



Orthodox
Outlet
for
Dogmatic
Enquiries

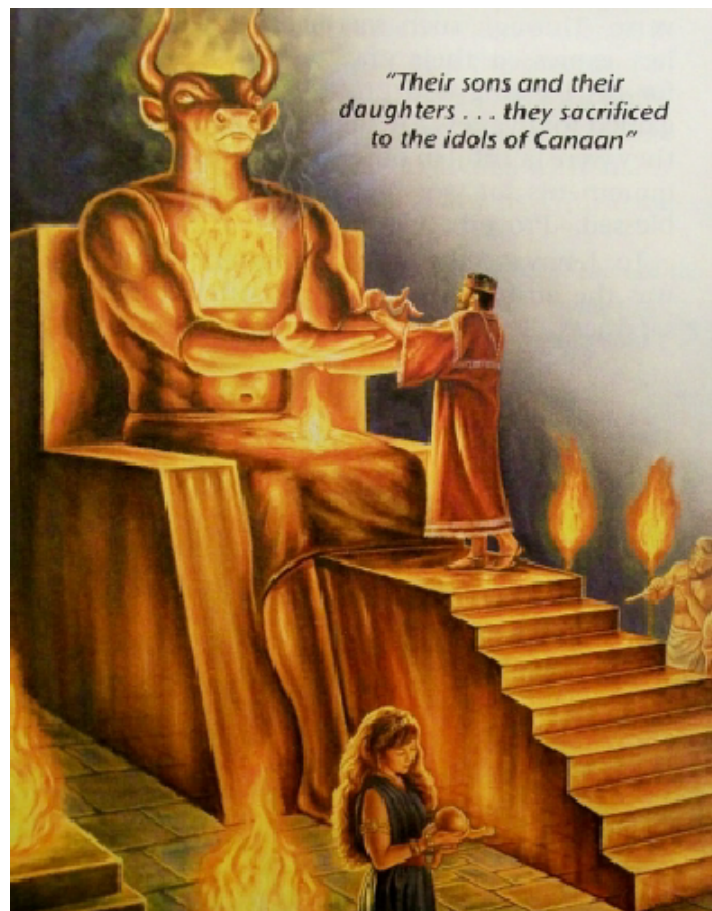
HOLY BIBLE

Home
Page

Related articles: ["Show them no mercy!"](#)

Divine commands for genocide

Can He who created and preserves the life of every living creation be accused as its murderer?



[Source](#) (Greek article)

Doesn't the Creator have authority over His creation?

Every civilized and rational person agrees that genocide (the obliteration of an entire populace) is a crime, and that those who commit it nowadays are justly convicted as war criminals.

But what can be said of the genocides that were ordered by God Himself in the Old Testament era? How can such a thing be accepted by the Christian faith of love, and the God of Christians Who gave the command, be regarded as Love?

1. Sentimental negation of the Scriptures

Without a doubt, the God of Love had ordered genocides during the Old Testament era. The Holy Bible has repeatedly recorded this, as we shall see further along. However this fact is also extremely scandalous for many people. In fact it is so scandalous, that some hasten to claim that the excerpts of the Holy Bible that have recorded those commands by God are supposedly false and additions. However, as any conscientious student can discern, those segments of the Holy Bible are actual and valid – as are all of its sections that have been preserved by the Church, as a part of the Canon of the Holy Bible.

Anyone can understand why these people hasten to characterize these excerpts of the Holy Bible as “illegitimate”; it is because they feel an inner conflict, in compromising the God of love with a command for genocide. However, such a seeming antithesis does not mean that anyone is free to “cut and sew” the Holy Bible to accommodate their own subjective perceptions. For Christians, the content of the Holy Bible is clear and specific; and the refusal to accept something that is perceived as contradicting their logic or their sense of justice not only doesn't solve the problem, but will lead to many more contradictions, which even reach the point of annulling Divine Revelation itself.

We should therefore consistently accept the Holy Bible exactly as it was handed down to us, and ONLY in that cadre should we attempt to explain the matters that seem problematic or contradictory. Always with consistency, and without sentimentalities or prejudices. The events are exactly as delivered to us, whether we like it or not!

We will now move on to the analysis of the matter of genocides step by step – within the cadre of Christian Revelation, with consistency and directness and without negating anything that was passed down to us as components of the Holy Bible.

Should anyone wish to negate segments of the Holy Bible so that his conscience not be troubled by believing in the God of the Bible Who had commanded genocides, then that person is in fact not only negating

Divine Revelation, but is also denying God of His absolute authority over His Creation and the lives of His creations! This is tantamount to indirectly accusing Him as a murderer, and with this stance is also disapproving God's commands, WHICH WERE ACTUALLY GIVEN! In other words, he becomes God's judge!

2. God's AUTHORITY over life and death

The first thing we should examine is: Could there be a difference between God and humans, as regards the RIGHT to commit genocide?

For every reasonable person the answer here is YES. We did NOT create the world, nor did we create life. We do NOT have the potential to recreate a person who has died, nor do we have the omniscience to decide whether someone should be executed. According to the Christian faith, even the courts that deliver death sentences are acting arbitrarily and are overstepping their rights, because NO person has a right over another person's life.

But for God this is different! He is the one Who not only created life (and the entire world) but is also the one Who continues to preserve every living organism, at every moment that passes. It He who gives life to mankind (and not only them) as a GIFT. And a gift is something that the recipient is NOT ENTITLED TO, but a gift that is GIVEN TO HIM, GRATIS.

Therefore, since God grants that gift to every person, at every moment, He is also the only one Who is entitled to decide WHEN and TO WHOM He will stop providing that gift. That which for people is considered "murder", for God it is a RIGHT.

If someone gives you something as a gift and then decides that you don't deserve to continue receiving it, then the donor has every right to cease giving it. It was his, and as such, he has the authority to cease giving it – but also to resume giving it, whenever he sees fit to do so. And no-one can accuse another, just because he has ceased giving a gift that belongs to him and no-one else.

So, those who accuse God for commanding genocide, are in actual fact denying a RIGHT that God perpetually has, given that without Him, no-one would have the right – or the ability - to live. How can it be possible for one to accuse his benefactor - the benefactor of the entire universe? Even if one second of life was given to us by Him, it would still be a PRESENT and we would OWE Him a debt of gratitude, because His is every life and existence. Even worse, when someone accuses God Who had deigned that those people could live – and in fact live as long as they did! Wasn't that His gift? Well, then it is His right to withdraw it, whenever He wants!

The second thing that separates God from people on the matter of commanding genocide is that God is NOT RESTRICTED by anything –

neither by natural laws, nor by MORAL laws. He Himself is the Lawmaker, and the Laws were given for the creations, not the Creator. That which is a “moral boundary” for a creation is God’s entire freedom of will. And the reason is not an “unjust” discrimination but the restrictions of every being. God is omnipotent and omniscient. We are not. When He decides on something, He knows what is best, because He knows EVERYTHING. We hardly know ourselves, let alone decide on matters of life of our fellow men!

Unrestricted as He is, God can act “arbitrarily”; and He has every right to act as He sees fit, because He acts with Love as His sole gnomon – which is the result of volition, and not obligation on His part. This act results in favour of His Creation and His creations – not for this temporary life, but for the sake of the eternal life, as we shall see further along.

If then someone denies (out of disbelief in the God of Christians) that He created the world and life; if he denies His very existence, that person is actually denying that reference in the Holy Bible about genocides. Because if our God is nonexistent, how could anyone accuse a nonexistent entity of genocide? And if someone denies that our God created life (something clearly stated in the Holy Bible), he must then remain consistent with himself and deny the trustworthiness of the Holy Bible in regard to God’s commands. It is not possible for him to regard the Holy Bible trustworthy in its references for divinely commanded genocides, but not trustworthy inasmuch as He Who gave the command is the Creator of the world and of life.

Either we accept that the God of Christians is indeed the Creator of life, and as such, He has every right to give such commands, or, we accept that He is nonexistent and His commandments are also nonexistent. We cannot apply double standards and measures. Either He exists and has given those commands, or, He does not exist, and He did not give those commands!

Thus, they who deny His existence as Creator of life cannot accuse Him for existent commands by Him! Likewise, they who accept Him as the actual Creator of life cannot deny His right to take away the life from whoever He chooses!

3. Does God want the death of mankind?

So, why did God give commands for genocide? Does God derive pleasure from the deaths of people? Is it something that He actually wants?

Let us allow Him to reply, from within the Holy Bible:

“For God made not death: neither does he find pleasure with the loss of the living. For he brought all things into being, and the creations of the world are salvific, and in them is no poison of destruction, nor is there a kingdom of Hades on earth: For righteousness is immortal. It is the

*irreverent who with their hands and their words have invited it (death)”.
(Wisdom of Solomon 1:13-16)*

“For I desire not the death of him that dies, says the Lord God. For this, return (repent), and live”. (Ezekiel 18:32).

Clear statements by God Himself! He makes it very clear that He does not like the death of people. He does not enjoy their death. He does not want it! But He also makes it clear that the death which He is accused of by many people was not brought on by Him. People themselves brought it upon themselves, for their transgressions! Because when people distance themselves from God, He necessarily deprives them of His gift of life, because they DO NOT DESERVE IT! And without seeking revenge for the repentant ones, He prompts the irreverent ones: *“For this, return (repent), and live”*.

4. Why God commanded the genocide of peoples

God’s accusers overlook the fact that He created the entire world, and that He brought into existence all the souls that exist; instead, they remain fixated on God’s decision that it is better if certain nations ceased to exist! The eradication of thousands of people BECAUSE OF THEIR SINS has been regarded as malice on the part of God. The creation of billions of people and every life (even of the guilty ones who were executed), and the creation of the entire universe, are supposedly NOT proof of His benevolence and love? Why such a prejudiced opinion? Is the punishment of those convicted by law proof that human justice is bad? If so, then they who accuse God should revolt against all governments and abolish every authority, with anarchy. And let them not punish any criminal and murderer!

But we are talking about murders! Why? Because it really was about murderers! Such were the Paganists of Canaan for which God had given the command for their extermination, using as “instruments” of execution either a cataclysm, or a fiery catastrophe as in Sodom, and another time angels or people – such as Moses’ army. Here, the means used are unimportant; only the just punishment of the guilty peoples. Yes, God does love His creations, but even goodness has its limits when it comes to perverts.

What had these peoples done, that made God order their extermination? (Note that He did NOT order genocide for all the populations of the region, only specific ones!) So, let us take a look at what those peoples did, as described in the Old Testament.

God warns the Israelites as follows, regarding the nations He had punished: *“take heed, that you do not follow them, after they have been destroyed before you... And do not seek to learn about their gods, saying “How did these nations worship their gods? I will do likewise”. You shall not do thus to your God, for everything that the Lord despises, they*

did for their gods. For they sacrificed their sons and their daughters in fire to their gods.” (Deuteronomy 12:30,31)

The existence of those nations was an open wound for humanity. Their demonic pagan gods thirsted for blood. They sacrificed their children as burnt offerings in fire to them! It was a continuing crime in God’s eyes, which had to end once and for all, with the annihilation of those nations and their obscene religion. Those nations had to be annihilated, so that not even a reminder of their barbaric religion would exist, lest the newcomer faithful residents of the region be misled.

Do you perhaps imagine that God is overdoing it? Is the Old Testament perhaps telling fairy tales about human sacrifices by idolaters? Well, let us cross-check this claim with other sources and find out! Contemporary researchers link [Lycaon’s Tradition](#) to the ritual human sacrifices performed on Lycaeon Mountain even during the 4th century B.C, as mentioned in the relative verse in Plato’s “[Republic](#)” (v.8,5 6 5d and “[Menon](#)” p.315).

“To us”, says Plato, “human sacrifices are not only illegal, they are also a show of disrespect, whereas to the Carthagens, on the contrary, it is also a sacred custom; and as it has undoubtedly also been mentioned, sometimes a father sacrifices his children to the god Cronos (Saturn).”

As such, we can surmise that only barbarians have such different laws to ours. During the Lycaeon feasts – as also with the descendants of Athamas - ancient Greeks committed the same human sacrifices. Theophrastus makes similar references, found in a passage by Porphyrios, the Neoplatonic philosopher from Tyre (3rd century A.D.) in his work “On Abstaining from living beings”: “Since then and until now, it was not only in Arcadia by the Lycaeans or in Carthage for Cronos; everyone commonly performed human sacrifice, but only during the period of legal commemoration did they always present blood of their race to the altars.....”

These sacrifices continued to be performed even during Roman times, judging by the following observation by the ancient traveller Pausanias:

"Upon this altar they sacrificed to Lycaeus Zeus secretly, and it was not for me to pry into what was delightful; let it be as it is and as it was from the beginning.” (8,38,7).

However we shall not present anything more here, on the abhorrent customs of the Greek idolaters, as we have already mentioned them in other articles of ours in more detail. If the Greek civilization, which is regarded as the noblest idolatrous civilization, committed such barbarities and God continued to tolerate its existence, then just imagine what was being committed by those peoples that God had given the command to be exterminated!

Strangely enough, these barbarities have not upset the Neo-idolaters, who are usually the ones that accuse the Christian God of homicides. They

were not upset, either by the human sacrifices committed by the Greeks or by the Canaanites. They were infuriated by God's command to exterminate those abhorrent nations! So, let us focus now on those nations:

What else did those nations do? Yahwe God says the following to the Israelites in Leviticus 18:1-30:

“[...]and you shall not act according to the practices of the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you, [...] Person by person shall not approach any of the household of his flesh to uncover shame; I am the Lord. 7 You shall not uncover the shame of your father and the shame of your mother, for she is your mother; you shall not uncover her shame [...]9 You shall not uncover her shame—the shame of your sister [...] 20 And you shall not give your bed of semen to the wife of your neighbor, to bring defilement onto her. 21 And you shall not give any of your offspring to serve Molech. [...]22 And you shall not sleep with a male as in a bed of a woman, for it is an abomination. 23 And you shall not give your bed to any quadruped for sowing to bring defilement on it, nor shall any woman stand before any quadruped so as to be mounted, for it is loathsome. 24 Do not defile yourselves in any of these ways. For by all these things the nations I am sending out before your face were defiled. 25 And the land became defiled, and I repaid their evil because of it, and the land was angry with its inhabitants. 26 And you shall keep all my precepts and all my ordinances and not commit any of all these abominations, the inhabitant and the guest among you who has come, 27 for the men of the land, who were before you, committed all of these abominations, and the land became defiled; 28 otherwise the land will become angry with you when you defile it, as it became angry with the nations that were before you. 29 For anyone who commits any of all these abominations—the souls that do so shall be exterminated from their people. 30 And keep my ordinances: not to commit any of all these abominable precepts that were done before you, and you shall not be defiled by them, for I am the Lord your God. ...”

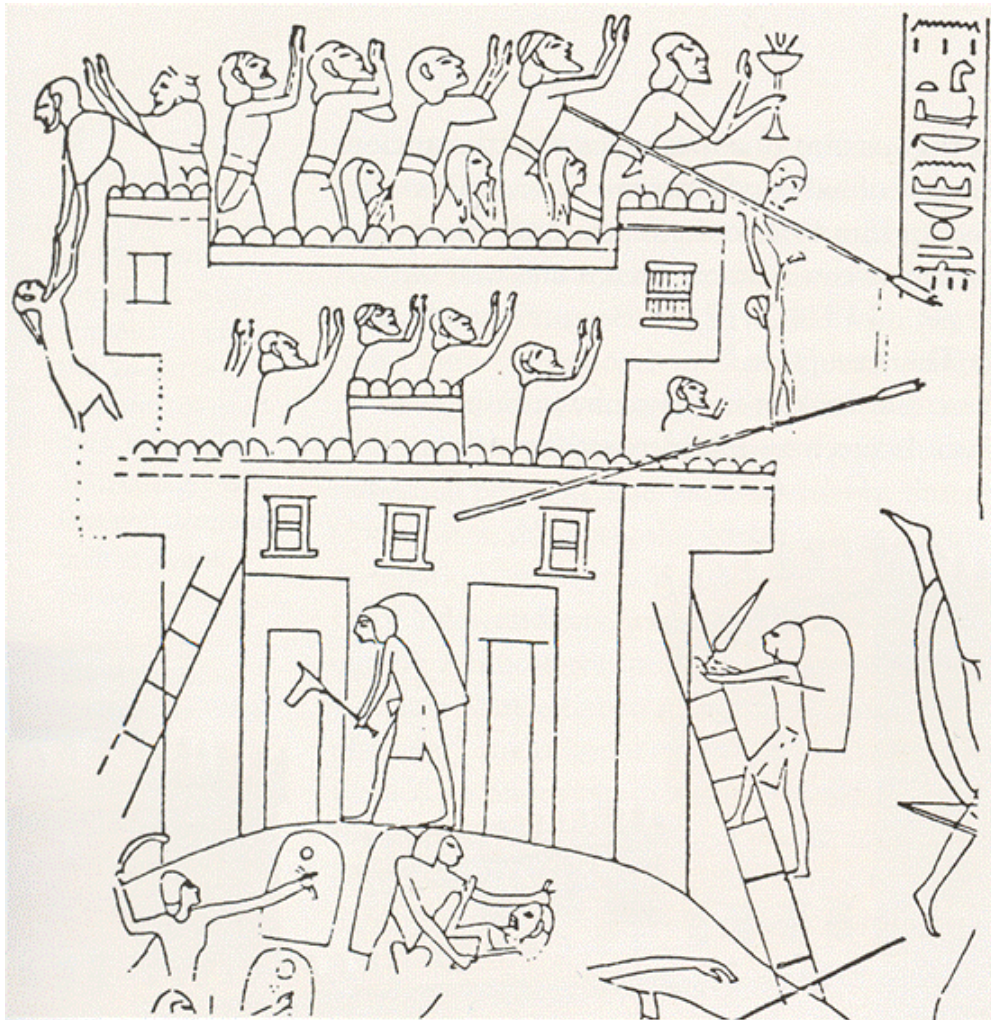
Do the above seem like exaggerations? Well, let us remember what of all the above the ancient Greek “gods” did, (albeit regarded as the noblest of the idolaters)! Remember Zeus, who was incestuously involved with his mother, his daughter, his sister... in fact, at times taking on the form of an animal (swan, bull, snake)... a perversion that simultaneously involved incest and bestiality! He was a pedophile and a homosexual, as we are taught by his “adventure” with Ganymedes... and an adulterer at the same time!

If such were the acts committed by the highest ranking of the demonic “gods” of the ancient Greeks, just imagine what the rest of their gods did - and WHAT EXAMPLE WAS BEING SET for human followers by such a perverted “god”! Imagine the orgies with “sacred fornication” that took place in the temples of Aphrodite! Imagine the half-goat Pan as a model of morality when copulating with goats – as so clearly depicted in ancient Hellenic art! And what about that ancient Greek, phallus-god, Tychon? If God had let live the noblest of the idolaters – the Greeks –

even though they committed such abominations, you can imagine what those nations in Canaan were doing, for God to have commanded their extermination!

In closing this chapter, let us take a look at an archaeological find (one of many) of the people of Canaan, some of which God had commanded to be exterminated:

“....Do not give any of your children to be sacrificed to Molek, for you must not profane the name of your God. I am the Lord” (Leviticus 18:21).



This is a bas-relief from the temple of Ammon at Karnak, Egypt, which depicts Canaanites sacrificing **THEIR CHILDREN** on the walls of a city to placate their “gods”!!! Above we can see young children being thrown off the walls, while below a little girl is being sacrificed by a man. The others are praying to their false gods. (Source: Ian Wilson, *THE BIBLE IS HISTORY*, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, London 1999, p.49.)

Well? Was God to blame for commanding an end to be put to the perpetuation of the crimes of such a people? If a parent nowadays commits such a crime, will anyone protest against the judge who will

convict that parent?

5. Selective death

And yet, despite the felonious state of those peoples, God did not command the extermination of all of them. God is just, and He exhausts every margin. Elsewhere He shows mercy, and elsewhere—when there is no possibility of the wicked repenting— He exterminates (not only by genocides with military means, but also by using every means in Nature).

For example, whereas He totally obliterated Sodom and Gomorrah, in the case of Nineveh He did not destroy it, since its citizens finally repented for (whichever) evil deeds. In Genesis (18:24-33) God repeatedly confirmed that even if there were only 10 righteous people in the cities, He would not destroy them! In the first instance, the inhabitants had no intention —nor did they show- any signs of repenting. Notice however what God said in the case of Nineveh: “10 *God saw their* (the inhabitants of Nineveh) *deeds -that they had turned from their evil ways- and God changed His mind about the punishment which He had announced to them* (through the Prophet Jonah), *and he did not fulfill it.”* (Jonah 3:10)

“And Ionas was grieved with great grief and was confounded. [...] 6 And the Lord God ordered a pumpkin vine to sprout, and it climbed up over Ionas’s head to be a shade over his head to shade him from his miseries. And Ionas was greatly pleased about the pumpkin vine. 7 And at the dawn of the next day, God commanded a worm and it attacked the pumpkin vine and it dried up. 8 And it happened when the sun rose, God ordered a fiery wind that burned, and the sun struck Ionas’ head; and he became faint and his soul was troubled and he said: “it would be better if I had died”. 9 Then God said to Ionas “were you so greatly saddened about the pumpkin vine?” Ionas replied “I was exceedingly saddened, to death”. 10 And the Lord said, “You felt sorry for a pumpkin vine, for which you didn’t suffer, nor did you nurture it; which came into being in the night, and in the night was lost. 11 Should I not then be saddened for Nineveh the great city, in which live more than one hundred and twenty thousand people, who could not discern their right hand from their left (infants), and many beasts?” (Jonah 4:1-11)

Notice how delicately God leads Jonah to think logically and mercifully. Jonah did not need to remind God of the infants of Nineveh; God reminded Jonah of them! God is not a “cold-blooded executioner”; He is the One who does not hesitate to rescind even His own command, when people repent!

Some may ask why the entire population of a “sinful” nation should be punished; but that is not exactly how things are.

1) In the Old Testament, the righteous and not sinful individuals of an evil nation are warned in advance to abandon their nation before God’s punishment falls upon it. For example, the righteous Kinites were warned

to leave the Amalekites in 1 King.15:6, before God's decision for punishment was meted out upon the Amalekites; also, the righteous Lot was warned to leave Sodom (Gen.19:12-16) before its obliteration by God's punishment. Lot's sons-in-law who did not take the warning seriously and remained in Sodom, lost their lives through their own fault.

2) There was a gradation however, as to which nations were to be exterminated and which were not. Not all the nations were evil, to the degree of undergoing genocide. First notice what God said:

“10 Now if you draw near to a city to fight against it, then you shall invite it to peace. 11 If it responds to you peaceably and opens up to you, then all the people found in it shall submit itself to you and serve you. 12 But if it does not make peace with you but battles against you, then you shall besiege it; 13 and after the Lord your God delivers it into your hands, you shall strike all of its males with knives; 14 and the women, and the infants and the livestock and all that is found in the city, all of its spoils you shall take for yourself, and you shall eat the spoils of your enemies – all that the Lord your God has given to you.”
(Deuteronomy 20:10-14)

We notice that God did not desire to punish those irreverent nations with genocide. He punished them with vassalage – an act that would lead them to the abolishment of idols, and to their salvation. Also noteworthy is the fact that even when those nations turned against God's command for surrender, only the males were exterminated – thus averting any chances of future retaliation. In every case, He would exhaust all possible options!

God's objective was not the extermination of mankind; He sought to exterminate the idolatry and the other sins of those nations, which wrought so much evil in the world. That is why He said: *“52 and you shall destroy all those who live in the land before you, and you shall remove their watchtowers, and all their molten idols you shall destroy them and all their steles you shall remove. 53 And you shall destroy all the inhabitants of the land, and you shall inhabit it, for to you I have given their land as an allotment.* (Num.33:52,53.)

Also: *“2 and the Lord your God shall deliver them into your hands and you shall strike them - by annihilation you shall annihilate them. You shall not establish a covenant with them, nor shall you show them any mercy”* (Deuteronomy 7:2)

3) It was only for some of the peoples that inhabited Canaan that God had initially commanded they be totally annihilated (genocide), because there was no chance that they would repent – something that the omniscient God was aware of. However even for them, God had given them sufficient time for them to repent – or, to become even more sinister and thus be deserving of extermination! But even while remaining unrepentant for the duration of the Israelites' wandering in the desert for 40 years and clearly showing their intentions to occupy the land, they had ample time to abandon their doomed land and save

themselves and their families.

6. Why did lawlessness have to be eliminated?

God hates sin, not the sinner. Sin is like a corroded ship. God says: “Abandon this one and get on the other, the ship of virtue, because I am going to sink it before it infects all of Creation”. But we stubbornly stay on it out of selfishness. He continues to remind us, for a long time. Eventually He is forced to destroy it and together with it we too are doomed (to God’s regret).

Besides, in the Old Testament God says: “Why do you sin? Don’t you know that it is to my sorrow to see you dying? Don’t you see that death is the wages of sins?”. This is how we can understand that God’s aim is the extinction of sin. God will stop Sin out of love. Because if He doesn’t, His Creation will degenerate...

This degeneration of Creation is the final “key” to understanding. Man is the minister of Creation. He is part of material Creation and at the same time he is the one through whom Creation offers worship to God. Everything we do has an impact on all of Creation. Our sinning causes it to become corrupted, whereas with our sanctity we help it remain perpetual. Sometimes, with the authority that He has over our lives as Creator, God is forced FOR THE SAKE OF THE REST to give such a command, so as not to cause greater and eternal harm to all. He always waits for the souls of those who were slaughtered to be healed and saved.

During those times, the Holy Spirit was not in the believers. There were no saints preserving the world with their prayers, as in our time, and so sometimes it was necessary to put an end to brutality, not only for the sake of Creation but also for the sinners, who would only increase in malice and their souls would be forever doomed.

As far as the total extermination is concerned, He had two reasons:

1. No-one should be left alive of that nation which would cause the continuation of enmity against the Israelites, and
2. No remnant of idolatry should remain in the land where the Israelites were to be settled, inasmuch as it would have caused them to continue similar practices.

It is characteristic that the Israelites did not heed God's warnings, but instead they showed mercy to some of the nations which they were ordered to exterminate. This led to their suffering of the consequences, which was that God handed them over to the hands of their enemies, because they ended up being idolaters. The Holy Bible is clear on that point and on the reasons according to which God commanded the total annihilation of certain peoples:

“34 They did not destroy the nations, which the Lord told them, 35 and they mingled with the nations and served their sculptures, and it became a scandal for them. 37 And they sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons. 38 and they spilled innocent blood, the blood of their sons and daughters whom they sacrificed to the carved images of Canaan, and the land was killed with bloods 39 And it was defiled by their acts, and they fornicated in their practices. 40 And the Lord became furiously angry with his people, and he abhorred his heritage. 41 And he delivered them into the hands of enemies, and those who hated them ruled over them. 42 And their enemies oppressed them, and they were humbled under their hands. 43 Many times he had saved them, but they embittered him in their will and were humbled in their lawlessness....44 And he regarded them when they were being afflicted, when he listened to their petition. 45 And he remembered his covenant and showed regret for the abundance of his mercy. 46 And he gave them over to be pitied, before all who took them captive.” (Psalms 105:34-46)

7. The death of innocents, including children

There is however one last point to which we owe an answer: Most certainly it was just, that all those nations had to be eliminated. But how were the children to blame? Why did God command their extermination also? Did God intend to save the children from sacrifices, by... exterminating them? We shall respond to these queries, immediately:

God did not intend to save specific children by killing them. He wanted to STOP child sacrifices in general, both at the time and for the future, because that way, many more children than those who were exterminated would be saved in future, given that if they had lived to grow up, they too would have continued their parents' practice of child sacrifice.

Family members are not co-punished because of a father who has sinned, but they do partake and must confront the consequences of his actions - for better or for worse. This basically is no different to what is happening today. For example, when a family member becomes ill, the remaining members who - albeit not ill - are not punished, but nevertheless are also exposed to the illness of that one individual and are obliged to take care of him, worry about him etc., likewise the children of a drug addict are deprived of all material well-being, since the family income is squandered by the addicted father for narcotics. The children of a murderer may end up orphaned if the father is killed. They likewise suffer the consequences of their father's evils and are the exclusive victims of their parents' foolishness and malice. No-one “punishes” the children of a murderer, but they do suffer the consequences that follow the murderer's punishment. They are subjected to the consequences of their parents' mistakes. Similarly, no-one punishes the children of a driver who causes the death of persons killed in a car accident because of their father's careless driving.

The Creator and preserver of life has every authority over the life of His creations, because He is the only one Who is able to RESURRECT THEM – just as He promises to resurrect even the irreverent inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah, despite the fact that He himself had commanded the destruction of their impious cities:

“Verily I say unto you, the land of Sodom and Gomorrah will be more tolerated in the day of judgment, than that city...” (Mathew 10:15) and *“ And you, Capernaum, who was lifted up to heaven, will be brought down to Hades; for if the powers that are being done in you were made in Sodom, they have remained until this day. 24 except I am telling you, the land of Sodom will be more tolerated on the day of judgment rather than you.”* (Mathew 11:23-24)

Indeed, He never does anything to the detriment of His creations. Even if they are disrespectful. Something may temporarily seem evil to us, because of our limited visual field in this life; but if we could see what happens after death, and if we knew what was to take place in the future age, after the resurrection, we would be able to comprehend the deeper reasons for a seemingly grotesque decision or a command to execute, which was very rarely given by God for certain reasons, either to people or angels.

According to Jesus, “not even one sparrow falls dead without His will” and “even the hairs on our head are numbered”. What does that mean? It of course means that not only genocides, but that every kind of “misfortune” happens to occur with His tolerance!

So, should we impute all the responsibilities for the misfortunes of the world to God? That depends on how each one perceives the matter. A faithless person, or someone with a servile mentality might say: “Of course if God CAN do something but doesn’t, He is responsible”. Those with a servile stance will say “If He does have authority over our lives, and since He was the One who gave it to us, He has all the authority to rescind it. And what’s more, He also has the power to restore it”.

This last argument is especially reminiscent of "placating" a dangerous God. We justify Him, not because we are convinced He is not to blame, but because that is the way we seek to placate Him, lest He become angry with us! Those who see him as a Father will say: "If He permits a certain misfortune to occur, He must have had a reason." Because who can tell what kind of reward He has in store for the poor unfortunate one who has suffered? And who can tell what benefit the future holds for the souls of others, from within that apparent misfortune?

I do not know (being but a simple individual) what else a true “child” of His could say. However, despite seeing Him as “personified Love”, I am posing my own question. (The above were written in order to reach the following question):

What can we say about those cases where God had given the command for entire genocides? He had specifically ordered: "Eliminate the old, the

young and the children; exterminate them all; show them no mercy!”, because things are different here; God is not merely tolerating, but is clearly ordering the death of people!

You might say that those peoples were corrupt; but weren't there any good individuals among the peoples who were slaughtered? Surely just the thought of children here is enough!

What happens when a good person dies? Doesn't the God of Love embrace him? Doesn't He comfort him? Doesn't He reward him for the tribulations that he suffered in his life? If one of us causes harm to someone, don't we hasten to compensate him, even if he happens to be a bad person – if possible, even many times over? How much more so, by the God of Love! Can you imagine what kind of wages those wronged people received, by the One who feeds even the tiniest of birds?

Moreover, it is useful here to remember that with His Resurrection the Lord freed and took up to the Paradise of souls ALL the denizens of Hades who believed in Him – even those who had died for their sins in Sodom! Everything that happened to them in their lives, and even in Hades, was a part of God's tutelage, which in time brought them to their salvation.

On a more practical note now – even if with sheer logic: Why genocide? Well, because it has the briefest duration of grief! How long does grief last in a genocide? From hours, up to days. Afterwards, there will be no elders mourning their children, or children who will be asking for their mothers, or women mourning for their husbands. Nor will there be slavery, tortures, or imprisonment. Only the agony of death, up to the moment of death. And after death, a God who is Love, who will soften the wounds of the slaughtered souls. Which souls? The ones that died pursuant to His commands - that is, the ones who died as martyrs or witnesses!

And where is the difference between allowing someone to be tortured, versus dying of natural causes or old age, if you yourself (if you were God) ordered deaths to be as painless as possible? I believe the comparison is only theoretical – although the second case is more merciful. And if we were to calculate what God "owes" to the former and what to the latter, we will see that the executed ones will "receive" more than those who died of natural causes.

Let's now weigh the distress of a person during the few hours prior to his execution, or the few days of the siege of his city, against an eternity of reward by the God of Love! I think the difference is incomparable!

In conclusion, the problem does not lie in whether God ordered the execution of some (even if the lawlessness of their people had reached its limits). The problem lies in our own faithlessness, our own servility – because we only look as far as death. Not afterwards. And we tend to judge with deficient knowledge. We also don't think simply, for example: “If I, the villain, cause harm to someone and then hasten to make

amends, what respectively does the God of Love do?

It is they who DON'T BELIEVE IN THE RESURRECTION who have the problem, because they believe that everything finishes with death. Hence, it is NOT God who ordered genocides that has the problem, but those who do not believe and do not trust His final, righteous judgment, His right over every life, and the just reward after the resurrection. Any rationalization of this matter must begin from there.

So, if one does NOT believe in God, in order to be consistent with his faithlessness, he should likewise NOT believe that this presumably "nonexistent" God had ordered any genocide.

If again one BELIEVES in God, then in order to be consistent with his faith, he is obliged to likewise acknowledge that God has the unique RIGHT to rescind the gift of life, from whichever of His creations He deems necessary. More so, he is obliged to believe that the God of love will not wrong anyone, but will also console the souls of the deceased innocents and will grant them eternal life during the general resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous.

Translation E.M.

Article published on: 23-10-2018.

Last update: 23-10-2018.

