

How Can You Worship A God Who Is So Bloodthirsty? Oh, Those Poor Canaanites - God's Unjust

Category: God's unjust

Example A)

“... as the meek and gentle savior, he was a thousand billion times crueler than ever he was in the Old Testament...Jesus the inventor of Hell.”

Mark Twain

Example B)

“The first time the Deity came down to Earth, he brought life and death; when he came the second time, he brought Hell.”

Mark Twain

Example C)

“He has one code of morals for himself, and quite another for his children. He requires his children to deal justly—and gently—with offenders, and forgive them seventy-and-seven times; whereas he deals neither justly nor gently with anyone, and he did not forgive the ignorant and thoughtless first pair of juveniles even their first small offense and say, ‘You may go free this time, and I will give you another chance.’”

Mark Twain

Example D)

“The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction. Jealous and proud if it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully.”

Richard Dawkins

Example E)

"It was God himself who said, 'Thou shalt not kill'. Then it is plain that he cannot keep his own commandments. He killed all those people... They had offended the Deity in some way. We know what the offense was without looking; that is to say, we know it was a trifle..."

Mark Twain

Food for Thought

Every Atheist, legitimate or illegitimate, has a version of this warmed-over goulash to serve up. I purposely limited your lunch choices to soup by Twain or porridge by Richard Dawkins.

Let's examine example A.

"... as the meek and gentle savior, he was a thousand billion times crueller than ever he was in the Old Testament... Jesus the inventor of Hell."

Mark Twain

Hell is not Twain's real issue; Twain wants to indict God for being unjust, vindictive, and cruel. In general, Twain holds to the notion that God perversely delights in death and suffering. But, Twain writes, God recognized His mistake, suffering ended at death! An oversight that could not be tolerated! That just wouldn't do. So, Jesus invented Hell, a place of suffering and torment that never ended. So, for Twain, God was cruel in the Old Testament and crueller in the New Testament. You may have noticed that nowhere in examples A, B or C are the Canaanites mentioned. The reason is simple, the Canaanite slaughter is but one example of the graver charge, God is unjust.

In example E, Twain is actually complaining about the slaughter of the Midianites, not the slaughter of the Canaanites. Twain says, "He killed all those people".

Before I address Twain's clumsy charges, let's peek at Richard Dawkins' masterpiece in example D.

(I always imagine him rising a bit too early due to a concern about the possibility of mismatched socks having been packed for his next college tour). Once that fear has been addressed, I picture him, in his white, knee-length boxers and his old man

t-shirt seated at an antique, mahogany desk. Oh, I almost forgot to mention the lovely sock garters he's sporting. Now, Richard can whip up example D.

"The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction. Jealous and proud if it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; A vindictive, bloodthirsty ethnic cleanser; a misogynistic, homophobic, racist, infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully."

Richard Dawkins

Then, he runs into his wife's bedroom to awaken her with this petulant diatribe, the expectation being that his wife will ooh and aah. Of course, she does so as any dutiful, practiced wife would who hopes Richard's college tour is his lengthiest ever. Ugh, I hate smug, and Dawkins fairly reeks of it.

All the showing off aside, Dawkins joins Twain in indicting God with being unjust.

If someone attacks you with some strain of this (not one soul has ever asked me thoughtfully about it to-date), I would begin by asking,

"If I cut through all the excess, meaning snide remarks, is your complaint that God is unjust and unduly cruel?"

This may elicit who-knows-what in response. I recommend staying with this until, in one way or another, you both agree that the charges of unfairness/unjustness and undue cruelty are proper.

"Just so I'm understanding, you are charging God with being unfair to the Canaanites, basically by punishing them more than their crimes deserved?"

You will see that I consistently attempt to calm everyone and to clarify by asking simple questions. You may have a superior way to approach this attacker, but since my goal is persuasion, I find this approach is best for me. I have failed and failed with many other approaches.

"Let me ask you, why did you choose to indict God over the Canaanite slaughter? I was kind of expecting you to bring up the Midianite slaughter?"

Now, I'm probing to ascertain what the attacker knows. Why? If the attacker actually knows there are Midianites, I am delighted. If the attacker knows about the Midianite slaughter, I take the short-cut to the question of does the punishment fit the crime or is the punishment too severe and unfair?

May we pause a moment to actually talk about the different slaughters you may be confronted with?

1. The Midianites

Moses is in charge.

Numbers 31:1-18. Clearly this is termed God's vengeance in verse 3. All the males are killed as well as the kings. Uh-Oh, by verse 15, Moses is angry. Why? They spared the women! Moses orders that all young males be killed, along with every woman who has been intimate with a man. The other women? Keep them.

2. The Amalekites

Saul and Samuel are in charge.

1 Samuel 15: verse 3 says... "Utterly destroy". Let me clarify one point. When the Bible says "all" in verse 8, referring to the destruction of the Amalekites, it does not mean all without exception, but rather, all that fell into Saul's hands. We later read of a few Amalekites. But, again, God clearly is avenging what the Amalekites have done, and the slaughter is great. It is striking that God commands, "... attack Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and do not spare them. But kill both man and woman, infant and nursing child, ox and sheep, camel and donkey." After Saul disobeys, Samuel is angry and so is God. Saul even spares Agag, the king of the Amalekites. Samuel corrects Saul's disobedience by hacking Agag to pieces before the Lord in Gilgal.

3. The Canaanites

Joshua is in charge.

Joshua 6:21. "And they utterly destroyed all that was in the city, both man and woman, young and old, oxen sheep and donkey, with the edge of the sword."

This hearkens back to Deuteronomy 20:16-18, in which the Lord commands that “Nothing that breathes remain alive, but you shall utterly destroy them; the Hittite and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite...”

It is true that the rural people appear to be spared at times, perhaps often, but the cities suffer unimaginable destruction. It often takes a while, and the Israelites regularly disobey along the way, but in the end, places like Jericho are utterly destroyed.

Now that you have a bit more information, do you feel better? No? I understand. Let's return to the last question I raised before the history lesson.

“Why did you choose to indict God over the Canaanite slaughter? I kind of expected you to bring up the Midianite slaughter?”

As I explained, I wanted to find out how much the attacker knew. I listen and respond. In this case,

“Really, never heard of the Midianite slaughter? How about the Amalekite slaughter?”

I prefer, at this point, to demonstrate that I know that the attacker knows precious little about the attack he's making. I find that it allows me to properly frame the question that needs to be answered correctly, because the attacker is bewildered by my indictment of God for three slaughters when the attacker only indicted God on one charge. I do so because it is intellectually honest, and I wish to persuade, not conquer. Intellectual honesty builds trust, and that's what I'm looking for.

“Look, I do want to answer your critique of God's actions, but I need to make sure I'm answering the actual question that's hiding behind or inside what you said. Aren't you really asking if I can't see how unfair God is? Likely, I should also answer, if I can, why the punishment is so severe. It doesn't fit the crime, right?”

There we have it, progress. It is normal for progress to take a while when folks are nervous. You relax; it helps them too.

“Let me ask you something now that we're agreed on what questions I'm going to attempt to answer. What kind of people were the Canaanites, Midianites and Amalekites?”

Some version of “I don’t know” will ring in your ears.

“That’s fine, I get it. It’s hard enough to spell Canaanite for Heaven’s sake. But, let me ask this, do you know what cult prostitution is?”

No matter the reply, you’ll probably nod and say, ***“I think that is partly true.”***

Now, one by one, I will slowly bring up bestiality, Molech, child sacrifice, incest, and orgiastic worship services. You need to research these for yourself. I would lean heavily on Molech (at times spelled Moloch), and I like to paint a clear verbal picture of this giant bronze god with its belly full of fire, its arms outstretched and a mother placing her first born child on Molech’s red-hot arms to sizzle. At some point, I will be asking what kind of punishment do these crimes deserve? Didn’t God actually exercise wondrous patience? Wasn’t God just? Doesn’t what they were doing make you sick? Doesn’t Richard Dawkins, as smart as he is, know what the Canaanites were like? **Why would any Atheist ever refer to them as innocent?**

Finally, I will ask,

“Don’t you think Dawkins actually knows what the Canaanites were like, and that he purposely holds back that information to bolster his accusations against God? To me, it’s dishonest discussion.”

I don’t say it passionately. I say it as if we both regret finding out about Dawkins. Dawkins is, as I’ve claimed all along, a charlatan. This is just another example of it. Dawkins and all members of the Traveling Medicine Show depend on the “Trust me, I am the Bright in the room” gambit (A.K.A. the argument from authority). Distrust in Dawkins is one of my goals for sure. Atheist heroes, as authorities, die slow deaths. I try to help hasten the death of Richard Dawkins as a hero. It’s in the best interests of his ardent admirers.