

THE ANCIENT NEAR EASTERN BACKGROUND OF THE LOVE OF GOD IN DEUTERONOMY

Probably no subject in the book of Deuteronomy, "le document biblique par excellence de l'*agapân*,"¹ has been so thoroughly studied as its teaching on love: Yahweh's love for Israel, and the imperative necessity of Israel's love for Yahweh in return.² Study of the theme has resulted in a certain consensus of opinion. It is generally agreed that the deuteronomic teaching has distinctive features, that it is not lacking in originality; it is also, though less commonly, agreed that for the conception of God and people bound by a mutual love, Deuteronomy is indebted to the prophet Osee.³ We propose here to broaden the basis for the discussion both of deuteronomic originality and dependence.

The point of departure for our inquiry is suggested by certain fundamental differences between Osee's preaching on love and the doctrine of Deuteronomy. Osee speaks of Yahweh's love ('*āhēb*, '*ah^abā*) for Israel, but never of Israel's "love" for Yahweh—neither as a fact (Israel's love is invariably presented as the love of other gods), nor as a present duty, nor as an ideal to be realized in the future restoration. This can hardly be explained except as a conscious, intentional avoidance of the term. In Deuteronomy, on the other hand, '*āhēb* is commonly predicated of Israel in relation to Yahweh; indeed, it epitomizes the book's central preoccupation, namely, observance of the Law. Secondly, in Osee God's love for Israel is either that of a husband for his wife (3,1) or of a father for his son (11,1). In Deuteronomy we find the father-son relationship (8,5; 14,1, etc.), but never in connection with love,⁴ and of the marriage-

¹ C. Spicq, O.P., *Agapè, Prolégomènes à une étude de théologie néo-testamentaire* (Studia Hellenistica 10; Louvain: E. Nauwelaerts—Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1955) 89.

² More recent studies: Spicq, *op. cit.*, 71-119; V. Warnach, *Agape, Die Liebe als Grundmotiv der neutestamentlichen Theologie* (Düsseldorf: Patmos-Verlag, 1951) 54-88; C. Wiéner, *Recherches sur l'amour pour Dieu dans l'Ancien Testament* (Paris: Letouzey et Ané, 1957) especially 38-46. See also W. Eichrodt, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (4th ed.; Stuttgart: E. Klotz—Göttingen: Vandenhoeck u. Ruprecht, 1961) 200-207; G. von Rad, *Theologie des Alten Testaments* (München: Chr. Kaiser, 1958) 222-223.

³ Cf. A. Alt, *Kleine Schriften zur Geschichte des Volkes Israel* (München: C. H. Beck, 1953) II, 272; H. Breit, *Die Predigt des Deuteronomium* (München: Chr. Kaiser, 1933) 158; Eichrodt, *op. cit.*, 203; G. von Rad, *Das Gottesvolk im Deuteronomium* (BWANT 47; Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer, 1929) 81; A. C. Welch, *ExpT* 41 (1929-30) 550; cf. also H. W. Wolff, *Dodekapropheton* (BK 14; Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1957) 76.

⁴ Against von Rad, *Theologie des A.T.*, I, 223.

analogy there is not a trace. This absence of all allusion to marriage is the more striking in that *'āhēb* is the verb most apt to express conjugal love.⁵

It is evident that, if Deuteronomy does depend on Osee, it has transformed the prophet's teaching into a notably different view of love. Can this be accounted for simply by appeal to Deuteronomy's "originality?"⁶ It is doubtless better accounted for if no radical transformation need be supposed—that is, if the distinctive deuteronomic view, which nowhere draws on the image of parental or conjugal love, was guided by the analogy of another and different love-relationship.

The nature of this relationship we may hypothetically reconstruct, *mutatis mutandis*, from the distinctive features of the love Deuteronomy proposes. Love in Deuteronomy is a love that can be commanded.⁷ It is also a love intimately related to fear and reverence.⁸ Above all, it is a love which must be expressed in loyalty, in service, and in unqualified obedience to the demands of the Law.⁹ For to love God is, in answer to a unique claim (6,4), to be loyal to him (11,1.22; 30,20),¹⁰ to walk in his ways (10,12; 11,22; 19,9; 30,16), to keep his commandments (10,12; 11,1.22; 19,9), to do them (11,22; 19,9), to heed them or his voice (11,13; 30,16), to serve him (10,12; 11,1.13). It is, in brief, a love defined by and pledged in the covenant—a covenantal love.

The problem, therefore, is: (1) is there evidence elsewhere in our sources for the existence of a comparable covenantal love; (2) if there is, is there also evidence which suggests that Deuteronomy knew of such a love and therefore may have been influenced by this knowledge?

Beginning outside the Old Testament, we may point to texts from the eighteenth to the seventh centuries B.C., in which we find the term love used to describe the loyalty and friendship joining independent kings, sovereign and vassal, king and subject.¹¹ In a letter to Yasma'-Addu, the king of Mari, one writer declares himself the king's servant and "friend" (*rā'imka*, literally, "the one who loves you").¹² Here, however,

⁵ On the meaning of *'āhēb*, see most recently Wolff, *op. cit.*, 42.

⁶ Alt, *op. cit.*, 272-273, sees the necessity of allowing for others besides the prophet who prepared the ground for the deuteronomic call to the love of God. Cf. also von Rad, *Theologie des A.T.*, I, 223.

⁷ Wiéner, *op. cit.*, 43.

⁸ Eichrodt, *op. cit.*, 206; Spicq, *op. cit.*, 92, n.2.

⁹ Eichrodt, *op. cit.*, 205; Wiéner, *op. cit.*, 41. The Deuteronomist substitutes *'abādīm* for *'āhēbīm* in 3 Kgs 8,23; cf. Dt 7,9.

¹⁰ We so translate *dābēq* in view of 2 Sm 20,2.

¹¹ For a similar semantic development cf. *amicitia* (*amo*) and *philia* (*phileō*) for the friendship between nations established by treaty.

¹² Georges Dossin, *Correspondence de Iasmah-Addu* (Archives royales de Mari V; Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1952) 76:4.

we must be cautious. This is an isolated example in this period, while the contents of the letter and the otherwise unknown identity of the writer do not allow us to determine the implications of this friendship. But the sequence of servant and friend, especially in the light of later texts, is noteworthy.

When we come to the Amarna period we no longer need hesitate, for then, as Korošec has briefly remarked, "love" unquestionably belongs to the terminology of international relations.¹³ In the correspondence between Tušratta of Mitanni and the Egyptian court it is the principal topic, and denotes the friendship between the rulers, who are independent and equals ("brothers").¹⁴ Like *ṭābātu*,¹⁵ with which it is virtually synonymous, this friendship is the object of agreement and established by treaty.¹⁶

However, a similar love also binds sovereign and vassal. The Pharaoh is expected to love his vassal.¹⁷ The nature of the latter's obligations is seen in the following text: "My lord, just as I love the king my lord, so (do) the king of Nuḥašše, the king of Ni'i . . . — all these kings are servants of my lord."¹⁸ The vassal must love the Pharaoh; this is only another way of stating his basic relationship to the latter, that of servant. Rib-Adda implies the same thing when in noting the defection of still another governor (vassal), he asks: "Who will love, should I die?"¹⁹ To love the Pharaoh is to serve him and to remain faithful to the status of vassal. And again, in describing the rebellion which closed to him the gates of his own city Byblos, the same king defines loyalty to the Pharaoh, which he assumes to be the same as loyalty to himself, in terms of "love":

¹³ V. Korošec, *Mednarodni odnošaji po klinopisnih poročilih iz el-amarnskega in hetitskega državnega arhiva* [International Relations according to Cuneiform Reports from the Tall al-Amarna and Hittite State Archives] (Ljubljana: Državna založba Slovenije, 1950) 340 (English summary, 393). Elsewhere in the legal language of the Akkadian sources *rāmu* denotes the free choice of a person; P. Koschaker, *JCS* 5 (1951) 108, n.14.

¹⁴ For references see the Glossary in J. A. Knudtzon, *Die El-Amarna-Tafeln* (= EA, Leipzig: J. C. Hinrich, 1915) II, 1493-1494, under *ra'āmu* and *ra'amātu*. Note especially "friendship and brotherhood," *ibid.*, I, 29:166.

¹⁵ Cf. EA 8:8-12. In a forthcoming issue of *JNES* the writer attempts to show that *ṭābātu* and related forms occur in Assyrian texts and in the Sefire inscriptions (*ṭb'*) with reference to the friendship established by treaties.

¹⁶ EA 27:72-73.

¹⁷ EA 121:61; 123:23; 158:6. Also E. F. Weidner, *Politische Dokumente aus Kleinasien* (Boghazköi-Studien 8; Leipzig: J. C. Hinrich, 1923) 56:59-62.

¹⁸ EA 53:40-44.

¹⁹ EA 114:68. For the reading and syntax of the line see the writer's remarks in *Orientalia* 29 (1960) 14.

"Behold the city! Half of it loves the sons of 'Abd-Ašir-ta [who fostered the rebellion], half of it (loves) my lord."²⁰

Finally, subjects must love their king. Rib-Adda's loyal subjects are "those who love me," and they are opposed to the treacherous and rebellious.²¹ Analogously, the Amorites "do not love 'Abd-aširta," for in general they serve the strong, and at the moment 'Abd-aširta is weak.²²

Coming down to the first millennium, we find this terminology still in use. A vassal must still love his sovereign. The vassals convoked by Esarhaddon to insure loyalty to his successor Assurbanipal are told: "You will love as yourselves Assurbanipal."²³ In another text we find a similar declaration under oath: ". . . the king of Assyria, our lord, we will love."²⁴

In the Old Testament one passage at least clearly belongs to the same juridical vocabulary. It is 3 Kgs 5,15, where Hiram of Tyre is called David's "friend" (*'ōhēb*). The entire section, vv. 15-26, "presents an early picture of correct historical similitude, reporting diplomatic and commercial relations between two states of Syro-Palestine—actually in its extent a fairly unique report."²⁵ It begins by telling of Hiram's embassy to Solomon when he heard of the latter's being anointed king, "for Hiram had always been a friend to David." It ends by informing us that Hiram and Solomon concluded a treaty. The interpretation of the designation "friend" must be guided not only by the result of the embassy, namely, a treaty, but by two other facts: 1. as follows from 2 Sm 5,11, Hiram and David were united by treaty;²⁶ 2. on the death of the treaty partner and the enthronement of his successor, the other party was expected to send an embassy. Thus David sends one to Hanun of Ammon,²⁷ and the king of Cyprus is represented in Egypt when a new Pharaoh takes the throne.²⁸ The importance attached to such embassies is clear from Hattusili III's letter to Rameses II, in which with some bitterness he complains that this

²⁰ EA 138:71-73.

²¹ EA 83:51; 137:47.

²² EA 73:15-19.

²³ D. J. Wiseman, *Iraq* 20 (1958) 49 col. iv 266-268; cf. also 43 col. iii 207. For variant readings, see R. Borger, *ZA* 54 (1961) 181-182.

²⁴ L. Waterman, *Royal Correspondence of the Assyrian Empire* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1930) 266, 1105:32. This document contains the oath imposed by Assurbanipal on his vassals and high officials to insure loyalty to himself in the imminent war with Šamaš-šum-ukin, his brother, in Babylon.

²⁵ Montgomery-Gehman, *The Books of Kings* (ICC; Edinburgh: Clark, 1951) 132.

²⁶ John Bright, *A History of Israel* (London: SCM Press, 1960) 183.

²⁷ 2 Sm 10.

²⁸ EA 33-34.

practice had not been observed on the occasion of his own enthronement.²⁹ In brief, "friend" in 3 Kgs 5,15 must be understood as a reference to the treaty relationship which existed between Hiram and David, and is now renewed with David's successor.

This is the only instance in which *'āhēb* refers to international relations.³⁰ But at least two other passages are strongly reminiscent of some Amarna texts. In 2 Sm 19,6-7 Joab protests bitterly to David for grieving at the death of a rebellious son while showing no concern for those who had remained loyal. He charges David with "loving those who hate you and hating those who love you (*'ōh^abēkā*)." ³¹ "Those who love you" have already been identified as "your servants" (v. 6). This recalls of course Rib-Adda's way of designating those loyal to him, as well as EA 53:40-44, where loving and being a servant were equated.

In view too of what we have seen one may perhaps appreciate more fully the significance of the statement in 1 Sm 18,16: "But all Israel and Judah loved (*'ōhēb*) David, for he went out and came in before them." It is clear that the writer sees this as another important step in David's way to the throne; the north as well as the south is attached to him.³² However, if we see in this attachment, as the Amarna and the Assyrian evidence encourages us to do, an essential requirement of the king-subject relationship, then the writer implies that the people at the point were already giving David a *de facto* recognition and allegiance, which his actual leadership and success in a sense justified.

In answer therefore to the first part of our problem, we may affirm, on the basis of biblical and extra-biblical evidence, the existence of a conception of a profane love analogous to the love of God in Deuteronomy. This profane love is also one that can be commanded, and it is a love too that

²⁹ Cf. V. Korošec, *Hethitische Staatsverträge* (Leipziger rechtswissenschaftliche Studien 60; Leipzig: Theodor Weicher, 1931) 47,48. For reasons, however, to doubt that this practice fell under *paṣṣu ša šarrāni*, "(divine) regulation for kings," as Korošec asserts, see A. Goetze, *Kleinasion* (2d ed., Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, III.1.3.3.1; München: C. H. Beck, 1957) 98, n.5.

³⁰ It should be remarked that "friendship" was never a narrowly defined term, applicable only to one type of relationship, e.g., among equals. Cf. again *amicitia* and the observations of D. Timpe, *Hermes* 90 (1962) 336ff., especially 338 on the wide variety of power relations covered by metaphorical terms like *amicitia* and *patrocinium*.

³¹ Cf. EA 286:18-20: "Why do you love the 'Apiru and hate the (loyal) governors?"

³² H. W. Hertzberg, *Die Samuelbücher* (ATD 10; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck u. Ruprecht, 1960) 126.

may be defined in terms of loyalty, service and obedience. It is, like the love of God in Deuteronomy, a covenantal love.³³

In a sense we have also answered the second half of our problem, namely, whether Deuteronomy knew of such a love and therefore may have been influenced by this knowledge. The biblical passages alone which we have adduced show that we may assume it did know of this profane covenantal love, and the fact that the love required of Israel is, *mutatis mutandis* (of course!), so similar, argues strongly in favor of assuming the influence of analogy.

Other considerations support this conclusion. It should be remarked first of all that, if Deuteronomy is the biblical document *par excellence* of love, it is also the biblical document *par excellence* of the covenant. No book of the Old Testament is so penetrated in every stage of its formation by the literary form which we now know goes back as far as the vassal treaties of the second millennium.³⁴ If therefore there is any book of the Old Testament in which a love analogous to that required of a vassal is likely to be found, it is in the book of Deuteronomy.

We must also take into account the juridical vocabulary in which the commandment of love is embedded. The dominance of legal language in Deuteronomy is evident and needs no proof. Moreover, many of the expressions have close parallels in the treaties of the first and second millennium.³⁵ Once therefore we realize that love has its place in this

³³ Cf. the covenant between David and Jonathan, which seals their love for each other (1 Sm 18,1,3; 20,17; cf. Spicq, *op. cit.*, 76); Jonathan loves David as himself, *kēnapšô*, which recalls the oath of the Assyrian vassals to love Assurbanipal as themselves, *kī napšātkumu*.

³⁴ This is already clear from K. Baltzer, *Das Bundesformular* (WMzANT 4; Neukirchen: Neukirchener Verlag, 1960) 40ff. The forthcoming study of N. Lohfink, *Das Hauptgebot, Eine Untersuchung literarischer Einleitungsfragen zu Dtn 5-11*, will offer additional arguments; see already his study on the *Redaktionsgeschichte* of Dt 29-32 in *BZ NF* 6 (1962) 32-56. A. Jepsen, *Verbannung und Heimkehr* (Festschrift Rudolph; Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr, 1961) 175, rejects any connection with the Hittite vassal treaties, since the Old Testament always speaks of God's covenant (Gottes *berith*) and never of Israel's covenant, and therefore God binds himself, not Israel. The strength of this argument may be judged from passages like "Keep Hatti's treaty of peace" (*riksa u šalama ša Hatti ušur*, J. Nougayrol, *Le palais royal d'Ugarit* [Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1956] IV, 36:19-21) and the many passages in Assyrian literature like "he sinned against my oaths (treaty)" (*ina adēya ihīma*), M. Streck, *Assurbanipal und die letzten assyrischen Könige* (Vorderasiatische Bibliothek VII, Leipzig: J. C. Hinrich, 1916) II, 132:93; cf. *ibid.*, 64:85, 342, Rm II, Nr. 99:87; Waterman, *op. cit.*, 1380: 5-12.

³⁵ Many of these have been pointed out in recent literature and need not be noted here. We would call attention only to two. First, the expression, to go after other gods. As N. Lohfink has pointed out to me, Deuteronomy never uses the pejorative

vocabulary, it is only sound to conclude that this explains its presence in Deuteronomy.

Even if in its use of the term love Deuteronomy should represent an innovation in Israel's covenant tradition, this would not diminish the probability of the interpretation we give the term. As we have seen, in the first millennium love still remains a duty of the vassal towards his sovereign. Influence from this direction on Deuteronomy is quite possible, for there is other evidence for very close contact with Assyrian treaty practices and expressions.

We may point first to the very long list of curses in Deuteronomy. Such length is unknown in treaties of the second millennium, but it does appear in the Esarhaddon text cited above.

More important is the presence in this same text of a curse which is substantially repeated in Dt 28,23. The Assyrian curse reads: "May they make your ground (hard) like *iron* so that none of you may flourish. Just as rain does not fall from a *brazen* heaven, so may rain and dew not come upon your fields . . ." ³⁶ In Dt 28,23: "The sky over your heads will become like *bronze* and the earth under your feet like *iron*." So similar are these curses that Borger writes: "Der Deuteronomist muss doch irgendwie dieses ebenso gesuchte, wie einprägsame Bild einer assyrischen Quelle entnommen haben. Kam es vielleicht auch vor in einem Vertrag zwischen den Assyrern und den Judäern?" ³⁷

One more example, in fact one of the most striking parallels the writer knows between cuneiform and biblical literatures in any period. In a passage of his annals which describes an Arab revolt, Assurbanipal states that the curses written in the treaties were brought down upon the rebels by the gods of Assyria. The text goes on: "The people of Arubu asked one and other again and again, 'Why has such an evil thing as this overtaken Arubu?' (and) they say, 'Because we have not kept the mighty oaths of the god Assur, we have sinned against the favor shown

zānā (save once, in 31,16, and this in the latest level of the document) but prefers the juridical term, "to go after," that is, to serve; on the legal implications of the term, which is also used of vassal relationships, see P. Koschaker, *art. cit.*, 108, and cf. *EA* 136:11ff., 149:46; 280:20. Second, the expression "with all your heart," which must be considered in the light of the treaty stipulations requiring the vassal to fight with all his heart (*ina kul libbi*, Weidner, *op. cit.*, 60:17-19, 61:23, 70:11ff.; 9, 132:3; *ina gammurti libbi*, Wiseman, *art. cit.*, 41 iii 169, 51 v. 310, and cf. 33 i 52-53) or to be faithful and fight with all his heart (J. Nougayrol, *op. cit.*, 89:20-21; cf. 1 Mc 8,25).

³⁶ Wiseman, *art. cit.*, 69 col. vii 528-531.

³⁷ Borger, *art. cit.*, 191-192.

us by Assurbanipal, the king beloved of Enlil."³⁸ In Dt 29,23ff. we read: "They and all the nations will say, 'Why has the Lord dealt thus with this land? Why this fierce outburst of wrath?' And they will say, 'Because they forsook the covenant which the Lord, the God of their fathers, had made with them . . . and they went and served other gods . . .'"³⁹ Identical contexts (the curses of the treaty/covenant), identical literary form. The biblical passage shows only insignificant differences: the question is asked and answered by future generations, not by those suffering from the curses; the biblical answer, though basically identical with the Assyrian, is considerably expanded and of course is a statement of deuteronomic theology.⁴⁰

In view of such parallels between Assyrian treaties and Deuteronomy,⁴¹ we may be virtually certain that deuteronomic circles were familiar with the Assyrian practice of demanding an oath of allegiance from their vassals expressed in terms of love. In line with Borger's proposal above, we may even assume that they knew of such oaths by Israelite kings.⁴²

But is the term love an innovation in the Israelite covenant tradition? We think not, at least it is no innovation made by the author of Dt 6,5, which is generally considered the earliest reference to the love of God in Deuteronomy.

First, Jgs 5,31: "May all your enemies perish thus, O Lord! but your friends⁴³ be as the sun rising in its might!" It has often been debated whether this verse, so unlike the rest of the Song of Deborah and so reminiscent of the Psalms, belongs to the original poem. The question will undoubtedly remain *sub judice*, but Weiser's cultic interpretation of the entire Song is persuasively argued, and if correct, would prove the

³⁸ Streck, *op. cit.*, 79:68-73. The parallel to Dt 29,23ff. is pointed out by Streck, 78, n.4, with a reference to D. H. Müller's *Ezechielstudien*, 61-62.

³⁹ On the basis of the Assyrian parallel we have slightly modified CCD's translation. Since in the Assyrian text the same ones who ask the question answer it, it is to be assumed that the subjects of *w'äm'erû* in vv. 23 and 24 are identical; so also in the parallel passages 3 Kgs 9,8-9; Jer 22,8-9.

⁴⁰ What remains to be investigated is the *Sitz im Leben* of this form; this we leave to another occasion.

⁴¹ The actual parallels may of course be later than the earliest texts in Deuteronomy on the love of God, but they still demonstrate the connection of the deuteronomic tradition with Assyrian treaties.

⁴² For example, Manasseh may have taken the oath in Assyria to love Assurbanipal; this would be the basis for the tradition preserved in 2 Par 33,11-13 (cf. Wiseman, *art. cit.*, 4). Since in view of the evidence of the second millennium the oath to love the sovereign hardly arose only in the early seventh century, we may safely assume that kings like Menahem also promised to love their Assyrian lord.

⁴³ MT, "his friends."

antiquity of v. 31.⁴⁴ Certainly the conclusion has an archaic ring, and the reference to the Israelites as Yahweh's "friends" becomes perfectly intelligible in the light of our remarks on the covenant background of the term love. The Israelites are those bound to Yahweh in covenant, and therefore naturally opposed to his enemies; the war and victory described in the Song are those of the people of God. It is probable therefore that the term love goes back to a very early period in the Israelite covenant tradition.

Certainly the use of the term is earlier than its appearance in Dt 6,5. We make this assertion on the ground that Dt 6,4-18⁴⁵ is by way of commentary a series of citations and allusions to the beginning of the Decalogue. "And thou shalt love the Lord, thy God, . . ." in 6,5 presupposes therefore "those who love me" in 5,10 (Ex 20,6).

The citations and allusions to the Decalogue in 6,10-15 are clear.⁴⁶ 6,12 ("the Lord, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place of slavery") cites the beginning of the Decalogue. 6,14 ("You shall not follow other gods") is a restatement of the first commandment in typically deuteronomic terminology. 6,15 ("for the Lord, your God, who is in your midst, is a jealous God") repeats the motive clause, with the addition of "in your midst," of 5,9 (Ex 20,5).

Framing, so to speak, the concrete application of the Decalogue to the period of the settlement in Palestine are the allusions to the Decalogue in 6,5 and 6,17, which refer to 5,10 (Ex 20,6): *w'āhabtā = l'ōh'bai, šāmōr tišm'erūn 'et mišwōt YHWH 'elōhêkem = ul'šōm'erê mišwōtai*.⁴⁷ This seems evident from a number of considerations:

- (1) In the context of 6,10-15, which is one of allusion to and citation

⁴⁴ A. Weiser, *ZAW* 71 (1959) 94-95.

⁴⁵ Dt 6,19 seems to have been added; cf. 9,4.

⁴⁶ I proposed this view of Dt 6,10-15 in my lecture notes *Adnotationes in librum Deuteronomii*, 100ff., in 1960, and compared von Rad's study of later levitical preaching (*Die levitische Predigt in den Büchern der Chronik, Gesammelte Studien Zum A.T.* [München: Chr. Kaiser, 1958] 248-261). Subsequently and quite independently, as N. Lohfink informs me, H. G. Reventlow proposed a very similar view at the 15th *Orientalistentag*. I should like to express my debt to Lohfink on two accounts: first, following his criticisms, I have here not proposed "him shall you serve and in his name shall you swear" as allusions to 5,9 (*to'obdēm*) and 5,11, so that the order of the Decalogue is now perfectly preserved in 6,12-15 (5,6.7.10); second, it was the study of his dissertation (cf. n.34 above) with its invaluable tables on the usage of the terms for law and its observance, as well as his own study of the structure of Dt 6, that allowed me to see the significance of the references to love and keeping the commandments in 6,5.17. For whatever may be correct therefore in the remarks that follow, a large share of the credit is due to Lohfink.

⁴⁷ MT, *mišwōtau*, Ketib, *mišwātō*; cf. app. crit. in Kittel, *BH*³.

of the Decalogue, the injunction to love Yahweh and keep his commandments is most likely also an allusion to the Decalogue.

(2) The sequence of *mišwōt-’ēdōt-huqqîm*, though found elsewhere (1 Par 29,19; 2 Par 34,31; cf. 4 Kgs 23,3), never occurs in Deuteronomy. This points to a special reason guiding the author's choice among the many expressions for law, commandments, etc. An adequate explanation would be the desire to allude to the Decalogue.

(3) The superscription of 4,45 has the sequence *’ēdōt-huqqîm-mišpāîm*, which is repeated in 6,20. Since 6,17 is the only other passage in Deuteronomy where *’ēdōt* is used, one would expect the sequence of 4,45 and 6,20. The initial position of *mišwōt* and its replacing *mišpāîm* may again be explained by the influence of the Decalogue.⁴⁸

(4) The phrase *’ašer šiwwāk* looks back to Horeb, not to the present time in Moab. In the relevant passages,⁴⁹ the general rule is that, where Yahweh is said to have commanded, and the speaker is Moses at the time of the promulgation of the deuteronomic laws,⁵⁰ then the perfect *šiwwâ* refers either to laws given the people at Horeb,⁵¹ or to the command given Moses at Horeb to remain with Yahweh and learn the laws he was to communicate in Moab.⁵² For this reason one never finds “. . . which Yahweh has commanded TODAY,” or “just as Yahweh has commanded TODAY.” The TODAY of Deuteronomy is confined to the participle *m^ešawwwe*.

Thus in 4,13 Moses speaks of the Decalogue as *’ašer šiwwâ ’etkem*, and continues in 4,14, “but me he commanded (*šiwwâ*) at that time” Similarly in 5,32-6,2: in vv. 32-33 (*šiwwâ* twice) we have a brief parenthesis on the observance of the Decalogue, recalled in 5,6-21; in 6,1 *šiwwâ* refers to the personal revelation to Moses at Horeb; in 6,2, however, we shift to the participle, *m^ešawwwekâ*, because the laws revealed to Moses at Horeb are now being promulgated.

Most of the exceptions to this rule are apparent rather than real. In 13,6⁵³ and 17,3 the subject is the worship of other gods, and therefore based on the first commandment of the Decalogue. 20,17 is concerned

⁴⁸ Another factor in the omission of *mišpāîm* may have been that the Decalogue does not contain *m*, if *m* are customary laws (casuistic).

⁴⁹ We do not consider therefore 1,19; 1,41; 2,37; 10,5; 18,18.20; 31,23; 34,9.

⁵⁰ Therefore the following passages drop out: 6,20.24.25; 26,13.14.

⁵¹ 4,13.23; 5,32.33; 6,17; 9,12.16; 13,6; 17,3; 20,17. The passages of the Decalogue 5,12.15.16 constitute a special problem, because the Decalogue is presented as a direct quotation. Whatever their explanation may be, they are not a difficulty for our view on the other passages with the perfect. It may also be noted that the Decalogue in Ex does not contain these references to the past.

⁵² 1,3; 4,5.14; 6,1; 28,69.

⁵³ Note the reference in the same verse to the historical prologue of the Decalogue.

with the destruction of the Canaanites, which was also commanded at Horeb.⁵⁴ 24,8 speaks of commands given the priests and Levites; it is difficult to say what commands are referred to, but they are not to be found in Deuteronomy.⁵⁵ 12,21 does refer to a law in Deuteronomy, namely 12,15, and 28,45 speaks of the entire law in Deuteronomy as having been commanded by Yahweh, which is quite without parallel (cf. 28,1.13.14.15). It should be observed, however, that 12,21 and 28,45 regard laws already announced to the people.

If, however, 6,5 and 6,17 allude to the Decalogue, then it is clear that *l'ôh^abai ul'šôm^{er}ê mišwôtai* was in the Decalogue at the time of the composition of 6,4ff.⁵⁶ No one would suggest that it was added by the author of 6,4ff. so that it could be subsequently alluded to. For this author the Decalogue in its present form represented the old normative tradition, the basis of Israelite existence, elements of which he singled out, commented upon, and applied to the Israel of his own time.

To sum up: our ancient Near Eastern sources suggest a quite new approach to the problem of the origins of the deuteronomistic doctrine on the love of God. In their light it seems highly questionable whether Osee's preaching is at all relevant, except perhaps in the sense that Osee's highly personal vision was grounded in the older covenant tradition we find in Deuteronomy. It is of course possible that the emphasis placed on love in the deuteronomistic tradition is to be partially explained by the prophet's influence. But the deuteronomistic love of service is older, probably as old or almost as old as the covenant itself. If so, and if the old sovereign-vassal terminology of love is as relevant as we think it is, then what a history lies behind the Christian test of true *agape*—"If you love me, keep my commandments"!

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⁵⁴ The immediate reference is to 7,2, but this is a deuteronomistic reformulation of an older text (cf. S. R. Driver, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Deuteronomy* (ICC, Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1902) 239-240, who correctly refers to Ex 23,31-33). On the relation of Ex 23,20-33; 34,10-16, and Dt 7,1-5, I again refer to Lohfink's forthcoming dissertation.

⁵⁵ C. Steuernagel, *Deuteronomium und Josua* (HK 3, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck u. Ruprecht, 1900) 89, thinks of laws like Lv 13f. and is probably correct in interpreting such a reference as a sign of a late addition.

⁵⁶ We agree with H. G. Reventlow, *Gebot und Predigt im Dekalog* (Gütersloh: G. Mohn, 1962) 40, that the assumption of a "deuteronomistic" redaction of the Decalogue should be buried once and for all. The Decalogue was transmitted and acquired its additions in the cult. It should be remarked that Deuteronomy itself never uses the participle—7,9 cites the Decalogue—but the participle is well attested in the Psalms (5,12; 69,37; 97,10; 145,20; cf. also 31,24).



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