
The Wars in the OT

Is this the “Christian” God?

1. God used Israel to bring judgment

- ❖ Gen 15:13-16: *"Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years. But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve... And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete."*
- ❖ Deut 9:4 - *"Do not say in your heart, after the LORD your God has thrust them out before you, 'It is because of my righteousness that the LORD has brought me in to possess this land,' whereas it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is driving them out before you."*
- ❖ Lev 18:24-25: *"Do not make yourselves unclean by any of these things, for by all these the nations I am driving out before you have become unclean, and the land became unclean, so that I punished its iniquity, and the land vomited out its inhabitants."*

2. Not “genocide”

- ❖ Deut 20:17-18: *“...but you shall devote them to complete destruction... that they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices that they have done for their gods, and so you sin against the LORD your God.”*
- ❖ It is about destroying Canaanite religion, not the Canaanites.
- ❖ Lev 18:26-28: *“But you shall keep my statutes and my rules and do none of these abominations,...for the people of the land, who were before you, did all of these abominations, so that the land became unclean, lest the land vomit you out when you make it unclean, as it vomited out the nation that was before you.”*
- ❖ *“A mixed multitude also went up with them...”* (Ex 12:38).
- ❖ God’s salvation includes all nations (Gen 12:3).

3. “Exaggerations”

- ❖ *“I have noted what Amalek did to Israel in opposing them on the way when they came up out of Egypt. Now go and strike Amalek and devote to destruction all that they have. Do not spare them, but kill both man and woman, child and infant, ox and sheep, camel and donkey.” (1 Sam 15:2-3)*
- ❖ *And he took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive and devoted to destruction all the people with the edge of the sword. But Saul and the people spared Agag and the best of the sheep and of the oxen and of the fattened calves and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them. (1 Sam 15:8-9)*
- ❖ *Now David and his men went up and made raids against the Geshurites, the Girzites, and the Amalekites, for these were the inhabitants of the land from of old, as far as Shur, to the land of Egypt. (1 Sam 27:8)*

Ex 23:23-33

I will *wipe them out* (v. 23)

I will make all your enemies turn their backs and *run*. (v. 27)

Hornets shall *drive [them] out* from before you. (v. 28)

I will not *drive them out* from before you in one year (v. 29)

Little by little I will *drive them out* from before you (v. 30)

You shall *drive them out* before you. (v. 31)

Do not let them live in your land (v. 32)

Deut 7:20-26

The LORD your God will *drive out those nations* before you, little by little. You will not be allowed to *eliminate them* all at once, or the wild animals will multiply around you. (v. 22)

Ex 23:23-33

I will send my terror ahead of you and throw into confusion every nation you encounter. I will make all your enemies *turn their backs and run.*

And I will send hornets before you, which shall *drive [them] out* from before you.

Deut 7:20-26

But the LORD your God will give them over to you and throw them into great confusion, until they are *destroyed.*

...will send hornets among them, until those who are left and hide themselves from you are *destroyed.*

Outside the Bible

- ❖ Pharaoh Thutmoses III (15th cent. B.C.): “The great army of Mitanni were conquered within an hour, completely annihilated, like those who don’t exist.” (The army of Mitanni lived on for another century.)
- ❖ Pharaoh Merneptah (ca. 1210 B.C.): “Israel is destroyed, his seed is not.” (Time of the judges)
- ❖ King Mesha of Moab wrote in 840-830 B.C.: “Israel has been completely destroyed forever.” (The northern kingdom Israel were taken by the Assyrians in 722 B.C.)

The Wars in the OT

1. God used Israel to bring judgment
2. It was not genocide
3. “Exaggerations” in the conquest descriptions