

How Can a Loving God Do That?

It is happening more and more these days, and it just breaks my heart. A pastor of another large church has announced that the Bible is not the Word of God. He is leading his evangelical church away from one of the four core tenets of evangelicalism: belief in the authority of the Scriptures.

According to such pastors, the problem is that the Old Testament does not describe the loving God of the New Testament and is filled with war and judgment. To such a statement, this is my response: Don't throw away the baby with the bathwater! Don't discard the Old Testament—learn how to read and teach it.

Jesus grew up memorizing and studying the Old Testament and had ample opportunity to disavow it if it was, in fact, not inspired. Instead, He considered the Old Testament to be the Word of God.

He did not seem to have a problem with how it portrays God nor troublesome passages like God's use of a flood to destroy a wicked generation of mankind. In fact, Jesus compared His own return with the flood narrative. He also did not disavow God's judgment that destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah but instead pronounced a worse judgment on the city of Capernaum for not believing in the miracles He had carried out there.

Jesus not only revered the Old Testament and considered it to be true but recognized its power and spiritual authority. When Satan tempted Him in the wilderness, Jesus responded with "It is written," and then quoted from Deuteronomy. One of those verses was that man shall not live by bread alone but by the Word of God, which in Jesus' time was what we now call the Old Testament. If we tell our congregants to disregard the Old Testament, we rob them of the very spiritual nourishment Jesus prescribed and the powerful weapons He used Himself.

If you want to better understand the God of the Old Testament, join me this week on the *Out of Zion* podcast on *God's Love for His People. Walk Thru the Bible* with me each week by downloading our Bible reading plan, and get started reading right away! Invite your friends and family to join us! I can't wait to *Walk Thru the Bible* with you! {eoa}

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