

Program: SS Panel 2025 4 Q

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Section title: Sunday - The Canaanites' Iniquity

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Note: This color and font = quarterly text

Note: This color and font = John Dinzey notes

John Dinzey.2025.Q4.L05. The Canaanites' Iniquity

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Question:

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READ

NIL: Not in Lesson

Next week: #6 The Enemy Within

Lesson 5

*October 25–31

God Fights for You

SABBATH AFTERNOON

Read for This Week's Study: *Gen. 15:16; Lev. 18:24–30; 2 Tim. 4:1, 8; Exod. 23:28–30; Deut. 20:10, 15–18; Isa. 9:6.*

Memory Text: “And Joshua captured all these kings and their land at one time, because the LORD God of Israel fought for Israel” (*Joshua 10:42, ESV*).

The book of Joshua contains some disturbing scenes. Serious questions are raised by the concept of a *divine or holy war* portraying a group of people with a God-given mandate to destroy another group.

The issue of divine war in the Old Testament is challenging. God appears in the Old Testament as the sovereign Lord of the universe; therefore, everything that happens must, somehow, be related to His direct or indirect will. **So, the question “How can God allow such things?” becomes inevitable.** Last week, we saw that **God Himself is involved in a conflict that is far greater than any war or battle fought in human history**, a battle that permeates every aspect of our lives. We saw, too, that the events of both biblical and secular history can be fully understood only in light of this conflict.

This week, we continue to explore the complexity of divinely sanctioned wars, the limitations and conditions of divine war, the final vision of peace offered by the Old Testament prophets, and **the spiritual implications of such wars.**

**Study this week’s lesson to prepare for Sabbath, November 1.*

SUNDAY

October 26

The Canaanites’ Iniquity

Read Genesis 15:16, Leviticus 18:24–30, Deuteronomy 18:9–14, and Ezra 9:11. What are these texts telling us about God’s larger plan in offering the land of Canaan to the Israelites?

Genesis 15:13 Then He said to Abram: “Know certainly that your descendants will be strangers in a land *that is* not theirs, and will serve them, and they will afflict them four hundred years.

14 And also the nation whom they serve I will judge; afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

15 Now as for you, you shall go to your fathers in peace; you shall be buried at a good old age.

16 But in the fourth generation they shall return here, **for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.**”

>>> The full cup principle?

Genesis 15:18 17 On the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying:

“To your descendants I have given this land, from the river of Egypt to the great river, the River Euphrates—

19 the Kenites, the Kenezites, the Kadmonites,

20 the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Rephaim,

21 the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.”

Leviticus 18:24–30 24 ‘Do not defile yourselves with any of these things; for by all these the nations are defiled, **which I am casting out before you.**

25 For the land is defiled; therefore I visit the punishment of its iniquity upon it, and **the land vomits out its inhabitants.**

26 You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit *any* of these abominations, *either* any of your own nation or any stranger who dwells among you

27 (for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who *were* before you, and thus the land is defiled),

28 **lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that *were* before you.**

]]> In other words: God is saying I am not giving you this land so that you could do the same thing that the people that were in it were doing. They were supposed to be different. They were supposed to be the light of the world....

Leviticus 18:29 For whoever commits any of these abominations, the persons who commit *them* **shall be cut off from among their people.**

30 “Therefore you shall keep My ordinance, so that *you* do not commit *any* of these abominable customs which were committed before you, and that you do not defile yourselves by them: I *am* the Lord your God.’ ”

Deuteronomy 18:9–14 9 “When you come into the land which the Lord your God is giving you, **you shall not learn to follow the abominations of those nations.**

Ezk 18:32 For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord GOD: wherefore turn *yourselves*, and live ye.

Gen 6:5 And GOD saw that the wickedness of man *was* great in the earth, and *that* every imagination of the thoughts of his heart *was* only evil continually.

because of these abominations

Deuteronomy 18:10 There shall not be found among you *anyone* who makes his son or his daughter pass through the fire, *or one* who practices witchcraft, *or a* soothsayer, or one who interprets omens, or a sorcerer,

11 or one who conjures spells, or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead.

12 For all who do these things *are* an abomination to the Lord, and **because of these abominations the Lord your God drives them out from before you.**

13 You shall be blameless before the Lord your God.

14 For these nations which you will dispossess listened to soothsayers and diviners; **but as for you, the Lord your God has not appointed such for you.**

‘The land which you are entering to possess is an unclean land,

Ezra 9:11 11 which You commanded by Your servants the prophets, saying, ‘The land which you are entering to possess is an unclean land, with the uncleanness of the peoples of the lands, with their abominations which have filled it from one end to another with their impurity.

*****READ*****

We need to look beyond the book of Joshua to completely understand what was meant by the iniquity of the nations inhabiting Canaan. These nations’ abhorrent practices of child sacrifice, divination, sorcery, witchcraft, necromancy, and spiritualism give us a hint (*Deut. 18:9–12*).

The discovery of the ancient Ugaritic texts (from Ras Shamra) provides more insight into the Canaanite religion and society, and they demonstrate that

condemnation of this culture was not only understandable but—according to Old Testament moral standards—also justified.

The Canaanite religion was based on the belief that natural phenomena, which assured fertility, were controlled by the sexual relationships between gods and goddesses. Thus, they envisioned the sexual activity of the deities in terms of their own sexual behavior and engaged in ritual sexual practices in order to incite the gods and goddesses to do likewise. This concept resulted in the institution of “sacred” prostitution, involving both male and female prostitutes engaging in orgiastic rites, again all as part of their own religious practices!

A nation cannot rise to a moral ground that is higher than that of the gods its people worship. As a result of such an understanding of their deities, it is no wonder the Canaanites’ religious practices included child sacrifice, which the Bible warned specifically against.

*****READ*****

Archaeological evidence confirms that the inhabitants of Canaan regularly sacrificed their firstborn children to the gods, really demons, whom they worshiped. Little skeletons found crushed into large jars with **votive** inscriptions testify to their degrading religion and what it meant for many of their children.

Votive: 1 consisting of or expressing a vow, wish, or desire

2 : offered or performed in fulfillment of a vow or in gratitude or devotion

*****READ*****

The eradication of the Canaanites, then, was not an afterthought, something that emerged in the wake of God’s decision to give the land of Canaan to the Israelites. The inhabitants of Canaan were granted a time of probation, a time of additional mercy during which they had the opportunity to discover God and His character through the witness of the patriarchs living among them. They had the chance, but obviously, they squandered it, and continued in their horrific practices until the Lord finally had to put a stop to them.

>>> This land (The Us and the other nations) having been heading in that directions for many years.....

Growth in Witchcraft Publishing

In the **1990s**, **approximately 4.5 million Wiccan-related books** were sold in the U.S., a figure that more than **doubled to around 10 million by 2000**, according to the American Booksellers Association. This surge reflects a broader trend of **increasing interest in alternative spiritualities and practices**. [Wikipedia](#)

The rise of self-publishing and the expansion of niche publishers have further contributed to the proliferation of witchcraft literature. **Today, it's estimated that hundreds to thousands of titles related to witchcraft and paganism are published each year, encompassing a wide range of topics from traditional practices to modern interpretations.** <https://www.patheos.com/blogs/panmankey/2018/06/the-golden-age-of-magickal-publishing/>

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there has been a **noticeable increase in books on witchcraft and related themes targeting children**, particularly in the preteen and teen age groups. While exact publication numbers per year are not readily available, the trend is evident through the growing number of titles and series aimed at younger audiences.

Growth of Witchcraft-Themed Books for Youth

- **Children's Books (Ages 0–12):** Resources like Flying the Hedge have curated lists featuring over 35 children's books that introduce concepts of witchcraft and paganism to young readers. These books often focus on themes like nature appreciation, empowerment, and basic magical practices. [Flying the Hedge](#)
- **Middle Grade (Ages 8–12):** Platforms such as Pop! Goes the Reader highlight 50 middle-grade books featuring witches and witchcraft, indicating a robust interest in this genre among preteens. [Pop Goes the Reader+1Pop Goes the Reader+1](#)
- **Young Adult (Ages 12+):** The young adult category boasts numerous titles that delve deeper into witchcraft themes, often intertwining them with coming-of-age stories, romance, and fantasy elements. Lists featuring 55 young adult books with witchcraft themes showcase the genre's popularity.

[illegible]

Additional Notes

The Amorities

The Amorities made themselves conspicuous by their idolatry. They accumulated guilt and indulged in wickedness after the order of that found in Sodom and Gomorrah and in the world before the flood. But though iniquity was added to iniquity, the Lord would not punish until the specified measure of guilt was reached, and their [cup of] iniquity was full. He gave special direction that the Amorites were not to be disturbed until their cup of iniquity was full; but when God saw that more evidence would be vain, that forbearance would do no good, His long-suffering had an end. When they had gone to the full measure of making void the law of God, the indignation of the Lord broke forth upon them. "The Lord is slow to anger, and great in power, and will not at all acquit the wicked." [Nahum 1:3.] When He arises in His anger to punish, as in the case of the Amorites, how fearful is His retribution. Though punishment is long delayed, it is not an evidence that it will be any less severe. 8LtMs, Lt 13, 1893, par. 28

Witchcraft and books on witchcraft - Local Restrictions and Challenges

Books featuring witchcraft have often been the subject of controversy:

- **Roald Dahl's *The Witches*:** In 1992, this book was placed on a restricted list by the Escondido Union Elementary School District in California after parents complained it promoted the occult and was too frightening for children. [Los Angeles Times](#)
- **Tomie dePaola's *Strega Nona*:** This classic tale was banned in several U.S. school libraries for depicting magic and witchcraft in a positive light. [Tinybeans+2Princeton University WordPress Service+2Brooklyn Public Library+2](#)
- **Daniel Cohen's *Curses, Hexes, and Spells*:** This book has appeared on multiple banned and challenged book lists, including being number 73 on the American Library Association's list of the 100 Most Frequently Challenged Books of 1990–2000. [ALSC+2Wikipedia+2Wikipedia+2](#)
- **J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series:** These books have faced numerous challenges and bans across various states, with critics arguing they promote witchcraft and the occult.

Legal Framework and Protections

While local challenges occur, the **First Amendment** of the U.S. Constitution provides strong protections against outright bans of books based on their content.

Courts have generally upheld the rights of libraries and schools to include a wide range of materials, emphasizing the importance of intellectual freedom.

For instance, in the case of *Counts v. Cedarville School District* (2003), a federal court ruled that requiring parental permission for students to access the *Harry Potter* books violated students' First Amendment rights. [Wikipedia](#)



Conclusion

While there is no national legislation specifically targeting children's books about witchcraft, local challenges and restrictions continue to arise. These actions are often met with legal challenges and public debate, reflecting the ongoing tension between concerns over content and the principles of free expression.