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We've covered the Creation, the Fall, the Flood, the Call of Abraham, the Exodus and Mt. Sinai, now we want to go to the Conquest and Settlement and we get into different issues with each one of these events but in the end, what we're trying to show is the coherence of the Scripture, that these are not just pieces, there is a divine pedagogy to history and by seeing this you develop a rationale for walking by faith. It's not easy to walk by faith when you're not convinced Scriptures is really true, you can't walk by faith when you have doubt, doubt is the opposite of faith. So we are organizing and connecting these events incrementally with the goal of making it easier to trust God. The series may sound theoretical at times but it's really very practical, it's intensely practical as we interact with the issues of our times and the way the world has handled those issues vs how God in the Scriptures handles those same issues. And of course, there's a wide divide.

With the Call of Abraham you have God splitting off one subset of the human race. He, at that point, brought into existence a counterculture and He's never stopped building a counterculture from the time of Abraham on through history. Why is He building a counterculture? Because the Noahic culture which gave rise to our modern civilization, that culture that developed out of the sons of Noah paganized very rapidly. It's not that God was upset with the arts and sciences, the technology of those people, they did great things, they built great things, but the motives underlying those projects were corrupt; it was the motives of the world system; the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life. And when you're left only with arts and sciences you can never be satisfied. Why? Because we're made in the image of God, we're theomorphs and therefore the only thing that will satisfy is a personal relationship with God. God knew this and so He called out Abraham into a personal relationship to form a divine

counterculture, a civilization having the elements of the Noahic civilization, but having, in addition, that something else, spiritual life. What was unique about the Call of Abraham? The fact that this is the only people that have a contract with God. You will not find this in any other religion, any other society, any other culture, any other race, only Israel has a contract with their God. And the God of the contract is the personal sovereign God, He's a God who is able to say I will do this and it will be done because history is My product. It's not run by a computer, it's not run by chance, it's not run by a committee. It is run by the sovereign God of the universe.

We said that by the time you get to the Exodus you have gone from an elect individual Abraham to an elect nation, Israel. And this is a picture of judgment/salvation, Egypt is being judged, Israel is being saved and we covered that in five points. But what is the uniqueness of the Exodus? What has never been enjoyed by any other nation in an oppressed situation? Has there ever been a revolution of a group of people coming out from under a tyrannical government without an army? You can argue that God was the army but in strictly human terms, think about that, it's the strangest revolution that man has ever witnessed in history. All other revolutions, all other freedom movements have always involved armed conflict. This is the only one that didn't. Why is that? Because God was going to show that it's His tools, not man's tools by which this is accomplished.

We came to Mt. Sinai and we said again this is a unique thing. Have you ever heard of a civilization or a nation anywhere in the history of man that ever heard the law being spoken from a mountain by God in the public audience of two million people? This wasn't a private vision, this was witnessed by the entire nation, out loud, in Hebrew, so you could record it. This is the background for three great truths that underlie our faith, the doctrine of revelation, the doctrine of inspiration, the doctrine of canonicity. Another unique thing about this event is you get God's law. This is God's law. And when you compare God's law with human laws, the Laws of Eshnunna, the Hammurabi Law code, you find this startling difference. In all law codes you have casuistic law, if this happens do this, if that happens do that, that's typical case law, but in addition to casuistic law you have another format in the divine law and that's what we call personal exhortation, this gets into the motives, don't deceive, don't purpose in your heart to do this or that, circumcise your heart. This is just mixed in right along with the case law.

What makes this so odd and so unique is that case law can be policed, we don't have a problem with that, but can you please tell me how you can police personal exhortation, commands that address the heart. No police force, no court, no judge can quite get inside the thoughts. But God can and so you have Him addressing the hearts of His people. And this shows what no other law code shows, a personal relationship between the lawgiver and the law-keepers and we found it was a Father-Son relationship. That is forever a relationship held between the Creator and Israel, never to be finally severed.

Today we're going to move on to another section of the Bible. We're going to deal with the Conquest and Settlement period. This introduces a whole new set of books, and we want to kind of organize it for those of you who may be a little unfamiliar with the OT. We've looked at the Torah, sometimes called the Pentateuch, five books; Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, these all go together. They constitute the Law or Torah, in the NT it's called the Law. Jesus in the NT described the OT as three parts: law, prophets and writings. Those are the three words the Jews used to describe it. We're finishing up with the first part of the OT, the Law. The Law is the foundation of the OT. Everything else is a follow up to this.

We're going to deal with a period of history that starts with Numbers, it goes on in Deuteronomy, it continues through Joshua and into the Judges. So this period of history is basically the last half of the 2nd millennium BC, it takes us from Moses to Samuel, the last judge of Israel. During that interval of world history, about 450 years there's not any sign of a super power bothering Israel. There's not one mention of Egypt in existence. This is why I mentioned the fact that, I'm personally persuaded there's something radically wrong with the secular chronologies because all of them have the 18th dynasty in here and that's the era of Egypt's greatness, that's the most well-attested dynasty in all Egyptian history but in the Bible, during all this time, there's no super power, just feudal kingdoms here and there. Then Egypt is a world player again in the time of Solomon and Rehoboam, but not here. In the midst of this we have the most controversial section of the Bible. I don't know of any other section of the Bible that's more ridiculed, apart from Gen 1, than this area. And that's because this section contains Holy War. Israel goes through dozens of battles, she wins some, she loses some. Every time she tries to live in peaceful coexistence with her neighbors God stirs things up and there's more bloodshed. Why can't there be peace between the Kingdom

of God and the kingdom of man? That's what we want to look at. It's a bloody, messy conflict between the kingdom of darkness and the kingdom of light. And we have to ask, "What is this doing in the pages of God's word?"

Three key criticisms of the Bible come out of this period. These three things you'll hear out of the mouths of informed non-Christians, whether they've read the Bible or not, they've heard about these things. And when we read the Bible we have to be honest, these three things are there. One of them is *genocide*, there is genocide in the Scriptures, an awful genocide, and we have to deal with why. You can't hide it, it's there. So what do we say? The second thing is *intolerance*, it is the most obvious example of religious intolerance the world had ever seen. Certain things are tolerated and other things are not tolerated, and anybody that differs is totally destroyed. Why is there such intolerance? A third thing is a divine *aversion to peaceful coexistence*. Why was peaceful coexistence considered to be evil? These are three major issues in the Bible that every Christian has to come to grips with: genocide, intolerance and an aversion to peaceful coexistence.

What we're going to do is take seven battles from the period of the Conquest and Judges. There are plenty more. These seven are chosen because each of them shows some aspect of these three issues.

Our aim here is to come to grips with something our God is telling us here. This is a lesson about our faith. Whenever we get clobbered with criticism over something, it's probably time that we sat down and reflected and not do the very dangerous thing of pretending it's not there or trying to hide it. Rather let's get it all out on the table and see what we're talking about. That's what we're going to do. So we're going to take seven battles that involve these three problems: genocide, intolerance, and an aversion to peaceful coexistence, exactly the opposite of what people consider to be ethical behavior and see if we can figure out why God commanded them. I want you to read through these passages, familiarize yourself with them and the very real problems we have here. The first two we're going to deal with today and these involve things that are going on in Exod 32-34, Deut 9-10, and Num 33.

Turn to Exod 32. The first one is the Covenant Breaking at Mt Sinai. Here's the scene. God spoke the ten words to all the people, they got afraid, it was

this big storm, fire from heaven, a very frightening sight, so the people backed off and said, “Moses, we can’t listen to this God, you go get the word, come back and tell us.” Verse 1, “Now when the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people assembled about Aaron and said to him, “Come, make us a god who will go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.” ²Aaron said to them, “Tear off the gold rings which are in the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring *them* to me.” ³Then all the people tore off the gold rings which were in their ears and brought *them* to Aaron. ⁴He took *this* from their hand, and fashioned it with a graving tool and made it into a molten calf; and they said, “This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt.” So it’s party time down below while Moses is up on the top of Mt. Sinai. What we have to do is look at what’s going on here, there are a number of things and we can’t get into all the details, but we want to touch some things.

One of the things in verse 1 that you want to observe, do you notice the impatience here? I mean look at this, it hasn’t even been three weeks this guy Moses is gone and we’ve got a rejection of the plan of God. Obviously one thing they had seen in Egypt with the plagues was that God has a timing and Moses is working on God’s cue. God gives the cue and the plan advances. Yet here they are impatient with the plan of God, going to speed things up. Another thing you observe in v 1, do you notice there’s something wrong with the government here? When God called the nation out, He left them with a governmental structure. The structure was Moses, Aaron and the elders. Now all of a sudden in place of that kind of government, we suddenly developed a democracy, all the people are coming to Aaron directing him what to do. And we don’t see this too well because we’ve all been brought up to believe in democracy. Yet when you read further in the chapter, verse 21, Moses confronts Aaron over this, and look at the conversation that goes on here, it’s kind of neat. “Then Moses says to Aaron, “What did this people do to you, that you have brought such great sin upon them?”” What they did to Aaron is they put political pressure on him, notice how verse 1 goes, the people saw, and they assembled themselves about Aaron. Here he is and he’s got a group of ticked off people and they tell him what to do. Yet in verse 21 Moses goes back to Aaron and says, “Hey, I don’t care if you’ve got an angry mob wanting to do this, you were supposed to be the leader, what happened? And then Aaron said, and this is one of the classic excuses of Scripture, look at this one

closely, “Aaron said, “Do not let the anger of my lord burn; you know the people yourself, that they are prone to evil. ²³“For they said to me, ‘Make a god for us who will go before us; for this Moses, the man who brought us up from the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him.’ ²⁴“I said to them, ‘Whoever has any gold, let them tear it off.’ So they gave *it* to me, and I threw it into the fire, and out came this calf.” You’ve got to catch the humor of Scripture because there’s a lot of humor, particularly in the OT and you have to learn to recognize it, because it’s not terribly overt, but it’s there, and the more modern translations have had more fun with these passages, translating them in a more relaxed way and this is one of those neat little humorous jabs, Aaron’s excuse, “Hey, I tossed this stuff in the fire and out came a calf.” So, something is wrong right at the top levels of administration. Things are out of control. And if you look at verse 25 Moses picks up on that, “Now when Moses saw that the people were out of control—for Aaron had let them get out of control to be a derision among their enemies—then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said ‘Whoever is for the LORD, come to me!’ And all the sons of Levi gathered together unto him.” Then he did some nasty things to the Levites, he ordered them to go in and kill people. This is kind of a bloody mess here, but do you know what’s happening? The issue is that this nation is going to be run under an authority structure, and if you don’t like it, you can get off the ship right now. Things have to get back under control. This has tremendous ramifications later for the doctrine of sanctification, because when we get into this, I’m going to go through all the blood and the gore here so we see what the passage is saying, then we want to come back to the doctrine. The doctrine that grows out of this is the doctrine of sanctification, or spiritual growth. Somehow that doctrine is tied in with the three issues; why is there genocide, why is there intolerance, and why is there an aversion to peaceful coexistence? Devotional commentators have noticed for centuries this section of Scripture is related to spiritual growth. And so we should read this section of Scripture over and over and over through the Christian life.

Let’s look further. Ask yourself as we look at verses 3-4, particularly verse 4, what have the people done by the end of verse 4? Obviously they’ve built a calf, but based on what we’ve talked about in the past, can you see through the idol to what actually happened here, that it’s more than just a golden calf, there’s a spirit behind that, especially where they say, “This is your god ... who brought you up out of the land of Egypt.” Let’s look at that sentence, let’s

analyze it. “This is your god,” and then the clause “who brought you, out of Egypt.” Now is this part of the sentence correct, never mind the “god,” but were they brought out of Egypt? Yes, that’s real history. The discussion that they’re having here has not to do with the event of coming out of Egypt in the sense of the raw basic fact; they all know they came out of Egypt. We’ll call this a little piece of data. Now, looking at verse 1 what do you notice? Who took them out of Egypt? There’s a conflict, apparently, in the interpretation of the data. They’re not denying the data, these people just walked out of Egypt, they’re not going to deny the data, but what’s happened to their interpretation of the data according to verse 1 and 4? There’s a conflict of some sort going on between verse 1 and 4. What is it? Verse 1 says Moses did it, a human being; verse 4 says a god did it, a calf. Let’s examine a little more carefully, same sentence, “this is the god,” who is making this assertion? Who is designing, defining and naming this god? Is the god doing the naming or is man doing the naming? Its man doing the naming. What event have we studied, the climactic event of the Noachic civilization, where we found the same kind of language? They said “Come let us build a city...let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered. See that spirit of autonomy? That’s the spirit of rebellion, the spirit of pride, and that’s what’s in all our hearts. That’s what our flesh loves. We want to carve out some area that we define, we control, we want to rule, we want security and *we* want it on *our* terms. That is the essence of sin. You see it in the tower of Babel and you see it at Mt Sinai.

With this spirit no amount of empirical evidence will convince a person. You could have a DVD of the resurrection of Jesus Christ and as Van Til said, you present the historical resurrection of Christ with an autonomous spirit and he says, “This is a strange universe. The resurrection of Jesus would be a fine item for Ripley’s *Believe It or Not*. Why not send it in?” Think about it. You could actually have evidence of Jesus Christ physically body rising out of the tomb on Easter and somebody could come up with, “It’s a strange universe.” The spirit of autonomy always generates an explanation for data and history no matter how stupid it may sound. To us it sounds stupid because our eyes have been graciously pried open by the Holy Spirit, but when we’re in the flesh we might go along with it. So here we have *us* defining our own meaning. You can take that and apply it to any point in your life, I can apply it in my life. When we see sin operating we’re doing the same thing, we’re engaging in exactly the same thing, we’re not making a golden calf, but we’re

really saying, “Well, this all happened because of this” and we generate whole schemes of interpretation to make them fit our sinful agenda. The Israelites do it, we do it. It’s sinful.

So right at the start of this whole thing, right at the very foot of the mountain when God’s giving the law up top, this is going on down below. What is this pointing to? What’s the grand idea here? The need for a new heart. These people are carnal. These people are never going to keep the law, these people are making themselves out to be the law. What’s the whole point of the law? To show that God is Lord, He’s the authority, He defines meaning. Up on the top of the mountain God is speaking and beginning His rule over this people and while He is speaking, you’ve got to catch the irony of this event, at exactly the hour that He’s on top of the mountain defining reality, on the bottom of the mountain man is defining reality. Both are making ultimate statements; the two cannot coexist. One or the other has to yield, because they’re both positing universals. God says I am the authority and I define the meaning of life. The people down below are saying we are the authority and we define the meaning of life. You can’t put those two together and get coexistence. Those two principles are at war eternally; that’s the sinful nature of man.

Let’s read further, verses 7-8, “Then the LORD spoke to Moses, ‘Go down at once, for your people, whom you brought up from the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves.’” It’s interesting, God puts them with Moses, these are your people Moses, but watch what happens. Moses was an interesting person; all these guys have very interesting biographies. If you’ve ever done a study of the life of Moses, or any one of these men, it’s encouraging to see them because one time you see them in all their grandeur, and the next moment you see them fall flat on their face, and it’s so comforting to realize that that happens to every one of us. Here you’re going to see one of the great moments in Moses’ life, magnificent moment. The Holy Spirit works through this man in such a way that he reveals not just something in his life but through his life he reveals something that eventually comes through the Lord Jesus Christ. Verse 8, “They have quickly turned aside from the way which I commanded them. They have made for themselves a molten calf, and have worshiped it, and have sacrificed to it, and said, This is your god, O Israel, who brought you up from the land of Egypt!” Verse 9, “And the LORD said to Moses, ‘I have seen this people, and behold, they are an obstinate people.’”

Verse 10, “Now then let me alone, that My anger may burn against them, and that I may destroy them; and I will make of you a great nation.” Think back for a minute. What was the promise to Abraham? The promise to Abraham was that there would be a seed, an eternal seed. Abraham, through Isaac, through Jacob, through the twelve tribes of Israel. One of those tribes was promised that he would have the scepter to rule; the scepter would never depart from this tribe. The tribe was Judah. The scepter would never depart from Judah. What tribe is Moses in? He’s of the tribe of Levi. What God is threatening to do here, it’s a tremendous moment in verse 10, God is threatening to violate His own word. God is threatening to undo His promises. I’m going to wipe out Judah. The wrath of God is horrifying in this sense. Here you have a revelation of God threatening to undo His very word. It’s an amazing statement, it’s an awful moment. In verse 11 Moses quickly comes in, and he makes one of the most famous intercessions in all of Scripture. And this is a picture of the intercessory work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Look what he does. “Then Moses entreated the LORD his God, and said, ‘O LORD, why doth Thine anger burn against Thy people whom Thou has brought out from the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand?’” See God tested him, notice how God phrased it in verse 7, “your people,” and “you brought them out of the land of Egypt.” Then you have in verse 11, Moses goes back and says “Oh no, no, they’re Your people, and You brought them out of the land of Egypt.”

Do you see how God pushes Moses, c’mon Moses, bring it on, it’s a challenge to see if Moses will push back. This is not a polite religious prayer. It’s not that kind of a prayer at all. Moses argues with God, that’s what’s going on, and you’ll see that several other times in the Bible. There’s some amazing stuff in the Psalms where this happens. These guys go one on one, toe to toe with God Himself. As some skeptic once said, “This is why the Jews run the banks, the congress and everything else, after all, they argued with God for 14 centuries, they got pretty good at it, so they can certainly argue with man.” These are tough people.

Moses makes an argument, this is bargaining. Look how he bargains with God. He knows God is really ticked, he knows that God could very well do exactly what He’s saying in just a fraction of a second. Moses is trying to calm God down, in other words. And to work on God’s heart, what does he do? I’ve

never seen this mentioned as a principle of prayer, but here you have Moses arguing with God and convincing God, based on a deep truth that's sitting there and lodged in God's own heart. Look at it carefully. Verse 11, "Then Moses entreated the LORD his God, and said, 'O LORD, why doth Thine anger burn....'" Verse 12, "Why should the Egyptians speak, saying, 'With evil *intent* He brought them out to kill them in the mountains and to destroy them from the face of the earth'? Turn from Your burning anger and change Your mind about *doing* harm to Your people." Now verse 13, see why I took these events in sequence, you all studied the event of verse 13, look at it: "Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel [Jacob], Thy servants to whom Thou didst swear by Thyself, and didst say to them, 'I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heavens, and all this land of which I have spoken I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.'" Verse 14, "So the LORD changed His mind about the harm which He said He would do to His people" or He relented.

That's one of those rare passages that cause theologians all kinds of problems, because it looks like you've got the immutability of God negated here. But one of the things we want to look at is verse 13 and the logic behind it. Remember how I said there was that burning oven back in Gen 15, it was dark and it passed between the slaughtered pieces that were on either side of it. I said it was the oath of malediction, and that you could properly translate that passage as God saying, "I will be damned if I do not do this," it's an oath of malediction. It's a very strong passage in the Hebrew. Very, very powerful swearing that goes on. That's exactly, verse 13, what Moses picks up on, he goes back to when God made the original contract, he goes back to the very way God swore to Himself and he throws it right back in the face of God. This is kind of scary stuff, and I'm not saying I would have the courage to do this at all. And I don't think many of us would, most of us would be hiding under a rock at this point. This is very different than the nice pious prayer we're so accustomed to admiring. This isn't nice praying. This is tough bargaining. It's almost like God reaches out and smacks Moses and Moses turns right around and smacks God, smacks God with His own promise.

Obviously God knew going into this what was going to happen. Why do you think God set this up? What do you think that God is pushing on Moses? Moses is going to be the leader of these people, they're a sinful people. They're a people that are going to screw up, and he's got to cope with it, he's

got to deal with it and remember Moses naturally didn't want to. Remember the first picture you get of Moses, "Oh well if I go back to Egypt they're not going to think much of me; I can't even talk." What God's doing is He's pushing Moses to stand up and assume authority, take the bull by the horns. In this case he did take the bull by the horns, he broke it. But what we have here is a teaching lesson that God is giving to Moses to build him into a spiritual leader and out of chapter 32 events two great truths arise.

We call this the covenant breaking at Sinai, and out of this covenant breaking event we get two great truths. One is the *need for a new heart*. There's simply no way the carnal heart is going to serve God, they have to have circumcised hearts. This is what God says in the book of Deuteronomy, O Israel, that your heart was circumcised. There must be spiritual surgery on the organ of life. This is a compulsion, we would say in Christian terms what you've got here is what you hear all the time, and you hear it in NT vocabulary so I think we get immune to it because we hear it so often, it doesn't register any longer: I no longer live but Christ lives in me, the life I live in the flesh I no longer live. You see, the natural man doesn't submit, a spiritual surgery has to happen, so the first great truth of this is a heart must be circumcised in order to be servants of the Lord. It doesn't come naturally. Second, the need for a priestly intercessor. For a sinful people to remain in fellowship with God there must be intercession, someone who will petition the Lord on our behalf. Moses is cast in that role, he's a type of Christ in this sense. His intercession on behalf of the people of Israel and Aaron.

Let's turn to the second of seven examples, Exod 34:11, this is the thing that is so offensive, the Declaration of Holy War. Verse 11, "Be sure to observe what I am commanding you this day: behold, I am going to drive out the Amorite before you, the Canaanite, the Hittite, the Perizzite, the Hivite and the Jebusite." See the intolerance, there's an aversion to peaceful coexistence. Look at what it says, think about what is said in verse 12, "Watch yourself that you make no covenant with the inhabitants of the land into which you are going, lest it become a snare in your midst." You cannot enter into peaceful coexistence with these people, ever! Verse 13, "But *rather*, you are to tear down their altars and smash their *sacred* pillars and cut down their Asherim ¹⁴—for you shall not worship any other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God— ¹⁵otherwise you might make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land and they would play the harlot with their

gods and sacrifice to their gods, and someone might invite you to eat of his sacrifice, ¹⁶and you might take some of his daughters for your sons, and his daughters might play the harlot with their gods and cause your sons *also* to play the harlot with their gods. ¹⁷“You shall make for yourself no molten gods.” Then it goes on and describes it. In a nutshell, what is he warning about in verse 15-17? In sociological, political terms, what’s God holding a red flag up here for? What would happen? He’s talking about social relationships developing in a peaceful environment, and intermarriages occurring. Yet that’s forbidden. There is an intolerance for that kind of peaceful coexistence, that must not happen. There must always be a hostility, an animosity, a war that goes on between you and the inhabitants of this land.

Let’s look further, in Num 33:50, this is just a sampling of these kinds of passages, you can find more, I just want to convince you that it’s not just an isolated text. The critics are right, this stuff is here. They’re wrong in how they’re interpreting it. ⁵⁰Then the LORD spoke to Moses in the plains of Moab by the Jordan *opposite* Jericho, saying, ⁵¹“Speak to the sons of Israel and say to them, ‘When you cross over the Jordan into the land of Canaan, ⁵²then you shall drive out all the inhabitants of the land from before you, and destroy all their figured stones, and destroy all their molten images and demolish all their high places; ⁵³and you shall take possession of the land and live in it, for I have given the land to you to possess it. ⁵⁴‘You shall inherit the land by lot according to your families; to the larger you shall give more inheritance, and to the smaller you shall give less inheritance. Wherever the lot falls to anyone, that shall be his. You shall inherit according to the tribes of your fathers. ⁵⁵‘But if you do not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall come about that those whom you let remain of them *will become* as pricks in your eyes and as thorns in your sides, and they will trouble you in the land in which you live. ⁵⁶‘And as I plan to do to them, so I will do to you.’” So clearly there is a divinely authorized intolerance to peaceful coexistence.

To get some background and interpret this, we want to leave you with some thoughts on how to interpret this, turn back to Gen 15:16 to get some background. There’s a little note here about why Abraham’s descendants were sent down to Egypt for four hundred years. There was a little problem we traced in Abraham’s family in the book of Genesis, they kept drifting father and farther away from God as you go from Abraham to Isaac to Jacob

and eventually you have Jacob is sleeping with professional Canaanite prostitutes, it's a grand Christian testimony. So if this people is ever going to maintain its identity God has got to get them out of there, away from that society that amalgamates, and so God sent them to Egypt, a segregated society, a people who wanted nothing to do with the Hebrews. And here we have that announced. While He was making His covenant with Abraham He said verse 16, "Then in the fourth generation they," that is the sons of Abraham, "shall return here," back to Palestine, "for the iniquity of the Amorite is not yet complete." In other words, the people that dwelt in this land had gone negative toward God, negative, negative, negative, negative, and they just were going down a spiral and God said I know how they're going to go, they're going to reject Me and reject Me and reject Me until their hearts are so calloused. And when they get down to this level I'm going to send My people in there to clean them out. This is going to be genocide, I want those people removed from this earth, and I'm the Lord and that's what I said, so I want you to go in there and I want you to kill them, all of them. I don't want you intermarrying with them, I don't want you associating with them, I don't want anything left of their civilization, I want it destroyed. I want animals destroyed, and especially all signs of their religious beliefs. Just imagine the ACLU response to this?

Here's a modern atheist response to these OT texts. I have to say Dr Richard Dawkins has described the Conquest with great flair and passion, "*The ethnic cleansing begun in the time of Moses is brought to bloody fruition in the book of Joshua, a text remarkable for the bloodthirsty massacres it records and the xenophobic relish with which it does so...the invasion of the Promised Land...is morally indistinguishable from Hitler's invasion of Poland, or Saddam Hussein's massacres of the Kurds and the Marsh Arabs.*" I mean, he's kind of got a point doesn't he? These are some of the satiric criticism these pages of Scripture receive. How do we answer this? We can't deny it's there. What do we say?

Here's our answer from Dr. Meredith Kline. This man has one of the clearest, finest answers for why is there genocide, why is there holy war, how do we as Christians talk about loving our neighbors at the same time we're killing them. Here's Kline's quote: "*If Israel's conquest of Canaan were to be adjudicated before an assembly of nations acting according to the provisions of common grace,*" this is a key statement, "*that conquest would have to be*

condemned as an unprovoked aggression and, moreover, an aggression carried out in barbarous violation of the requirement to show all possible mercy even in the proper execution of justice.” Continue the quote, this is an explanation, follow through this and we’ll pick this up next week, but in this quote is one of the finest statements of how to handle this problem. *“The unbeliever is the believer’s neighbor today; but the reprobate is not the neighbor of the redeemed hereafter for the reason that God will set a great gulf between them. God, whose immutable nature is to hate evil, withdrawing all favor from the reprobate, will Himself hate them as sin’s finished products.”*

That’s another thing that goes back to that Gen 15:16 passage, the iniquity of the Amorites is full—sin’s finished products. “And if the redeemed in glory are to fulfill their duty of patterning their ways after God’s, they will have to change their attitude toward the unbeliever from one of neighborly love to one of perfect hatred, which is a holy, not a malicious passion....” This, by the way, is not now, it’s in eternity. “It will only be with the frank acknowledgement,” and here’s the substance of the answer, “It will only be with the frank acknowledgement that the ordinary ethical requirements were suspended and the ethical principles of the last judgment intruded that the divine promise and commands to Israel concerning Canaan and the Canaanites come into their own.”

See what Kline was saying, he’s saying God is giving the human race a fore view of the ethics of future judgment. He’s suspending the ethics of common grace just for a moment to give us a peek at the ethics of future judgment. He in His omniscience knows when a society, a culture, an individual has reached that point. Let’s go back to God’s character for a moment. Remember we said God is gracious, that comes out of His love, but that grace has a starting point and an ending point, we said evil is bracketed, evil had a beginning, and in the future the new creation happens and evil is put over into an eternal garbage heap called the Lake of Fire, so you have this period of time in between this. That’s where grace operates. Grace doesn’t eternally operate. Grace stops once the judgment occurs, once history is over grace is all over. An example is the history for the angels, the angels have decided, Satan is never going to be saved, the demons are never going to be saved, their day of salvation, if it ever was, is over. Salvation is closed to them; there is no grace available for them. Grace is only a temporary, historical thing in the Christian position. Therefore, what happens, you have an ethic of

common grace, and we're used to those ethics, the unbeliever loves those ethics, the ethics of grace, grace, grace because it enables the freedom to rebel against God, and he wants those ethics, he calls those the highly evolved superior ethics, the ethic of tolerance, a slight distortion of the ethics of grace. So we do have the ethics of grace, but at one point in history to give revelation of what He is going to do at the end of history, God gave back here a small historic revelation of what's going to happen on a mass scale over in the future. Holy war in the OT is a preview of the wrath of God in the final end of history. When He exterminates those who have finally rebelled against His gracious call to salvation there will be no tolerance in that day.

So as you think about genocide and intolerance and these other things, these are heavy issues, and why they become so heavy is that they can't be discussed without bringing into the discussion the return of Christ, and the final judgment in history. And people don't want to deal with that, they want to keep safe in this ethics of common grace over here, that is comfortable, but this is very uncomfortable. So we're going through an uncomfortable portion of the Scriptures, it's a messy portion of Scriptures, but out of it will grow, I think, a renewed appreciation for the nature of who it is we worship.

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