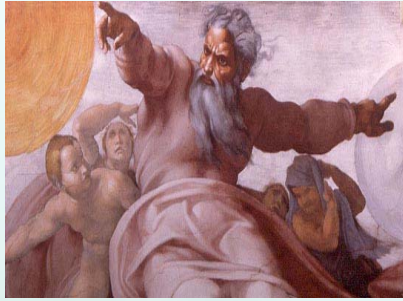


# *Troubling Images of God In the Old Testament*

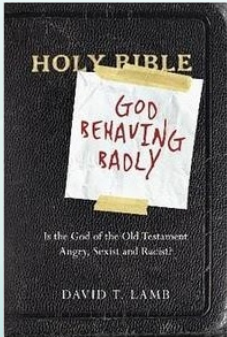




# ***Troubling Images of God In the Old Testament***

- ✦ Introduction and Feedback from You
- ✦ The “Strange” Laws of the Old Testament and their Application to Christians Today
- ✦ The “Crude” Laws Jesus Seemed to “Correct”
- ✦ Patriarchy, Women, Polygamy and Concubinage
- ✦ Slavery and Human Trafficking
- ✦ Massacres and Ethnic Cleansing

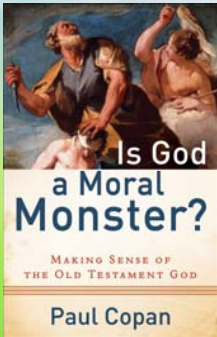
# Read Along:



## God Behaving Badly:

*Is the God of the Old Testament Angry, Sexist and Racist?*

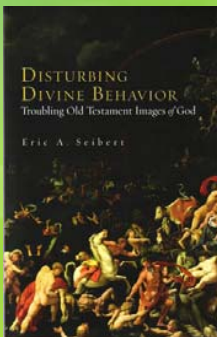
by David T. Lamb



## Is God a Moral Monster:

*Making Sense of the Old Testament God*

by Paul Copan



## Disturbing Divine Behavior:

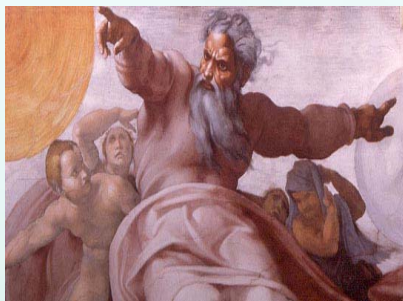
*Troubling Old Testament Images of God*

by Eric A. Seibert



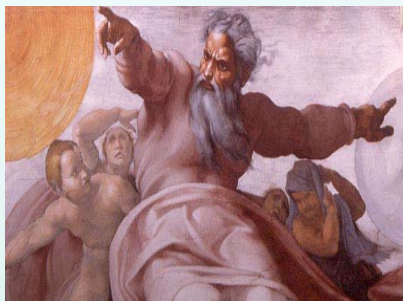
*Troubling Images Part 2*





## *Why Take On This Series?*

- ✦ Christians genuinely have questions about the images of God they see in the Old Testament.
- ✦ Most of us have received entirely unsatisfactory answers, so instead we just ignore the issues entirely.
- ✦ This series is not intended to “solve” for God as if He were the sum total of our demands for rational proofs.
- ✦ The goal is to ask deep questions about the character of God, and come away changed – more deeply in love with God – as a result.



## *Why Take On This Series?*

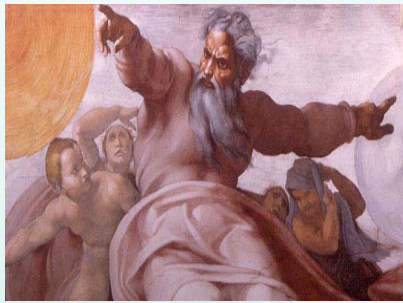
- Q: Why would God prohibit Israel from wearing clothes made out of two different types of materials, or planting two different types of seeds in the same field (Lev. 19:19)?
- Q: Why would God prohibit men from cutting their hair at the sides of their head, or clipping off the edges of their beard? (Lev. 19:27)
- Q. Why are tattoo marks prohibited? (Lev. 19:28)
- Q. What relevance do these laws have for Christians today?
- Q. If these laws don't apply to Christians, why cite to the Old Testament at all?



# *The Mosaic Law*

- ✦ God set up His ideal relationship with humans in the garden; there was no need for the law.
- ✦ Abraham was declared righteous for his faith in God well before the law was given to Israel (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:3)
- ✦ The law was never intended to be permanent; it looked forward to its fulfillment (Jer. 31).
- ✦ The law was a vast improvement over the laws existing at the time in the ancient Near East, a good (Rom. 7:12), incremental step toward the ideal, but was not the ideal.
- ✦ The law was merciful and practical because it did not impose on Israel an ideal it was not ready to accept, but gradually moved Israel toward the ideal (Ezek. 36).





# *The Mosaic Law*

✦  
✦  
✦  
✦  
✦

“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. And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.”

Ezekiel 36:26-27

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*Part 2*



## *... Toward the Ideal*

The Garden:	All created in God's image.
Near East:	Brutal and harsh treatment of slaves.
The Law:	Limited punishment of slaves; some foreign runaway slaves given refuge.
New Testament:	Masters to show concern for slaves; slaves part of the body of Christ.
Restoration:	Return to the creation ideal, with all image-bearers viewed with dignity as equals, and with humanity restored.





# *Purposes of the Law*

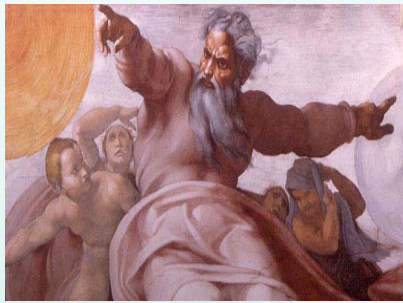
- Holiness: Israel was to be “set apart”; God is holy, and Israel as His covenant people were to be holy as well.
- Integration: God’s reign should affect all aspects of our life; no separation of secular from sacred.
- Ritualistic: The law separated life from death, clean from unclean, pure from blemished, and symbolically related to God’s creative intent.
- Health Reasons: ????
- Canaanite Practices: ????



# *So Does the Law Apply?*

- YES: *“Do not think that I have come abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them.” - Matthew 5:17*
- MAYBE: *“For I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven.” – Matthew 5:20*
- NO+YES: *“Until John the Baptist, the law of Moses and the messages of the prophets were your guides. But now the Good News of the Kingdom of God is preached, and everyone is eager to get in. But that doesn’t mean that the law has lost its force. It is easier for heaven and earth to disappear than for the smallest point of God’s law to be overturned.” Luke 16:16-17 (NLT)*
- NO: *“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death. For what the law was powerless to do because it was weakened by the flesh, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh to be a sin offering.” - Romans 8:1-3*

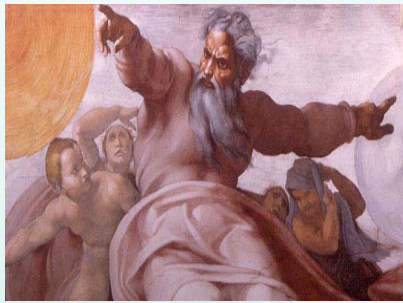




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# *So Does the Law Apply?*

Does the Law still apply?

Yes\*

Are Christians obligated to live under the law?

No

(\*) It's requirements for atonement for sin still apply, but were fulfilled by Jesus through His sacrifice for all.





# *So Does the Law Apply?*

Acts: 10:14-15: “Surely not, Lord!” Peter replied. I have never eaten anything impure or unclean.” The voice spoke to him a second time, “Do not call anythign impure that God has made.”

Acts 15:1, 6, 10-11: “Certain people came down from Judea to Antioch and were teaching the believers: ‘Unless you are circumcised, according to the custom taught by Moses, you cannot be saved.’ . . . The apostles and elders met to consider this question. After much discussion, Peter got up and addressed them: . . . ‘Why do you try to test God by putting on the necks of Gentiles a yoke that neither we nor our ancestors have been able to bear? No! We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved, just as they are.’”

1 Timothy 4:1, 3-5: “The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. . . [they] order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.”





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What if we listened to what everyone had to say — and discovered that God can speak through us all? After all, we all learn better when we talk things out, hear different points of view, and give room for the Spirit to speak through our deliberation.

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