

Scriptures and Doctrine :: Destruction of the Canaanites**Destruction of the Canaanites - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/8/15 15:50**

I was listening to Zac P's "Through the Bible" series (which is very good- I recommend it) and in his discussion of Joshua he likened the destruction of the canaanites to surgery to remove a gangrenous leg. It was God's love for Israel that required their destruction, just as concern for a patient's life would justify an amputation.

This is the standard reason given by most Bible expositors.

The only problem is that it didn't work, as we find out in Judges, etc.

What am I missing?

Re: Destruction of the Canaanites - posted by Jeremy221, on: 2017/8/16 2:10

The thing that always strikes me about taking of the Land is how "the time was full" comes up. This phrase is linked to two things harvest and judgement. In the prophets, I believe Ezekiel, there is the analogy of the walled vineyard where Israel are compared to vines who though dressed and cared for as high quality vines are producing the fruit of wild plants which is the reason for their destruction and judgement.

Do you have the link for the message? I wonder if he covers this.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/8/16 7:18

No- he doesn't get into that at all. I don't have the link but if you go to his ministry site you can find it free to download under "through the Bible."

God must have known that slaughtering the canaanites was not a solution to keep Israel from sinning, so one must wonder why He commanded it.

And besides that, it does not seem to be God's prescribed plan for dealing with sin/temptation. He does not command Christians to settle in the desert somewhere away from all influences of culture. We are to come out from among them, but not geographically.

Re: - posted by Jeremy221, on: 2017/8/17 15:30

I think you need to shift your perspective a bit. Your current comments and observations seem to come from a church/Israel centered view. The issue at hand involves a much greater dealing of God with His creation.

God shared with Abraham about His plan to deal with the nations in Canaan but states that the time is not yet full. This is about 430 years before He sends the children of Israel to take over the Land and possess it.

In a similar fashion, God talks about judging Egypt and setting the Jews free and in so doing bringing the gods of the Egyptians under judgement.

In the prophets, God warns about the impending judgement on not only Israel and Judah but Edom, the Amorites, Assyria, Babylon, Egypt and many more. If you look carefully, these warnings often start decades or even centuries before the judgement is enacted.

This method of God's will is explained in Scripture of warning about impending judgement through His prophets and demonstrated over and over.

As for coming out from among them, the Zac Poonen series in question appears to be from the 80s or 90s which I believe came at a time when he was moving from a much more legalistic view to one of Spirit and grace filled. My understanding of legalism is that it is very focused on the purity and sanctity of an individual as maintained by that individual. Because this group must maintain their own sanctification, it is nearly impossible to have any contact with the outside world. A Spirit filled and lead individual, though subject to the same temptations, is safe to go and be anywhere the Lord directs

ust Christ was on the Earth.

So the idea of "coming out from among them" and being in the Land, there is a very separation from all that is the wisdom and character of the World. The Land can be compared to the Church but first it must be compared to the individual's life. Just as the people had to be set apart before entering the Land and the related rest, so must we be utterly set apart to God before we can enter the rest. All those born in the wilderness had not been circumcised and God would not bring them to the people in until they were. If the people are the means through which the Land was sanctified, one could compare them to one's spirit or soul, the source of will and purpose that brings action. If your will and purpose is not fully set to realize the Word and all the blessings and goodness it promises, you'll stop before you get there. However God told the people it wouldn't happen instantly. It would take until they were big and strong enough to fill and possess the Land. This is warning and promise of God as we seek sanctification and maturity. He goes before us to bring us there but we must be patient and advance in faith without compromise careful to not make any agreements or overlook any related sin. There are similar warnings to the churches in the New Testament regarding sin.

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/8/17 16:21

The traditional reason given for why God commanded the slaughter of the peoples of Canaan was that if the Israelites did not do this, they would be too weak to resist being lured into their sinful ways by worshiping false gods thereby abandoning the true and only God. To state it bluntly, if they killed all the competition, they would not be tempted.

This does not sit right, at least with me. So I wonder if this traditional reasoning is accurate at all.

Re: - posted by Jeremy221, on: 2017/8/19 14:00

How do you see it in light of New Testament?

In response to your final statement,

Quote:

-----So I wonder if this traditional reasoning is accurate at all.

No, because it is at best incomplete. Otherwise, it is a massive oversimplification.

Again, how do you currently see its purpose?

I believe the teaching is available here on SI:

<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/singlefile.php?lid=2574&commentView=itemComments>

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/8/20 8:13

I certainly agree with and like ZP's application-- but obviously the NT does not require us to move into the desert away from culture in order to "fight our giants." Our separation is not literal. I think there is a realization that if a Christian cannot fight the good fight within a culture of bad influence, then he will not be able to fight it alone in a cave.

But for some reason we are still taught that Israel was to totally wipe out all the inhabitants of Canaan in order to keep themselves pure. That is a pretty fragile state to be in, and not very demonstrative of God's power to preserve.

Re: - posted by Jeremy221, on: 2017/8/20 16:39

I think your issue with totally wiping out the inhabitants is missing key facts of what the Israelites actually did and how God commanded them to administer and run the Land. The Law describes a theocratic nation where everyone, including foreigners living in the Land, lived and worshipped according to God's word. There is no moral pluralism in the Land, or in the Kingdom. Second the foundation of a people wholly set apart to God, their role on the Earth was to be witnesses and messengers of God's grace and righteousness. What you have described as the role of the Church in world was the calling of Israel too. I shouldn't add "too" because the Church, now largely made of Gentiles, has been ingrafted through Jesus Christ into Israel. The issues of ingrafting and sharing roles and responsibilities on the Earth should not be replaced or downplayed. This is part of how He will save them in a day.

Re: Destruction of the Canaanites - posted by staff, on: 2017/8/20 16:51

Hi Tmk,

I recommend Cliffe Knechtle series on youtube "give me an answer" he deals with this subject over and over as its asked by college students all the time in a different way.

He says specifically that the bible was using hyperbole in this instance but whether thats true or not his answer covers th is subject, urs staff

Re: Destruction of the Canaanites - posted by InTheLight (), on: 2017/8/20 18:47

Quote:

-----This is the standard reason given by most Bible expositors.

The only problem is that it didn't work, as we find out in Judges, etc.

Your complaint doesn't give the whole picture, this is not "the" standard reason given by most expositors. While cleaning house of debauched religion so that true worship could be established was certainly part of the intention, ultimately the conquest was an issue of sin.

This was judgment on a national level for many hundreds of years of idolatry and debauchery. Indeed God brought the same judgment on Israel when they failed to obey His commands and they repeated the idolatry.

This whole complaint is the same rhetoric that comes from the "new athiest" camp, not sure why it is brought up here. God is God, we are not, He is not to be measured by our standards.

In Christ,

Re: - posted by TMK (), on: 2017/8/21 8:36

Who's complaining?

I actually don't have a problem at all with the slaughter of the Canaanites from a judgment standpoint. They were abhorrent idolaters and child sacrificers in the worst possible ways imaginable; killing the children saved the from growing up in such a culture, if you want to look for a bright side.

God is unchanging in his character and his ways.

Therefore this begs the question of why He wanted the Israelites to wipe out the ungodly nations but does not expect Christians to do the same. Now, this is something of a rhetorical question obviously. But on the one hand we have "wipe out your enemies" and on the other we have "love your enemies."

Re: - posted by Gloryandgrace (), on: 2017/8/29 19:18

Hi Todd: My take on this is derived from a sermon by Major Ian Thomas who I believe gives us and excellent understanding of this situation with the Canaanites'.

Simply put, the C's represent the flesh, the carnal, sinful nature...they are descendent from Esau and Edom whom God swore he would war against forever. So, in this life, our sinful nature is to be "put to death", crucified, Mortified etc and we are to live according to Christ who lives in us.

But, we all know that the sinful nature erupts from time to time, situation or circumstances arise that bring forth our carnal nature where we didn't realize it was holding a piece of land that now must be taken for Christ.

This continual battle that Israel faced is our battle today and it does us well to understand that their defeats teach us where to be watchful, their victories teach us what God will do when we die to self.

Hope this sheds some light. Check out Major Ian Thomas's sermons dealing with going into the promised Land. He can preach it of far better than I can.