

ASSEMBLY TIMES

Sunday

Bible Class on hold
Morning Assembly 10:30
Evening Assembly 5:00

Wednesday

Evening Bible Class 6:30

RADIO PROGRAM

The Bible Speaks



Sunday 9:00-9:30a.m.
KURM 790AM

Downtown Church of Christ

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Rogers, AR 72757
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A man is not ready
to live if he is
not ready to die.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Today
All Classes
On Hold

Next Sunday
All Classes
On Hold

This info is provided
to help everyone stay
in synch during our
three-year study thru
the Bible (Sunday AM).

FAMILY NEWS

PRAYER LIST –

Preachers we support: Japan, Philippines, Vietnam, Canada, Mexico, Peru, & U.S.

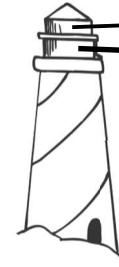
Sick: Kathy Fletcher, Marsha Swim, Rai Starr, Diane Willis, & Etta Frazelle.

Shut-ins: Betty Jo Young, Margaret Abel, Erton Usrey, Billie Pennington, Shirley Cole, & Mary Lou Lewis

Military: Logan Dickey, Kyler Sullins

THURSDAY ONLINE – Every Thursday night at 6:30 we have a class for our young ones on Facebook. You can view it live — or view it later!

SUMMER DATES – Our **VBS** is set for July 18-22 with Chris Reeves and our **Youth Lectures** are set for July 30-31 with Paul Sheehan. Plan ahead!



DOWNTOWN GOSPEL BEACON

**PUBLISHED WEEKLY BY THE DOWNTOWN CHURCH OF CHRIST
ROGERS, ARKANSAS**

May 16, 2021

The Canaanite Conquest: Genocide or Justice?

So, the skeptic's argument goes like this: If God is such a loving and compassionate God, then why did He order the Israelites to completely destroy the Canaanites (effectively committing genocide)? It is one of the most common attacks against Biblical authority and, in fact, impugns the very nature of God.

The command is found in De 7:1-5, "you shall conquer them and utterly destroy them", and again in De 20:16-18, "let nothing that breathes remain alive". That was the command given to Israel shortly before

they entered the land under Joshua's leadership. But was that command morally right? That's the question.

Of course, the accusation assumes that there is an objective moral standard that governs human behavior. If there is no God, and thus no codified moral standard of right and wrong, the whole question is a farce. What difference does it make if Israel (or Hitler, or Pol Pot, etc.) committed genocide? The real question is, was God inconsistent in making such a demand of His people before the conquest? >

The command sounds harsh when taken out of context; but the same passages that stated the command also gave the reason: “lest they teach you to do according to all their abominations which they have done for their gods” (20:18). And what “abominations” would those be? Both the Bible and ancient Canaanite sources document their pagan practices (Le 18), which included cult prostitution (male & female), incest, adultery, homosexuality, bestiality, and child sacrifice (small children burned alive to the god Molech). The Law of Moses prescribed the death penalty for Israelites who practiced such things.

And how rampant were these practices among the Canaanites? God told Abraham that if he could find ten righteous people in the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah that He would spare them. But there were none. Many years later, after the Jews ignored God’s warnings and were practicing the same things, God challenged Jeremiah to find just one righteous person in the city of Jerusalem — but he could not (Jer 5:1).

The command to destroy these pagan communities was **not** an ethnic genocide. It was a just punishment for a rebellious people who knew better (note Rahab’s confession to the two spies, Josh 2:8-11). Rahab was spared for her faith — as were some others (De 20:10-14, Josh 9:1-18). As for the children who were caught up in the destruction — like children of all ages who have suffered and died because of parents’ poor choices, the Canaanite children were, in the eternal picture, better off.

Capital punishment has, in all ages, been considered by God to be right and just in those circumstances where people flagrantly rebel against His standards of moral decency (Ge 9:6, Ro 13:4). Yet, how much more severe will be that eternal punishment for those who refuse to repent of those sins! (Mt 25:30, Mk 9:42-44, etc.)

So, let’s not pretend to be more righteous than God. He knew what He was doing with the Canaanites, and He knows what He is doing with us. Let’s humble ourselves before Him!

- *WKing*

Faith in Context

I couldn’t tell you the number of times I’ve driven down the road only to realize I’ve been breaking the speed limit. Admittedly, I’ve sped on purpose before...

Now, these last several years I haven’t had the desire to speed anymore, and yet I still seem to break the speed limit just as much these days as when I did it on purpose in the past.

Why did I speed on purpose before? Well... it’s because I never expected to get caught. And why do I accidentally speed now? Probably because I no longer think about getting caught.

Obviously, this has been unwise and very foolish of me, because whether I don’t expect punishment, or don’t even think about it — it’s still a reality. If I keep this up, eventually I will get pulled over by the police.

I think of this in terms of why in the world we either **purposefully** sin, or sin because we **don’t care** to pay enough attention.

Since God hasn’t quite ‘pulled us over’, this may breed contempt toward His judgment. We think we can get away with it, or we don’t care to consider it. After all, if God isn’t coming down to stop me or directly tell me to knock it off, then it must not be a big deal, right?

This isn’t quite the scenario we make it out to be. What might seem like carelessness or a lack of punishment from God, is actually loving patience, waiting for us to repent and grow (2 Pet 3⁹).

And in the end, when those flashing lights catch up to us because we have abused His patience, it won’t be a ticket. It will be the judgment of our God, with the sentence of death (Rom 6²³).

- *WHSmith*

