

Introduction

- Why does God command the killing of women and children?
- Does the Bible condone genocide?

Primary Passages

- 1 Samuel 15 describes the commanded annihilation of the Amalekites.
- Exodus 17 describes Amalekites' attack and God's promise.
- The promise is completely fulfilled with the death of Haman in Esther
- Genesis 15, God promises Abraham the promised land occupied by other nations.
- The entire book of Joshua describes the conquest of the promised land.

Time Period

- This kind of conquest behavior was very common for the time period.
- Most ancient Near Eastern kingdoms were absolutely brutal to their enemies.
- The Assyrians documented their behavior, which included mutilations, burning alive, flaying prisoners, gouging out eyes, dismembering corpses, and brutal attacks on young children.
- Women could expect to be assaulted and enslaved.
- Comparatively for the time period, Israel's commands are more acceptable.
- Modern objections are only possible because of the Christian ethic.

Corporate Sin

- The Bible repeatedly judges nations corporately (The prophets).
- Every person in the nation, even those generations later, faces consequences.
- The entire Corinthian church is guilty of allowing sexual immorality (1 Cor 5).
- Daniel repents on behalf of national sins that are not his personally (Dan 9).

Time to Repent

- The commands of judgment are public and known.
- God's judgment can always be avoided and relented by repentance.
- Genesis 15:16: God gives the nations 400 years to repent.
- Rahab, the Gibeonites, and Ruth are examples of those who repented.

Why?

- This kind of destruction is not about gaining riches or slaves.
- It is a conquering of false gods and removing their religion.
- It is to avoid idolatry and the worship of false gods.
- Some argue it was to avoid STDs or other diseases.
- The primary Biblical reason for destruction is as an act of justice.
- Israel acts on behalf of God as an agent of judgment.

NT Changes

- This conquest and destruction only applies during the initial conquest of the promised land.
- It is not normal behavior for the entire Old Testament.
- The NT moves from the Kingdom of God being found in the physical nation of Israel to the universal church.
- Now, we are commanded to love our enemies.
- Jesus will bring the final judgment when He returns.

Other Answers

- Every scholar, including secular scholars, agrees that these accounts are historical.
- Others say that God changes from being bloodthirsty to merciful.
- Some see a division between the God of the OT and Jesus in the NT.
- Some say the Bible just tries to give justification for Israelite greed.

Responding

- Point people towards the moments of grace in the OT.
- Remember that these are unique circumstances.
- Remember that Christ is the revelation of God.
- God in the Old Testament is the same as Christ.