

NO Doubt About It Part II
The Good Book?
June 6, 2021

Good morning everyone.

What a great thought with which to begin this message:

"I will build my life upon God's love ... for it is a firm foundation."

There's so much power – transformational power – in that idea. We'll come back to it a bit later.

Anyway ... if you're joining us for the first time or the first time in a long time, you should know that we're wrapping up part two of a three-part series dealing with the issue of *doubt* ...

... which might seem kind of odd since, after all, church and Christianity are supposed to be about *faith*.

But faith and doubt are not opposites. The opposite of faith is *unbelief* – which is refusing to believe in spite of the *evidence* that is there ...

... which again might sound a bit odd because most people think that there's no relation between faith and evidence.

Faith, most people think, is believing in something *in spite* of the fact that there *is* no evidence.

But that's not faith – at least not as Jesus described it.

Once when He was talking to his disciples, He said:

"The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work."

So ...

"Believe me when I say that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves." John 14:10-11 (NIV)

In other words, "the things I'm saying and the things I'm doing are evidence that I am who I say I am. And you have a choice to make."

And the choice was whether or not they would commit to following Him.

... which leads to another thing we've learned in this series:

“Faith” requires having enough evidence to be able to make an ongoing commitment.

It's trusting that what you see and what you know is more solid than what you don't see and don't know because there are always things we don't see and don't know.

For example, when you get out on 152 today on your way home ...

- You're going to look at the traffic flow and weigh out what you see in terms of the number of cars and how fast everyone is going.
- And then you're going to subconsciously consider what your car is able to do in terms of acceleration based on what it's done before and how it's been running lately.

And if all that evidence points in the right direction, you're going to make a commitment. You're going to step on the gas and head home *in spite of the possibility* ...

- That someone might change lanes unexpectedly because they are texting.
- Or that there might be a clog in your gas line that causes your car to stall out.
- Or whatever.

You can't know if those things are going to happen or not but that doesn't stop you because you trust that *what you do know* is more solid than *what you don't*.

You have faith – and you *act* in faith – based on enough evidence to make a commitment.

So, in the first week of this series we began by looking at the evidence that points to the Resurrection of Jesus being true.

And we started with that particular issue because if *that* didn't happen, then none of the other questions about Jesus and the Bible and Christianity really matter.

After all, the day after Jesus was crucified nobody believed anything special about him. In fact, everyone who had been following him literally ran and hid in fear that they were next!

The only reason they came back ... the only reason Christianity even exists ... is that they saw him alive, and they hung out with him for six weeks until he returned to his Father in Heaven.

Of course, the primary way that we *know about* the Resurrection is through the New Testament writings known as “The Gospels” – Matthew, Mark, Luke and John ...

... which led us last week to address the question of “what evidence is there for trusting that they are telling the truth; that they’re not something made up long after the fact to justify the existence of the Church and Christianity?”

And if you missed either of those first two messages, I strongly encourage you to check them out especially if you are...

- A skeptic.
- Or a Christian who is surrounded by skeptics.
- Or a young person who is being told

over and over by so many cultural influencers that “Christianity is a terrible myth that just makes the world worse.”

And if you want to check them out, you can watch, listen to, or read the transcript in the media section of our app and our website.

Still “Hitched”

Of course, even if you believe that the evidence points to the Gospels *being reliable*, there is a related issue that needs to be addressed ...

... because what Christians have relied on for centuries as “the revelation of God” is *more* than just those four writings.

And it’s more than just the writings of Paul and the other Apostles which make up the 27 documents known as the New Testament.

For centuries, Christians have *also* believed that the 39 documents that make up *the Old Testament* – which is probably better called *The Hebrew Bible* – are divinely inspired.

As Paul wrote to one of his apprentices ...

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NIV)

For Paul and those who began the Christian movement (all of them Jewish), Jesus (who was also Jewish) was the fulfillment of what the Old Testament was pointing to.

In their minds, it was all one contiguous story – the story of what God was doing to rescue

and redeem a world that had been cursed by sin through his “chosen people,” Israel.

However, as the Christian message and the church began to spread worldwide – and many who were *not* Jewish came to believe in Jesus and follow Jesus – the question of exactly where the Old Testament fits and how to handle it began to arise.

In fact, not long after the Resurrection and the launch of the Church, Luke, in his second writing (called *The Acts of the Apostles*) tells us that there was a great controversy over whether or not Gentiles who were believing in Jesus needed to follow the commandments given by God through Moses.

As in all 613 of them.

As in circumcision for all adult males who, not being Jewish, had not been circumcised as

infants.

The answer was pretty amazing.

After much discussion, James (the half-brother of Jesus) who was at that point the leader of the church in Jerusalem, said "my judgment is that we should not make it difficult for the Gentiles who are turning to God."ⁱ

And then he wrote a letter to be disseminated among the Gentile churches laying out their decision.

"It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us," he wrote, "to lay no greater burden on you than these few requirements:

And here are the requirements:

"You must abstain from eating

food offered to idols ...

*... from consuming blood or
the meat of strangled animals*

...

*... and from sexual
immorality.*

If you do this, you will do well.

*Farewell." Acts 15:28-29
(NLT)*

And with that short letter, the Church and Christianity in a sense "unhitched" itself from the Old Testament ...

... at least as it comes to having to observe all the special laws and cultural markers (like circumcision) that God gave to the Israelites to distinguish them from their neighbors.

In other words, the decision was that "you don't need to become Jewish before

becoming a Christian.”

... which was a huge relief especially to the adult men.

Of course, as Gentiles learned more and more about Jesus ...

- They naturally wanted to know about his backstory ...
- Which naturally included his Jewish background (which was constantly alluded to in the Gospels) ...
- Which naturally led to ... you guessed it ... the Old Testament, the Hebrew Bible.

And so, because it was so important to the story of Jesus (and to Jesus himself), they began to read the Hebrew Bible and study it along with those documents which were

expressly Christian, the New Testament.

Fast forward to AD 364, where church leaders at the Council of Laodicea (all of them Gentiles) officially listed the Old Testament documents in the writings that were to be used in church teaching.ⁱⁱ

... then to AD 400, when the first version of what we would call a “Bible” combined the Old and New Testaments together in one book – the Latin *Vulgate*.

And ever since then, Christians worldwide have thought of the Old Testament as part of “God’s Word” right alongside of the New Testament.

Of course, that nice, neat little story belies the struggle that took place – and still takes place – around what is actually *in* the Old Testament.

What I mean by that is that once people started *reading it* some questions arose such as ...

- Did people really live to be hundreds of years old as some of the stories in Genesis say?
- What about all of those weird laws and prohibitions in Leviticus and Deuteronomy? Even though it was decided in the first century that they don't apply to Christians, why would God have given them in the first place?
- And what things like about God telling Israel to completely wipe out the Canaanites as they entered into the Promised Land?
- And why is it that God in the OT seems so much angrier than He does in the

New Testament? Maybe they aren't the same?

And then, later, as scientific knowledge grew ...

- What about the cosmology of the OT which puts the earth at the center of the universe?
- What about dinosaurs?
- Was the world created in only six days?
- How does that square with evolution?

Now, I'm sure that you recognize all of those questions because not only have they been asked for centuries by serious Christians.

- They have also been at the forefront of attacks on "religion" by popular

atheistic authors and speakers like Sam Harris, Richard Dawkins, and the late Christopher Hitchens.

- They are also what so many students hear for the first time when they take Philosophy 101 or a World Religions class at college.
- And they were also written on many of the “doubt cards” you all turned in during the service and online way back at the beginning of this series.

So, if we’re going to deal seriously with doubts about the Christian faith, we certainly need to talk about where the Old Testament fits into that faith.

What About Love?

Of course, that is a really, really big topic and

given that we don't have all day, we're going to have to take this in pieces ...

... which is why *next week's message* is going to deal with the issue of *creation and cosmology* ...

... which, as you know, is why atheists and skeptics claim that Christianity is inherently anti-science and therefore, irrelevant (if not dangerous) to the modern world.

And because we don't have all day, I'm also not going to address things like ...

- Whether the parting of the Red Sea really did happen.
- Or whether the sun really did stand still as Joshua fought the battle of Jericho.
- Or whether Methuselah really did live to

be 969 years old.

After all, if you believe that God really did raise Jesus from the dead, it's not that hard to believe in some of the extraordinary and miraculous events of the Old Testament.

And if that logic doesn't work for you, it might help to know that there have been serious and intelligent Christian *and Jewish* leaders through the centuries who have made strong arguments that ...

- Some of those stories were actually *intended* to be allegorical and hyperbole ...
- And would have been heard that way by the original audience.

I'm not sure about that but what *I am sure of* is that, in the big picture, those things are not

nearly as important as the other questions about the Old Testament ...

... because those "other questions" push on what we've been told is the true nature of the God we worship – and which we sang about right before this message:

That God is, primarily, *love* – and so much so that *love for others* (including enemies) is the hallmark of those who believe in and follow Jesus.

As one of Jesus' closest friends once put it:

Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. 1 John 4:8 (NIV)

So, with that in mind, the most important questions – at least when it comes to doubt – are questions like:

- How do the weird (to us)

commandments God gave to the Israelites reflect love?

- How can something like God telling Israel to destroy the Canaanites “loving”?

And those two questions – specifically – are what I’m going to focus on in the rest of this message because those are the ones that come up most often (aside from questions about cosmology).

Weird Laws

So, let’s look for a bit at some of the “strange to us” laws found in the Old Testament.

The key to understanding this issue is realizing that these laws were established for a purpose very specific to the people of Israel ... which was to represent God and to be a

blessing to the entire world so that the world could eventually be redeemed from the curse of sin.

Basically, God said to them, "I'm going to give you your own land. And when you get to this land, if you obey me, I will prosper you."

"But if you disobey me, *for the sake of the world who's watching*, I'm going to have to punish you.

"So, you must not take on the customs and the religious traditions of the surrounding nations. If you do – if you embrace their immorality or their polytheism ...

"I'm going to turn you over to those surrounding nations so that you get a real good dose of that so that when you repent, I can bring you back to the land."

And then he said to them, "Here are the rules. Here are the stipulations. Here are the laws. Here's the covenant."

And all of this was outlined at Mount Sinai when Moses came down not just with *ten* commandments but with 613 commandments ... some of which, again, sound weird to us.

... which is why atheist Richard Dawkins, in his book *The God Delusion* ...

... summarizes what he thinks of the covenant in pretty degrading terms.

"Judaism was originally a tribal cult of a single, fiercely unpleasant God, morbidly obsessed with sexual restrictions and with the smell of charred flesh."

But I think Dawkins (and others like him) is absolutely wrong when it comes to

understanding the Hebrew Bible – what you and I call the Old Testament.

For example, let's look at what is probably the most restrictive and, in some cases, controversial section of the covenant law which is found primarily in the OT book of Leviticus.

Now, if you've ever actually *read* Leviticus, you know that it seems like you're reading something from another planet.

That's because *you are*. It was a very different time and place than ours.

Anyway, when you get to Leviticus 18, you find 19 sexual prohibitions – 19 laws dealing with sexuality.

And if that's all you read without understanding the context, you would say,

“See, that’s why I’m not a religious person.
That’s why I’m not a Christian.

“You all just want to mess with my personal life by getting in my bedroom ... which is none of your business.”

But that’s a very shallow understanding of what’s actually going on in this passage.

So, why does God spell out 19 prohibitions for the people of Israel?

Because all 19 were practiced in Egypt (where they had come from) and all 19 were practiced in the land of Canaan (where they were going).

So, in essence God was saying to the nation, “Look. I’m asking you to be different. I want every area of your life – including your sex life – to be different because you’re my people

and I have a special role for you in this world.”

In fact, this is one of the reasons why Jewish men were circumcised.

Every time a man had to relieve himself ...

- He would be *visually reminded* that he was not like men from the surrounding nations.
- He would be *visually reminded* that he belonged to a special people with a special calling.

Now, here's a fascinating thing that people overlook about those 19 prohibitions.

The Hebrew people (and the law that God gave Moses to give to the nation) were way ahead of their time.

And the reason that's the case is because the

theme of these sexual prohibitions has to do with...

Well, let me just show you the theme for this whole section.

It's found in verse 11.

No one is to approach any close relative to have sexual relations. Leviticus 18:11 (NIV)

... which seems very reasonable to me. And I'm sure it seems very reasonable to you.

But it did *not* seem reasonable to ancient Egyptians, Canaanites, or the surrounding nations.ⁱⁱⁱ

In fact, let me tell you how way ahead of their time the Hebrew people were, and the law of Moses was.

- There are about 1,500 years separating the giving of the law and Jesus showing up on planet Earth.
- At that point 1,500 years later, Roman civilization is only slowly beginning to embrace much of the sexual ethic that God gave the Hebrews 1,500 years earlier.
- But at the same exact time over in Egypt (1,500 years later) *the monarchs are still marrying their siblings*. And it would take several more generations for that to finally come to an end.

How backwards was *that*?

The point being ... you can't just look at the Old Testament covenant and go, "Oh, it's so antiquated. How in the world could God be so old-fashioned and narrow-minded?"

It was actually far ahead of its time.

In fact, the covenant that God established with the ancient Israel is a moral and civil code that when understood in its ancient context is brilliant.

And every scholar knows, and every historian knows that you never ever, ever pull something out of its ancient context and compare it to things going on in a modern world.

So, even though it strikes *us* as unsophisticated and barbaric, it was superior in every way to the civil and religious codes and moral codes of the surrounding nations.

Specifically, the protections afforded to the most vulnerable were nothing short of revolutionary.

- Women were better protected and had more rights.
- Servants, foreigners, and children all fared better under the Mosaic covenant than their counterparts in the surrounding nations.

Why?

Because from the very beginning, the Hebrews – *in contrast to the nations around them* – believed that there was a single God (not a multitude of gods) who created human beings in his image.

And therefore, they believed that everyone was born with dignity.

And this set them apart from the very beginning, and it would take centuries for the

rest of the world to finally catch up.^{iv}

So, again, while it might seem weird to us in our day and time, those odd laws were part of a loving plan for a people who God had set apart for His purposes *in their time*.

And what was really fortunate – at least for you and me – was that *the early Christian leaders understood this* which is why they decided that Gentiles didn't have to become Jewish to become Christian.

They understood that in Jesus – who, again, was Jewish – the purpose of the nation and the purpose of the Law of Moses had been fulfilled.

The Canaanites

Now, talking about the purpose of the Law God gave Israel naturally leads to the issue

of what happened when the people finally entered into the land that God had promised to Abraham 400 years earlier ...

... a land that was occupied at the time by a people known as "the Canaanites."

As they were about to enter, Moses gives them this instruction:

"As for the cities of these peoples that the Lord your God is going to give you as an inheritance ...

... you must not allow a single living thing to survive.

Instead, you must utterly annihilate them ...

... just as the Lord your God has commanded you."

Deuteronomy 20:16-17

(NET)

And, according to the book of Joshua, that's what they did.

Chapter 10 tells us that "Joshua defeated the whole land, including the hill country, the Negev, the lowlands, the slopes, and all their kings.

"He left no survivors. He annihilated everything that breathed, just as the Lord God of Israel had commanded."^v

In all, thirty-one cities wiped out with no terms of surrender offered and no chance to relocate to another place.

So, what are we to make of *that*?

One option is to do what some Christians throughout history have done ... which is to

conclude that “the God of the Old Testament can’t be the same as the God of the New.”

Of course, if that were true, you would expect that Jesus would have made that clear. But He didn’t.

Instead, he fully embraced the God of the Old Testament – with all of the seemingly crazy stuff that bothers you and me – and not just as “God” but as *His* Heavenly Father.

Another option is to do what I mentioned earlier ... which is to read Joshua’s report of genocide as hyperbole.

After all, even though Joshua initially reports that he followed God’s command of “utter destruction,” he later writes that ...

- He did not take *all* of the land.^{vi}

- And that many of the people who were supposedly either annihilated or removed from the land were actually still living there!^{vii}
- And we know that this is true because pretty much the rest of Old Testament history is how Israel did not obey the covenant and, instead, adopted the customs of the Canaanites.

But let's suppose that Joshua and the Israelites *did kill* even a few people based on God's command. What about that? Is that what a loving God would require?

To our modern ears it seems like the answer has to be "no" which is why, again, it's helpful to remember the time and place in which all of this happened.

When we read in the Old Testament that

entire cities are wiped out by the Israelites or, in some cases by God Himself – as in the flood of Noah or in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah – we immediately think ...

- But what about the innocent little kid?
- What about the pregnant mom?
- What about the sick old man?
- Why aren't they spared? Why aren't they given a chance to repent?

You and I tend to think about love and justice primarily in terms of *individuals* where what happens to each singular person matters most.

But at least half of the world back in that time – and even today – *doesn't* think like that.

In the eastern cultures – meaning the Far East as well as the Middle Eastern biblical cultures – the *community and nation* are considered to be just as important if not *more important* than the individual.

And the Bible comes from *those* cultures not ours, which is why a lot of what happens in the Bible – Old Testament and New – deals with communities and nations.

God's love and justice are applied at *that* level just as much as at the individual level – and maybe even more so.

As Westerners that seems odd to us. It's not how our culture has trained us to think.

But why is our culture right and theirs wrong?

Could it be that *our* perspective is off? That our judgement of what is "good" and what is "loving" is incorrect because of our individualism?

And, if so, could it be that, for instance, God's judgment on the Canaanites *as a nation* was totally justified?

In fact, that is exactly the case Moses makes after telling Joshua to wipe them out.

Wipe them out, he says ...

Otherwise, they [collectively] will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in worshiping their gods, and you will sin against the Lord your God.

Deuteronomy 20:18 (NET)

Now, to you and me that means nothing. Or it sounds trivial like "they're going to make you eat pork" or something mundane.

But to historical researchers who have come to understand Canaanite culture – the word

“detestable” is an understatement because the Canaanites and surrounding cultures worshiped the god Moloch.

And that meant some really terrible things, including the most terrible being child sacrifice.

Specifically, they would light a fire under the bronze statue of the god and then lay the child on the outstretched burning hands. And the infant would literally cook. His or her skin would literally melt.

While this was going on there would be drums beating loudly so that the parents of the child would not hear its screams.^{viii}

And God’s concern was that the people of Israel – the people through whom He was going to send the Messiah ...

God's concern was that they not be corrupted by the thoroughly corrupted people of Canaan. And so they – the Canaanites – had to be removed from the land.

In addition, just to be clear, God's decree of judgment on the Canaanites wasn't issued on a whim.

It's not like one day He suddenly said, "you know what? you're out of here" because 400 years beforehand, God had made himself known to them.^{ix}

When Abraham – who was living in the land of Canaan at the time and had a great deal of influence ...

When Abraham was about to sacrifice his son Isaac, God stopped him. God said, "I will provide the sacrifice" which was shocking because in that culture, child sacrifice was

normal.

It was expected that a god would ask you to kill one of your kids to show your obedience and your servitude.

So, what Abraham experienced was a testimony to them that *the true God* doesn't desire child sacrifice.

But the Canaanites rejected it and moved deeper into sin until, one day, it reached such a level of severity that God decided to use the Israelites to bring judgement on them.

However, *even then*, the Bible tells us that the Canaanites had heard about what God had done for the Israelites in delivering them from Egypt.^x

And *even then* they could have repented and turned to Him. But they did not.^{xi}

And because of that ... because as a community and as a nation the corruption was so deep, there was no possibility of redemption. And judgment was in order.

Again, that sounds odd – and maybe even repulsive – to our Westernized way of thinking about justice.

So maybe a more modern example will help us understand.

A Modern Example

Not too long ago – and some of you may remember this – in the former Yugoslavia, things got really ugly. Churches were burned, women were raped, and innocents brutally murdered.

Miroslav Volf, a theologian who lived there at

the time, wrote that the experience dramatically changed his thinking.

He wrote that at one point in his life, he believed that wrath and anger were “beneath God” because “God is love” and divine love should be beyond wrath – which is what many of us believe, too.

“However,” he wrote ...

“My last resistance to the idea of God’s wrath was a casualty of the war in the former Yugoslavia, the region from which I come. According to some estimates, 200,000 people were killed and over 3,000,000 were displaced.

“My villages and cities were destroyed,” he wrote. “My people shelled day in and day out, some of them brutalized beyond imagination. And I could not imagine God *not* being angry.

"How *should* God react to [such] carnage?" he wrote. "By doting on the perpetrators in a grandfatherly fashion?"

"By refusing to condemn the bloodbath but instead affirming the perpetrators' basic goodness?"

Not at all, Volf wrote.

Instead, God *should be* fiercely angry!

"Though I used to complain about the indecency of the idea of God's wrath," he wrote, "I actually came to think that I would have to rebel against a God who *wasn't* wrathful at the sight of the world's evil.

And then he concludes ...

“God isn’t wrathful *in spite* of being love.
God is wrathful because God *is* love.”^{xii}

Friends let’s be honest.

The reason why it’s so hard for us to understand that the most loving thing God can sometimes do is to remove the source of evil is because most of us have only known peace and tranquility.

Even with the political strife of recent years, what most of us have experienced is nothing like the brutality that characterized places like Yugoslavia and people like the Canaanites.

And therefore, most of us do not understand the raw power of evil.

And therefore, it is extremely difficult for us to

connect the dots between God's judgment and God's love.

Which means the problem is with us, not with God.

As Volf put it – God isn't wrathful *in spite* of being love. God is wrathful because God *is* love.

So, let us put to bed the idea that the God of the Old Testament is mean and vindictive.

It's not really that hard to do. After all, in page after page of the Old Testament ...

- We see God's offer of mercy, hope, and forgiveness.
- We find laws and codes that are

shockingly progressive in their acceptance of foreigners and affirmation of women.

- We see a God who commands hospitality to the stranger, fairness to the poor, protection and provision to widows, orphans and refugees – even fair treatment of animals!

In fact, the central confession of the Old Testament is what is written in Exodus 34:6 ...

... which says ...

"The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness ...

... maintaining love to thousands and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and

sin."

Exodus 34:6-7α (NIV)

And it's repeated in every section of the Old Testament.

- It's found in the law of Moses.
- And in the books of history.
- And in the poetry
- And even in the prophets who so often railed against the sin of the people.

And this why, friends, in spite of these crazy (to us) stories, what the Old Testament (and the whole Bible, actually) ...

...what the Bible *really is* ...

- Is a story of a God who is on a relentless

pursuit of people who He loves. Like the song says, His goodness is running after us!

- It's the story of a God who brings his people from bondage to liberation, from exile to restoration, and then eventually shows up in the skin of his own creation^{xiii} ... in the person of Jesus of Nazareth.
- It's the story of a God who takes responsibility Himself for setting the world right ... in the death and resurrection of Jesus.

Why? Because, again ...

God is love. 1 John 4:8
(NIV)

And, as we sang at the beginning of this service ...

God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. John 3:16-17 (NIV)

Conclusion

And the reason that matters to you and to me is that even though the Bible was written at another time and in another place, the story continues even to this day.

Even to this day, God is still in the business of bringing people from bondage to liberation and from exile to restoration.

And yes, it's sometimes hard to understand.
Yes, it's not always comfortable.

But the cross wasn't comfortable, either. The cross wasn't easy.

But it was the loving response to our greatest need: to be liberated from the bondage of sin and restored to what God intended us to be.

So, the story continues.

And God is inviting you and me to become a part of it because, for some strange reason, He loves us.

He loves us in spite of all of our faults and all of our failures.

And he's just waiting for us to say "yes" and believe Him and trust Him in whatever step is next in our life.

He's waiting for us to build our life on the firm foundation that is his love.

For some ... <words about salvation>

For others ... <words about obedience>

- Stop doing something
- Start doing something
- Get out of bed or off your couch and come be physically present

So, in the next few minutes, the band is going to do a song which is actually a prayer about being part of God's story.

And, as Sabrina sings it for us, I invite you to use her words as a prayer for what God might do in your life.

“Lord, we give this time to you. And we invite you to speak to us.”

Ok, so here we go.

Endnotes

ⁱ Acts 15:19

ⁱⁱ <https://www.gotquestions.org/Council-of-Laodicea.html>

ⁱⁱⁱ <https://www.thetorah.com/article/sexual-prohibitions-in-the-bible-and-the-ane-a-comparison>

^{iv} From Andy Stanley’s message series *The Bible for Grown-Ups*, Part III “The Old Testament”

^v Joshua 10:40

^{vi} Joshua 13:1-5

^{vii} Joshua 13:13!

^{viii} <https://crossexamined.org/god-behaving-badly-destruction-canaanites/>

^{ix} <https://www.bethinking.org/bible/old-testament-mass-killings> comment on Gen 15

^x See the story of Rahab in Joshua 2:8-12

^{xi} *ibid*

^{xii} Miroslav Volv, *Free of Charge*, see

<https://www.whitehorseinn.org/2014/01/whi-1188-is-god-a-moral-monster>

^{xiii} Heather Zemple @<https://theaterchurch.com/media/god-in-the-hands-of-angry-people/old-testament-god>