

What do we do with all the death & destruction in this part of the Old Testament?

1. The larger storyline of Scripture reveals God to be merciful, gracious and compassionate.

Exodus 34:6

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

Stay anchored to what God has made clear while you journey through what's confusing.

2. The spiritual climate of the people who occupied the promised land.

The Canaanite religion was a fertility cult which revolved around the sexual relationship between gods and goddesses.

Leviticus 18:21

Do not give any of your children to be sacrificed to Molech, for you must not profane the name of your God. I am the LORD.

"Since God's first concern for His universe is its moral health, that is, its holiness, whatever is contrary to this is necessarily under His eternal displeasure. To preserve His creation God must destroy whatever would destroy it. When He arises to put down iniquity and save the world from irreparable moral collapse, He is said to be angry. Every wrathful judgment in the history of the world has been a holy act of preservation. The holiness of God, the wrath of God, and the health of the creation are inseparably united. God's wrath is His utter intolerance of whatever degrades and destroys. He hates iniquity as a mother hates the polio that takes the life of her child."

- A.W. Tozer

3. Much of the violence commissioned by God was isolated to a specific time in specific circumstances.

In Joshua and Judges, God is clearing the land for His presence to dwell with His people and establish His nation to eventually be a conduit of blessing to the rest of the world.

Recommended resource:

How (Not) to Read the Bible by Dan Kimball

Cycle of the book of Judges:



Judges 3:31

After Ehud came Shamgar son of Anath, who struck down six hundred Philistines with an oxgoad. He too saved Israel.

Judges 4:4

Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lappidoth, was leading Israel at that time.

Judges 4:15

...the LORD routed Sisera and all his chariots and army by the sword, and Sisera abandoned his chariot and fled on foot.

Judges 4:17

Sisera, however, fled on foot to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite...

Judges 4:20-21

²⁰ "Stand in the doorway of the tent," he told her. "If someone comes by and asks you, 'Is anyone here?' say 'No.'" ²¹ But Jael, Heber's wife, picked up a tent peg and a hammer and went quietly to him while he lay fast asleep, exhausted. She drove the peg through his temple into the ground, and he died.

Judges 4:23-24

²³ On that day God subdued Jabin, the Canaanite king, before the Israelites. ²⁴ And the hand of the Israelites grew stronger and stronger...

Whether it's...

Shamgar the Canaanite with his oxgoad

David the family run with his sling

Deborah the prophetess holding court in a male-dominated environment

Jael the Kenite with a tent peg

principle = **God loves impossible odds. And God uses the ordinary to deal with the impossible!**

- **Opportunities typically come disguised as impossible problems.**
- **God typically inserts the ordinary to deal with the impossible.**

Why?

So when the impossible turns possible, there's only one place to point.

Courage doesn't wait for situational factors to turn in your favor. It waits for only one thing, a green light from God.