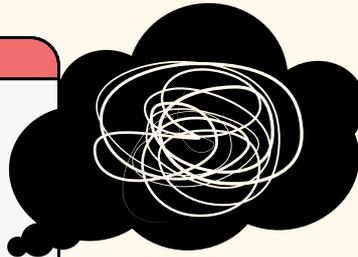


THE OLD TESTAMENT

Tips & advice for those who struggle to read the Old Testament

QUESTIONS/PROBLEMS:

- Is God too vengeful?
- Is there incongruence between the Old & New Testaments?



RESPONSE:

Ironically, I'm going to use a New Testament passage to give some context to the Old Testament's legalism regarding sin (that is covered by God's grace), which is revealed most powerfully in the New Testament.

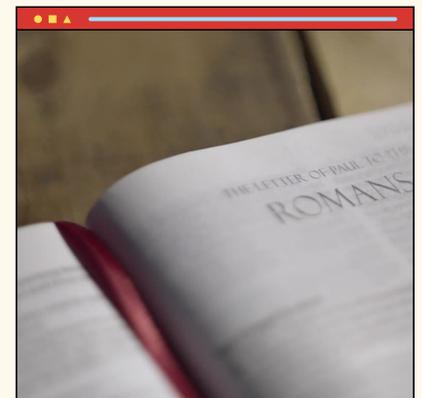
KEY SCRIPTURE: ROMANS 5:20

"God's law was given so that people could see how sinful they were. But as people sinned more and more, **God's wonderful grace became more abundant**." New Living Translation

"But the law came to increase & expand [the awareness of] the trespass [**by defining and unmasking sin**]." Amplified Translation

"Sin didn't, and doesn't, have a chance in competition with the aggressive forgiveness we call grace... because **God is putting everything together again through the Messiah**, [grace] invites us into life—a life that goes on and on and on, world without end." The Message Translation

Date: February 2022



BIBLE STUDY TIPS:

- The Bible Project
- SOAP - (Scripture; Observation; Application; Prayer)
- YouVersion
- MessengerX
- Chronological Study Plans
- A Proverbs A Day
- Famous Bible Stories



For details, visit:
www.abigailrozuru.com/simple-bible-study-tips-old-testament

A VENGEFUL GOD OR...

Where we may see 'vengeful' and unfair, seemingly disproportionate responses from God to sin, we often don't see His grace and the bigger picture because it is actually more nuanced.

One example is God's response to Moses' sin despite all Moses had already done as a servant of the LORD.

Moses...

- led the Israelites out of slavery,
- obeying God by standing up to Pharaoh (not an easy task!);
- put up with a perpetually disobedient and aggravating group of people - the Israelites - in the wilderness for forty years!

And yet... because of ONEEEE sin - angrily hitting a rock instead of speaking to it (disobedience) - Moses is told he won't lead the Israelites into the Promised Land! (Numbers 20:12)

But the story doesn't end here...

ON MISALIGNMENT BETWEEN THE OLD & NEW TESTAMENT

Sin & Lawlessness

We have been lawless from the start. Murder or the extremes of violence & immorality seem to be the first port of call where 'justice' is concerned, e.g. Cain & Abel; Moses killing the Egyptian.

An eye for an eye

So an 'eye for an eye' seems to respond to the need for justice as a more 'proportionate' punishment for the wrongdoing. E.g. rather than killing the Egyptian for flogging the Israelites, Moses could have flogged the Egyptian, which would be a 'proportionate' 'eye for an eye' type of punishment.

But Jesus says 'turn the other cheek'...?

Yes... in the Old Testament, God responded with a law that reflected the contemporary culture and met them in the middle. A drastic call for peace in response to harm at that time may have been too much too soon.

A vengeful God?

With the rate the Israelite community grew (Exodus 1:9,12), they were viewed as a threat by surrounding nations; it may have been a 'kill or be killed' situation. They also would have quickly outgrown smaller areas of land as an agricultural community so conquest was key.



A VENGEFUL GOD OR...MERCIFUL & KIND?

Now, I used to always read Numbers 20:12 as the end of Moses' journey of promise, which I thought incredibly unfair! I mean, after all he's done and all the crap he's put up with leading the Israelites who basically moaned every single day for several decades, despite being freed from slavery!

Anyway, I was wrong.

We see Moses again 'talking with Jesus' at the Transfiguration in Matthew 17:1-9.

This means he clearly got way more than the promise of an earthly Promised Land!

MORAL OF THE STORY

Most of the time we barely get half of the picture, but I'm sure if we had the full revelation of God's grace, we'd trust God, His faithfulness & His goodness.

And we get greater revelation as we read the New Testament in light of the Old Testament.

