

Making Sense of the Bible
Chapter 22-23 Questions

Chapter 22

1. Name the three categories of Old (First) Testament texts that Hamilton thinks are “morally problematic.” (see page 208)

2. On page 208, there is a list of scriptures describing things worthy of the death penalty in the First Testament scriptures. Which one of these do you find most surprising?

3. How would you respond if your minister told you to kill someone because it was the will of God?

4. Are there things we are called to do as Christians that can be unhealthy for other believers or non-believers? Name one example.

5. Name the two ways Hamilton suggests we can use to resolve the moral and theological dilemmas caused by the apparent conflict between the violence of God in the First Testament and God as reflected by Jesus? Which one does Hamilton favor?

Chapter 23

1. Hamilton defines Providence on page 220. Sum up his definition in your own words.

2. Hamilton describes the extremes of Christian belief about the “mechanism and extent of God’s governance” on page 220 as “God the micro-manager” and “God the absentee land lord.” Choose one of these beliefs and give your own definition of what it means, or give an example.

3. On page 221, Hamilton discusses one important example of a theological conviction of early biblical authors that later ones struggled with. What is it?

4. If suffering isn’t caused or controlled by God, does that affect your ability or the way you pray? How so?

5. Hamilton writes on page 225 that “in the New (Second) Testament the apostles believed and taught that Jesus bore the punishment for humanity’s sins.” Read Acts 5:1-11. Does Peter’s curse contradict what Hamilton says? How so?