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GOD AND THE PROBLEMS OF LOVE

Kelly James Clark

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God and the Problems of Love

Elements in the Problems of God

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Abstract: Religious believers are often commanded to love like God. On classical accounts, God seems a poor model for human beings: an immutable and impassable being seems incapable of the kind of episodic emotion (sympathy, empathy) that seems required for the best sorts of human love. Models more conducive to human love, on the other hand, are often rejected because they seem to limit God's power and glory. This Element looks first at God and then divine love within the Abrahamic traditions—Islam, Christianity, and Judaism. It will then turn to love and the problem of hell, which is argued as primarily a problem for Christians. The author discusses the kind of love each tradition asks of humans and wonders, given recent work in the relevant cognitive and social sciences, if such love is even humanly possible. This title is also available as Open Access on Cambridge Core.

This Element also has a video abstract: www.Cambridge.org/Clark

Keywords: God, love, Islam, Christianity, Judaism

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