

Does God Change His Mind?

Q: My young adult pastor has been listening to a guy who says that God changes his mind but not his character. I brought up the prophet who got killed by bears because he believed God changed his mind. The theologian brought up how God supposedly changed his mind when he told Moses he was going to destroy Israel and create a nation from Moses, he said that repentance is God changing his mind. How do I counter such wrong doctrine and influence my youth pastor toward obeying the Commandments?

Point 1: The pastor's position directly contradicts Scripture.

You are correct that the Bible says that God does not change.

“For I am the Lord, I do not change; Therefore you are not consumed, O sons of Jacob.” Malachi 3:6 (NKJV).

Not only does the Bible say that God does not change, but it specifically says He does not change his mind.

“God is not a man, that He should lie, Nor a son of man, that He should repent. Has He said, and will He not do? Or has He spoken, and will He not make it good?” Numbers 23:19 (NKJV). As the youth pastor said, to repent is to change his mind. So, this verse makes it very clear that God does not change his mind.

“My covenant I will not break, Nor alter the word that has gone out of My lips.” Psalm 89:34 (NKJV).

“Forever, O Lord, Your word is settled in heaven.” Psalm 119:89 (NKJV).

“The grass withers, the flower fades, But the word of our God stands forever.” Isaiah 40:8 (NKJV).

“But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.’ ”” Matthew 4:4 (NKJV).

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away.” Matthew 24:35 (NKJV).

“If He called them gods, to whom the word of God came (and the Scripture cannot be broken)” John 10:35 (NKJV).

“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NKJV).

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.” James 1:17 (NKJV).

Point 2. The pastor’s position misrepresents what it means to believe.

In Genesis 15:6, the Scripture says, “And he believed in the Lord, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.” The Hebrew word “believed” is “אָמַן” (aman). It means that God spoke and Abram believed that God would do exactly what He said He would. This verse is quoted many times in the Bible as the model of faith. If you believe that God changes his mind, then you cannot have faith that He will do what He promised to do.

Point 3. The pastor’s position undercuts any assurance Believers may have in God.

Salvation is by faith, not by works. “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9 (NKJV).

If God can change his mind, what if on Judgment Day He decides that salvation should be by works alone. What jeopardy we would be in! God forbid.

Point 4. The pastor’s statement that God changed his mind when he told Moses he was going to destroy Israel and create a nation from Moses demonstrates a lack of understanding Biblical Hebrew.

Biblical Hebrew has two tenses – perfect tense and imperfect tense. It is in many ways more simple than English. There are no words for “will” “might” “could” or “should.”

The very same Hebrew words can be translated “I will destroy” or “I might destroy” or “I could destroy” or “I should destroy.”

So, read the text as I should destroy Israel and start over with Moses and any idea that God changed His mind evaporates.