

THE UNSEEN WORLD OF THE BIBLE

Session 9: 'Holy War'

04 December 2022

Objectives

Explain: Yahweh's purpose for Israel in the Land.

Explain: Why Israel wiped out some cities.

Explain: Why Yahweh would become human.

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Lesson Theme

"The conquest of the Promised Land was a holy war—a battle against the forces of darkness and enemies under the dominion of hostile gods the Bible says are real spiritual entities."

M S Heiser, *Supernatural*, p. 95

Israelites proved a rebellious people

The people complained about their hardships in the hearing of the LORD, and when he heard them his anger was aroused. Numbers 11:1

Miriam and Aaron began to talk against Moses because of his Cushite wife, for he had married a Cushite. "Has the LORD spoken only through Moses?" they asked. Numbers 12:1-2

The promised land was occupied by foreign gods

After the start of Israel's journey

My angel will go ahead of you and bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites and Jebusites, and I will wipe them out. Do not bow down before their gods or worship them or follow their practices.

Before the end of Israel's journey

When you look up to the sky and see the sun, the moon and the stars — all the heavenly array —do not be enticed into bowing down to them and worshiping things the LORD your God has apportioned to all the nations under heaven. Deuteronomy 4:19

Afraid of Nephilim, Israel refused to enter Canaan

The Nephilim were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of God went to the daughters of humans and had children by them. Genesis 6:4

We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them. Numbers 13:33

Session 9: 'Holy War'

Yahweh ordered Israel to dispossess Canaanites

After the start of Israel's journey

'When you cross the Jordan into Canaan, drive out all the inhabitants of the land before you. Destroy all their carved images and their cast idols, and demolish all their high places'. Numbers 33:51-52

Before the end of Israel's journey

The LORD will drive out all these nations before you, and you will dispossess nations larger and stronger than you. Every place where you set your foot will be yours. Deuteronomy 11:23-24

Israel was to exterminate cities that resisted

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. Joshua 11:19-20

They annihilated with the sword everything that breathed in the city, including men and women, young and old... Yet Joshua spared Rahab the prostitute ... and all who belonged to her. Joshua 6:21, 25

Yahweh promised to drive out pagan peoples

I will send an angel before you and drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. Exodus 33:2

I will drive out before you the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites. Exodus 34:11

"Remember what Yahweh did to Pharaoh"

You may say to yourselves, "These nations are stronger than we are. How can we drive them out?" But do not be afraid of them; remember well what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and to all Egypt. Deuteronomy 7:17-18

- Ten plagues
- Nile poisoned
- First-born deaths
- Army drowned

Israel exterminated Nephilim enemies: Sihon

Sihon did not permit Israel to pass through his border; ... he fought against Israel. Numbers 21:23

When Sihon and all his army came out to meet us in battle at Jahaz, the LORD our God delivered him over to us and we struck him down, together with his sons and his whole army. At that time we took all his towns and completely destroyed them—men, women and children. We left no survivors. Deuteronomy 2:32-34

Session 9: 'Holy War'

Israel exterminated Nephilim enemies: Og

King Og of Bashan and all his forces marched out against them to do battle at Edrei.
Numbers 21:33

The LORD our God also gave into our hands Og king of Bashan and all his army. We struck them down, leaving no survivors. At that time we took all his cities... We completely destroyed them, as we had done with Sihon king of Heshbon, destroying every city—men, women and children. Deuteronomy 3:3-6

Who was King Og?

We took from these two kings of the Amorites the territory east of the Jordan, from the Arnon Gorge as far as Mount Hermon... We took all the towns on the plateau, ..., and all Bashan as far as ... towns of Og's kingdom in Bashan. (Og king of Bashan was the last of the Rephaites. His bed [sarcophagus] was decorated with iron and was more than nine cubits long and four cubits wide.)
Deuteronomy 3:8-11

Is the God of the Bible evil or murderous?

How could a moral god command the slaughter of entire cities of men, women and their children?

Who is asking?

- Do you advocate for free abortion?
- Do you argue for sterilization by vaccine?
- Do you support military action overseas?
- Or are you a theist who is embarrassed or perplexed by such biblical passages?

Who is replying?

- The Canaanites were given 400 years to repent.
- They practiced infanticide and genocide.
- They were given opportunity to emigrate.
- Only giant (Nephilim) clans who chose to oppose Yahweh were annihilated (exterminated).
- Yahweh's aim was to bless all nations through Israel living in a land under Yahweh's rule.

Yahweh knew in advance that Israel would fail

The LORD said to Moses: "You are going to rest with your ancestors, and these people will soon prostitute themselves to the foreign gods of the land they are entering. They will forsake me and break the covenant I made with them." Deuteronomy 31:16.

It was Yahweh who gave victory to Israel

"I destroyed the Amorites before them, though they were tall as the cedars and strong as the oaks. I destroyed their fruit above and their roots below. I brought you up out of Egypt and led you forty years in the wilderness to give you the land of the Amorites." Amos 2:9-11

Session 9: 'Holy War'

Israel had a three-fold task to accomplish

1. To chase enemy nations out of Canaan.
2. To exterminate the Nephilim linages.
3. To dispossess foreign gods from the land.

Israel obeyed Yahweh partially

No Anakites were left in Israelite territory; only in Gaza, Gath and Ashdod did any survive. Joshua 11:22

When Joshua had grown old, the LORD said to him, ... "There are still very large areas of land to be taken over... The five Philistine rulers ... from Baal Gad below Mount Hermon to Lebo Hamath..." Joshua 13:1-6

At Gath, there was a huge man with six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot ... These were descendants of Rapha in Gath, and they fell at the hands of David and his men. 1 Chronicles 20:6-8

Nephilim linages continued to plague Israel

The Philistines occupied one hill and the Israelites another, with the valley between them. A champion named Goliath, who was from Gath, came out of the Philistine camp. 1 Samuel 17:3-4

How tall was Goliath?

Hebrew Bible: "six cubits and a span" ≈ "About 9 feet 9 inches or about 3 meters" (1 Samuel 17:4, NIV and note).

Greek Bible: "He was close to seven feet tall 1 Samuel 17:4. 'The LXX, a Qumran manuscript of 1 Samuel, and Josephus read "four cubits and a span." A cubit was approximately 17.5 inches, a span half that.' (1 Samuel 17:4, NET2 and note).

Yahweh would himself have to complete the task

1. He would become a human being, an Israelite.
2. He would lead a life of obedience to the Torah.
3. He would fulfil the old covenants, inaugurating the New Covenant.
4. He would die to take away human sins, forming a new humanity, disempowering the gods.
5. He would rise and initiate world mission to the nations, dispossessing the gods.
6. He will return and destroy the Antichrist.
7. He will cast the devil and fallen gods into a pit.
8. He will establish the everlasting Kingdom of God on earth.
9. He will raise and judge the dead, rewarding the righteous.
10. He will dwell amongst his redeemed people forever.