

Is God Ghastly and Genocidal?

God's Command to Conquer the Canaanites

Why this topic?

- A. the Bible speaks extensively about it
- B. Christians have many questions about it
- C. Christ's enemies attack the character of God on account of it

Scripture readings

- A. Deuteronomy 7:1-6; 9:1-8
- B. Joshua 6:20-25

Introduction: objections to and attacks against the Christian faith

- A. Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, chp.2, pg.51.

“The God of the OT is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: *jealous* and proud of it; a *petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak*; a *vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser*; a *misogynistic* (one who hates/distrusts women), *homophobic* (irrational fear of, aversion to or discrimination against homosexuals), *racist, infanticidal* (murder infants), *genocidal, filicidal* ('filicide' = deliberate act of parent killing own child), *pestilential* (causing destruction/death by means of death-inducing diseases that are epidemic in proportions), *megalomaniacal* (psychological disorder in which person suffers fr. delusions of own grandeur & suffer fr. obsession w. power), *sadomasochistic* (the perversion of finding pleasure in inflicting ph./mental/emotional pain especially upon s/o supposedly love), capriciously *malevolent bully*.”

- B. Dan Barker, *God: The Most Unpleasant Character in All Fiction* (2016)

- a self-proclaimed former Christian pastor who, in publishing this book, sets out to prove that Dawkins' description of God was accurate

- C. Romans 11:22 – “Consider the goodness and severity of God.”

1. God is not genocidal but just

- A. Canaanite's sinfulness
 - i. Leviticus 18
 - sexual sins
 - child sacrifice
 - ii. note the kind/degree of sins
 - 1 Corinthians 6:18
 - Romans 2:15

- B. God's purity & the punishment of sin
 - i. Leviticus 18:25
 - ii. Israel as God's eviction agent
- C. God's patience
 - i. Genesis 15:16
 - ii. Exodus 34:6; Psalm 103:8; Jonah 4:2
- D. God's fairness (ie. not racist)
 - i. Deuteronomy 7:4
 - ii. Leviticus 18:28
 - iii. Deuteronomy 13:6-9
 - iv. Ezekiel 9:5
 - v. Deuteronomy 9:4-7
- E. Reflection: letting God be God & letting God administer justice

2. God is not ghastly but gracious

- A. limitations God gives regarding the conquest of Canaan
 - i. limited amount of land to be conquered
 - Numbers 34:1-15
 - Deuteronomy 34:1-4
 - Deuteronomy 20:10-15 – offer of peace
 - Ezekiel 18:23, 32; Proverbs 24:17; 2 Peter 3:9b – God's heart of compassion
 - ii. limited time frame of the conquest
 - *one* specific window of time in *one* specific period of history in *one* specific geographical area calling for the Israelites to conquer *one* specific little sliver of land
 - we reject the church's involvement in:
 - the Crusades
 - imperial conquests
 - religious wars
- B. The ultimate reason for the conquest of Canaan: The Gospel!
 - i. Joshua 6:20-25 – Rahab as the first among many Gentiles who receive God's grace
 - ii. Ruth 4:18-22 & Matt. 1:3 – Rahab as the great, great, great grandmother of the Savior

Conclusion

- A. Day of Judgment #1 enacted by the First Joshua, son of Nun
- B. Day of Judgment #2 enacted by the Second Joshua, son of God
 - i. installment 1 of 2 – the cross of Christ
 - ii. installment 2 of 2 – the second coming of Christ (Revelation 18-19)