



AREOPAGUS PROCLAMATION

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But isn't the Old Testament an example of how God sometimes gets it wrong? I mean, otherwise why didn't He just start with the New Testament in the first place?

Secondly, in most cases one only changes their mind when new information comes along. But God is omniscient (Psalm 147:5). He never suddenly comes to know something that He has not already known from eternity.

Thirdly, the best translations use the term *relent*, not *repent*, when Scripture refers to God adopting a "new" position on some matter.

Of course God has always known what His ultimate position will be on every matter. So terms like "new" or "relented" or "changed His mind" may, in part, be an accommodation to human perspective. That is, to us it may *seem* that

God has changed. But the best way to understand a passage like Exodus 32:14 is to realize that here God *actually* takes the position that He always *ultimately* intended to take. Though genuinely sorry about all disobedience, He chooses to involve us in fulfilling His purposes by teaching us to depend on Him and by granting us influence with Him through prayer.

What if creation itself was a Divine blooper? I mean, look at the mess we're in — poverty, crime, corruption, disease, death, mental illness.

Any such verdict would be premature and unjustified according to God's Word. See Romans 8:28, Ephesians 1, and Revelation 21.

Atheist Richard Dawkins has described God as "a capriciously malevolent bully." How do we know that God is not fickle?

We have His Word to the contrary. (Numbers 23:19, Ephesians 1:11)

For I will proclaim the name of the LORD; ascribe greatness to our God! The Rock, his work is perfect, for all his ways are justice. A God of faithfulness and without iniquity, just and upright is he. (Deuteronomy 32:3-4, ESV)

Long before He ever entered into His first (Old) Covenant with Israel, God had His New Covenant with *all believers* in mind. The Old Testament wasn't just some sort of exercise in trial and error. God had to make it clear to all of us humans for all time that we can not and will not *ever* measure up to His perfect standards — just like any good parent who may at times have to allow their child to fail in order to teach them humility and obedience.



But if God never fails, why does the Bible say in Genesis 6:6 that He was sorry that He had created man on the earth?

God was *indeed* grieved that all those people had turned away from Him in sin. But that doesn't mean that it came as a surprise to Him. And it certainly did not include obedient Noah who found grace in God's sight. (Genesis 6:8)

What about all those places where the Bible says that God changed His mind or repented, e.g. Exodus 32:14; 1 Samuel 15? Don't they indicate that God made mistakes?

First off, we know that the inherent nature of God Himself never changes. (Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 13:8, James 1:17) In fact, by definition, it *cannot* change. Why not? Because God is eternal. He exists outside of time (Revelation 1:8) and change implies the passage of time. So God Himself can never change in any way.

Does God Ever Get It Wrong?

by Daryl E. Witmer

Isn't it possible that God, even if He is all-powerful and well-intended, might get things wrong once in a while?

Well, if you're referring to the God of the Bible, that's a logical non-starter. If God is God then by definition He is always right because He not only *sets* the standard for what is right — *He is the standard*. The Bible says that God is holy and righteous and good *by nature*. (Psalm 118:1) We finite humans often develop our own ideas about what seems right and good in certain situations, and then we question God when His ways don't match up with those ideas. How backward and presumptuous. The Bible says that God *is* righteous. So everything that He does is necessarily right and good. Abraham once made this point rhetorically: "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is just?" (Genesis 18:25b, ESV) David wrote: "The works of [God's] hands are truth and justice; All His precepts are sure. They are upheld forever and ever; They are performed in truth and uprightness." (Psalm 111:7-8). And Psalm 119:137 says: "Righteous are You, O LORD, And upright are Your judgments."

More Evidence in Defense and Confirmation of the Christian Faith