

THE OLD TESTAMENT AND PACIFISM

By Allon Maxwell

It is inevitable, in any discussion on the subject of Christian Pacifism, that sooner or later, someone will point to the Old Testament stories about Moses and David and many others who engaged in war, apparently with God's approval.

I do not deny these stories. Nor can I deny that many of those who were clearly not pacifists, are listed amongst the faithful in [Hebrews chapter 11](#).

How do we explain those stories, in the light of Christian Pacifism?

I confess that I do not know the answer to that awkward question.

What I do know is that I may not use any of those stories to invalidate the clear teaching of Jesus that it is the peacemakers who are the children of God and that it is the meek who shall inherit the earth, in the Age to Come.

In the transfiguration vision given to Peter and James and John, God made it very plain that it was Jesus with whom God was pleased, above Moses and above Elijah. In future, they were to listen to Jesus, rather than either Moses or Elijah. ([Matthew 17:5](#))

The practical implication of this is that if there is any apparent conflict between anything that Jesus says, compared with what we read about Moses and Elijah, or anyone else for that matter, we are to resolve that conflict by listening only to Jesus.

Jesus alone is THE WAY to God. There is no salvation in anyone else.

With God's total approval, I am a disciple of Jesus, not of Moses.

Jesus plainly taught in the Sermon on the Mount, that as a child of God, I am committed to turn the other cheek to the aggressor, love my enemies and do good to them.

I do not see how it is at all possible to obey that, without being a pacifist.

I have committed myself to follow Jesus, no matter what it costs.

That for me is the end of any Old Testament "loopholes" used by others in their vain attempts to justify disobedience to the Son of God in this fundamental and essential element of Christianity.