

JOSHUA

TAKING HOLD OF THE PROMISE

**Hard
Questions
About God's
Justice**



To stay away from Christianity because part of the Bible's teaching is offensive to you assumes that if there is a God he wouldn't have any views that upset you. Does that belief make sense?

– Timothy Keller



Joshua 6:16-27

And at the seventh time, when the priests had blown the trumpets, Joshua said to the people, “Shout, for the LORD has given you the city. And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the LORD for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. But you, keep yourselves from the things

devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD.” So the people shouted, and the trumpets were blown. As soon as

the people heard the sound of the trumpet, the people shouted a great shout, and the wall fell down flat, so that the people went up into the city, every man straight before him, and they captured the city. Then they devoted all in the city to destruction, both men and women, young and old, oxen, sheep, and donkeys, with the edge of the sword.

But to the two men who had spied out the land, Joshua said, “Go into the prostitute's house and bring out from there the woman and all who belong to her, as you swore to her.” So the young men who had been spies went in and brought out Rahab and her father and mother and brothers and all who belonged to her. And they brought all her relatives and put them

outside the camp of Israel. And they burned the city with fire, and everything in it. Only the silver and gold, and the vessels of bronze and of iron, they put into the treasury of the house of the LORD. But Rahab the prostitute and her father's household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive. And she has lived in Israel to this day, because she hid the

messengers whom Joshua sent to spy out Jericho. Joshua laid an oath on them at that time, saying, “Cursed before the LORD be the man who rises up and rebuilds this city, Jericho. “At the cost of his firstborn shall he lay its foundation, and at the cost of his youngest son shall he set up its gates.” So the LORD was with Joshua, and his fame was in all the land.

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And the city and all that is within it shall be devoted to the LORD for destruction. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. But you, keep yourselves from the things devoted to destruction, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the devoted things and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD.”

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And the city and all that is within it shall be **devoted to the LORD for destruction**. Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live, because she hid the messengers whom we sent. But you, keep yourselves from the things **devoted to destruction**, lest when you have devoted them you take any of the **devoted things** and make the camp of Israel a thing for destruction and bring trouble upon it. But all silver and gold, and every vessel of bronze and iron, are holy to the LORD; they shall go into the treasury of the LORD.”

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Deuteronomy 20:10-18

“When you draw near to a city to fight against it, offer terms of peace to it. And if it responds to you peaceably and it opens to you, then all the people who are found in it shall do forced labor for you and shall serve you. But if it makes no peace with you, but makes war against you, then you shall besiege it. And when the LORD your God gives it into your
into your

hand, you shall put all its males to the sword, but the women and the little ones, the livestock, and everything else in the city, all its spoil, you shall take as plunder for yourselves. And you shall enjoy the spoil of your enemies, which the LORD your God has given you. Thus you shall do to all the cities that are very far from you, which are not cities of the nations here. But in the cities of these peoples that the LORD.

your God is giving you for an inheritance,
you shall save alive nothing that
breathes, but you shall devote them to
complete destruction, the Hittites and the
Amorites, the Canaanites and the
Perizzites, the Hivites and the Jebusites,
as the LORD your God has commanded,
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.

We should note that the instructions to Israel to annihilate the Canaanites were specific in time, intent, and geography. That is, Israel was not given a blanket permission to do the same to any peoples they encountered, at any time or in any place. It was limited to the crucial time when Israel was just establishing itself as a theocracy under God, to protect Israel's worship, as well as to punish these specific peoples.

– David M. Howard



Leviticus 18:1-3

And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying, “Speak to the people of Israel and say to them, I am the LORD your God. You shall not do as they do in the land of Egypt, where you lived, and you shall not do as they do in the land of Canaan, to which I am bringing you. You shall not walk in their statutes.

The Heinous Practices Of The Canaanites

Incest- (Lev. 18:6-9)

Adultery- (Lev. 18:9-18)

Child sacrifice- (Lev. 18:21)

Bestiality- (Lev. 18:23)

Deuteronomy 7:3-5

You shall not intermarry with them, giving your daughters to their sons or taking their daughters for your sons, for they would turn away your sons from following me, to serve other gods. Then the anger of the LORD would be kindled against you, and he would destroy you quickly. But thus shall you deal with them: you shall break down their altars and dash in pieces their pillars and chop down their Asherim and burn their carved images with fire.

Genesis 15:13-16

Then the LORD said to Abram, “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... As for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. And they shall come back here in the fourth generation, for the **iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.**

2 Peter 3:9

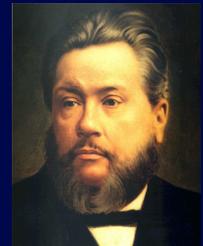
The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.

Romans 2:4-5

Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance? But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are **storing up wrath** for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

God's wrath, though it come not on you yet, is like a stream that is dammed up. Every moment it gathers force. It bursts not the dike, yet every hour it is swelling it. Each moment of each day in which you remain an unbeliever you are treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath when the measure of your iniquity is full

– Charles Spurgeon



Deuteronomy 9:5-6

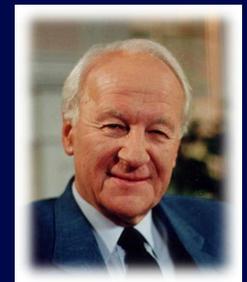
Not because of your righteousness or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is driving them out from before you, and that he may confirm the word that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Habakkuk 1:13

You who are of purer eyes than to
see evil and cannot look at wrong

God's wrath is neither an impersonal process of cause and effect (as some scholars have tried to argue), nor a passionate, arbitrary or vindictive outburst of temper, but His holy and uncompromising antagonism to evil, with which He refuses to negotiate.

– John Stott



It is because we are sinners, and because God so often showers us with grace, that we lose sight of the justice of God, and the blackness of sin. When we read about the execution of the Canaanites we ought not to ask, “How could God do this?” but “Why does He not kill us all?” The shocking part of the story of the conquest of Canaan is God’s love for His rebellious people, not His just wrath toward other rebels.

– R. C. Sproul



Ezekiel 33:11

Say to them, As I live, declares the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways, for why will you die, O house of Israel?

God has no malice in His purity, no maliciousness in His actions. God does not “delight” in the death of the wicked – even though He decrees it. His judgments upon evil are rooted in His righteousness, not in some distorted malice in His character. Like an earthly judge weeps when he sends the guilty for punishment, God rejoices in the justness of it but gets no glee from the pain of those justly punished.

– R. C. Sproul



But Rahab the prostitute and her father's household and all who belonged to her, Joshua saved alive.