

ESV **Proverbs 22:10** Drive out a scoffer, and strife will go out, and quarreling and abuse will cease.

ESV **Proverbs 26:17** Whoever meddles in a quarrel not his own is like one who takes a passing dog by the ears.

ESV **Proverbs 26:20** For lack of wood the fire goes out, and where there is no whisperer, quarreling ceases.

Additional Observation: Ecclesiastes 3 (See also, 7:21; 10:2)

- **The Prophetic Books** (Isa, Jer, Lam, Eze, Dan, Hos, Joe, Amos, Oba, Jon, Mic, Nah, Hab, Zep, Hag, Zec, Mal)

What do we see in the books of prophecy that relates to disagreement?

What we deserve...

wrath

- Isaiah and Israel (Isaiah 43:26 ["let us argue together; set forth your case, that you may be proved right"]; 45:9-10 ["woe to him who strives with him who formed him"], 19 ["I the LORD speak the truth; I declare what is right"]; 48:1, 4; 58:2-3; 59:1-15; 65:1-7)
- Jeremiah and Israel (See also, Jer 6:10; 7:25-26)

ESV **Jeremiah 2:9** "Therefore I still contend with you, declares the LORD, and with your children's children I will contend.

ESV **Jeremiah 2:23** How can you say, 'I am not unclean, I have not gone after the Baals'? Look at your way in the valley; know what you have done-...²⁵ ...But you said, 'It is hopeless, for I have loved foreigners, and after them I will go.'

ESV **Jeremiah 2:26** "As a thief is shamed when caught, so the house of Israel shall be shamed...²⁷ ...For they have turned their back to me, and not their face. But in the time of their trouble they say, 'Arise and save us!'

ESV **Jeremiah 2:29** "Why do you contend with me? You have all transgressed against me, declares the LORD.

- Ezekiel and Israel (Ezekiel 2:1-7 ["they are a rebellious house"]; 7:1-9 ["I will judge you according to your ways"]; 11:1-12 ["you have not walked in my statutes...but have acted according to the rules of the nations"]; 18:30-32 ["turn and live"], etc.)

Additional Observation: Malachi 1 (See also, 2:17; 3:6ff, 13)

Sunday, August 17, 2025
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A Theology of Disagreement
No. 3 | The Old Testament and Disagreement, pt. 2

Selected Scriptures

Review

A Theology of Disagreement

We can disagree about what **is** (reality).
We can disagree about what it **means** (interpretation).
We can disagree about what is **right** (righteous).
We can disagree about what is **best** (wisdom).
We can disagree about what we should **care** about (values).
We can disagree about what we should **want** (desires).
We can disagree about what we are **okay** with (submission).

- A disagreement is a situation in which two parties do not have the same opinion.
- A disagreement occurs, most observably, because no two parties are exactly the same and both parties are naturally morally corrupt.
- A disagreement may not initially be morally consequential or result in immoral conduct between two parties.
- A disagreement may also start out immorally by one or both parties, and proceed quickly to conflict or a range of other relationally-charged actions.

The Old Testament and Disagreement, pt. 2

What do we see in the Old Testament that may contribute to our understanding of disagreement and our handling of disagreement?

Disagreement in the rest of the Old Testament

- **The Pentateuch** (Gen, Ex, Lev, Num, Deut)

What do we see in the books of Moses that relates to disagreement?

What we experience...

fear

- The King of Egypt and the Hebrew Midwives

ESV **Exodus 1:8** Now there arose a new king over Egypt, who did not know Joseph.
⁹ And he said to his people, "Behold, the people of Israel are too many and too mighty for us. ¹⁰ Come, let us deal shrewdly with them, lest they multiply, and, if war breaks out, they join our enemies and fight against us and escape from the land." ... ¹⁵ Then the king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, ¹⁶ "When you serve as midwife to the Hebrew women and see them on the birthstool, if it is a son, you shall kill him, but if it is a daughter, she shall live." ¹⁷ But the midwives feared God and did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but let the male children live.... ²⁰ So God dealt well with the midwives. And the people multiplied and grew very strong. ²¹ And because the midwives feared God, he gave them families.

- Pharaoh and Moses (Exodus 5-12; see esp., Ex 6:9; 9:20)

- Moses and Israel (Exodus 15-17; see also, Num 11-12 [Miriam and Aaron disagreed about Moses' leadership], Num 13-14 [Israel disagreed about going into the land, esp. 14:1-10], Num 15-17 [Korah disagreed about Moses' leadership])

^{ESV} **Exodus 15:22** Then Moses made Israel set out from the Red Sea, and they went into the wilderness of Shur. They went three days in the wilderness and found no water. ²³ When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter; therefore it was named Marah. ²⁴ And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, "What shall we drink?" ²⁵ And he cried to the LORD, and the LORD showed him a log, and he threw it into the water, and the water became sweet. There the LORD made for them a statute and a rule, and there he tested them, ²⁶ saying, "If you will diligently listen to the voice of the LORD your God, and do that which is right in his eyes, and give ear to his commandments and keep all his statutes, I will put none of the diseases on you that I put on the Egyptians, for I am the LORD, your healer."

- Israel and God (Leviticus 26:40-45)

- God and Israel (Deuteronomy 4-6; see esp., Deut 4:25-26, Deut 6:18-19)

^{ESV} **Deuteronomy 4:9** "Only take care, and keep your soul diligently, lest you forget the things that your eyes have seen, and lest they depart from your heart all the days of your life. Make them known to your children and your children's children- ¹⁰ how on the day that you stood before the LORD your God at Horeb, the LORD said to me, 'Gather the people to me, that I may let them hear my words, so that they may learn to fear me all the days that they live on the earth, and that they may teach their children so.'

^{ESV} **Deuteronomy 12:8** "You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today, everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes, ⁹ for you have not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance that the LORD your God is giving you.... ²⁸ Be careful to obey all these words that I command you, that it may go well with you and with your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.

Additional Observation: Sometimes we need assistance with our disagreements (e.g. Exodus 18:1-27; see also, Deut 1:9-18)

- **The Historical Books** (Josh, Judg, Ruth, 1-2 Sam, 1-2 Kings, 1-2 Chron, Ezra, Neh, Esth)

What do we see in the books of history that relates to disagreement?

What we see...

desire

- Joshua and Achan (Joshua 7; see also, Josh 22)

^{ESV} **Joshua 7:19** Then Joshua said to Achan, "My son, give glory to the LORD God of Israel and give praise to him. And tell me now what you have done; do not hide it from me." ²⁰ And Achan answered Joshua, "Truly I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and this is what I did: ²¹ when I saw among the spoil a beautiful cloak from Shinar, and 200 shekels of silver, and a bar of gold weighing

50 shekels, then I coveted them and took them. And see, they are hidden in the earth inside my tent, with the silver underneath."

- Israel and God (Judges 1-2; see esp., 2:11-15; also, Jud 14, 19-21)

- Samuel and Israel (1 Samuel 8; see also, 2 Sam 12)

^{ESV} **1 Samuel 8:4** Then all the elders of Israel gathered together and came to Samuel at Ramah ⁵ and said to him, "Behold, you are old and your sons do not walk in your ways. Now appoint for us a king to judge us like all the nations." ⁶ But the thing displeased Samuel when they said, "Give us a king to judge us." And Samuel prayed to the LORD. ⁷ And the LORD said to Samuel, "Obey the voice of the people in all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected me from being king over them. ⁸ According to all the deeds that they have done, from the day I brought them up out of Egypt even to this day, forsaking me and serving other gods, so they are also doing to you.

- Adonijah and Solomon (1 Kings 1; see also, 1 Kings 12 [Rehoboam and Jeroboam]; and, all of the ref. to "evil/right...in the eyes of the LORD")

- Ezra and Israel (Ezra 3)

^{ESV} **Ezra 3:11** And they sang responsively, praising and giving thanks to the LORD, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever toward Israel." And all the people shouted with a great shout when they praised the LORD, because the foundation of the house of the LORD was laid. ¹² But many of the priests and Levites and heads of fathers' houses, old men who had seen the first house, wept with a loud voice when they saw the foundation of this house being laid, though many shouted aloud for joy, ¹³ so that the people could not distinguish the sound of the joyful shout from the sound of the people's weeping, for the people shouted with a great shout, and the sound was heard far away.

Additional Observation: Sometimes we are pressed to choose where our agreement lies (e.g. 1 Kings 18; see also, 1 Kin 22)

- **The Wisdom Books** (Job, Psalms, Prov, Ecc, Song of Sol)

What do we see in the books of wisdom that relates to disagreement?

What we need...

wisdom

- Job and His Friends (Job 16:2 ["miserable comforters you are"], with 42:7-8 ["my anger burns against your friends"])

- Our Life and the Psalmist (Psalm 25:8-10 [the unity and truthfulness of God], with 32:5-9 [we agree with God when we confess]; see also, 34:13-14; 35:1-2; 37:27-31; 55:9-15; 73:1-17; 78:17-20; 86:3-13; 95:8-11)

- Wisdom and Folly (Proverbs 1:10, 22; 8:14; 9:10; see also, Prov 10:19, 32; 11:2, 12; 12:15, 17; 13:3, 20; 14:6, 15, 29; 15:1, 23; 16:21, 24; 17:9, 27; 18:2, 13, 17, 19; 19:8, 13, 27; 20:3, 5, 19, 22; 21:2, 19, 21, 23, etc.)

^{ESV} **Proverbs 17:14** The beginning of strife is like letting out water, so quit before the quarrel breaks out.