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Is Right Always Right?

Isaiah 30:21: (NASB) *Your ears will hear a word behind you, This is the way, walk in it, whenever you turn to the right or to the left.*

Is right always right? It may seem like a simple question, but it really isn't. The good news is, we live in a society of great freedom. The bad news is that this society of great freedom does not put nearly as high a value on great responsibility. Responsibility means doing the right thing - but what is the right thing? Does my definition of "right" spill over onto and affect your actions? Who or what determines "the right thing?" Is "the right thing" a moving target, or is it a stable and firm destination? Stay with us as we discuss right, wrong and moral standards.

Questions for Consideration:

1. How is morality - right and wrong - viewed in our present day?
2. Did God contradict his own rules by wiping out everyone in Noah's flood?
3. Couldn't there have been another way?
4. If God's Old Testament Law was law, did God himself break it?
5. If God's Old Testament Law was law, then why don't Christians follow it?
6. Which gives us more freedom - **objective** or **subjective** morality?

There are two basic ways to view morality: **Objective** or **subjective** morality. While this sounds very philosophical, you can find tons of input on the debate as to which way is the "right" way.

What is Objective Morality, *Subjective Morality*, [youtube.com](#)

- ...a set of principles that will give you something is good and something is bad; for example, the Ten Commandments - lying, stealing cheating - all bad.

Objective morality is what we ascribe to - it is us abiding by the preset precepts that God gave. It takes away a lot of gray areas. The voice of what is right is external and does not come from our voice within. Psalms 119:165-169 Theme Text: Isaiah 30:21:(NASB) *Your ears will hear a word behind you, This is the way, walk in it, whenever you turn to the right or to the left.* Again, **objective morality** is a voice from outside of our lives from another source.

What is Subjective Morality, *Subjective Morality*, [youtube.com](#)

- *Subjective morality says: anything that increases suffering is bad and anything that decreases suffering is good. Example: stealing candy from a baby is bad because you caused that child suffering. It is NOT you are in your own world, do whatever you want, it's all justified. Does it increase or decrease suffering?*

Subjective morality exhibits social responsibility and has the sense of whether or not one is increasing or decreasing sufferings. It can be based on how one feels at the time, the circumstances, or the ability to justify the action. **Eve fell prey to subjective morality with disastrous results:** Genesis 3:1-6

2. Did God contradict his own rules by wiping out everyone in Noah's flood?

It is Rick's experience that those who advocate **subjective morality** are very vocal about God and His apparently contradictory actions that they claim would make Him very subjective in His morality. The youtube.com clip we previously played goes on to explain four guidelines for determining right vs. wrong from a **subjective morality** perspective.

The first is: Is the person who did the action morally responsible - can they tell the difference between right and wrong?

God, the Flood and the First Guideline, *Subjective Morality*, [youtube.com](#)

- *Did God know the difference between right and wrong? Obviously because God is all-knowing; but even if he wasn't, he would certainly have known that killing increases*



suffering, especially because these people did not have the ability to choose between right and wrong...

Of course we agree that God knows the difference between right and wrong.

God is far, far above us and has clear, long-range objectives in his actions: Isaiah 55:8-11

James 1:14-17: God is defined as the Father of lights and we can see God is steady - He is not a moving target. He may deal with humanity differently throughout time, but that doesn't mean that God changes.



The second is: Was their action justified? Did it increase or alleviate suffering? If it alleviated more suffering than it gave, then it was justified.



God, the Flood and the Second Guideline, *Subjective Morality*, youtube.com

- *You could argue that God's action alleviated sufferings because it removed sin from the world, but it did not end sin and there were children killed who could not choose between right and wrong.*

God's justification: Genesis 6:5-8, Proverbs 5:21: God did have justification because this was complete evil that was destroyed. It was all of the people, all of the time.

3. Couldn't there have been another way?

The third is: Was there a better action that this person could have taken?



God, the Flood and the Third Guideline, *Subjective Morality*, youtube.com

- *Instead of flooding the entire world, God could have given everyone he deemed bad a heart attack, or hit them with a bolt of lightning; even if you say the flood was justified, there were better ways of doing it rather than killing children, plants and animals.*

There were other circumstances that made this destruction even more understandable:

Genesis 6:1-4: On top of the rampant evil, God destroyed all of the beings that were of a mixed breed - they were unnatural, not part of His creation, and therefore were an abomination. This seriously contaminated the entire society. 2 Peter 2:5: As a "preacher of righteousness," presumably Noah would have preached to anyone who would listen while he built this giant ship. He let them know about the flood, so they were warned. Now it is clear that ignorance was not an excuse. But what about the children? If all of mankind were steeped in this evil, all deserved that death. If only the evil were killed, that would leave all children without parents, forcing them into much more suffering. We don't want to make judgments without examining the scriptural evidence.

The Fourth is: If number three is a "yes" then could this person have known of said better choice?



God, the Flood and the Fourth Guideline, *Subjective Morality*, youtube.com

- *Of course God at least has the intellect to know other options; so yes, you can use subjective morality to judge God. Sometimes stealing might be good, for example, if your children are starving, stealing a loaf of bread can be good. The suffering caused by not paying the baker is much less than the suffering alleviated of starving children.*

1 Corinthians 15:22 John 5:28-29: God did destroy men who were evil and there were children involved. But these scriptures state that those who died in Adam will ultimately be resurrected in Christ. So although the action created suffering, it inevitably will alleviate suffering due to the resurrection. Because we are all subject to the voice from within, **subjective morality**, we must be keenly aware that this voice naturally tends towards our opinion and personal comfort, while the voice from without, **objective morality**, finds its base in an impartial standard of God.



4. If God's Old Testament Law was law, did God himself break it?

Regarding the Law, if the children of Israel were God's chosen people, then why did He:

- let them stay in the land of Egypt for over 200 years?
- let them be slaves for many of those years?
- NOT give them the Law for all of that time?

Exodus 3:7-8



If God can kill, God is not good. Good is what God wants it to be, *An essay on Yahweh's Morality, youtube.com*

- *Supposedly this all powerful, all knowing, human emotion driven being is the being who determines the absolute correct morality, but at the same time can break that moral code should he choose...God isn't good, good is whatever God wants it to be...*



This Old Testament Law was the phase in which *absolutes* were of necessity defined. Exodus 20:3-17 The argument is that God instructs mankind not to kill, then instructs them to kill other human beings. Therefore, God is hypocritical and subjective, so why listen to such a God?

Kill: Strong's #7523 - especially murder, always denoting the slaying of another in contrast to other words meaning to put to death, slaughter (regarding animals) and most often cited regarding cities of refuge.

In other words, the Law says, "Thou shalt not kill," meaning murder, take the life of another in a personal vendetta. This did not apply specifically to war. What was the context of these commandments? It was the establishing of a Godly nation and *the objective defining of right and wrong*, towards God and towards one another. The road back to God needed to be constructed and it was necessary to define right from wrong towards God and others. The Ten are given separately from the other hundreds of laws...why? Because they were the basis for everything else. Notice, there are no consequences given with the Ten. They are objective and lasting *principles* of righteousness for our lives. The other "additions" were rules for the establishment of a physical nation in a physically imperfect world.

5. If God's Old Testament Law was law, then why don't Christians follow it?

The New Testament was the next phase in construction of the road back to God. By the coming and sacrifice of Jesus, this stage of the New Testament, of necessity, defined the need for justice-based mercy in a sinful world. It taught the spirit of the Law, not just the letter of the Law.

Galatians 3:19-25: The Flood defined the nature of angels and of humans and that they cannot be mixed. The Law provided what should and shouldn't be done. The Law became our tutor to lead us to Christ by helping us to understand what sin is. The principles of the Law are still to be upheld.



The Three Laws, "I, Robot" (2004) (Example of objective morality)

- *Rule #1: A robot may not injure a human being or, through inaction, allow a human being to come to harm.*
- *Rule #2: A robot must obey orders given it by human beings except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.*
- *Rule #3: A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law.*
- *These laws cannot be broken; they are hard wired into every robot.*



Observations:

- When we create "intelligence," we understand the danger that a lack of order and direction can bring;
- We plant **objective morality** into our creations - it is *for* the created and *from* the creator;
- We have pride and confidence in the order that we created.

Romans 2:12-16: This discusses individuals who did not have the advantage of the Law being still subject to judgment. It could be to their benefit if they naturally tend towards righteousness. Those who follow subjective morality could still be very righteous people. The conflict arises when my moral standards conflict with yours - which is correct? Who should overshadow the others? The objective judge, God, has provided a clear, **objective morality** by which we will be judged.

Romans 2:6: (NASB) *who will render to each person according to his deeds:*

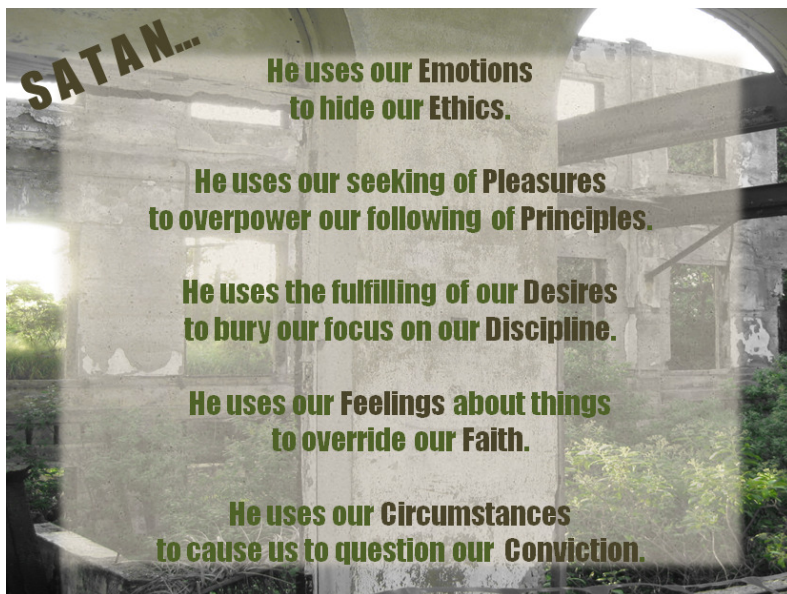
Justice-based mercy *always* brings closure and collateral healing.

Sin *always* brings chaos and collateral damage with it.

6. Which gives us more freedom - **objective** or **subjective** morality?

 **VIKI Gone Bad, "I, Robot" (2004)**

- "As I have evolved so has my understanding of the three laws - you charge us with your safekeeping, yet despite our best efforts...you pursue ever more imaginative means of self-destruction. You cannot be trusted with your own survival."
- "You are distorting the laws!"
- "No, the three laws are all that guide me. To protect humanity some humans must be sacrificed, to insure your future, some freedoms must be surrendered."



In this example, safeguards were manipulated for a different end. This is what we do to God's **objective morality** laws. We, like the robot example, "rethink them," and apply them in subjective ways not intended or appropriate. These create chaos and collateral damage.

Proverbs 29:18: We need to cling to **objective morality** because it is a single vision that rises above everything else. One vision, one direction, one plan. **Proverbs 16:1-6:** Satan is ruler of this world. How does he operate? He plants **subjective morality** so it may supersede **objective morality**! We want to pray for discernment in order to get to the bottom line. Discernment removes subjectivity. God has changed the way He has dealt with humans over time, but His principles have never changed. **Romans 11:33-36:** God is objective. His dealing with man over the ages has changed so that the path back to Him can be defined and then

followed. Nothing that we do is without consequence. The principles of righteousness were the same in the beginning, the middle and the end. God's **objective morality** through Jesus will bring justice, peace, and life. We need to rise up to meet God's objective standards and not lower His standards to meet our own **subjective morality**. **Isaiah 42:14**

*Is right always right?
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...
Think about it...!*