

LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT: BIRKAT AHAVA

I BIBLICAL INSPIRATIONS

1. DEUTERONOMY 4:35-37

Unto thee it was shewed, that thou mightest know that the LORD he is God; there is none else beside him. (36) Out of heaven he made thee to hear his voice, that he might instruct thee: and upon earth he shewed thee his great fire; and thou heardest his words out of the midst of the fire. (37) And because he loved thy fathers, therefore he chose their seed after them, and brought thee out in his sight with his mighty power out of Egypt;

אתה הראת לדעת, כי יהוה הוא האלהים: אין עוד, מלבדו. לו מן-השמים השמיעך את-קלו, ליסרך; ועל-הארץ, הראך את-אשו הגדולה, ודבריו שמעת, מתוך האש. לו ותחת, כי אהב את-אבותיך, ויבחר בנרעו, אחריו; ויוצאך בפניו בכחו הגדל, ממצרים.

2. DEUTERONOMY 7:6-8

For thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God: the LORD thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. (7) The LORD did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: (8) But because the LORD loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the LORD brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

ו כי עם קדוש אתה, ליהוה אלהיך: בך בחר יהוה אלהיך, להיות לו לעם סגולה, מכל העמים, אשר על-פני האדמה. ז לא מרבכם מכל-העמים, חשק יהוה בכם--ויבחר בכם: כי-אתם המעט, מכל-העמים. ח כי מאהבת יהוה אתכם, ומשמרו את-השבעה אשר נשבע לאבותיכם, הוציא יהוה אתכם, ביד חזקה; ויפדך מבית עבדים, מיד פרעה מלך-מצרים.

3. 1 KGS 10:1-9

And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the LORD, she came to prove him with hard questions. (2) And she came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart. (3) And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not any thing hid from the king, which he told her not. (4) And when

א ומלכת-שבא, שמעת את-שמע שלמה--לשם יהוה; ותבא לנסתו, בחידות. ב ותבא ירושלמה, בחיל כבד מאד, גמלים נשאים בשמים וזהב רב-מאד, ואבן יקרה; ותבא, אל-שלמה, ותדבר אליו, את כל-אשר היתה עם-לבבה. ג ויגד לה שלמה, את-כל-דבריה: לא-היתה דבר נעלם מן-המלך, אשר לא הגיד לה. ד ותרא, מלכת-

<p>the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, (5) And the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the LORD; there was no more spirit in her. (6) And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. (7) Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard. (8) Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. (9) Blessed be the LORD thy God, which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the LORD loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice.</p>	<p>שָׁבָא, אֶתְּ, כָּל-חֵכְמַת שְׁלֹמֹה; וְהַבַּיִת, אֲשֶׁר בָּנָה. הַ וּמֵאֲכָל שֻׁלְחָנוֹ וּמוֹשֵׁב עַבְדָּיו וּמַעֲמַד מִשְׁרָתוֹ וּמִלְבָּשֵׁיהֶם, וּמִשְׁקִיו, וְעַלְתּוֹ, אֲשֶׁר יַעֲלֶה בַּיִת יְהוָה; וְלֹא-הָיָה בָּהּ עוֹד, רוּחַ. וַיִּתְאַמֵּר, אֶל-הַמֶּלֶךְ, אָמֵת הִנֵּה הַדְּבָר, אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתִּי בְּאַרְצִי--עַל-דְּבָרֶיךָ, וְעַל-חֵכְמֹתֶיךָ. ז וְלֹא-הֵאֱמַנְתִּי לְדְבָרִים, עַד אֲשֶׁר-בָּאתִי וַתְּרַאֲנֵה עֵינַי, וְהִנֵּה לֹא-הִגַּדְתָּ לִּי, הַחֲצִי: הוֹסַפְתָּ חֵכְמָה וְטוֹב, אֶל-הַשְּׂמוּעָה אֲשֶׁר שָׁמַעְתִּי. ח אֲשֶׁרִי אֲנִישִׁיךָ, אֲשֶׁרִי עַבְדֶּיךָ אֱלֹהִים, הַעֲמִידִים לְפָנֶיךָ תָּמִיד, הַשְּׂמַעִים אֶת-חֵכְמֹתֶיךָ. ט יְהִי יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, בְּרוּךְ, אֲשֶׁר חִפֵּץ בְּךָ, לְתַתֶּךָ עַל-כִּסֵּא יִשְׂרָאֵל--בְּאַהֲבַת יְהוָה אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל, לְעַלְמֵם, וַיִּשְׁמֶךְ לְמֶלֶךְ, לַעֲשׂוֹת מִשְׁפָּט וּצְדָקָה.</p>
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4. DEUTERONOMY 10:12-16

<p>Deu 10:12-16 And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, (13) To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good? (14) Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens is the LORD'S thy God, the earth also, with all that therein is. (15) Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them, and he chose their seed after them, even you above all people, as it is this day. (16) Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked.</p>	<p>יב וְעַתָּה, יִשְׂרָאֵל--מָה יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, שָׂאֵל מֵעַמְּךָ: כִּי אִם-לִירְאֵה אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ לְלַכֵּת בְּכָל-דְּרָכָיו, וּלְאַהֲבָה אֹתוֹ, וּלְעַבֵּד אֶת-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, בְּכָל-לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל-נַפְשְׁךָ. יג לְשֹׁמֵר אֶת-מִצְוֹת יְהוָה, וְאֶת-חֻקֹּתָיו, אֲשֶׁר אֲנֹכִי מְצַוֶּה, הַיּוֹם--לְטוֹב, לָךְ. יד הֲוֵן לְיְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ, הַשָּׁמַיִם וּשְׁמַיִם הַשָּׁמַיִם, הָאָרֶץ, וְכָל-אֲשֶׁר-בָּהּ. טו רַק בְּאַבְתְּיָךְ חִשַּׁק יְהוָה, לְאַהֲבָה אוֹתָם; וַיִּבְחַר בְּיִרְעֵם אַחֲרֵיהֶם, בְּכֶם מִכָּל-הָעַמִּים--כִּיּוֹם הַזֶּה. טז וּמִלְתָּם, אֶת עֲרַלְת לְבַבְכֶם; וְעַרְפְּכֶם--לֹא תִקְשׁוּ, עוֹד.</p>
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5. ISAIAH 63:7-17

<p>I will mention the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, and the praises of the LORD, according to all that the LORD hath bestowed on us, and the great goodness toward the house of Israel, which he hath bestowed on them according to his mercies, and according to the multitude of his lovingkindnesses. (8) For he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: so he was their Saviour.</p>	<p>ז חֲסִדֵי יְהוָה אֲזַכִּיר, תְּהִלַּת יְהוָה, כְּעֵל, כָּל אֲשֶׁר-גָּמְלָנוּ יְהוָה; וְרַב-טוֹב לְבַיִת יִשְׂרָאֵל, אֲשֶׁר-גָּמְלָם בְּרַחֲמָיו וּבְרַב חֲסָדָיו. ח וַיִּאֲמַר אֶךְ-עַמִּי הִמָּה, בְּנִים לֹא יִשְׁקְרוּ; וַיְהִי לָהֶם, לְמוֹשִׁיעַ. ט בְּכָל-צָרְתָם לֹא (לו) צָר, וּמִלֶּאךָ פָּנָיו הוֹשִׁיעֵם--בְּאַהֲבָתוֹ</p>
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<p>(9) In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old. (10) But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them. (11) Then he remembered the days of old, Moses, and his people, saying, Where is he that brought them up out of the sea with the shepherd of his flock? where is he that put his holy Spirit within him? (12) That led them by the right hand of Moses with his glorious arm, dividing the water before them, to make himself an everlasting name? (13) That led them through the deep, as an horse in the wilderness, that they should not stumble? (14) As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the LORD caused him to rest: so didst thou lead thy people, to make thyself a glorious name. (15) Look down from heaven, and behold from the habitation of thy holiness and of thy glory: where is thy zeal and thy strength, the sounding of thy bowels and of thy mercies toward me? are they restrained? (16) Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not: thou, O LORD, art our father, our redeemer; thy name is from everlasting. (17) O LORD, why hast thou made us to err from thy ways, and hardened our heart from thy fear? Return for thy servants' sake, the tribes of thine inheritance.</p>	<p>וּבְחַמְלָתוֹ, הוּא גָאֵלָם; וַיִּנְטֵלֵם וַיִּנְשָׂאֵם, כָּל-יְמֵי עוֹלָם. י וַיְהִי מְרוֹ וַיַּעֲזֹבוּ, אֶת-רוּחַ קְדָשׁוֹ; וַיִּהְפֹּךְ לָהֶם לְאוֹיֵב, הוּא נִלְחָם-בָּם. יא וַיִּזְכֹּר יְמֵי-עוֹלָם, מִשָּׁה עִמּוֹ; אֵיזָה הַמַּעֲלָם מֵיָם, אֵת רַעִי צֶאֱנוּ--אֵיזָה הַשָּׁם בְּקִרְבוֹ, אֶת-רוּחַ קְדָשׁוֹ. יב מוֹלִיךְ לַיָּמִין מִשָּׁה, זְרוּעַ תְּפָאֲרָתוֹ; בּוֹקֵעַ מַיִם מִפְּנֵיהֶם, לַעֲשׂוֹת לוֹ שֵׁם עוֹלָם. יג מוֹלִיכֵם, בְּתַהוֹמוֹת; כְּסוּס בַּמִּדְבָּר, לֹא יִכְשָׁלוּ. יד כְּבָהֱמָה בְּבִקְעָה תִרְדּוּ, רוּחַ יְהוָה תְּנִיחֶנּוּ--כֵּן נִהְגֵת עִמָּךְ, לַעֲשׂוֹת לָךְ שֵׁם תְּפָאֲרָת. טו הֲבִט מִשָּׁמַיִם וּרְאֵה, מִזְבֵּל קְדָשְׁךָ וְתִפְאֲרָתְךָ: אֵיזָה קִנְאֲתְךָ וּגְבוּרָתְךָ, הַמּוֹן מֵעֵיף וְרַחֲמֶיךָ אֵלַי הַתְּאֻפְקוּ. טז כִּי-אֲתָה אֲבִינּוּ--כִּי אֲבָרְהָם לֹא יִדְעֵנוּ, וַיִּשְׂרָאֵל לֹא יִכִּירֵנוּ: אֲתָה יְהוָה אֲבִינּוּ, גָאֵלְנוּ מֵעוֹלָם שְׁמָךְ. יז לָמָּה תִתְעַנּוּ יְהוָה מִדְרָכֶיךָ, תִּקְשִׁיחַ לְבָנוּ מִיִּרְאָתְךָ; שׁוּב לְמַעַן עֲבָדֶיךָ, שְׁבִטִי נִחַלְתָּךְ.</p>
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6. JEREMIAH 31:1-5

<p>(1) Thus saith the LORD, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest. (2) The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee. (3) Again I will build thee, and thou shalt be built, O virgin of Israel: thou shalt again be adorned with thy tabrets, and shalt go forth in the dances of them that make merry. (4) Thou shalt yet plant vines upon the mountains of Samaria: the planters shall plant, and shall eat them as common things. (5) For there shall be a day, that the watchmen upon the mount Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go up to Zion unto the LORD our God.</p>	<p>א כֹּה, אָמַר יְהוָה, מִצָּא תָן בַּמִּדְבָּר, עִם שְׂרִידֵי חֶרֶב; הַלּוֹךְ לְהִרְגִיעוֹ, יִשְׂרָאֵל. ב מִרְחוֹק, יְהוָה נִרְאָה לִי; וְאֶהְבֵת עוֹלָם אֶהְבֵתֶיךָ, עַל-כֵּן מִשְׁכַּתֶּיךָ חֹסֵד. ג עוֹד אֲבַנֶךָ וְנִבְנִית, בְּתוֹלַת יִשְׂרָאֵל: עוֹד תַּעֲדִי תַפִּיךָ, וַיִּצָּאֲת בְּמַחֲוֹל מִשְׁחָקִים. ד עוֹד תִּטְעִי כְרָמִים, בְּהָרֵי שְׁמְרוֹן; נִטְעוּ נִטְעִים, וְחִלְלוּ. ה כִּי יֵשׁ-יוֹם, קָרְאוּ נְצִירִים בְּהַר אֶפְרַיִם; קוֹמוּ וְנַעֲלֵה צִיּוֹן, אֶל-יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ.</p>
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7. JEREMIAH 15:1-6

<p>Then said the LORD unto me, Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be toward this people: cast them out of my sight, and let them go forth. (2) And it shall come to pass, if they say unto thee, Whither shall we go forth? then thou shalt tell them, Thus saith the LORD; Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity. (3) And I will appoint over them four kinds, saith the LORD: the sword to slay, and the dogs to tear, and the fowls of the heaven, and the beasts of the earth, to devour and destroy. (4) And I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth, because of Manasseh the son of Hezekiah king of Judah, for that which he did in Jerusalem. (5) For who shall have pity upon thee, O Jerusalem? or who shall bemoan thee? or who shall go aside to ask how thou doest?</p>	<p>א ויאמר יהוה, אם-יעמוד משה ושמואל לפני, אין נפשי אל-העם הזה; שלח מעל-פני, ויצאו. ב והיה בי-יאמרו אליך, אנה נצא; ואמרת אליהם כה-אמר יהוה, אשר למות למות ואשר לחרב לחרב, ואשר לרעב לרעב, ואשר לשבי לשבי. ג ופקדתי עליהם ארבע משפחות, נאם-יהוה, את-החרב להרג, ואת-הכלבים לסחב; ואת-עוף השמים ואת-בהמת הארץ, לאכל ולהשחית. ד ונתתים לזועה (לזעוה), לכל ממלכות הארץ--בגלל מנשה בן-חזקיהו, מלך יהודה, על אשר-עשה, בירושלם. ה כי מי-יחמל עליך, ירושלם, ומי, ינווד לך; ומי יסור, לשאל לשלם לך. ו את נטשת אתי נאם-יהוה, אחור תלכי; ואט את-ידי עליך ואשחיתך, נלאיתי הנחם. ז ואזרם במזרה, בשערי הארץ; שפלתי אבדתי את-עמי, מדרךיהם לוא-שבו.</p>
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8. MALACHI 1:2; 3:13-18

<p>The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi. (2) I have loved you, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the LORD: yet I loved Jacob,</p> <p>*</p> <p>Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? (14) Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts? (15) And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered. (16) Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name. (17) And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him. (18) Then shall ye return, and</p>	<p>ב אהבתי אתכם אמר יהוה, ואמרתם במה אהבננו; הלא-אח עשו לי-עקב נאם-יהוה, ואהב את-יעקב.</p> <p>*</p> <p>יג חזקו עלי דבריכם, אמר יהוה; ואמרתם, מה-נדברנו עליך. יד אמרתם, שוא עבד אלהים; ומה-בצע, כי שמרנו משמרתו, וכי הלכנו קדונית, מפני יהוה צבאות. טו ועתה, אנחנו מאשרים זדים; גם-נבנו עשי רשעה, גם בתנו אלהים וימלטו. טז אז נדברו יראי יהוה, איש אל-רעהו; ויקשב יהוה, וישמע, ויכתב ספר זכרון לפניו ליראי יהוה, ולחשבי שמו. יז והיו לי, אמר יהוה צבאות, ליום, אשר אני עשה סגלה; וחמלתי עליהם--כאשר יחמל איש, על-בנו העבד אתו. יח ושבתם, וראיתם, בין צדיק, לרשע--בין עבד אלהים, לאשר לא עבדו.</p>
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discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth him not.	
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II. GOD LOVES OTHER GROUPS, TOO

QUMRAN

1. DAMASCUS DOCUMENT (CD 8:14-18)

And as Moses says: *not due to your righteousness and the rectitude of your heart do you come to supplant these gentiles, for due to the love He had for your fathers, and due to His keeping his oath* (Deut 9:5), and so it is for the returnees of Israel who left the ways of the people. As God loved the first ones who went after him, he loved those who came after them, for theirs is the covenant of the fathers. And as he hated the builders of the wall, he became angry (with them).

ואשר אמר משה "לא בצדקתך ובישר לבבך אתה בא לרשת את הגוים האלה כי מאהבתו את אבותך ומשמרו את השבועה". וכן המשפט לשבי ישראל סרו מדרך העם. באהבת אל את הראשנים אשר היעירו אחריו אהב את הבאים אחריהם כי להם ברית האבות. ובשונאו את בוני החיץ חרה אפו.

2. RULE OF THE COMMUNITY (1QS 3:25-4:1)

And he created the spirits of light and darkness
And on them set every work,
And on their paths every labor.
God loved one for all eternity, and will desire forever in all of its deeds.
And the other, he hated its community and hated all of its ways forever.

והוא ברא רוחות אור ורושכ ועליהון יסד כול מעשה.,
<וע> ל <דרכי> הן כול עבודה.
אחת אהב אל לכול <מו> עדי עולמים ובכול עלילותיה ירצה לעד.
אחת תעב סודה וכול דרכיה שנא לנצח.

NEW TESTAMENT

3. JOHN 3:16-21

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (17) For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. (18) He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. (19) And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. (20) For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. (21) But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

4. ROMANS 9:1-16

I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, (2) That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. (3) For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: (4) Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; (5) Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. (6) Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: (7) Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. (8) That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. (9) For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sara shall have a son. (10) And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; (11) (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) (12) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. (13) As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. (14) What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. (15) For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. (16) So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.

5. EPHESIANS 2:1-9

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; (2) Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: (3) Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (4) But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, (5) Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) (6) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: (7) That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. (8) For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: (9) Not of works, lest any man should boast.