

# God, If You Are Good Why Is the Old Testament So Bloody?



"When the Lord your God brings you into the land you are about to enter and... hands these nations over to you and you conquer them, **you must completely destroy them.** Make no treaties with them... Do not inter-marry with them... They will lead your young people away from me to worship other gods.

"The Lord your God... constantly loves those who love him and obey his commands. But he does not hesitate to punish and destroy those who hate him... **You must destroy all the nations the Lord your God hands over to you. Show them no mercy** and do not worship their gods. If you do, they will trap you."

"As you approach a town to attack it, first offer its people terms for peace... But if they refuse to make peace and prepare to fight, you must attack the town. When the Lord your God hands it over to you, **kill every man in the town... destroy every living thing...** just as the Lord your

God has commanded you. This will keep the people of the land from teaching you their detestable customs in the worship of their gods" (Deut. 7:1-4,10,11,16; 20:10-18)

## "That sounds like ethnic cleaning or genocide."

"(God) shows **love to the foreigners** living among you and gives them food and clothing. So you, too, must show love to foreigners" (Deut 10:18,19)

"**Do not rejoice when your enemies fall into trouble...**For the Lord will be displeased"  
"If your enemies are hungry, give them food to eat." (Prov 24:17-18; 25:21-22)

## "But killing people is wrong."

"For every living soul **belongs to me**, the father as well as the son—both alike belong to me. The **soul who sins is the one who will die.**" (Ezekiel 18:4 NIV)

"Don't be afraid of those who want to kill your body; they cannot touch your soul. Fear only God, who can destroy both soul and body in hell." (Matt 10:28)

## "That brutality can't be the loving God of Jesus."

### 1. The Old Testament God is a God of Love

"He is the faithful God who...lavishes his unending love on those who love him and obey his commands." (Deuteronomy 7:9)

"Return to the Lord your God, for he is merciful and compassionate. Slow to get angry and filled with **unfailing love.** He is eager to relent and not punish" (Joel 2:13)

### 2. Jesus accepted this story & spoke often of Judgement

(Jesus) "Don't imagine that I came to bring peace to the earth! No, I came to bring a sword." (Matt 10:34) "I have come to set the world on fire" (Luke 12:49)

### 3. The bloodiest Bible book is the Revelation of Jesus

"And the one sitting on the horse...**judges fairly and then goes to war...**The armies of heaven...followed him... From his mouth came a sharp sword, and with it he struck down the nations with the fierce wrath of almighty God." (Rev. 19:11-16)

## "But killing primitive people who didn't know better?"

"He is the faithful God who...lavishes his unending love on those who love him and obey his commands. But he does not hesitate to **punish and destroy those who hate him.**"  
(Deuteronomy 7:9,10)

## "I am a reluctant warrior, but..."

### 1. There is a time to fight for right

"The LORD is **slow to get angry**, but... he never lets the **guilty go unpunished...**  
The LORD is good, a **strong refuge** when trouble comes." (Nahum 1:3,7)

### 2. I fought to protect my people

"Make no treaties... Do not intermarry with them...They will lead your young people away from me...they will trap you...teaching you their detestable customs" (Deut 7)

"When you arrive in the land...be very careful not to imitate the detestable customs of the nations living there. For example, never sacrifice your son or daughter as a burnt offering. And do not let your people practice fortune-telling or sorcery...or witchcraft...or function as psychics... It is because the other nations have done these things that the Lord will drive them out" (Deut. 18:9-14)

### 3. I fight for your victory

"For the Lord your God is going with you! **He will fight for you** against your enemies, and **he will give you victory!**" (Deut.20:4)

"The Lord **stands beside me like a great warrior.**" (Jeremiah 20:11)

## "I am a merciful warrior"

"first offer its people terms for peace"

### 4. My love warns

Rahab: "**I know** the Lord has given you this land...We are all afraid of you...**For we have heard** how the Lord made a dry path for you through the Red Sea... your God is the supreme God of the heavens and the earth"(Joshua 2:9-12)

Gibeonites: "**we were clearly told** that the LORD your God commanded his servant Moses to give you this entire land and to destroy all the people living in it. So we feared greatly for our lives because of you." (Joshua 9:24)

### 5. My love waits

"After four generations your descendants will return here to this land, for the **sins of the Amorites do not yet warrant their destruction.**" (Genesis 15:16)

"(The Lord) is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent." (2 Peter 3:7,9)

### 6. My love rescues

"**Joshua spared** Rahab the prostitute and her relatives" (Joshua 6:25)

"**Joshua saved** (Gibeonites) from the Israelites, and they did not kill them" (Josh 9:26 NIV)