

## Killing in the Name of God?

(February 29, 2020)

Killing in the name of God. Gotten several questions lately, not only via email, but even at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln. Just got back from a five day trip. Went to Nebraska. Hit three colleges, all University of Nebraska. Started Kearney, went to Lincoln, then on to Omaha. Wonderful crowds every place we went. You can see all of the Q&A from those presentations, and the presentations, as well, if you'd like. If you go to our YouTube channel, [crossexamined.org](https://www.crossexamined.org) YouTube channel, you will see those three events lined up there. We stream them all live. They're also on our Facebook page. And if you want to see some of the Q&A, particularly the Q&A regarding this question; What would you do if God told you to kill somebody? What would you do? I'll relate some of that here in this particular program. But if you want to see more of that you can go and watch those particular Q&A's. In fact, the last Q&A, the one at Omaha, went an hour and 15 minutes and I was about spent after that. Each presentation takes an hour 30 to 40 minutes, and then you have Q&A, so that whole event went three hours. That University of Nebraska at Omaha. So, I was pretty spent after two church services, an evening event for my friend, Tim Stratton, on Sunday, then a pastor's meeting on Monday morning, and then three successive university events from Kearney, to Lincoln, to Omaha. So, we have a lot of new Q&A up there on the YouTube channel that you can look at.

But the question that we didn't get to last week and was asked at the University of Nebraska at Lincoln, comes from Brian. Brian didn't ask it at Lincoln, but he did via email. He said, "I've gotten into your podcast and can't say how much of a blessing your ministry has been." Thank you. Brian. "It's enabling me to be more bold in my faith and to try and lovingly discuss the evidence for my faith. I have a few questions for you. My friend and I got into a discussion a few days back and he posed a couple of questions I had no answer for. His first question/objection seemed to say, because God gives us only the choice voice of Jesus, or a belief in Jesus, or eternal punishment, he argued it was not true free will."

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Alright, let me stop right there. I think he's confusing the consequences of free will with free will itself. In other words, you have free will even when you only have two choices. And that's true of any...you know, Coke or Pepsi, they got free will, okay? You can choose one of the two. Just because one may not be one that you like, you still have a free choice. So, you don't have to have 1000 choices in order to have free choice. You just have to have two. And so, you still have free choice, even if you only have two choices for eternity.

It's actually the atheists who can explain why you have free will. Because again, if materialism is true, and that's what most atheists today are...they're materialists...then they shouldn't, and we shouldn't, none of us should have free will, because we are completely controlled by the laws of physics. And that's why Sam Harris, a prominent atheist, says we don't have free will. And of course, all you need to do to ask him about that is to say, "Did you arrive at the conclusion that we don't have free will freely?" Because if you didn't, you have no warrant to believe it or anything else you think. So, it's the atheists that don't have free will.

Christians have free will and you have a lot of choices in this life. Just because you only have two in the afterlife, doesn't mean you don't have free will. You still have free will. And actually, atheism gives you no choice. You just going to die and become worm food. Doesn't matter what you believe doesn't matter what you do, that's what's going to happen to you. And almost every worldview gives you very few choices in the afterlife. Obviously, the Eastern worldviews say you're in this cosmic cycle of karma, whereby you're going to come back and be reincarnated, based on how well you do in this life. If you do well, morally, you'll come back at a higher level next time. If you don't do well, you'll come back as a lower level. You really don't have much of a choice. You just got to live as morally as you can.

And this is, by the way, why, to a certain extent, Mother Teresa in India was fighting an uphill battle, because according to the karma theology that they had there in India, if you helped somebody who was suffering, you were actually hurting them long term. Because if they're suffering now, they're basically suffering because of previous wrongs they've done, and you want them to wear off their karma, or work through their karma. You want to help them now, that's not really helping them according to that theology. In fact, it's hurting them, and they deserve what they have. Mother Teresa comes along and says, No, we try and comfort everyone who's suffering, and karma is false.

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Now, if you think about this, the whole Eastern worldview of karma, they don't have the resources in order to actually make karma work. Because if karma were true, first of all, you'd need a moral standard to say, what is good and what is bad. And there is no moral standard in a pantheistic worldview. There's no objective moral standard. Everything is God. There's no standard beyond the world. Everything just is God. You're God, I'm God, everything's God. And so, they actually have to steal a moral standard from God in order to make the karma system work. And secondly, you would need a being like God, in order to put people, if karma were true, in the right location in the next life. You'd have to have a being who has all knowledge to say, this person deserves to go to this level and this person because it deserves to go to this level. You would need a theistic God in order to carry that whole thing out.

But I digress. I'm just pointing out that they don't have the resources in their worldview to actually do what their worldview says it does do. Really, only Christianity has the resources to actually do what it says it does do. In fact, if you think about it, in Greg Koukl makes this point in his, *The Story of Reality* book, that Christianity really, the entire Christian story, is really the answer to the problem of evil. Everybody's dealing with the problem of evil. Only Christianity answers it. That's what Christianity is. How do we reconcile this broken world? How do we redeem this broken world? Well, we actually don't, unless Jesus comes and redeems it for us, and then we participate with him as ambassadors for Christ in order to redeem it. But he redeems us first, in order for us to even do that. And so, ultimately, evil is quarantined in a place called hell. It's separation from God and we talked a little bit about this last week, here on this program.

So, you don't get choices in other worldviews, really. In Islam, you have two choices. Right? You're either Muslim, and you have to have your good deeds outweigh your bad deeds, in order to see if Allah will let you in to his paradise. And the only way to really guarantee you're going to make it is to die in jihad, according to Islam. So, you don't really know if you're going to make it. Allah is arbitrary, and so he isn't essentially good. Whatever he does is good. And you won't know if you're going to make it, again, unless you're a jihadist and die in jihad. You won't know until you get there.

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So, look, every worldview has very few choices in the afterlife and Christianity gives you two choices. You're either going to be with Jesus in the afterlife, or you're not. There's only two choices and you have the freedom to choose one or the other. So, you still have free will in the afterlife, with two possibilities. You're either with God or you're not with God. Those are the two choices.

Now, we had another question, this gentleman did. He asked, "'If God told you to kill someone, would you?' I know this was a gotcha question", says Brian, "but I also could not fully refute it, because I know God has done so in the past with Abraham. And a little bit later with the Canaanites". And he says, "This question has perplexed me. Any thoughts?" Yes, I'll give my thoughts right after the break. You're listening to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with Frank Turek at the American Family Radio network. Our website is [crossexamined.org](http://crossexamined.org). CrossExamined with a D on the end of it. org. We also have an app. Two words in the App Store, Cross Examined. Download it. It's free. It's got a lot of great stuff on it. Back in two.

Killing in the name of God. What do we think about that? Difficult subject for modern minds. You're listening to, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, with Frank Turek. And Brian wrote in and asked the question, "If God told you to kill someone, would you?" He's actually being asked that question by a friend of his. And I actually had this question posed by a gentleman who showed up at our Lincoln event, who got in line several times to ask repeated questions. He was an atheist, but he was very respectful. He got a little bit flustered a couple of times, or a little bit emotional, but that's okay. We had about 600 people in the room and about another hundred in an overflow room, so it was a big crowd. And he kind of asked the same question, you know. "If God told you to kill someone, would you?" And so, I said, "Well, actually, I'm very hesitant to answer hypothetical questions, because I don't know what I would do". And I take this lesson from Peter, who was asked about his loyalty to Jesus and he said, "Lord, I'll never deny you." What did he wind up doing? He wound up denying him three times. Who knows what I would do? I mean, I'd hope I do the right thing. I hope I'd be loyal. I'd want to, of course, if I thought God was telling me to kill somebody, you know, we'd go see a psychiatrist in America today, obviously. What are you talking about?

But let's go back to Old Testament times. Let's go back to Abraham. And before we do, let's set this up, before we get back to Abraham. One of the things I said to the gentleman, his name

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happened to be Cody, in Lincoln, was, Well, if atheism is true, what's wrong with killing people? I mean, really, because there is no right or wrong. No objective right or wrong. Human beings are nothing but overgrown germs. We're just moist robots, molecular machines. We're not anything special. We're just the highest, intellectually, on this evolutionary tree. So, there's no purpose to life, which means there's no right or wrong way to live it. Without purpose you can't know right or wrong anyway. Without God, there is no right or wrong. You can know right or wrong and disbelieve in God. You can do right and disbelieve in God. But there would be no right unless there was a god. So, you're stealing a standard from God to say that something you find in the Old Testament is wrong. If atheism is true, and there's no purpose for life, human beings are nothing special, so there's nothing wrong with killing them. Woah, well, that's just true. Sorry. That's just it.

Now, the better question. Is it okay for God to kill people? Is it murder when God kills people? And with Cody at Lincoln, we got into the Canaanite issue. We talk about that quite a bit on campus, because that always comes up. And the bottom line to the Canaanite issue is that, when God decides that the Canaanites, first of all, need to be expelled from the land, driven out of the land and killed, is that wrong for God to do? And is he doing it arbitrarily? Or is there a reason for him doing that? And it turns out, there's a reason. He's judging a group of people that were so vial, that they were literally sacrificing their children to the molten hot metal God known as Moloch. They'd heat this idol up, which had sort of the head of a bowl, and this odd body, and they would put fire in it, heat the metal thing up, and then put their children, as old as four years old, on these molten hot metal arms of this idol, and watch the baby sizzle to death. The Greek writer, Plutarch, said that, the drummers in the towns would play their drums louder, so the parents couldn't hear their baby screaming as they were being sacrificed. And they were involved in many other grossly immoral practices. And God finally said, after 400 years, this needs to be judged. I need to get the promised people in the promised land, and these people are in the way, and they won't move out. And so, God judged them, and he pushed them out of the land.

In fact, Paul Copan, as you know, makes the point in his very insightful book, *Is God a Moral Monster*. He makes the point that these commands appear to be Ancient Near East hyperbole. Because, for example, if you read in Deuteronomy seven, wipe everybody out women, children, everyone. And then the next verse it says, and then don't intermarry with them. And you're

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wondering, how can you intermarry with a whole group of people you just wiped out? You couldn't. That's the point. This is ancient Near East hyperbole.

Like we would say, in a sporting event, we annihilated the other team. Oh, really? No, they still exist. You didn't destroy them completely. I mean, you just beat them badly. And Copan makes the point that this is what was going on in the Old Testament. And the cities were attacked, not the people in the rural areas. And the cities were fortresses. That's where the military was. The civilians, if they were in the cities, would have evacuated long before any kind of warfare like that had happened, according to Copan.

But let's say Copan's wrong. Let's say it's not hyperbole. Let's say it's literal, that God wanted these people dead, even though you find them over and over again in the Old Testament after, supposedly, they've all been wiped out. Would it be wrong for God to kill people? No, it is not wrong. God kills everyone. If God exists, and people die, God ultimately removes his hand from people. It's not murder for God to kill people. It's murder for us, because we're not the author of life, and we don't have the authority to take life, except through a duly appointed government. And that's only, supposedly, supposed to be with guilty capital punishment, or capital crime offenders, not with innocent people. We don't have the right to take life. As I say, only in a government situation. But God does have the right to take life. And he can take us out when we're two years old or eighty two years old. That's up to him.

Look, if Christianity is true, people don't die, they just change location. They just go from this life to the next life. And so, God has the authority to do that whenever he wants. So, if you're going to question somebody and say, God is immoral, or imply that God is immoral for ordering killings based on judgment, then in my view, you have an illegitimate complaint. Because you have no moral authority by which to say God is wrong, and you don't recognize that God is the author of life. He is the one that gave it, he is the one that can take it, and he is the one that can resurrect it.

But you might say, well, if God told you to do something like this, what would you do? And I think one of the hardest questions to answer are those where God hasn't given us particular reasons why he does a certain thing. Like, why did he ask Abraham, for example, to kill Isaac? Well, he says in there, of course, I wanted to see if you would be faithful to me. Well, obviously

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God knew whether or not Abraham would be faithful to him, because he's outside of time. It was really Abraham who didn't know what he would do. But we'll get to Abraham and Isaac in a minute, with more detail.

God hasn't told us the answer to some questions. Like, why did God use other people as instruments of judgment? I mean, why use Israel against the Canaanites? Why not just wipe out the Canaanites yourself God? Like you did, at least partially, to Sennacherib's army in 701 BC, when Sennacherib has Hezekiah caged like a bird... [unintelligible]. This is an archaeological discovery that comports with the Bible's account that Sennacherib had Jerusalem surrounded, and Hezekiah wouldn't give up, and hundred 85,000 of Sennacherib's troops die just in one night. The Lord took them out, and then Sennacherib's General went home. Why didn't God just do that? And why does God use Babylon against Israel? Why doesn't God just discipline Israel himself? Why does God use Rome against the Jews in the first century, in 70 AD? Why doesn't God just do all the judging and punishing himself?

Well, that's a good question. It's a hard question to answer because he hasn't told us particularly why he just doesn't do everything himself. But I think we can speculate. I mean, we could broaden the question. You know, we can ask that question about any topic. Why doesn't God do everything for us? Well think about it. If he did, what purpose would we have? How could we grow? If we are truly his ambassadors, and God wants us to grow into his disciples, then we've got to act in this world. We just can't sit around and let God do all the work. We're supposed to be his ambassadors. We're supposed to be like God, in the sense that we're his imagers. We're his ambassadors. So, God has used people as instruments of justice, directly, and through governments, as I mentioned. So, if someone were to come to you and say, Well, what would you do? You can answer, Well, I really don't know what I would do. But again, the issue is whether God has the authority to kill people. And as I mentioned, he does.

Now what about Abraham? Abraham knew God's voice before Genesis 22. God had spoken to him in Genesis 12, and in Genesis 15, so he knew who God was. In fact, he had confirmation God was God. Because Isaac was confirmation that God had spoken to him and acted on his behalf. Remember, Abraham and Sarah were very old, and they said, you will have a son. And Isaac was confirmation of that promise. They did have a son. Now, he's being asked to kill that son. Why? Please. Really? Can you imagine that? Søren Kierkegaard, Danish philosopher, has a

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whole book on that called, Fear and Trembling. But look, Abraham had no uncertainty who was telling him to kill. Now he knew God's voice.

Muhammad, on the other hand, when it comes to Islam, according to his biographers, like Haykal, and you can look this up. Muhammad thought he was originally getting revelation from a demon. He thought he was being possessed. Now his wife, Khadijah, talked him out of it and said, No, you're getting revelation from the same source as Moses. But Muhammad initially was uncertain. Abraham had no uncertainty. No uncertainty at all. He knew who was telling him to take his son Isaac's life.

Why would he do that? You need to realize that about 2000 BC, or so, that's when Abraham took Isaac upon the hill. And the hill, by the way, was known as Mt. Mariah. When Isaac said, "Where is the sacrifice for the offering, dad?" And Abraham said, "God will provide the sacrifice." Well, 2000 years later, on that same hill, Mt. Mariah, God is the sacrifice. God takes his son Jesus to that same hill, but this time, he doesn't stop the sacrifice. He goes through with it. In other words, Isaac is a type of Christ. He's foreshadowing the real savior, Jesus Himself. So, that should give us some context.

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So, Isaac is a type of Christ. Abraham is the father; Isaac is the son on Mt. Moriah. And the angel says don't touch the boy. The sacrifice is stopped 2000 years later on the same hill, the same Mt. Mariah. God is the father he takes his son there, but the sacrifice isn't stopped, because the sacrifice is the answer to the problem of evil. The innocent sacrifice, Jesus, takes evil upon

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himself so the punishment do us, will not be put on us, if we trust in Him. So, when people bring up Abraham, I think a lot of times they're missing the real reason that passage is there. Yes, it happened, but it was foreshadowing the real sacrifice. And of course, Abraham knew that God had the power to resurrect Isaac, if he had gone through with the sacrifice, because he said his servants, we will be back. So, even if he thought he was going to go through with the sacrifice, he knew that God could resurrect him.

I want to mention, next weekend, I'm going to be at North Central Church in Spring, Texas. Sunday morning services, and Sunday evening we're going to do, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist. All the details are on the website. And Spring, Texas is just kind of on the outskirts of Houston, just north of Houston. So, I'll be there at the 9:00am and 11:15am service and then at 5:00pm. We're going to continue with the, I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist, and take your questions. So, that's going to be next week, the eighth.

and then the following week, I'll be out at Calvary Chapel, Chino Hills, with my great friend, the great Jack Hibbs. And I'll be doing the morning services there and then meeting with some of the students in the evening. So, that's Calvary Chapel, Chino Hills. So, that's coming up in the future. So, check all that out, if you're anywhere near Houston, or anywhere near, say the Los Angeles Basin. Those are the two areas. By the way, that would be the number two number four city in terms of size. I think LA is number two. Houston is like number four. Of course, you got New York, Chicago, I think it's LA and Houston. Or New York, LA, Chicago, Houston. Something like that, in terms of size, so we're hitting the big areas. Hope to see out there.

Alright, let's go back to our topic here, because I got another question that was sent in by Ben. And Ben is 16 years old. He says, "I live in Canada and this is regarding a Q&A scenario that you mentioned the beginning of your March 11 podcast called, The Bible is All You Need." So, this is going back about 11 months, almost a year now. He says, "In response to your saying that Muslims are motivated to die for their faith, mainly by Surahs eight and nine, a Muslim guy tells you that the terrorists in question have misinterpreted these sections of the Quran. Instead of going to the Quranic text to show why their interpretation is, in fact correct, you say something like, 'Yeah, well, a lot of Muslims think that's what it means.' My question is this, couldn't the same argument be used as soundly against Christianity? That is, a lot of Christians have done terrible things and justified them using the Bible. Is the only difference that more atrocities

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have been committed in the name of Allah than those committed in the name of in the name of Yahweh.?" And he goes on to say, "Thanks for your podcast videos. They've helped me immensely talking about my faith."

Well, thank you so much for the question, Ben. It's a good insightful question. And I think maybe the best thing to do to answer this question is to talk about my friend, Nabil Qureshi, who died a couple of years ago. Now Nabil, early on, was a Muslim apologist, if you will. He was very strong in his Muslim faith. And he eventually met a man by the name of David Wood. Yes, that David Wood, Acts 17 Ministries on YouTube, if you want to go look up David Wood if you don't know who David is. I've had him on this program several times. Amazing apologist, particularly to Muslims, because David, who was a Christian, began to witness and have many conversations with Nabil, a Muslim. And eventually, after a seven year process, Nabil became a Christian. And he became a Christian apologist, working with Ravi Zacharias International Ministries. And he was brought up as a Muslim, and he was told Islam is a religion of peace, and in his sect of Islam, he thought it was. And in fact, when 911 happened, he said, "Who hijacked my faith. This is a religion of peace".

Well, Nabil has many recordings on YouTube, and I want to play a short clip from the video. It's not actually that short. It's just over four minutes. But in a second here, we're going to play this. And what I want you to listen to is how Nabil explains, from doing all the research himself, why he thinks that Islam really is a violent religion at its core, at its writings. And he explains why. So, listen to this. This is Nabil Qureshi, ladies and gentlemen. Here he is.

Nabil Qureshi: "As I started investigating, I truly did believe that the context was all defensive battles in the Quran. But the more I investigated, the more I realized that was simply not the case. Chapter nine, verse five. Chapter nine is the most violent chapter of the Quran. It's souda thalma. And this is the very same chapter which says, 'Fight the Jews and Christians until they pay the Jizya and feel humiliated'. That's chapter nine, verse 29. This is the same chapter, chapter nine verse 111. And I think this is one of the scariest verses of the Quran. Chapter nine verse 111 says, 'The reason Allah has bought your person and your property is this, so you may slay in battle and be slain'. In other words, you're a Muslim so you can kill and die in battle.

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And so, I had to contextualize that. Somehow, I had to say, this cannot be what Muslims are told to do. But as I study the history of early Islam, I found out that actually, chapter nine of the Quran is the last major chapter to have been revealed. In other words, right before Muhammad dies it's as if he calls people to his deathbed and says, 'I've got some more instructions to give you'. That's just metaphorical language I'm using, but like this is the last message I want to leave with you. Chapter nine of the Quran. The most violent one there is.

When we consider the Bible, when people will say, 'Well, what ISIS is doing, didn't Obama say something like this recently? What ISIS is doing is no better or no worse than the Crusades. It's no better no worse than what happened in Christian history'. I say no, no, no, no, no, no. You got to keep things in their appropriate context. In the Bible, the violence did happen. We cannot sidestep it. And you didn't ask this question. So, if someone else wants to ask it, that's fine. But there was violence in the Old Testament, and there's specific circumstances and things that we should talk about with that, so someone please ask. But it did not end up that way. That wasn't the final marching order of God. What we were left with was; 'Turn the other cheek', 'He who lives by the sword dies by the sword', 'Give your enemies something to drink, if they're thirsty'. That's what we were left with. Complete grace and peace.

Flip that around for Islam. In the early, the Meccan days of Islamic history, the message is very, very peaceful. Jews, Christian, Sabians, all of you, if you do good deeds and good works, and you fear God, on the last day for you is heaven. Whereas towards the end, we start hearing things like, anyone who comes before Allah without Islam as their religion, their religion will not be accepted. It goes the other direction. So, how do we distill all this?

There's also the matter of Islamic traditions, hadith. You know, we as, I'm guessing most of us here are Protestant, there may be Catholics, you will understand this, as well. Protestants have kind of a sola scriptura lens. It's like the Bible is my authority and that's it. Muslims are not like that. The Quran is their greatest authority, sure, but then they have whole swathes of Islamic tradition called hadith. And the hadith are the lens through which the Quran is often applied. So, Sunni Muslims often use books like Sahih al-Bukhari, Sahih Muslim, in order to see how Muhammad lived. What was it that he did? By the way, Muhammad's name is only mentioned four times in the Quran. Now, it's not a book of history about Muhammad's life. So, people go to the hadith to see how Muhammad lived. And because there are so many of hadith, people

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can point to the peaceful ones and say, that's how Islam should be. Then you got people like ISIS pointing to the violent ones saying, that's how Islam should be. Who is right? Who is right? And can you make Islam whatever you want to make it?

My concluding statement here is that peaceful Muslims, who say Islam as a religion of peace are not lying to you. They honestly believe it. I did. But they haven't investigated the original sources, or at least, they have done so in a way that wasn't faithful to the timeline of events. Early Islam was, in fact, rather violent. Islam, even under Muhammad's time, did have offensive wars against Jews and Christians. And that rendering of Islamic history is what leads people to diligently, or faithfully, live a violent Islam. I hesitate to say this, but I think it's true. If I still believed in Islam, and if I wanted to be faithful to Muhammad, I would have a hard time not going to Syria right now to fight for ISIS. It seems like they're doing what Islam commands."

That's Nabeel Qureshi, ladies and gentlemen, who as I say, was a Muslim apologist originally, became a Christian apologist, and tragically died in September of 2017, after a long battle with stomach cancer. But Nabeel studied all this for himself, and came to that chilling conclusion at the end, that he thinks what ISIS is doing is what Islam teaches. I noticed he mentioned that Muhammad is only mentioned four times in the Quran. So, many Muslims look to the life and practice of Muhammad, as recorded in the hadith, to see how to interpret the Quran. And chapter nine, Surah nine in the Quran, is the last chapter that was revealed. It's the last words, if you will, from Muhammad, recorded, that basically say that you need to kill any non-Muslim. And Surah eight and Surah nine are very similar in that regard.

So, I know where the jihadists, and Nabeel knows, as well, where the jihadists go in the Quran and the Hadith to justify killing non-Muslims today. But I can't possibly imagine any place in the New Testament that people would use to justify killing non-Christians. Even the Old Testament verses about driving out and killing the Canaanites, that we mentioned earlier in this broadcast, are not universal commands. But they are about bringing judgment on those specific nations over 3000 years ago, because of their persistent sin. Never because they weren't believers in Yahweh. That wasn't why those were ordered.

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Now obviously, people can justify whatever they want by taking scriptures out of context. The question is, are Muslims taking Surah nine out of context? Surah eight out of context? And according to Nabeel, and of course many jihadists, they say no. The question is, Is the Quran true? That's really the question. And thankfully, there are many peaceful Muslims. And as Nabeel said, he was peaceful, and he thought Islam taught peace. After he looked at it more closely, he thought that they didn't. And so, you can't get, if you're going to be honest with the text...Ben, thank you for writing in...you can't get Jihad from Christianity. You can get it from Islam. And so, we need to be clear about that and we also need to pray for Muslims. Pray they would discover the true Jesus.

I'm Frank Turek. We're back in just two minutes, so don't go anywhere.

One of the things we miss, I think, in our modern era, is who God really is, with regard to judgment. We always think, or many of us think, that God is just a God of love and no judgment. But if you think about it, if God didn't judge sin, he really wouldn't be loving either. Just like if a parent never disciplined or punished a child, the parent really wouldn't be loving. The parent wouldn't care about the soul and the future of that child if the parent didn't punish the child, and correct the child, when the child went wrong. In fact, Miroslav Volf, who is originally from Croatia, and saw some terrible things in his country, used to think that God was just a God all of the kind of soft soap sentimentality. Love. Just good feelings for everyone. He now, by the way, teaches at Yale University and has written on this profoundly. And I'm just paraphrasing him now. But he said, I used to believe that was the true God. And now I couldn't worship a God that didn't judge sin. Because I saw such horrific activity in my country; women raped, people murdered, that if they're that if God isn't going to punish them, how could I worship Him? And so, we need to realize that God is a God of judgment, and thankfully so. Otherwise, how could he really be also a loving God if he does not punish sin?

In fact, if you compare the Old Testament and the Quran, or say Jihad and violence used, supposedly, in the Old Testament, then it's not the same thing. Because in the Quran, and in Islam, commands to kill are on the innocent for what they believe. Not what they've done, but what they believe. They're just non-Muslims. Whereas, in the Old Testament, when God says, these people need to be pushed out or killed, they are guilty, and it's for their actions. It's not based on their beliefs. In fact, if you notice, right after the golden calf, God actually orders the

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killing of people that worship the golden calf for their actions, for their behavior. And they were Israelites. That's why we know this isn't, as many atheists will try and say, genocide. It's not genocide in the Old Testament, it's punishment. It's judgment. Because God just doesn't carry it out on non-Israelites, he carries it out on Israelites, for their immoral behavior.

So, there's a big difference between the violence that you see in the Quran, which of course is commanded, if you read it plainly, even today, and the violence that you see in the Old Testament, which was for a specific time, for a specific group of sinners, as a last resort. It's a different thing than what you see in the Quran. But of course, it's something that you're going to get questioned on, if you're a Christian, and you ought to be able to know how to answer it. But one thing we need to be clear about is that God is not just a God of soft soap sentimentality, good feeling kind of love. True love punishes what is evil. Because if you're all one way, if you're all grace and no truth, you're not really a loving being. You've got to have both. And we look at it in our modern culture, and CS Lewis famously said, "We would just like God to be kind of a senile old man who just wants everybody to have a good time". That's not the way the universe really works, ladies and gentlemen. This is serious business. And we're here making choices that will last for an eternity. And this life is the time to make those choices. And there will be judgment.

I got another question from Sam Hall. He says, "I'm a college student, currently attending Texas Tech". And he's recently started to dive into Christian apologetics. "Greatly enjoyed your content." Very nice. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. And it goes on to say this. "I'm a firm believer that Jesus, being God, was and is incapable of making mistakes. However, I've encountered a troubling passage, found in Matthew 24, that many have used to challenge that belief regarding Jesus's words as reliable or not hinges on the infallibility of his words and actions. So, this is not a subject to be taken lightly, for a Christian like myself. Even CS Lewis famously called the particular verse I'm referring to as the most embarrassing verse in the Bible. I, however, cannot write it off as an embarrassment since I haven't fully explored the context of Matthew 24."

Good for you, Sam. At least you're pointing this out, that you're not going to jump to conclusions outside of the isolated verses of the chapter itself. "In Matthew 24, Jesus speaks of the destruction of the temple and then seemingly goes on to speak of the end times. He then

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says in verse 34, that both the temple's destruction, and the second coming, were going to happen before the contemporaries that he was speaking to passed away. He was indisputably correct about the temple, but clearly, the second coming of Christ did not come before the people passed. A few sentences later, Jesus says that. 'No one except the Father knows the time of the second coming'. Was this an admission of ignorance or a mistake that Jesus had made, as CS Lewis had described it, or was Lewis missing something? This opens up the broader question, if Christ was truly fully human, couldn't mistakes like this be expected?"

Wow, there's a lot here. I don't even have time to get into it all. But this is a passage that has troubled many. And if you go to Matthew chapter 24, and we don't have time to read the whole thing. But we'll read the ending and the beginning, just to give it some context. "Jesus left the temple and was walking away when his disciples came up to him to call his attention to its buildings. 2 "Do you see all these things?" he asked. "Truly I tell you, not one stone here will be left on another; every one will be thrown down." 3 As Jesus was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to him privately. "Tell us," they said, "when will this happen, and what will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" 4 Jesus answered: "Watch out that no one deceives you. 5 For many will come in my name, claiming, 'I am the Messiah,' and will deceive many."

He goes on to talk about wars, and rumors of wars, and being persecuted, and the abomination that causes desolation. He goes on and on and on. He talks about, "the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from the sky, and the heavenly bodies will be shaken". And then he says, in verse 34, "Truly I tell you; this generation will certainly not pass away until all these things have happened". And you go, wow. How could that be? How could Jesus have said that? Well, look, when did he say that? First of all, well he said that about 30 AD. What's a generation? Well, a generation is about 40 years, and that would be about 70 AD. Well, in 70 AD, he was right when they said that the temple was destroyed. He says, these things that will happen in this generation are the events surrounding the destruction of the temple. And that's what the disciples asked about. When will these things happen? And then they say, and the end of the age.

So, the temple was destroyed about 40 years after this prophecy of Jesus, which was well within the lifetime of many of those present. Jesus also appeared, however, to talk about

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events surrounding his second coming. And so, that's where the confusion comes in, especially when he says things like, "The sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light, the stars will fall from the sky". Well, that certainly didn't happen in 70 AD, so how can we say Jesus was actually telling the truth here? I mean, he got it half right but what about the other half?

Well, I'm going to give a brief answer now, and in a future program we'll go into more depth. But when Jesus is quoting, "The sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light". Well, first of all, he is quoting something. What's he quoting? He's quoting from Isaiah 13:10. And what's Isaiah talking about? Isaiah is talking about a time when the Babylonians will be judged in Old Testament times. Is he talking about literally the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will literally fall from the sky? No, this is known as apocalyptic literature. It's a strong way of saying it will be a terrible time. It doesn't mean, literally, the sun will be darkened, or the stars will fall from the sky.

Look, it didn't happen in Old Testament times when Isaiah was talking about it. Not literally. And so, we shouldn't expect it, literally, to happen in the future, either. He's basically using this hyperbolic way of communicating a severe truth, or a terrible time, by using apocalyptic literature here. So, that was the case in 70 AD, that it was a terrible time. But he's not saying that this is a literal sun darkening and stars fall from the sky. Because we know it didn't happen in the Old Testament and he's mentioned it here in the New Testament.

And by the way, before I go any further, I don't know all this stuff off the top of my head. I have to study just like you do. There are a couple of resources you can get. One, you ought to get the Apologetics Study Bible, if you don't have it, because it has notes on these kind of things. Secondly, there's some very good commentaries. The one I'm looking at right now is, The New American Commentary. And you can get all of this in Logos Bible software. Okay. You can just cross reference this, you can click on links, you can totally exegete a passage.

And while scholars disagree about this, what they do agree upon is, that Jesus is quoting here from Isaiah 13, and this is not literal. role. And most scholars agree that most prophecies have kind of a dual fulfillment. They have a short-term fulfillment and a long-term fulfillment. The short-term fulfillment was 70 AD. The long-term fulfillment is when Jesus comes back. But it doesn't mean that he was going to come back in the first century. What it meant was that

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everything that needs to happen before he can come back will happen in the first century. In other words, there's nothing since 70 AD that has to happen on the prophetic calendar for Jesus to come back. It's imminent. So, Jesus could have come back 2000 years ago, right after 70 AD, you know, 1900 years ago. Or he could come back today, or tomorrow, or anytime in between. Okay? So, this passage, which we'll get into more detail on a future program, does not show that Jesus made a mistake. In fact, Jesus is predicting the 70 AD event and he's also predicting the future event. And there's a dual fulfillment going on here.

By the way, when you see armies descending on Jerusalem, flee to the mountains. If it really was the end of the world, in 70 AD, what sense would it make to flee to the mountains? They'd be gone too. Anyway, we'll unpack this more in a future program.

I'm Frank Turek. Great being with you. Don't forget, I'm in Spring, Texas next week. Hope to see you there. God bless See you next time.

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