

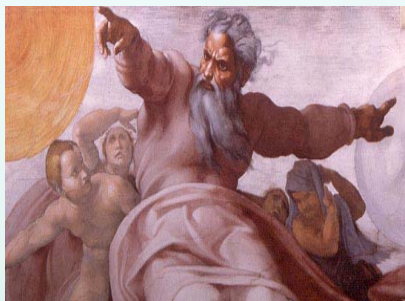
# *Troubling Images of God In the Old Testament*





# ***The God I Don't Understand...***

- ✦ Introduction and Feedback from You
- ✦ The “Strange” Laws of the Old Testament and their Application to Christians Today
- ✦ The “Harsh” Laws of the Old Testament
- ✦ Patriarchy, Polygamy and Concubinage
- ✦ **Violence, War, Massacres and “Ethnic Cleansing”**



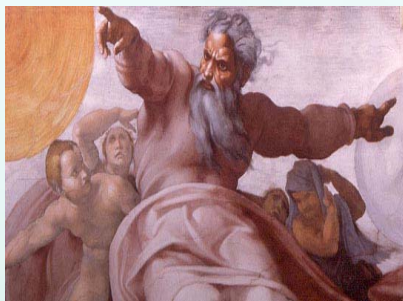
# *Let's Dive Right In...*

## Conquest of the Southern Canaanites Cities

*“So Joshua subdued the whole region, including the hill country, the Negev, the western foothills and the mountain slopes, together with all their kings. He left no survivors. He totally destroyed all who breathed, just as the LORD, the God of Israel, had commanded. Joshua subdued them from Kadesh Barnea to Gaza and from the whole region of Goshen to Gibeon. All these kings and their lands Joshua conquered in one campaign, because the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for Israel.”*

- Joshua 10:40-43





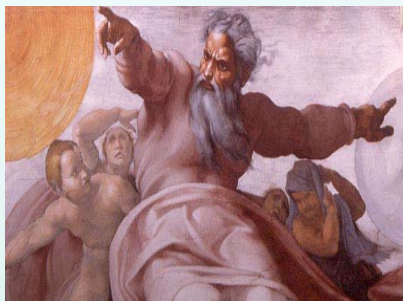
# *Let's Dive Right In...*

## Conquest of the Northern Canaanites Cities

*“Except for the Hivites living in Gibeon, not one city made a treaty of peace with the Israelites, who took them all in battle. For it was the LORD himself who hardened their hearts to wage war against Israel, so that he might destroy them totally, exterminating them without mercy, as the LORD had commanded Moses. At that time Joshua went and destroyed the Anakites from the hill country: from Hebron, Debir and Anab, from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua totally destroyed them and their towns. No Anakites were left in Israelite territory; only in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod did any survive.”*

- Joshua 11:19-22

*Troubling Images Part 7*



# *Let's Dive Right In...*

## Conquest of the Amalekites

*Samuel said to Saul, . . . “This is what the LORD Almighty says: ‘I will punish the Amalekites for what they did to Israel when they waylaid them as they came up from Egypt. Now go, attack the Amalekites and totally destroy[a] all that belongs to them. Do not spare them; put to death men and women, children and infants, cattle and sheep, camels and donkeys.’ ”*

*Then Saul attacked the Amalekites all the way from Havilah to Shur, near the eastern border of Egypt. He took Agag king of the Amalekites alive, and all his people he totally destroyed with the sword. But Saul and the army spared Agag and the best of the sheep and cattle, the fat calves and lambs—everything that was good. These they were unwilling to destroy completely, but everything that was despised and weak they totally destroyed.*

*- 1 Samuel 15:1-3; 7-9*

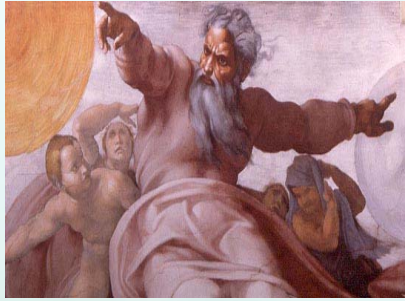


# *Let's Dive Right In...*

Um yeah, what's with all the  
"destroy everyone" verses?



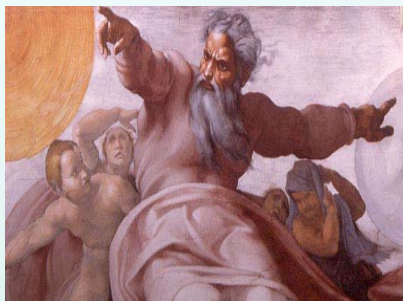




## *Does It Make A Difference That... ...We Are Reading a War Narrative?*

*“No Anakites were left in Israelite territory...” (Joshua 11:22a)*

*Caleb asked: “Now give me this hill country that the LORD promised me that day. You yourself heard then that the Anakites were there and their cities were large and fortified, but, the LORD helping me, I will drive them out just as he said.” (Joshua 14:12; also Joshua 15:13-19)*



## *Does It Make A Difference That... ...We Are Reading a War Narrative?*

*“He totally destroyed all who breathed ...” (Joshua 11:4ob)*

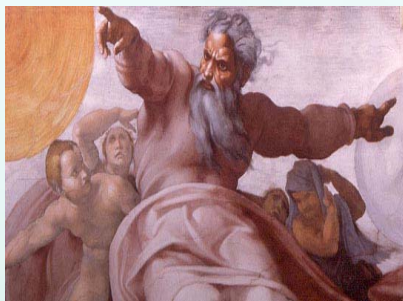
*Joshua warned: “Do not associate with these nations that remain among you; do not invoke the names of their gods or swear by them.” (Joshua 23:7)*

*“But if you turn away and ally yourselves with the survivors of these nations that remain among you and if you intermarry with them and associate with them, then you may be sure that the LORD your God will no longer drive out these nations before you.” (Joshua 23:12-13)*

*“When Joshua had grown old, the LORD said to him, ‘You are now very old, and there are still very large areas of land to be taken over.’ (Joshua 13:1)*

*Troubling Images Part 7*





## *Does It Make A Difference That... ...We Are Reading a War Narrative?*

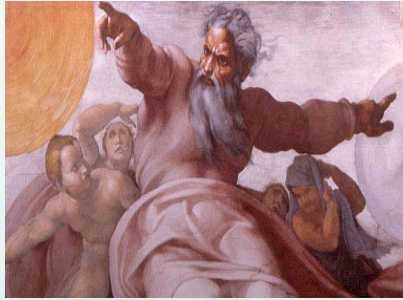
*“[A]ll his people [Saul] totally destroyed with the sword...”  
(1 Samuel 8)*

David later attacked the Amalekites and “did not leave a man or woman alive.” (1 Samuel 27:8)

David fights the Amalekites again in 1 Samuel 30.

Amalekites are still around 250 years later. (1 Chron. 4:43)

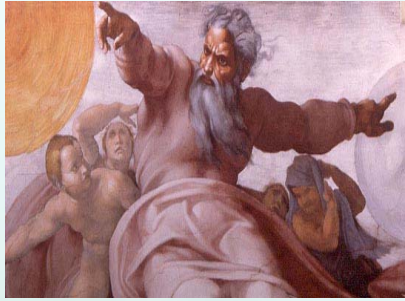
Even Haman, the enemy of the Jewish people in the story of Esther, is an Amalekite descendant. (Esther 3)



## *Does It Make A Difference That... ...This Is Not Ethnic Cleansing?*

- Words like “ethnic cleansing” and “genocide” are emotionally charged words that tends to cut off discussion.
- They do have a precise definition that doesn't apply here; those definitions are 20<sup>th</sup> century constructs.
- Israel never attacked anyone because they wanted to; all indication was they were acting on God's command.
- When God was not behind Israel's action, they were defeated.
- The law protected the foreigner in Israel's midst, so this was not warfare based on ethnicity.

*Troubling Images Part 7*



## *Does It Make A Difference That... ...This Is Not Ethnic Cleansing?*

- *“When a foreigner resides among you in your land, do not mistreat them. The foreigner residing among you must be treated as your native-born. Love them as yourself, for you were foreigners in Egypt. I am the LORD your God.”  
(Leviticus 19:34)*





## *Does It Make A Difference That... ... Civilians May Not Have Been Killed?*

- Jericho, Ai and other Canaanite cities referenced were most likely military strong holds (fortresses), with the people of the region living in the rural areas around these “cities.”
- Archaeological evidence does not point to civilians living in these “cities.”
- Words that invoke “women and children” or “all” of the inhabitants of a certain city were idiomatic expressions that accompanied the warfare rhetoric.



## *Does It Make A Difference That... ... The People Knew of God's Action?*

- People who acknowledged God were spared (i.e., Rahab, and perhaps the Gibeonites).
- People were aware of what God had done in Egypt for His people. The Canaanites were also aware of how God had parted the Red Sea for His people (Joshua 2:10-11; Joshua 9:9; Exodus 15:14-17)
- It was possible to make peace with Israel (Gibeonites), and perhaps even to surrender (march around Jericho).



## *Does It Make A Difference That... ...The Story Involves Women & Children?*

- Do we believe that God can judge anyone at anytime, and bring about their death as a result?
- Do we believe that people *cannot* know God unless they have had a chance to hear about him at a Greg Laurie Harvest Crusade? (Contrast Romans 1)
- Do we believe that children must be given the chance to make their own decisions about who they will worship and how they will act before they are judged?





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