

THE OLD TESTAMENT & THE IMAGE OF GOD – PART ONE

A Mount Olivet D.C. Bible Study by Rev. Dr. John Johnson

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The Old Covenant was applied in Exodus 24:1-11 and was an eternal contract between Israel and God. Prior to the Old Covenant God only made promises to faithful people such as Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

We know in this first covenant to break one rule or law was to break them all (James 2:9-11). The community as a whole was subject to punishment for the sins of a few. A good example of this is Numbers 25:1-18 where God sent a plague against the Israelites because a leader of the Simeonites continued to worship Baal and sin against God so that he could have sex with a Midianite woman.

2 Chronicles 7:13-15 (God tells Solomon He will respond to true repentance).

Much later in the history of Israel the people have been exiled to Babylon and yet false prophets are telling the people that within a few months God will rise up and set them free. God explains his love for the exiles but points out that they must stay 80 years in Babylon and that the extremely disobedient in Jerusalem must still be punished (Jeremiah 29:10-23).

QUESTIONS

A lot of people that look at the Old Testament see God as harsh and unfair. Thus it is common to hear people declare, "I worship the God of the New Testament".

1. In one short sentence describe God?
2. Is the God of your description consistent with the God portrayed in the Old Testament? Why or why not?

In Isaiah 58:1-14 (God becomes more specific about what repentance looks like in his sight).

King David helps us see God's point of view more clearly in Psalms 51. Here David opens up and explains for history how he repented to God after committing adultery with Bathsheba and killing her husband Uriah (See 2 Samuel chapters 11-12). Then once David is confronted by the prophet Nathan the illicit child is struck dead by God. Immediately David cleans up, worships God and then with days writes Psalm 51.

[Next time we will continue with God's image in the Old Testament and how that compares to our current views. Due to LWML commitments the next study date is October 12].