

The contrast between the actions and commands attributed to God the Father (primarily in the Hebrew Bible/Old Testament) and the actions and teachings of Jesus the Son (in the New Testament) is one of the most extensively studied topics in biblical theology. Here are several scriptural examples where their recorded actions or directives appear incongruent:

Retribution vs. Non-Retaliation

The Father's Command (Lex Talionis): In the giving of the Law, the Father institutes strict proportional retribution for injuries.

- **Exodus 21:23-25:** "But if there is serious injury, you are to take life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot, burn for burn, wound for wound, bruise for bruise."

The Son's Action and Teaching: Jesus explicitly quotes this law and instructs his followers to do the exact opposite, modeling this non-retaliation during his trial and crucifixion.

- **Matthew 5:38-39:** "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also."

Treatment of Enemies

The Father's Action: In the Old Testament, the Father frequently commands the total physical destruction of Israel's enemies, including non-combatants, as an act of divine judgment.

- **1 Samuel 15:3:** "Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy all that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys."

The Son's Action: Jesus rebukes his own disciples when they suggest calling down divine violence on those who reject them, and he actively heals those who come to arrest him.

- **Luke 9:54-55:** When a Samaritan village rejects Jesus, James and John ask, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" Jesus turns and actively rebukes them.
- **Matthew 5:44:** "But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

Capital Punishment and Mercy

The Father's Command: The Mosaic Law, dictated by the Father, mandates immediate capital punishment (usually by stoning) for various moral and religious infractions, including adultery and breaking the Sabbath.

- **Leviticus 20:10:** "If a man commits adultery with another man's wife—with the wife of his neighbor—both the adulterer and the adulteress are to be put to death."

The Son's Action: When presented with an opportunity to enforce this exact law, Jesus subverts the execution and offers grace instead.

- **John 8:7, 11:** When a woman caught in adultery is brought to him to be stoned according to the Law, Jesus says, "Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." After the crowd leaves, he tells her, "Neither do I condemn you. Go now and leave your life of sin."

Ritual Purity and Separation

The Father's Action: The Father establishes a rigid system of clean and unclean foods, as well as strict laws regarding physical contact with diseases, bodily fluids, and corpses, which separated the Israelites from surrounding nations.

- **Leviticus 11:** Details extensive lists of animals that are an "abomination" to eat or touch.
- **Leviticus 13:** Commands that people with skin diseases (leprosy) must be isolated outside the camp and cry "Unclean! Unclean!" if anyone approaches.

The Son's Action: Jesus intentionally bypasses these purity laws. He routinely touches "unclean" people to heal them rather than isolating them, and he abolishes the dietary restrictions.

- **Matthew 8:3:** Jesus reaches out his hand and touches a man with leprosy, an act that would traditionally render a person ritually impure.
- **Mark 7:18-19:** "'Are you so dull?' he asked. 'Don't you see that nothing that enters a person from the outside can defile them? ...' (In saying this, Jesus declared all foods clean.)"

Theological Note: Because orthodox Christianity holds that the Father and Son are one in nature and will (John 10:30), theologians do not view these as literal disagreements within the Godhead. Instead, they are historically reconciled through frameworks like **Progressive Revelation** (humanity was given stricter laws in its infancy, with grace revealed later), **Covenant Theology** (the Old Covenant served a temporary, civil purpose for the ancient nation of Israel, fulfilled and replaced by the New Covenant), or the view that Jesus is the ultimate, perfect revelation of God's character (Hebrews 1:3) which corrects ancient human misunderstandings of divine will.