
5. The post-exilic people.

Ezra 8:35 Then the exiles who had returned from captivity sacrificed burnt offerings to the God of Israel: ...

■ **The difference between what ought to be and what is** ■

James 1:22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.

²³ *Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror*

²⁴ *and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like.*

■ ²⁵ *But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.* ■

Proverbs 24:16 A righteous man falls seven times and gets up, but the wicked are overthrown by calamity.

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Is God's Wisdom Timeless?

Is God a Moral Monster?—part 4

April 29, 2018

■ *Psalms 119:89 (RSV) Forever, O LORD, thy word is firmly fixed in the heavens.* ■

2 Timothy 3:16-17 (RSV) All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,¹⁷ that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

■ *John 8:31-32 (RSV) Jesus then said to the Jews who had believed in him, If you continue in my word, you are truly my disciples,³² and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."* ■

Understanding the Old Testament

The law of Moses: "toothless" and provisional

Romans 7:7 What shall we say, then? Is the law sin? Certainly not! Indeed, I would not have known what sin was except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting really was if the law had not said, Do not covet."

Romans 7:8 But sin, seizing the opportunity afforded by the commandment, produced in me every kind of covetous desire.

Romans 7:12 So then, the law is holy, and the commandment is holy, righteous and good.

Ezekiel 36:26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.

Incremental steps toward the ideal

Genesis 1:27 So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.

Genesis 2:24 For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh.

Matthew 19:3 Some Pharisees came to him to test him. They asked, 'Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any and every reason?'

Matthew 19:4 'Haven't you read,' he replied, 'that at the beginning the Creator 'made them male and female,'⁵ and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh'?⁶ So they are no longer two, but one. Therefore, what God has joined together, let man not separate.'

Matthew 19:7 Why then,' they asked, 'did Moses command that a man give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away?'

Matthew 19:8 Jesus replied, 'Moses permitted you to divorce your wives because your hearts were hard. But it was not this way from the beginning.'

The redemptive movement of scripture

Israel's history; different stages, different demands

1. The wandering clans.

Genesis 10:31 These are the sons of Shem by their clans and languages, in their territories and nations.³² These are the clans of Noah's sons, according to their lines of descent, within their nations. From these the nations spread out over the earth after the flood.

2. A theocratic people and a theocratic nation.

Genesis 12:2 'I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing.'

3. Monarchy, the rule of a king. Saul, David, Solomon, etc.

1 Samuel 24:20 "I know that you will surely be king and that the kingdom of Israel will be established in your hands."

4. People of the exile.

Jeremiah 29:10 This is what the LORD says: 'When seventy years are completed for Babylon, I will come to you and fulfill my gracious promise to bring you back to this place.'¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'¹² Then you will call upon me and come and pray to me,
