

***Dark God***  
***Cruelty, Sex, and Violence in the Old Testament***  
**Thomas Römer**

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The God of the Old Testament can shock readers of the Bible: he drowns his creation in the Flood, requires Abraham to sacrifice his son, destroys the first-born of the Egyptians the night before the Exodus, and ruthlessly eliminates the Israelites who were devoted to the worship of the golden calf. Throughout the centuries, many Christians and philosophers have rejected all or part of the Old Testament because of these divine characteristics that violently contrast with the image of the good and kind God of the New Testament. So, can we believe in a God who is macho, cruel, despotic, or who even indulges in ethnic cleansing? Thomas Römer puts forward a reinterpretation of these difficult passages in the light of the most recent research into the Old Testament. For the author, the characteristics that God appears to have, and that at first seem repulsive, are aimed at preserving the faith from dogmatic complacency by instilling in mankind the unexpected vision of a God who is engaged with the real life of humanity. This work is a widely revised and augmented reissue of the older version that was published in 1996. It includes a new chapter: Is God sanctimonious and are human beings sinners?