-בה.
- טו** רק באבתיד חשק ה', לאהבה אותם; ויבחר בזרעם אחריהם, בכם מכל-העמים--כיום הזה.
- טז** ומלתם, את ערלת לבבכם; וערפכם--לא תקשו, עוד.
- יז** פי, ה' אלהיכם--הוא אלהי האלהים, ואדוני האדונים: האל הגדל הגבר, והנורא, אשר לא-ישא פנים, ולא יקח שחד.
- יח** עשה משפט יתום, ואלמנה; ואהב גר, לתת לו לחם ושמלה.
- יט** ואהבתם, את-הגר: כי-גרים הייתם, בארץ מצרים.
- כ** את-ה' אלהיך תירא, אתו תעבד; ובו תדבק, ובשמו תשבֿע.
- כא** הוא תהלתך, והוא אלהיך--אשר-עשה אתך, את-הגדלות ואת-הנוראות האלה, אשר ראו, עיניך.
- כב** בשבעים נפש, ירדו אבתיד מצרימה; ועתה, שמך ה' אלהיך, ככוכבי השמים, לרב.
- 12** And now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you, but to fear the LORD your God, to walk in all God's ways, and to love God, and to serve the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul;
- 13** to keep for your good the commandments of the LORD, and God's statutes, which I command your today?
- 14** Behold, unto the LORD your God belongs the heaven, and the heaven of heavens, the earth, with all that therein is.
- 15** Only the LORD had a delight in your ancestors to love them, and God chose their seed after them, even you, above all peoples, as it is this day.
- 16** Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiff-necked.
- 17** For the LORD your God, is God of gods, and Lord of lords, the great God, the mighty, and the awe-inspiring, who regards not persons, nor takes reward.
- 18** God does execute justice for the fatherless and widow, and loves the stranger, in giving them food and raiment.
- 19** Love you therefore the stranger; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.
- 20** You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve God; and to God shalt thou cleave, and by God's name shall you swear.
- 21** God is your glory, and God is your Lord Who has done for your these great and tremendous things, which your eyes have seen.
- 22** Your ancestors went down into Egypt with seventy people; and now the LORD your God has made you as the stars of heaven for multitude.

א וְאֶהְבֶּתָּ, אֵת ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ; וְשָׁמַרְתָּ
 מִשְׁמֵרֹתָיו, וְחֻקֵּיהֶם וּמִצְוֹתָיו--כָּל-
 הַיָּמִים. 1 Therefore you shall love the LORD your God, and
 keep God's charge, and God's statutes, and God's
 ordinances, and God's commandments, always.

13. Jacqueline E. Lapsley, "Feeling Our Way: Love for God in Deuteronomy," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* Volume 65, Issue 3 (2003)

My goal has been to suggest that the language of love in Deuteronomy funds an array of meanings diverse enough to warrant further inquiry. (363)

At first glance it appears that the Shema in Deut 6:5 supports the idea that the emotions play a significant role in the type of love that is commanded. Must not loving Yhwh "with all your heart (לבב) and all your soul (נפש) and all your might (מאד) necessarily involve the emotions? This idea, however, while not rejected outright, has garnered very little support. Because there are some ancient Near Eastern treaty parallels for this phrase, it is generally viewed as part of the borrowing and thus reflective of the necessary fealty of a vassal. The significant parallels in Hittite and Akkadian are not exact (none contains the threefold Deuteronomic combination) but involve a "fighting with the whole heart" for the suzerain and being faithful to him "with all your heart." This is widely interpreted as meaning that vassals must be loyal with "sincerity of heart and truthfulness of behaviour," that is, the obligation must "affect their whole being." As for the meaning of the phrase in Deut 6:5, Dean McBride has offered an interpretation that is widely endorsed: the three clauses do not offer totally separate meanings but collectively insist on the "absolute singularity of personal devotion to God" with one's "fullest capacity." Here, McBride sees an intense personal dimension to the love Israel should express for God, but still he reemphasizes that such a love "bears no trace of mystical self-denial or spiritual privatism." This reminder stems from a quite laudable concern to situate the expression of love for God within the community, in social relationships; but the emphasis on love as action in community appears to leave little remainder. Is love for God, as Deuteronomy envisions it, coterminous with adherence to the law? (364)

One reason that is urged for understanding Israel's love for God as obedience is that this love is a "love that can be commanded." This argument falls into the trap of driving a wedge—a typically modern wedge—between emotion and action. Indeed, some scholars have noted that the argument does not hold up under scrutiny. As Jeffrey Tigay observes, "The idea of commanding a feeling is not foreign to the Torah, which assumes that people can cultivate proper attitudes." The objection that feelings cannot be commanded relies on the modern notions not only that feelings exist within the private world of the individual, but also that they are uncontrollable. In order to talk about love in Deuteronomy, on the other hand, we must come up with a way to talk about emotion that does not perpetuate the modern propensity to privatize feelings and separate them from action. What is needed is an explanation not only of the content of love in Deuteronomy but of how the writers of Deuteronomy constructed their entire moral discourse out of their own social and cultural resources, not ours. If we can hear

the Deuteronomic view of love correctly, it will likely offer a trenchant critique of our modern construction of love, with its uncontrollable romantic feelings and actions. (365)

Yet if feelings without actions are ethically suspect, then the contrary is also true. Actions devoid of feelings of love, even those that fulfill the commandments, are morally suspect. The biblical clue for this appears in God's relationship with Israel. God's love for Israel is not expressed solely in action but in the divine emotional response to Israel. Somehow, God's love for Israel is born out of a feeling, and that feeling has moral weight and relates in a significant way to the actions God takes on Israel's behalf (Deut 7:8). Recent work in the area of virtue ethics and narrative ethics lends support to the significance of emotions in the moral life, as do arguments being made in the field of neurobiology. Arguments on this topic appear to be divided into two broad streams: one holding that emotions are of ethical value but are not an integral part of cognition per se (e.g., Michael Stocker), the other that emotions are crucial for ethics because they are an integral part of cognition (e.g., Martha Nussbaum from a philosophical perspective, or Antonio Damasio from a neurobiological perspective). According to this second line of thinking, "appropriate"—that is, "right"—emotional responses are, in fact, necessary for right moral thinking. It is the implications of this second line of thinking for understanding love in Deuteronomy that I want to mention briefly here. From their respective disciplines, Nussbaum and Damasio argue that emotions provide human beings "with a sense of how the world relates to [their] own set[s] of goals and projects. Without that sense, decision making and action are derailed." Damasio demonstrates that persons who lack emotions as a result of damage to the area of the brain where emotions are thought to "reside" are perfectly capable of intelligent, "rational" thought, but are utterly incapable of making any kind of moral decision or evaluation—they lack any sense of engagement between themselves and the world. Nussbaum calls the engagement of one's own vital projects with the world—missing in Damasio's brain-damaged patients—the "eudaimonistic element."

Emotions are necessary in the moral life, according to Nussbaum, because they constitute judgments of value; they are "value-laden ways of understanding the world." This appraisal of the role of emotions is significant for how love is understood in Deuteronomy. If it can be shown that love for God in Deuteronomy is not limited to obedience or to an emotionless version of loyalty but, in fact, has emotion as a constitutive element, then it follows from the research of Damasio and Nussbaum that the emotionally loving response to the deity is not an irrelevant footnote to obedience to the law, but is fundamental to a proper relationship with God. (368-9)

14. Tehillim - Psalms 139

כֹּא הֲלוֹא-מִשְׁנֵאִידָהּ אֲשַׁנָּא; וּבִתְקוּמָאִידָהּ, אֲתִקּוּטֵט. כֹּב תִּכְלִית שְׁנֵאָה שְׁנֵאֲתִים; לְאוֹיְבִים, הִיוּ לִי.
21 Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate Thee? And do not I strive with those that rise up against Thee? 22 I hate them with utmost hatred; I count them mine enemies.