



## **Mandatory Fun: The Commandment of Joy**

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**1. Deuteronomy (Devarim) 16:14-15**

<p>You shall rejoice in your festival, with your son and daughter, your male and female slave, the Levite, the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow in your communities. You shall hold a festival for the Lord your God seven days, in the place that the Lord will choose; for the Lord your God will bless all your crops and all your undertakings, and you shall have nothing but joy.</p>	<p>וְשִׂמְחֶתָּ בְּחַגֶּךָ אֶתְּהָ וּבִנְךָ וּבִתְּךָ וְעַבְדְּךָ וְאִמְתְּךָ וְהַלְוִי וְהַגֵּר וְהַיְתוּם וְהָאֵלְמָנָה אֲשֶׁר בְּשַׁעְרֶיךָ: שְׁבַעַת יָמִים תַּחֲלֵג לַיהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בַּמָּקוֹם אֲשֶׁר יִבְחַר יְהוָה כִּי יְבָרְכֶךָ יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכֹל תְּבוּאָתְךָ וּבְכֹל מַעֲשֵׂה יָדֶיךָ וְהָיִיתָ אֶדָּ שְׂמֵחַ:</p>
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**2. Deuteronomy (Devarim) 6:5**

<p>You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.</p>	<p>וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת יְהוָה אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל־לִבְבְּךָ וּבְכָל־ נַפְשְׁךָ וּבְכָל־מְאֹדְךָ:</p>
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**3. Deuteronomy (Devarim) 6:6-9**

<p>Take to heart these instructions with which I charge you this day. Impress them upon your children. Recite them when you stay at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them as a sign on your hand and let them serve as a symbol on your forehead; inscribe them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.</p>	<p>וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה אֲשֶׁר אֲנִי מְצַוְךָ הַיּוֹם עַל־לִבְבְּךָ: וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם לְבָנֶיךָ וְדַבַּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךָ בְּבֵיתְךָ וּבְלִכְתְּךָ בַּדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשִׁכְבְּךָ וּבְקוּמְךָ: וְקָשַׁרְתָּם לְאָזְנוֹת עַל־ יָדְךָ וְהָיוּ לְטֹטְפֹת בֵּין עֵינֶיךָ: וְכָתַבְתָּם עַל־מְזוּזוֹת בֵּיתְךָ וּבְשַׁעְרֶיךָ:</p>
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**4. William L. Moran, “The Ancient Near Eastern Background of the Love of God in Deuteronomy,” *Catholic Bible Quarterly* (1963)**

Love in Deuteronomy is a love that can be commanded. It is also a love intimately related to fear and reverence. Above all, it is a love which must be expressed in loyalty, in service, and in unqualified obedience to the demands of the Law. For to love God is, in answer to a unique claim (6,4), to be loyal to him (11,1.22; 30, 20), 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...

**5. Martha C. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (2001)**

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...

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...

Indeed, a great advantage of a cognitive/evaluative view of emotion is that it shows us where societies and individuals have the freedom to make improvements. If we recognize the element of evaluation *in the emotions*, we also see that they themselves can be *evaluated* – and in some ways altered, if they fail to survive criticism. Social constructions of emotion are transmitted through parental cues, actions and instructions, long before the larger society shapes the child. We teach children what and whom to fear, what occasions for anger are reasonable, what behavior is shameful. If we believed that racial hatred and aggressions were innate, we could at best teach children to suppress these impulses. But according to the cognitive/evaluative theory, there would be no racial hatred if there were not certain perceptions of salience – that people with different skin color are threatening, or dangerous, or evil. By shaping the way children see objects, we contend against these social conventions.

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

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...

**7. Babylonian Talmud Berakhot 54a**

<p>One is obligated to recite a blessing for the bad that befalls him just as he recites a blessing for the good that befalls him, as it is stated: “And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your might” (Deuteronomy 6:5).          “With all your heart” means with your two inclinations, with your good inclination and your evil inclination, both of which must be subjugated to the love of God. “With all your soul” means even if God takes your soul. “And with all your might” means with all your money, as money is referred to in the Bible as might. Alternatively, it may be explained that “with all your might” means with every measure that God metes out to you; whether it is good or troublesome, thank God.</p>	<p>חַיִּיב אָדָם לְבָרֵךְ עַל הַרְעָה          כְּשֵׁם שֶׁמְבָרֵךְ עַל הַטּוֹבָה,          שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "וְאָהַבְתָּ אֶת ה'          אֱלֹהֶיךָ בְּכָל לְבָבְךָ וְגוֹ'".          "בְּכָל לְבָבְךָ" — בְּשֵׁנֵי          יִצְרָיִךְ, בְּיִצְרָר טוֹב וּבְיִצְרָר          הַרְעָה. "וּבְכָל נַפְשְׁךָ" —          אֲפִילוֹ הוּא נוֹטֵל אֶת נַפְשְׁךָ.          "וּבְכָל מַאֲדְךָ" — בְּכָל          מְמוֹנְךָ. דָּבָר אַחֵר: "בְּכָל          מַאֲדְךָ" — בְּכָל מְדָה וּמְדָה          שֶׁהוּא מוֹדֵד לְךָ הֵוֵי מוֹדָה          לוּ .</p>
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**8. Gary Anderson, "The Expression of Joy as a Halakhic Problem in Rabbinic Sources," 1990**

The experience of "joy" is often not an amorphous subjective feeling but rather a set of discrete behaviors which were thought to create the proper sentiment or feeling. This ritual state of "joy" included at least five discrete behaviors: 1) eating and drinking, 2) sex, 3) praise, 4) festal attire, 5) anointing with oil. This summary is significant for a number of reasons. First, it shows that simhah is more than a simple feeling. Secondly, this behavioral dimension helps to answer a neglected but important question: how can a legal text command "joy"? On first reflection, the idea of commanding an emotion appears quite unusual if not impossible. But if this emotion is understood as a set of discrete behaviors, then it is quite possible to command.

**9. Babylonian Talmud Pesachim 109a**

<p>The Sages taught: A man is obligated to gladden his children and the members of his household on a Festival, as it is stated: "And you shall rejoice on your Festival, you, and your son, and your daughter, and your manservant, and your maidservant, and the Levite, and the stranger, and the fatherless, and the widow that are within your gates" (Deuteronomy 16:14). With what should one make them rejoice? With wine.</p> <p>Rabbi Yehuda says: One should enable each member of his household to rejoice with an item that pleases them, men with what is fit for them and women with what is fit for them. Rabbi Yehuda elaborates: Men with what is fit for them, i.e., with wine. And as for the women, with what should one cause them to rejoice? Rav Yosef teaches: One should delight them with new clothes, in Babylonia with colored clothes and in Eretz Yisrael with the pressed linen clothes that are manufactured there.</p> <p>It was taught that Rabbi Yehuda ben Beteira says: When the Temple is standing, rejoicing is only through the eating of sacrificial meat, as it is stated: "And you shall sacrifice peace-offerings and you shall eat there and you shall rejoice before the Lord your God" (Deuteronomy 27:7). And now that the Temple is not standing and one cannot eat sacrificial meat, he can fulfill the mitzva of rejoicing on a Festival only by drinking wine, as it is stated: "And wine that gladdens the heart of man" (Psalms 104:15).</p>	<p>תנו רבנן: חייב אדם לשמח בְּנָיו וּבְנֵי בֵיתוֹ בְּרֵגֶל, שְׂנָאָמַר: "וְשִׂמְחֶתָּ בְּחֻגְדֶּךָ". בְּמָה מְשִׂמְחֵם — בַּיַּיִן. רַבִּי יְהוּדָה אוֹמֵר: אֲנָשִׁים בְּרֵאֵוֵי לָהֶם, וְנָשִׁים בְּרֵאֵוֵי לָהֶם. אֲנָשִׁים בְּרֵאֵוֵי לָהֶם — בַּיַּיִן. וְנָשִׁים בְּמַאי? תַּנִּי רַב יוֹסֵף: בְּבִבְלָא — בְּבִגְדֵי צְבָעוֹנִין, בְּאַרְצֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל — בְּבִגְדֵי פִשְׁתָּן מְגוּהָצִין. תַּנִּי, רַבִּי יְהוּדָה בֵּן בֵּיתֵיָא אוֹמֵר: בְּזִמְנוֹ שְׂבִית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ קָיָים אִין שְׂמִיחָה אֶלָּא בְּבִשָּׁר, שְׂנָאָמַר: "וְזָבַחְתָּ שְׁלָמִים וְאָכַלְתָּ שֶׁם וְשִׂמְחֶתָּ לִפְנֵי ה' אֱלֹהֶיךָ", וְעַכְשָׁיו שְׂאִין בֵּית הַמִּקְדָּשׁ קָיָים, אִין שְׂמִיחָה אֶלָּא בַּיַּיִן, שְׂנָאָמַר: "וַיַּיִן יְשַׂמַּח לִבִּב אָנוּשׁ".</p>
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## 10. Babylonian Talmud Moed Katan 14b

A mourner does not practice their mourning on a Festival, as it is stated: “And you shall rejoice in your Festival” (Deuteronomy 16:14). If it is a mourning period that had already begun at the outset of the Festival, the mitzvah of rejoicing on the Festival, which is incumbent upon the community, comes and overrides the mitzvah of the individual. And if the mourning period began only now (i.e., during the Festival), the mitzvah of the individual does not come and override the mitzvah of the community.

אָבֵל אֵינוֹ נוֹהֵג אֲבִילוֹתוֹ  
בְּרִגְלָהּ, שֶׁנֶּאֱמַר: "וְשִׂמְחֶתָּ  
בְּחֻגְדָּךְ". אֵי אֲבִילוֹת  
דְּמַעֲיָקְרָא הוּא — אֲתִי  
עָשָׂה דְרַבִּים וְדָחִי עָשָׂה  
דְּיָחִיד. וְאֵי אֲבִילוֹת דְּהַשְׁתָּא  
הוּא — לֹא אֲתִי עָשָׂה דְּיָחִיד  
וְדָחִי עָשָׂה דְרַבִּים.