



Demanding Our Attention: The Hebrew Bible as a Source for Christian Ethics

Emily Amdt

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What can we possibly learn about our relationships to others from reading the story of an ancient father who raised a knife to slaughter his beloved only son? Contemporary Christian ethicists, faced with such dilemmas, are often tempted to treat the Hebrew Bible in a limited, distanced, and even dismissive way. Yet Emily Arndt here argues that ancient scriptures can be a vital resource for Christian ethical studies today. Focusing on a close analysis of the akedah — the story of Abraham’s near-sacrifice of Isaac — she demonstrates the power of even the most troubling and uncomfortable Old Testament narratives to teach valuable ethical lessons. Placing ourselves in relationship to such complex, perhaps un-resolvable, and always challenging sacred texts, she says, is in itself a practice that can help us learn to relate authentically and ethically to others. “This is a fully formed, sophisticated, and beautifully written book, offering an important contribution to the field of theological ethics. . . . A fitting tribute to a scholarly career that was cut short all too soon.” — Jean Porter (from the foreword)

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