

TOWARDS A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY ON EMOTIONS

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“Like the one who has set out to sea in a small boat is filled with immense anxiety, as he is entrusting a small piece of wood to the immensity of the waves, so also we are apprehensive as we venture into such a vast ocean of mysteries.” (*In Genesim Homiliae IX*, PG 12, 210). A tension similar to the one expressed by Origen on the threshold of undertaking a homiletic commentary on the Book of Genesis is experienced by the one who wishes to even attempt a sketch of the biblical theology of emotions. Two reasons stir up this fear. On the one hand, there is an enormous fluidity regarding the definition and classification of emotions: In a study published in 1981, two researchers at the Georgia Southern College¹ listed no fewer than 92 definitions in which they pooled together 9 skeptical statements about the possibility of defining such a variable reality, engaged in the Bible - as we shall see – by a lexically and symbolically complex and varied constellation.

On the other hand, this human process with many components comes into sight in the entire arcade of the Biblical pages with an impressive wealth and one would not be able to compress it into a rigorous theoretical mold: beginning with aesthetic emotion itself of the Creator contemplating the beauty/goodness (*tôb*) of his work in chapter 1 of Genesis, right upto the tension that rules supreme on the last page of the Book of Revelations in which there is a yearning for the coming of Lord Jesus (22:17,20). Between these two extremes, sprawls a real album of emotions difficult to be catalogued. It is a chromatic emotional spectrum that goes from the frigid violet of anxiety or fear, and comes into the warm red of joy or tenderness. Therefore we would need to proceed only through selective surveys or emblems (for example, the

Psalter in itself could transform into a vocabulary of the whole human emotional arch).

The human and divine emotional horizon of Scriptures

We begin, then, with a sort of introduction that outlines in a very liberal and “impressionistic” way, the horizon which we seek to enter. Later, we will choose some trails into which to venture. We have spoken above about the fluid mobility in this category, because of which it is not infrequently that synonymous words and realities are adopted which in fact are varied and diverse. Let us just scroll through this lexical list: emotion, passion, desire, feeling, affection, moods, attitudes, instinct, impulse, inclination, disposition, attention, aspiration, excitement, impression, deep sentiment, turmoil, apprehension, uneasiness and so on. Or, if one wishes to make an inventory divided into two columns with the respective positive and negative dimensions of emotions, we would end up with another endless classification.

On the positive side one could, for example, place pleasure, affection, eros, tenderness, sympathy, compassion, respect and so on. In the negative slot, we can include displeasure, antipathy, hatred, horror, cruelty, porn, disgust, nausea, repugnance, contempt, indifference, disinterest, and so on. More specifically, but equally complex would be an analysis of the attention to emotions that some literary exegetical methods reserve to the biblical texts. We refer to the rhetoric, both classical as well as modern which in the structural *dispositio*, in the stylistic *ornatus* and in various textual forms assigns a rate of performativity, specifically even emotional influence on the hearer-reader. Or we could also refer to the narratology that takes into account the concurrent presence in the literary work both of the author with his emotional baggage as well as of the reader who is involved by adherence to the plot.

This horizon so multiple and mobile, similar to a kaleidoscope, is by its very nature dynamic, so much so, that every emotion has different emphases and degrees of incarnation according to the different personalities of the human subjects. It is interesting to note that in the Neo-Latin languages as also in the Anglo-Saxon area, the vocabulary used to define this vital experience has movement itself as its basis. In fact from the Latin verb *movere* are derived “emotion, commotion, emotional” and similarly in French or Spanish as in English we have emotion, commotion, emotional”, while “*commuovére*” means “to move”. A similar semantics governs the German “*Gemütsbewegung*” which evokes precisely the movement (“*Bewegung*”) of the soul (“*Gemüt*”), while evocatively “*bewegen*” can indicate both “move” in the spatial sense or “move” in the emotional sense, and “*Bewegung*” denotes both “motion” and “emotion”.

Although its emotional vocabulary is more symbolic in nature, as we shall see, it is a fact that the Bible offers an immense panorama of experiences that can be said to be in the category “emotion” and its corollaries. The God of the Bible - unlike the Aristotelian immobile Motor or the greek Fate - is a “pathetic” God, who knows tenderness and passion, disappointment and bitterness, joy and sadness (Gen 6:6; Psalm 78:40), who passes from laughter to anger (Ps 2:4-5), and who knows the jealousy of love and the trepidation for betrayal. So will it be in Christ, to whose emotionality we will return: his empathy with humanity is connected to his incarnation: “For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin” (Heb 4:15).

Similarly, man in the Bible does not have as an ideal, the achieving of a state of *apátheia*, as exhorted both by the Epicurean as well as the Stoic philosophies. In this regard, the book of Job can be considered as a true and proper atlas of the emotions and feelings that move and stir in the dark area of trial and of human suffering. These experiences are assumed by the sacred author as outlines of an anthropology but also as a way of theological knowledge, so much so that their extreme estuary is

theophany (“I had known you by having heard: but now my eyes have seen you” 42:5). The emotional state is transformed, therefore, into a way of learning and meeting God, thus becoming a structural component of faith. Without being exhaustive, but proceeding only by way of example, we may collect and order all the fundamental emotional typologies in the Bible.

Thus, we consider the strange inner dialogue of the person praying, with his “I” which is in a state of excitement, as found in the antiphon that embellishes Psalm 42-43: “Why are you cast down, O my soul, why are you disquieted within me?”(42:6,12; 43:5). Specimens in this line are the “confessions” that Jeremiah embeds in chapters 11-20 of his prophetic book². We also take into account the basic but incisive representation of the impulse for violence generated by envy in Cain (Gen 4:1-8) with the clarification on the dialectics between the primal instinct and conscious will, “sin is crouching at your door; its instinct is towards, but you can dominate it” (4:7). Vehement pages and of extraordinary psychological subtlety are devoted to sexual impulse, beginning with David who is fascinated by the beautiful naked Bathsheba (2Sam 11:2), to the point of falling into full moral blindness. Pointed is the analysis of the transition from amorous passion to hatred in Amnon overwhelmed by the erotic urge for his half-sister Tamar: after having raped her, he “conceived towards her a vehement hatred; the hatred towards her was greater than the love with which he had loved her” (2Sam 13:14-15).

The pair eros and violence occurs in radiant forms in the story of the attempted violence of the Sodomites (Gen 19) or in the macabre story of the rape of the Levite's concubine in Gibeah (Jdg 19) or in the more subtle “script” starring Susanna subjected to the desires of the two elders (Dan 13). We could then continue with the famous description of the depression that impinges on Saul, with the characteristic of persecution mania (cf. 1Sam 18-26). This repeated emotional dejection in a weakened form is repeated also in King Ahab embittered by Naboth’s refusal to sell to him his vineyard (1Kgs 21:4: “And he lay down on his bed, and turned away his face, and would eat no food”). Then we have the terror that invades another king, Belshazzar, in

the face of the mysterious hand, which writes on the wall a nefarious oracle (Dan 5). And finally we have the explosion of guilt and remorse that leads Judas to suicide (Mt 27:3-10).

Let us conclude this liberal but incomplete exemplification of the phenomenal multiplicity of emotional experience offered by the Scriptures with an episode that is very evocative and which is at the heart of the powerful story of Joseph the Egyptian. Initially he is able to control himself, to pretend “to be a stranger [to his brothers] and to speak harshly to them” (Gen 42:7-8). But then the emotional level rises, on account of which he is compelled to “go aside to weep” (42:24). Later facing little Benjamin, the son of his own mother, Rachel, Joseph has to “hasten to go out because he had been deeply moved inwardly in the presence of his brother and feeling the need to cry, he entered his private apartment to weep. Then he washed his face and came out; and strengthened himself” to eat with all his brothers (43:29-31). But in the end, the wave of feeling is so strong that “he could no longer restrain himself ... and he made himself known to his brothers and burst out in a cry of sorrow” in front of the shocked and upset brothers (45:1-3).

Knowledge, emotion, passion

After this overview of the emotional phenomenon and its presence as a common thread in the Scriptures, we will now try to set up a more systematic discourse around the structural anthropological category that derives from the psychophysical unitary condition of the human person according to the Bible. To this conception, in fact, we apply an expression of the French poet Charles Peguy: “spirituality for the scriptures is not ethereal but blossoms from a ‘carnal soul’.” Human existence is seen, then, not only as spiritual and rational but also as sentimental, emotional, passionate - for the man in the Bible what another great poet Giacomo Leopardi asserted in his song titled *Aspasia* (1835) is true: “What if affections / bereft of life, and of gentle mistakes / it is a starless night in the middle of

the winter.” One who does not have emotions is a “wintry” being, frigid and gloomy. As noted by Ivan Illich, one of the contemporary dramas is the “loss of senses”, which is paradoxically manifested in an oscillation between the two extremes of the sensory materialistic and carnal bulimia, and the abstract anorexia linked to the senses which are almost digitalized or reduced to a prosthesis in computer communication, as is pointed out by Marshall McLuhan.

We will seek now to reconstruct a sort of grammar of biblical emotional feeling. We will start from the basic structure that has as its foundation general biblical epistemology. As is known, it presents itself according to a symbolic and therefore unitary and polymorphic setting concurrently, able to compose a harmony in the thinking, willing, feeling, acting, namely the intellectual, volitional, affective and effective dimensions. What in modern Western epistemology is separated in the rational, psychological, philosophical, scientific, ethical, aesthetic, religious-mystical approaches, is in the Semitic conception (but not only), coordinated in unity in the same human cognitive experience. Enlightening in this regard are the semantics of the verb *jd'* (which registers 1119 occurrences in the Old Testament) and of the New Testament greek verb *ghinoskein* (222 occurrences) that can also stretch into the sexual act as a final consequence of interpersonal knowledge (cf. Mt 1:25) which extends to the entire personal adhesion (cf. Jn 10:14-15, 17:3) ³.

In this light, the “reasons of the heart”, to use the famous phrase of Pascal, are distinct but not separate in the only cognitive act of the one and the same person. For this reason, in the description of active human subjectivity in its knowledge, consciousness and choice, in addition to rationality, we need to attach a galaxy of feelings. Simplifying the map of the emotional expressions as has been outlined by modern analysis, we will now base ourselves on some structural components. The first concerns a distinction between two inter-related elements. On the one hand, is *emotion* which we consider as an instant subjective reaction that arises from the relationship between a person and a salient and incisive event, able to involve the entire psycho-physical knowledge that we have mentioned above. It is, therefore, an

act of epiphany because it blossoms from a burst that is addressed to us, embraces us, involves us and even overwhelms us. Of course, the resulting reaction may be antithetical: it can generate adherence, action, feeling, but it can also produce repression, rejection, incapacity to act.

On the other hand, as a result of the initial emotion, it can induce and stabilize in a person a lasting and even permanent reaction, becoming constitutive of the personal being: it is *the passion* that can acquire greater or lesser tonality according to its continuity in time, throughout the life of a subject. It also can register two antithetical outlets, becoming virtue or vice. In our analysis, we will certainly not be able to develop in a clear or articulated way this process: the treatment, for example, of the seven capital vices would require an huge documentary dossier. We will content ourselves in identifying only some emotions that easily verge on passions following a subsequent large and complex affair.

The dark and bright object of desire

After this first structural distinction between emotion and passion, it seems useful to propose another important component that occupies much space on the biblical horizon: *desire*. It can be considered the radical motor of the entire human knowing in its totality - rational sensory-operative, and therefore also of emotion and passion. It is a vital energy that arises from the discovery of one's own creaturely limitation, and the relative willingness to overcome it tending towards the beyond, and the other, rather, to the Beyond and the Other par excellence, to the eternal, the 'the infinite', the transcendent, the absolute, the divine (it is not without reason that the word "desire" refers back etymologically to *sidera*, the "stars"). The Bible presents it as the fundamental source of the entire human "knowing", as a manifestation of personal freedom and as crossroads of morality. In fact in the Yahwistic version of creation, "the woman saw that the fruit of the tree [of the knowledge of good and evil] was good for food, pleasing to the eyes, desirable for

gaining wisdom” (Gen 3:6). It has, thus, both the emotional-sensory aspect (taste and sight) and the intellectual and psychological side (wisdom) as well as the moral dimension (the knowledge of good and evil).

The fundamental Hebrew word for desire is *hmd* which is associated with ‘*wh*’: examples are the ninth and tenth commandment, “You shall not covet (*hmd*) the house of your neighbor, you shall not covet (*hmd*) the wife of your neighbor ... you shall not covet (*hmd*) the wife of your neighbor, you shall not covet (‘*wh*’) your neighbor's house ...” (Exodus 20:17, Deuteronomy 5:21)⁴. The New Testament term instead is *epithymía* which is based on *thymós*, in its turn based on the Indo-European *dhu* that evokes the swirling of air in a vortex and supposes a violent motion and therefore an uncontrollable desire⁵. Contrary to what happens in contemporary conception, biblical desire (see in particular Mt 5:27-30 and 6:21-3) is not reducible to a vague emotional reaction in front of an attractive subject/object, but rather is considered in its quality of true and proper vital choice. It is an ethical decision, an intentional and operating project. It is aiming at a reality to conquer it, consecrating to this realization, mind, will and action. In practice, it is a confirmation of a global symbolic gnosiological conception that we have described, applied to the volitional dimension.

Desire, like its corollaries, emotion and passion, reveals two faces. There is the perverse darkness of desire which culminates in temptation and sin. It is summarized in the Epistle of James: “each person is tempted by desire (*epithymía*) which lures and entices him, Then desire (*epithymía*) conceives and gives birth to sin; and sin when it is committed brings forth death. (James 1:14-15). It will be particularly Paul who will point the finger at the degeneration of desire, so much so that for him *epithymía* is essentially a negative category (Rom 1:24; 6:12; 7:7 Gal 5:24; Col 3:5; 1Tim 6:9; 2Tim 3:6; Tit 2:11-12; 3:3). In particular, *epithymía sarkós* – where *sárx*, “flesh”, is obviously to be understood in the Pauline sense as negative principle that leads to sin – is the culmination of this degeneration. The Christians therefore “walk by the Spirit, to be not brought to gratify the desires of the flesh. For

the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh; for these are opposed to each other” (Gal 5:16-17). A similar perspective is also present in the Johannine literature, the desires of someone are branded as of the one who has for father the devil, and that lead to murder and lies (Jn 8:44, cf. 1Jn 2:16-17).

There is, however, a bright area where desire is “in-finite” because it aspires to the divine infinite. As we have in the invocation “Thy Kingdom come!”, a kingdom which must be sought and desired before any other reality (Mt 6:33). Already in the Old Testament, faith is described as a desiring-searching that arrives to an outcome of communion: “Seek the LORD so that he may be found! You will seek me and find me because you seek me with all your heart; I will be found by you” (Is 55:6; Jer 29:13-14). The faithful are defined as those who “seek the Lord” (Is 51:1). Theirs is an almost physical desire for God because the *nefeš*, which concomitantly is “throat” and “soul” thirsts for God (Ps 42: 2-3; 63:2; Am 8:11).

However, it is interesting to note that in the Bible, the primacy is to be assigned to the desire of God himself in regards to his creature, a yearning that precedes, exceeds, and fulfills the human desire: “I replied those who did not consult me, I made myself be found by those who did not seek me. I said, here I am! here I am! to a people who did not seek me” (Is 65:1; cf. Rom 10:20). “Before they can call me, I will answer; while they are still invoking me, I will have already heard them” (Is 65:24). Meaningful is the parable of the lost sheep who is sought by the shepherd, as well as the Pauline Road to Damascus or the invocation of the Psalm: “Seek your servant, O Lord” (Ps 119:176)⁶.

This strong theological and mystical connotation - objective and subjective - of desire does not exclude, however, that in the Bible the purely human dimension is absent. Extraordinary in this regard is the Song of Songs, able to weave in an unitary harmony, sexuality, eros and love, carnal desire and spiritual longing, embrace of the bodies and meeting of souls. The whole poem is spanned by desire, right from the initial passionate kiss (1:2-4) to reach - even through the gloom and the diminution of

desire (3:1-5 and 5:2 - 6:3) - to the final scene which is a new beginning, as happens to the insatiability of desire that is precisely tireless pursuit (8:14). The desire for of love is a constant swing between presence and absence, possession and conquest; the goal is never final because the “in-finite” tension underlying desire is not quenched by a mere carnal possession but leans towards a transcendent fullness. This is the main thread of desire that runs through the Song of Songs. As Lacan writes, “if you have to establish the notion of the Other (with a capital O) as the place of the word, it is necessary to affirm that, man being an animalistic prey to language, his desire is the desire for the Other”⁷.

Heart, intestines, kidneys, nose and liver: the organs of emotion

Having outlined the structure of emotion-passion-desire according to biblical categories, we will now need to undertake a specific examination of organs that govern the emotional output of the human person. Naturally, at the basis lies always an unitary psychophysical anthropological conception, that is taken from scriptures and uses physiological symbols. On another level, there are five organs involved and we now present them only in regard to the function that they exert in relation to emotional experiences. The main organ of interiority in the Bible is the heart: the significance is evident also on the lexicographical level because the Hebrew and Aramaic *leb/lebab* reverberates 860 times while in the New Testament, *kardia* recurs 156 times. Interestingly, Hans Walter Wolff in his well-known essay on the *Anthropologie des Alten Testaments* (1973) places the “heart” in the chapter dedicated to “rational man” and says that the “heart” is the most prevalent biblical anthropological concept. It covers the whole range of emotions, of intellectual functions, volitional functions..., it is the center of man who lives in a conscious way.” Practically by “heart” is denoted the “I” in the exercise of its inner capacities. It is, therefore, rationality (Prov 15:14; 1Kgs 3:9-10), the principle of ethical options (Prov 6:18; Mk 7:21-22), the root of true religion (Ezek 11:19).

However, the heart is also the source of the affective and passionate life. It quivers like a tree shaken by the wind (Is 7:2), becomes soft as wax in fear (Ps 22:15), dissolves in water because of terror (Jos 7:5), knows depression as also the exaltation of joy (Prov 15:13; 17:22). Falling in love and its intoxication are celebrated thus by the beloved in the Song of Songs: “You have ravished my heart, my sister, my bride, you have ravished my heart with a glance of your eyes” (Song 4:9). The wedding day in Semitic languages is commonly called “the day of the gladness of heart”. A joy that is more prosaically also induced by wine (Ps 104:15), but at the same time degeneration can be lurking around with the blurring of intoxication (Prov 23:31-33), as also happens with sexual desire: “Do not desire her beauty in your heart”, “the wife of your neighbor” (Prov 6:25). It is however undeniable that, “Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life” (Prov 13:12).

The second emotional organ par excellence is embodied in the bowels, especially maternal, expressed in Hebrew by the well-known root *rahm* which also echoes in the incipit of all suras (except sura 9) of the Quran in the formula called *basmala: bismi Llah al-rahman al-rahim*, “in the name of God, the merciful and the compassionate”. Applied to God is also the symbol of *rahâmîm*, of the womb used to indicate an almost instinctive and indestructible feeling of love because of which the perfect divine portrait is formulated by Paul as of one who is “rich in mercy” (Eph 2:4). The Apostle, however, here uses the abstract *éleos*, but in the New Testament the symbolism of the Hebrew “visceral” is traced to the verb *splanchnízomai* (12 times: Mt 9:36; 14:14; 15:32; 18:27; 20:34; Mk 1:41; 6:34; 8:2; 9:22; Lk 7:13; 10:33; 15:20) and the noun *splánchnon* (11 times) and the derivatives *eusplánchnos* (Eph 4:32; 1Pt 3:8) and *polysplánchnos* (James 5:11)⁸.

The emotional aspect of this terminology is expressed brilliantly in the cry of Jeremiah: “My bowels! My bowels! I writhe in pain. Oh, the agony of my heart! My heart pounds within me”(4:19) or in that of Jerusalem personified: “Behold, O Lord, for I am in distress, my bowels are stirred in me, my heart is wrung within me” (Lam

1:20). We should also note the constant bond with the other emotional organ, the heart. Through the *raḥamîm* or the verb *splanchnízomai* one can recompose the whole spectrum of one of the most delicate emotions: tenderness, which we will consider later directly.

First and foremost we have the fraternal tenderness which stands out in the aforesaid meeting of Joseph with his brothers when the emotion affects his bowels (Gen 43:30). We have the instinctive maternal (Is 49:15-16) and paternal (Jer 31:20; Hos 11:8-9; Lk 15:20) tenderness which is attributed to God himself. Next, we have human tenderness made up of understanding and sharing, as often happens in the encounter of Jesus with the sick (Mt 20:34, Mk 1:41), towards people torn by grief like the widow of Nain (Lk 7:13) or to the poor, suffering and hungry crowds, (Mt 9:36; 14:14; 15:32, Mk 6:34), so much so that the Letter to the Hebrews coins the definition of Christ as “merciful high priest” (2:17) using however the adjective *eleêmôn*. The love for the hapless neighbour, must move the bowels as happens to the Samaritan in the parable (Lk 10:33), in contrast to the priest and the Levite who pass over, indifferent to the pain of the victim. In short, the Johanine warning is relevant: “But if any one has the world’s riches and sees his brother in need, yet closes his bowels (*splánchna*), against him, how does God’s love abide in him? (1Jn 3:17). On account of this, it is necessary to be “merciful (*oiktírmones*) as is merciful the heavenly Father” (Lk 6:36) and “blessed are the merciful (*eleêmônes*) because they will receive mercy (Mt 5:7).

A third organ which takes on meanings linked to emotionality, after the heart and the bowels, is represented by the kidneys, in Hebrew *kelajôt*: they are the seat of affections, passions, impulses, and in some ways even of the unconscious (Jer 12:2, Ps 73:21, Job 19:27, Prov 23:16). God can penetrate into that deepest sphere also. He can illuminate it (Ps 16:7), pierces it with his eyes (Jer 20:12), probes it (Ps 7:10) and sifts it with trials (Jer 11:20; 17:10), refines and purifies it (Ps 26:2). It was in fact, he who in the gestation of the fetus in the mother’s womb shaped the kidneys (Ps 139:13). The kidneys are often placed parallel to the heart, while other times they

appear through the euphemism of “hips” (*motnajîm*): “Devastation, stripping, desolation, discouraged hearts, weak knees, shivering hips, pallor on all faces” (Nah 2:11). If here the scene is of terror, with the use of the Greek word *nephroî*, “kydneys”, later it describes instead the indignation that encompasses the father of the Maccabees, Mattathias, when he witnesses the action of a Jew who agrees to offer an idolatrous sacrifice in his village, Modin: “When Mattathias saw it, he burned with zeal and his kidneys were stirred. He gave vent to righteous anger; he ran and killed him upon the altar. (1Mac 2:24). But the kidneys also are capable of getting excited in the surge of joy: as is the case of the father who “rejoices in his kidneys because the lips [of the son] say what is right” (Prov 23:16)⁹.

We conclude this physiological-symbolic diagnosis with a discussion on two marginal yet evocative organs. First, the nose, the nostrils, *'af / 'ap* that in its genesis (*'anf*) onomatopoeically evokes snorting nostrils when the person is overwhelmed by anger. For this reason, figuratively it becomes the specific term to indicate indignation and anger. As L. Alonso Schökel¹⁰ notes, *'af* is “the seat of the irascible passion and, therefore, the physical meaning moves on to signify ire, wrath, courage, anger, rage, fury, irritation, indignation, resentment, hatred, envy”. It thus opens up a particularly important chapter that can accommodate within its interior, a double and antithetical profile, the virtuous view of indignation as moral wrath as well as the vicious outlook of ire as aggressive anger.

On the first side, of *'af* as the wrath of ethical indignation, we have the anthropomorphism of the “wrath of the Lord which is lit against Israel” the sinner (for example in Jdg 3:8) so much so that the “day of wrath” becomes a metaphor to describe God’s judgment (Ezek 7:10; Zeph 1:15,18; Mt 3:7, 1Thess 1:10, Rom 2:5; 12:19). In all languages, and therefore also in the biblical language, “fiery” images are often adopted in this regard: wrath blazes, burns, flares (in Hebrew the specific *ḥrh* is used). For good reason, the one who is angry is described as if puffing sparks, his blood boils and is hot, he is inflamed with anger; anger is kindled, creates fire; he is worked up, and so on. God himself is a participant of this psychophysical emotion

on account of which the Psalmist proclaims rhetorically: “Who does not know the power of your anger, and in fear of you, your wrath?” (Ps 90:11).

On the same lines, one has to bring in the genre of imprecatory Psalms which are dripping with emotion (cf. Ps 58 in particular) and which are inserted in an atmosphere of appeal to the justice of a moral God, who sides with the victims. The same goes for the literary genre of the prophetic mold of “Woe!” (See, for example, Is 5:8-22, Mt 23:13-33). This, however, does not exclude that in the Bible, the second aspect of *'af* cannot also be denounced, that of the cruel and insulting wrath, impetuous and blind fury (Prov 27:4) of the “excited dispute that lights the fire and of the violent brawl that leads to shedding of blood” (Sir 28:11). Precisely for this reason, Paul in the “works of the flesh” poses a series of seven vicious reactions attributable to degenerate ire: “enmities, strife, jealousy, dissension, factions, envy” (Gal 5:20-21). And his final model appeal is: “Do not let the sun go down on your wrath” (Eph 4:26).

There is a final organic component which in the Bible can soar to the seat of emotional reactions: *the liver*. Its identification is sometimes difficult because the rare term *kabed* (14 times in the Old Testament: cf. for example Ex 29:13,22; Lev 3:4; 4:9; 9:10,19; Prov 7:23) has the same root of a much more common and noble term *kabôd*, “glory” specially divine glory. Thus, “there are a number of cases of the use of *kabôd*, glory, which could be later adaptations, spiritualizing, an original *kabed*, liver”¹¹. The fact is that - in addition to indicating the material organ in the human body and in animals sacrificed in worship and as subject of magic hepatoscopy to plot fortunes (Ezek 21:26) - the liver is sometimes regarded as the seat of strong emotions. We thus have the lament that rises from the spectator of the ruin of Jerusalem under the armies of Nebuchadnezzar, including this cry: “My eyes are spent with weeping; my bowels are in turmoil; my liver (*kabed*) is poured out in grief” (Lam 2:11). It is basically the bile that embodies the emanation of a *summus animi dolor*¹².

Positive, however, is the function that is assigned to the liver to express the peace and serenity of the person praying in Psalm 16:9, where mention is made of the heart (*leb*), the entire corporeality (*basar*) and, indeed, the liver (*kebedî*) but the Masoretes - as noted above - have confused it with the more common *kabôd*, “glory”, while earlier (16:7) the kidneys (*kiljôt*) are introduced: “Therefore my heart rejoices and my liver exults, my flesh also dwells safe” (16:9). Thus we have, in this Psalm a true list of all the organic metaphors regarded in the Bible as sources of emotions, affections, passions¹³.

The anguish of Jesus

At this point, we should subject some fundamentally emotional ‘families’ to a more accurate analysis, always taking into account the fluidity that these categories entail, capable of spilling over into other human experiences. The repeated assertion of the unity of the symbolism of biblical anthropological symbolism makes it difficult to resolve in a clear way the different perimeters. If we take into consideration the vast bibliography with a psychological, sociological, and even medical and scientific slant, we could isolate four families of very mixed emotional tonality¹⁴.

1. Fear: anguish, anxiety, dread, nervousness, apprehension, tension, hesitation, scare, terror, and so on to the extent of pathology of phobias or panic.
2. Wrath: ire, wrath, fury, anger, irritation, exasperation, acrimony, animosity, annoyance, irritability, hostility, hatred to the extent of pathological violence.
3. Sadness, pain, sorrow, melancholy, loneliness, isolation, bitterness, desolation, killing to the extent of depressive disorders.
4. Joy: enjoyment, happiness, bliss, tenderness, affection, pleasure, ecstasy, elation, satisfaction, elation to the point of forms of maniacal and fanatic enthusiasm.

We will now choose from this rainbow of diverse thematic colors, just two extreme models: using an image already described in the introduction, on the one hand we will present the frosty “violet” of anguish with all the nuances that it implies (distress, anxiety, restlessness, apprehension, distress, torment, pain, weeping ...), and on the other hand, we will choose the warm “red” of affection that manifests itself in intimacy with the tenderness and the tinge of reciprocal belongingness.

Naturally given the limitations of our analysis, we will take up only some points which remain open to further investigation. Let us start, then from the field of the action of anguish which as is known, has been accurately and evocatively discovered by Kierkegaard in his *The Concept of Anxiety* (1844) where the experience of strong emotions is seen as a launching pad towards transcendence.

From the lexical point of view, it is formulated in the main European languages through the symbol of restriction, almost a prison, as is suggested by the root which generates “*angustia, angoscia, angoisse, Angst, anguish...*” and which, with medical terminology, introduces *l’angina pectoris*, in which the anguished emotion can generate a physiological redundancy. The same phenomenon can be noted in Hebrew where the root *šrr* which defines the restricted and constrained space (Is 28:20; 49:19) generates the anguish of the afflicted, restless and unhappy soul, *šar* (Gen 32:8; Jdg 2:15; 2Sam 1:26; Ps 66:14; 102:3; 106:44; 107:6). For this reason liberation is expressed through the root *rḥb* which denotes a spatially open, vast and free horizon (Deut 12:20; Ex 3:8; 34:24; Ps 119:45) and, therefore, can become a symbol of existential consolation and salvation, “Enlarge my anguished heart, deliver me from anxieties” (Ps 25:17; cf. 119:32; 18:37; Is 60:5).

If the book of Job can be taken as a repertoire of multiple iridescences of anguish, as are in a more reduced way the lamentations of the Psalter, then the basics for the very doctrine of Incarnation is the anxiety that grips Jesus, especially in his passion as can be indeed seen in the famous declaration of the Letter to the Hebrews: “In the days of his flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications, with loud cries and tears, to God who was able to save him from death, and he was heard for his

godly fear. Although he was a Son, he learned obedience through what he suffered; and being made perfect he became the source of eternal salvation to all who obey him” (Heb 5:7-9)¹⁵. Keeping aside the exegetical and theological issues related to this passage (especially with regard to the “perfection” achieved through “obedience”), there is no doubt that Christ is in solidarity with humanity through his suffering: it is precisely in this painful way that he implements and reveals the fullness of his humanity. An experience thus becomes a dramatic instrument of formation: the Greek verbal pair *épathen/émathen* (“suffered/learned”) is interesting in wake of the famous binomial *pathémata/mathémata* (“sufferings/teachings”), a *topos* of Greek literature, beginning Aesop¹⁶.

Christ is, therefore, “the man who knows suffering” like the Servant of the Lord (Is 53:3), and his existence is marked by weeping both for the death of his friend Lazarus, with the internal emotion that pervades the soul (Jn 11:32-38), as well as for the fate of the beloved city Jerusalem (Lk 19:41). He is distraught in the face of betrayal by Judas (Jn 13:21), he sighs in the face of disease (Mk 7:34) and hostility against him (Mk 8:12), experiences indignation and sadness at the same time before the hardness of the hearts of his audience (Mk 3:5). But the pinnacle of his emotional anguish is arrived at in Gethsemane¹⁷, the psychological dynamics of which is anticipated by John in the encounter of Christ with the Hellenists : “Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? No, for this purpose I have come to this hour” (Jn 12:27). Against the background of the anguish in the Garden of Olives there is a pooling together of Judas’ betrayal, Peter’s denial, the indifference and neglect of the disciples, components that result in the emotional state of Jesus which climaxes in the sweat of blood (Lk 22:44) which Luke considers as the outcome of an *agôn*, of an inner struggle-agony.

The evangelist most attentive to note down the reactions of Christ on that night is Mark who already indicates other intimate occasions of tension during his public ministry (cf. Mk 3:5; 8:12; 10:14). At the entrance to Gethsemane itself where he cuts himself off along with the sleepy Peter, James and John, Mark notes that “he began

to *ekthambeîsthai e ademoneîn*” (14:33). The first is a verb of terrified fear, and is used only by this evangelist in the New Testament (cf. Mk 9:15; 16:5,6). It is bewilderment in front of an unpredictable experience that upsets the soul; indeed, in classical Greek it is a word to describe terror and trembling of the agonized. The second verb, *ademoneîn*, also rare in the lexicon of the New Testament (it is only used in the parallel text of Mt 26:37 and in Phil 2:26), means anguish, distress, anxiety.

An inner state which is confessed to by Jesus himself: “My soul is very sorrowful (*perilypós*), even to death” (Mk 14:34; cf. Mt 26:37), is inspired by the words of the Psalm antiphon 42-43, which we have already evoked (42:7,12; 43:5) an emotional state that radiates the prayer of Jesus, as expressed by Mark, first, in an indirect way in his narrative: “prayed that, if it were possible, the hour might pass from him”(14:35) and then, in an explicit and personal form: “Abba’, Father, everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will.” (14:36). Interesting to note in this invocation, are the dialectics between the anxiety that leads to bitter sadness and the willingness that dominates emotion, with the decision to follow the *Via Dolorosa* which leads to the summit of Calvary. Emotion, feeling, passion intersect with freedom, rational choice, voluntary decision, just as the extreme desolation of supplication clings to the intimacy of the divine fatherhood (“Abba’, Father!”). This is what will also happen in the final invocation on the cross where, as is well known, the opening words of the tragic Psalm 22 pronounced by Jesus do not finish up in despair, because the text of the psalm ends up with a bright horizon of liberation and joy, and Christ according to the Jewish practice assumes in totality the Psalm waiting also for a final saving answer to his impassioned imploring.

The image of the chalice - which, as is known, is not infrequently a symbol of divine wrath and judgment and therefore of death (Ps 75:9; Is 51:17; Lam 4:21; Hab 2:16) - embodies an ominous mortal destiny, it generates extreme sadness, just as confessed by Jesus before the disciples, talking about a sadness *heós thanátou*, “unto

death”. It is the same situation of many biblical characters who, in the face of desperate or unbearable situations invoke death: from Moses (Num 11:15) Elijah (1Kgs 19:4), Jeremiah (20:14-18) Jonah (Jon 4:3,8), Job (Job 3:3) to Tobias and Sarah (Tob 3:6,13). Jesus, however, “does not ask to be freed from anxiety *through death*, but to be freed *from death*. In his mouth the expression ‘sorrowful even unto death’ is a kind of a superlative to indicate the extreme form of a state of mind from which he would like to be relieved ... But Jesus chooses to remain faithful as a son despite the prospect of that death ... He therefore faces death with the confidence and the freedom of the son who even in death knows he can count on his vital relationship with the Father¹⁸.

The jealous tenderness of God

If we go along with the theory of the structures of the imaginary, developed by Gilbert Durand¹⁹, which he modeled on the somatic typology of the human person, in addition to the dominant vertical “positional” ascendant and the cyclical “copulative” of progress and of return, a dominant “digestive” is delineated which assumes a huddling together in intimacy. It is in this context that the most tender, emotional, and possessive emotions of communion develop. We come now to the other extreme of our emotional chromatic aspect where the warmth of love dominates. We have already introduced this particular aspect when we looked at the body of the maternal and paternal “bowels” (*rahamîm*) with their sway of intimate and sweet or compassionate and merciful feelings.

Now we would like to refer to a more general emotion which underlines the planet of genuine love, tenderness, expressed in the aforementioned “visceral” root *rĥm*, but also with a very evocative symbolism. The German writer Heinrich Böll, Nobel winner 1972, in his *Brief an einen jungen Katholiken* (1958) had rightly criticized «the messengers of Christianity of every origin” for ignoring tenderness and had proposed “a theology that could acquire tenderness and could use its

language in order to knock out its great opponent: mere ecclesiastical legislation”. We must recognize that since then there have been many steps taken with the development of a “theology of tenderness” by Carlo Rocchetta²⁰, with recourse to the category of “compassion”, as did Johann Baptist Metz²¹ to enhance Christian empathy in religious and cultural pluralism, or with the theme of “mercy” being emphasized by Walter Kasper and especially by the Magisterium of Pope Francis.²²

The foundation is the image of the father, “As tender (*rh̄m*) is a father toward his son, so is the Lord tender (*rh̄m*) toward those who fear him” (Ps 103:13; cf. Hos 11:1-4). Or the maternal: “You have been carried by me from your maternal womb upheld from your womb (*rah̄em*)” (Is 46:3; cf. 49:15 e 66,13), because of which the relationship of intimacy with the Lord is the same as that of the “child weaned in its mother’s arms” (Ps 131:2). Other times, however, to express this tender and sweet intimacy recourse is taken to zoomorphism of the bird to “cover you with his feathers,” so that “under his wings you will find refuge” (Ps 91:4) or of the “mother hen gathers her chicks under her wings” (Mt 23:37; Lk 13:34). Or also evoked are “birds flying” above the nest to defend it and “so the Lord of hosts will protect Jerusalem” (Is 31:5). Or again, “like an eagle which keeps watch over its nest, who flutters over its young, [the Lord] spread his wings and took [Israel] and lifted him up on his wings” (Deut 32:11)²³.

One could attach a long list of strides in which, with vocabulary and with different symbols, the feeling of tenderness on the part of God toward his people is highlighted as is also done with the fraternal (cf. Ps 133), amicable (cf. 2 Sam 1:19-27), and nuptial bond. In the latter case, clearly emblematic is the Song of Songs that uninterruptedly exalts the embrace between the two main characters who live the full range of emotions that the two lovers experience in their profound intimacy, in an emotional dynamism that is never satisfied: For this reason, the ending is again an appeal to amorous pursuit. “Make haste, my beloved, *and* come quickly, like a gazelle or a young hart upon the mountains of spices!” (Song 8:14). Similar is the reading that Hosea completes of his nuptial story whose deep crisis could be cured by

a return to an embrace in an exclusive solitude: “Behold I am now going to allure her; I will lead her into the wilderness and speak to her heart” (Hos 2:16).

A particular profile of passionate tenderness can also be jealousy²⁴ whose ardour is well expressed by the same root that is the basis of the Hebrew word *qin’ah*: *qnn*, in fact denoting the reddish dye, therefore the blush that pervades those who experience passion. The Greek term *zêlos* (16 times in the New Testament, and 11 times the verb *zeloûn*) also supposes ardour, fervour, ardent desire to precisely designate the revolutionary movement of the Zealots, mentioned eight times in the New Testament. This is why jealousy often accompanies the symbol of fire, as it appears in the famous passage from the Song of Songs: “Tenacious as *she’ol* is jealousy, Its flashes are flashes of fire, a divine flame!” (8:6; cf. Deut 4:23-24; 6:14-15; 32:21-22; Zech 8:2; Heb 10:27). With reason therefore, in some languages falling in love is called “the strike of thunderbolt”.

Therefore, in jealousy, there is an appearance seemingly antithetical to tenderness and is the exclusive possession of the other; on the one hand, it expresses the negativity of a blinding passion (Prov 27:4; Job 5:2), able to lead to homicidal violence, as in the case of Cain (Gen 4:5-6); on the other hand, however, it expresses the unbreakable bond that binds two people, a bond wounded by betrayal. In this light, the extensive use of jealousy in the Bible as a theological category against idolatry is explained, to such an extent as to make it the mantle of God (Is 59:17); see for example, Ps 78:57-58; Ez 5:13; 1Cor 10:21-22). The cause of this divine jealousy is idolatry so much so that the lexeme “idol of idolatry” (Ez 8:3) is coined.

Precisely because of its connection to nuptial symbolism, jealousy reveals itself as another face of tenderness, the strong and passionate emotion that God feels for his creature and, as happens in many divine biblical definitions, this jealousy is not only the principle of reactions to rejection but it is a source of infinite love. For this reason divine jealousy is described through the symbolic numerical contrast between the four generations in which the wrath of God lasts, and a thousand ones of his tender goodness (Ex 20:5; 34:6-7). The same divine tenderness appears in a protective

quality that jealousy assumes towards Israel, when the jealous zeal of the Lord breaks out against the oppressors, creating a sort of defensive wall for the victims (Nah 1:2; Zech 1:14-17; Wis 5:17). God, who at Sinai is par excellence named “Jealous” (Ex 34:14), will be the guardian of the faithful “remnant” of Israel upon whom he will pour out his effective and saving tenderness (Is 37:31-32). And the faithful will be defined precisely through their zealous “jealousy” towards their God, as stated by Elijah (1Kgs 19:10), by Jesus himself (Jn 2:16-17) and by the apostle Paul (2Cor 7:7,12; 11:2).

Four Analytical moments

This short essay that we have dedicated to an embryonic theology of emotions is governed by a conviction which, incidentally, also reigns supreme in the field of psychology, science and culture in general: the category “emotional” is by its nature highly mobile and fluid, so as not to be condensable in a definition and, therefore, also not compressible in a rigorous analysis. The fact nevertheless remains that the Bible is traversed by multiple emotional threads that confirm not only the incarnation of the Word of God but also the symbolic and analogical quality of theology (in the sense of discourse about God) offered by the Scriptures. This is what we pointed out in the first instant of our analysis when we outlined a kind of a panoramic gaze on the sacred texts.

Then in a second moment, we have attempted a reduction in the perspective trying to find a small “grammar” of the emotional feeling that is based on biblical anthropology and so on a unified theory of knowledge. It does not seek to separate emotional knowing from the intellectual one, intertwining them despite the diversity of approaches. Thus comes the importance that is assigned to emotionality or if you wish, to the reasons of the heart. At this point, we have identified a specific emotional perimeter which is connected to and yet distinct from passion, this latter to be considered as a permanent *habitus* generated and nourished by emotions. The engine

of the emotional experience in its fullness is to be found in *desire* with its two faces, the bright and positive nevertheless also the dark and negative. Of course, in this simplified emotional “grammar”, we could have taken in more articulations in different other chapters, as happens in many psychological manuals: The subjective experiences or feelings, expressive behaviors of emotions experienced, bodily changes generated by emotion and so on. The discourse, however, could be lost in an actual general treatise on feelings.

The third movement of our journey has focused on certain “organs”, producers of emotion, employed in their symbolic and emotional value: the heart, bowels the kidneys, nose and liver. Thus we confirmed the basic psycho-somatic unity of biblical anthropology. In the fourth step, we have sought to select symbolically, a typology of emotion. Thus, we have opted for the two extremes of anguish and tenderness, the first one a cold and lacerating experience, the second one, warm and ardent. In some respects, they are accompanied by two basic inventories of prayer not limited only to the biblical area- on the one hand, the supplication-lamentation and, on the other hand, the hymn and thanksgiving, that is, the painful entreaty and joyful praise. In another sense, we could conclude that emotions reflect the contradictions of historical experience and of the yearning towards eschatological fullness in which “there will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain” (Rev 21:4) because there will be “divine intimacy” in all its glorious and luminous fullness: “He will dwell with them and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them, their God” (Rev 21:3) because “God will be all in all” (1Cor 15:28).

NOTES

¹ P.R. Kleinginna Jr. – A.M. Kleinginna, *A categorized list of emotion definitions, with suggestions for a consensual definition*, in “Motivation and Emotion” 5/n. 4 (1981), pp. 345-379. As is known, the question was already taken up in the philosophical and ethical area by Aristotle in *Retorica* and in *Etica Nicomachea* and in *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas d’Aquino. The first really specific analysis can be found in the *Treatise of Human Nature* by Hume (1739), but already Descartes with his *Passions de l’âme* (1649), Spinoza with l’*Ethica* (1677) and Hobbes with *Leviathan* (1651) were the forerunners of this investigation which would have an initial specific status both in W. Wundt, *Grundzüge der physiologischen Psychologie* (1873-74), as well as in W. James (*What is an emotion*, in “Mind” 19, 1884, pp. 188-205). Meanwhile comparative studies had begun regarding animal behavior with Darwin and his essay *The Expressions of Emotions in Man and Animals* (1872) which basically gave birth to an autonomous discipline, ethology. With the arrival of the psychological sciences this interest spread out and acquired many forms and connections (see, for example, A. Morton, *Emotion and Imagination*, Polity Press, Cambridge 2013).

² See G. Barbiero, «*Tu mi hai sedotto, Signore*», Gregorian & Biblical Press, Roma 2013 e M. Bordoni, *Teologia pathetica dei profeti*, in *Gesù di Nazaret Signore e Cristo*, Herder – Pontificia Università Lateranense, Roma 1982, vol. I, pagg. 142-144.

³ We refer to a summary on the biblical verb “to know” in W. Schottroff, *jd’ conoscere*, in E. Jenni – C. Westermann edd., *Dizionario Teologico dell’Antico Testamento*, Marietti, Torino 1978, vol. I, coll. 591-607; W. Schmithals, *ginōskō, gnōsis, gnōstos*, in H. Balz – G. Schneider, *Dizionario Esegetico del Nuovo Testamento*, Paideia, Brescia 2004, coll. 654-663. At the general modern methodological level, an unitary hermeneutics on knowledge that was biological (thinking-feeling) or trilogical (will-thought-feeling) was proposed especially by T. Ribot, *La logique des sentiments*, F. Alcan, Paris 1905.

⁴ For the Decalogue see, G. Ravasi – A. Tagliapietra, *Non desiderare la donna e la roba d’altri*, Il Mulino, Bologna 2010, pp. 9-69. For the Hebrew root of “desire” see instead, E. Gerstenberger, *hmd*, in E. Jenni – C. Westermann, *Dizionario... cit.*, coll. 501-503.

⁵ F. Büchsel, *thymós, epithymía...*, in *Grande Lessico del Nuovo Testamento*, Paideia, Brescia 1968, vol. III, coll. 589-604; H. Hübner, *epithymía...*, in H. Balzer – G. Schneider, *Dizionario... cit.*, coll. 1309-1314.

⁶ Specially Germana Strola deals with the topic of God’s desire (subjective and objective genitive) in various essays: *Alcuni elementi di lessicografia per lo studio del desiderio di Dio nella Bibbia ebraica*, in “Rivista Biblica” 47 (1999), pp. 361-371; 48 (2000), pp. 307-317: *Il desiderio di Dio. Studio dei Salmi 42-43*, Cittadella, Assisi 2003; *Desiderio*, in R. Penna – G. Perego – G. Ravasi edd., *Temi teologici della Bibbia*, San Paolo, Cinisello Balsamo 2010, pp. 326-333: See also Aa.Vv., *Nostalgia e desiderio di Dio*, Glossa, Milano 2006, in particolare pp. 53-141; A. Barban ed., *Il desiderio e Dio*, San Paolo, Cinisello Balsamo 1997; J. Nabert, *Le désir de Dieu*, Cerf, Paris 1996; P. Stefani, *Il desiderio di Dio nell’Antico Testamento*, in C. Ciancio ed., *Metafisica del desiderio*, Vita & Pensiero, Milano 2003, pp. 39-52.

⁷ J. Lacan, *La direzione della cura e i principi del suo potere*, in *Scritti*, Einaudi, Torino 1974, vol. II, p. 624.

⁸ See H.J. Stoebe, *rḥm pi. avere misericordia*, in E. Jenni – C. Westermann, *Dizionario... cit.*, vol. II, Casale Monferrato 1982, coll. 685-692; N. Walter, *splanchnízomai – splánchnon*, in H. Balz – G.

Schneider, *Dizionario...* cit., coll. 1389-1393. For *bas mala* cf. *Il Corano* edited by A. Ventura, Mondadori, Milano 2010, p. 426.

⁹ In the New Testament the kidneys, *nephroí*, appear as hapax only in Rev 2:23 according to the traditional biblical form: “they will know that I am the one who scrutinizes the kidneys (*nephrouís*) and the hearts (*kardías*) of men».

¹⁰ L. Alonso Schökel, *Dizionario di ebraico biblico*, San Paolo, Cinisello Balsamo 2013, p. 67. See also G. Sauer, *’af, ira*, in E. Jenni – C. Westermann, *Dizionario...* cit., vol. I, pp. 195-196.

¹¹ L. Alonso Schökel, *Dizionario...* cit., p. 376. See also G. Sauer, *’af, ira*, in E. Jenni – C. Westermann, *Dizionario...* cit., vol. I, pp. 195-196.

¹² F. Zorell, *Lexicon Hebraicum et Aramaicum Veteris Testamenti*, Pontificium Institutum Biblicum, Roma 1968, p. 344.

¹³ See E. Dhorme, *L’emploi métaphorique des noms de parties du corps en hébreu et en akkadien*, Gabalda, Paris 1923.

¹⁴ We cite an exemplary title, R. Bodei, *Geometria delle passioni. Paura, speranza, felicità: filosofia e uso politico*, Feltrinelli, Milano 1997; Idem, *Ordo amoris. Conflitti terreni e felicità celeste*, Mulino, Bologna 1991; G. Chimirri, *Etica delle passioni*, Dehoniane, Bologna 1996; G. De Simone, *Sentire l’uomo, gustare Dio*, Cittadella, Assisi 2013; S. Natoli, *Dizionario dei vizi e delle virtù*, Feltrinelli, Milano 1996; Idem, *La felicità. Saggio di teoria degli affetti*, Feltrinelli, Milano 1994; *L’esperienza del dolore: Le forme del patire nella cultura occidentale*, Feltrinelli, Milano 1986. On a more strictly theological level we indicate the synthesis of G. Barbaglio – G. Bof, *Sentimento*, in G. Barbaglio – G. Bof – S. Dianich edd., *Teologia*, San Paolo, Cinisello Balsamo 2002, pp. 1504 – 1522. As a *specimen* of a sectorial thematic research we cite S. Leonarda, «*Mia gioia e mia corona*» (*Fil 4,1*): *ricerca biblico-teologica. La gioia nelle lettere di S. Paolo*», Augustinus, Palermo 1988.

¹⁵ For the exegesis of this passage we refer to M. Bachmann, *Hohepriesterliches Leiden. Beobachtungen zu Hebr 5,1-10*, in ZNW 78 (1987), pp. 244-266 e a J. Swetnam, *The Crux at Hebrews 5,7-8*, in Bib 81 (2000), pp. 347-361. See also C. Marcheselli Casale, *Lettera agli Ebrei*, Paoline, Milano 2005, pp. 247-262.

¹⁶ R. Tosi, *Dizionario delle sentenze latine e greche*, Bur-Rizzoli, Milano 1991, pp. 753-754. See also K.M. Woschitz, *Erlösende Tränen. Gedanken zu Hebr 5,7*, in “Bibel und Liturgie” 56 (1983), pp. 196-201.

¹⁷ R. Fabris, *L’angoscia di Gesù*, in “Servitium” 37, n. 145 (2003), pp. 53-62. On a general level, G. Barbaglio, *Le emozioni e i sentimenti di Gesù*, in “Servitium” 34, n. 130 (2000), pp. 39-50.

¹⁸ R. Fabris, a. c., pp. 58-59. For a complete analysis of the scene of Gethsemane (MK 14: 26-52; Mt 26:30-56; LK 22:39-53; Jn 18:1-11) Refer to R. E. Brown, *La morte del Messia*, Queriniana, Brescia 1999, pp. 137-362.

¹⁹ G. Durand, *L’imagination symbolique*, Presses Universitaires de France, Paris 1993⁶; *Les structures anthropologiques de l’imaginaire. Introduction à l’archétypologie générale*, Bordas,

Paris 1982⁹. Following the durandian model, an attempt has been made to order the whole symbolism of the Psalms: L. Monloubou, *L'imaginaire des Psalmistes*, Cerf, Paris 1980.

²⁰ C. Rocchetta, *Teologia della tenerezza*, Dehoniane, Bologna 2000. Cf. also E. Fuchs, *Desiderio e tenerezza*, Claudiana, Torino 1988 e J. Vanier, *Lettera della tenerezza di Dio*, Dehoniane, Bologna 1995.

²¹ J. B. Metz – L. Kuld – A. Weisbrod edd., *Compassion. Weltprogramm des Christentums*, Herder, Freiburg i. Br. 2009.

²² W. Kasper, *Misericordia*, “Giornale di teologia” n. 361, Queriniana, Brescia 2013. See also G. L. Moreira, *Compaixão-Misericordia: uma espiritualidade que humaniza*, Paulinas, São Paulo 1996; R. Rodrigues Da Silva, *Misericordia*, in R. Penna – G. Perego – G. Ravasi, *Temi teologici...* cit., pp. 857-863; J. Sobrino, *El principio-Misericordia*, Sal Terrae, Bilbao 1992.

²³ “The eagles fly over their newborns in large circles, and after each attempt to fly, the little ones come to rest on the wings of the parents” (P. Buis, *Le Deutéronome*, Beauchesne, Paris 1969). The preceding verse also (*Deut 32:10*) is marked by tenderness: “He shielded him and cared for him; he guarded him as the apple of his eye” .

²⁴ C. Dohmen, “*Eifersüchtiger ist sein Name*” (*Ex 34,14*). *Ursprung und Bedeutung der alttestamentlichen Rede von Gottes Eifersucht*, in ThZ 46 (1990), pp. 289-304; M. Hengel, *Gli Zeloti*, Paideia, Brescia 1996; B. Renaud, *Je suis un Dieu jaloux. Évolution sémantique et signification théologique de qin’ah*, Cerf, Paris 1963; F. Serafini, *Gelosia*, in R. Penna – G. Perego – G. Ravasi, *Temi teologici...* cit., pp. 511-515. More specific and complex is the theme of “jealousy” in *Rm 9,11*: see M. Baker, *Paul and the salvation of Israel. Paul’s ministry, the motif of jealousy, and Israel’s yes*, in CBQ 67 (2005), pp. 469-484; R. H. Bell, *Provoked to jealousy: the Origin and Purpose of the Jealousy Motif in Romans 9-11*, Mohr-Siebeck, Tübingen 1994; R. Fabris, *La “gelosia” nella lettera ai Romani (9-11). Per un nuovo rapporto tra Ebrei e cristiani*, in Aa. Vv., *Israele e le genti*, A.V.E., Roma 1991, pp. 129-156.