GOD PLAYS FAIR

Most people think that the Old Testament God is very different from the New Testament God, and that He willingly calls Israel to commit genocide against the Canaanites. But the Bible claims that God is always the same loving, compassionate God. So what about the Canaanites? The context of Deuteronomy 7, and other relevant passages, reveal that this was no genocide at all, and God plays fair with all peoples at all times, giving them equal chances for repentance and reformation.

God had given the Canaanites more than four hundred years of probation, during which He sent prophets and warnings. Speaking with Abraham, God predicted that the Canaanites would eventually become so evil that He would have to give their land to someone else (Abraham’s descendants), but their cup of iniquity was not yet full (Gen. 15:16). Leaders like Melchizedek were true followers of God, and Balaam was at least initially a true prophet of God, famous beyond Israel and Moab (it was perhaps due to his prophecies that the wise men found baby Jesus). While Genesis is focused on Israel, hints make clear that God was always trying to reach all people, even seeking to bless the world through Abraham (Gen. 12:1–3).

God gives Israel about four hundred years of probation after they take possession of the land before they are also kicked out due to their cup of iniquity being full. God then gives the land to Babylon (He earlier gave Assyria the northern kingdom). God does not play favorites. In fact, the prophets point out that Israel is actually acting worse than Canaan right before the exile (cf. Ezek. 16)!

Read This Week’s Passage: Deuteronomy 7:1–11
Write out Deuteronomy 7:1–11 from the Bible translation of your choice. If you are pressed for time, write out Deuteronomy 7:7–11. You may also rewrite the passage in your own words, or outline or mind-map the chapter.
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Go back to your scribed text and study the passage.

- **Circle** repeated words/ phrases/ideas

- **Underline** words/phrases that are important and have meaning to you

- Draw **Arrows** to connect words/ phrases to other associated or related words/phrases

What special insights do your marks seem overall to point to?

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Memorize your favorite verse in Deuteronomy 7:1–11. Write it out multiple times to help with memorization.

What difference does it make to you personally to realize that the Canaanites were driven out rather than being wiped out?

What could God do in your life if you had more faith?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/deut05-3
After looking at your scribed and annotated text, what special insights do your marks seem to point to overall?

What questions emerge after studying this passage? What parts are difficult?

What other principles and conclusions do you find?

How does God’s justice show itself in Deuteronomy 7?

Read more at www.inversebible.org/deut05-4
What relationship do the following verses have with the primary passage?

Joshua 2:8–13
Deuteronomy 20:1–20
1 Kings 11:1–13
Exodus 23:20–33
Judges 2:1–12
Amos 9:7–12
Isaiah 13:19–22, 34:8–17

What other verses/promises come to mind in connection with Deuteronomy 7?

Review your memorized verse from Deuteronomy 7:1–11.
What is your reaction to the statement that the Covenant Curse Giver is the same as the Covenant Curse Bearer?

How do you see Jesus differently or see Him again?

What is He saying to you through these texts?

Prayer: How do you respond to seeing Jesus in this way?

Meditate on Deuteronomy 7:1–11 again and look for where Jesus is.

Read more at www.inversebible.org/deut05-6
Review the memory verse. How does it apply to your life this week?

After this week’s study of the chapter, what are applications you can make personally and privately?

What are applications you can make with others?

Read more inSight from the Spirit of Prophecy at www.inversebible.org/deut05-7
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Share insights from this week’s memory verse and Bible study as well as any discoveries, observations, and questions with your Sabbath School class (or Bible study group). Consider these discussion questions with the rest of the group.

How did you see God’s grace and fairness this week in the Canaanite discussion?

How do you now see God’s consistent actions more clearly throughout the whole Bible?

How does the punishment in Deuteronomy 7 compare to the second-death final destruction in Revelation?

How can we take the principles of justice against the wicked and apply them in our non-theocratic context?

How have you seen God give probation in your own life?

How do we remember what God has done for us in the past so that we can bring it to mind in new and challenging situations?

Will you accept Jesus, the Bearer of our covenant curses, again or anew today?

What Do We Do with the Canaanites?