

God says that he will blot out the Amorites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Canaanites, etc.

And he commands Israel:

“You shall utterly overthrow them... I will drive them out before you.”

In the modern world this would be called “ethnic cleansing” or “genocide.”

How can God command this?

One of the benefits of preaching through the whole Bible

is that it forces us to deal frankly with the hard teachings of Scripture.

We can't just pretend that these things don't exist.

So how can a just and merciful God command the extermination of an entire people group?

There are three stories in Genesis that are a backdrop to this.

In chapters 6-9 of Genesis, God sends a flood to destroy the whole human race –  
except righteous Noah and his family.

In the Flood, God declares that the wages of sin is death.

When humanity chooses wickedness over righteousness,  
then the proper result is death.

Then, in chapters 18-19 of Genesis, God himself sends fire from heaven  
to wipe out Sodom and Gomorrah –

rescuing only righteous Lot and his family.

But there is a difference between the Flood and Sodom and Gomorrah.

In chapter 6, God determines to destroy the earth by himself.

In chapter 18, God brings Abraham into his council,  
asking Abraham's opinion of how to proceed in the matter.

Why does God do this?

Because God has adopted Abraham as his son.

God has given Abraham an inheritance.

As the son of God, Abraham is to play a part in bringing judgment (and showing mercy)  
to all the earth.

The third story connects more directly to our text for today.

In Genesis 15, when God establishes his covenant with Abraham,  
the LORD says to Abraham in Genesis 15:13-16,

“Know for certain that your offspring will be sojourners in a land that is not theirs  
and will be servants there, and they will be afflicted for four hundred years.

But I will bring judgment on the nation that they serve,  
and afterward they shall come out with great possessions.

As for yourself, you shall go to your fathers in peace;  
you shall be buried in a good old age.

And they shall come back here in the fourth generation,  
for the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.”

The iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete.  
What does that mean?

Think about the principle that we see in the Flood and at Sodom and Gomorrah:  
the iniquity of a people is “complete” when God says “time’s up!”  
Noah was a righteous man – but no one listened to him.  
Lot sought to dissuade the men of Sodom – but no one listened to him.

When a people refuse to repent and believe in the LORD –  
when they refuse to listen to his prophets –  
that is a good sign that their iniquity may be complete.

So it’s not that the Amorites and the Canaanites were the *worst sinners* on earth.  
It’s rather that “time’s up” for them.

The Final Judgment is coming upon the Amorites and the Canaanites –  
just as it had come for Sodom in the days of Lot,  
just as it had come for all humanity in the days of Noah.

And in each step, the son of God takes a more direct role.  
With Noah, God simply told him what he would do.  
With Abraham, God asked for his counsel.  
Now with Israel, the son of God will take the sword –  
even as God himself declares that *he* will be the one  
that drives the nations out before Israel.

Our Psalm of response reflects on this story.  
Because after the LORD drives out the nations before Israel,  
Israel becomes afflicted.  
Israel becomes a laughingstock.  
The nations now are arrayed against the son of God.

Sing Psalm 80

What is going on?

Psalm 80 points us forward to show that Israel – the son of God –  
brings judgment against the nations,  
so that Israel might itself become the nation that bears the judgment of God.  
After all, think about the implications of the saying,  
“the iniquity of the Amorites is not yet complete”:  
Every nation is a sinful nation.  
What will happen as nation after nation fills up their iniquities?  
God will destroy nation after nation, people after people –  
until all the nations of the earth are destroyed!

When will it ever change?

It will only change when the Son of God bears the judgment of God –  
when the iniquities of the nations are borne by the *one*  
who has the right to *judge the nations*.

Only then can the Seed of Abraham bring the blessing of God *to* the nations.

And that's why we need to read Revelation 19.

Read Revelation 19

Modern thought would teach you that the world has *always* been like this.

Man simply evolved from the beasts –  
or, more precisely, man is simply a beast.  
Death is just a normal part of the cycle of existence.  
There is no such thing as “sin” or “righteousness” –  
there is simply “things we like” and “things we don't like.”

The Christian message begins from a very different starting point.

The Christian message begins with the doctrine of creation.  
That in the beginning God created all things *good*.  
In the beginning man was sinless.  
In the beginning death was *abnormal*.

Because in the beginning God planted a garden in Eden.

It's worth pointing out that God called Adam and Eve  
to fill the earth *and subdue it*.

Subduing the earth suggests that *not* everything was like the Garden.

The Garden was a place of order and harmony –  
but the earth outside of the Garden was not.

Adam and Eve were called to make the rest of the earth like the Garden.

But instead Adam and Eve rebelled and listened to the voice of the Serpent,  
thereby bringing sin, misery, and death to all their descendants –  
so that all creation groans under the dominion of sin,  
longing for the revelation of the sons of God (Romans 8).

And that is what Revelation 19 speaks of – the revelation of the sons of God.

But notice *who* in Revelation 19 wields the sword?

The King of kings and Lord of lords – who sits on the white horse.

The army of the King simply stands and watches.

Because the one who has the right to bring judgment on the nations  
is the Son of God.

He is the one who rules the nations with a rod of iron.

He is the one who treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.

And he is worthy to do this because he himself has ransomed people for God  
by his own blood.

He endured the wrath of God on the cross –  
he passed through God’s judgment – and was vindicated!

That’s the context that we need in order to understand what Exodus 23 is doing.

Exodus 23 – like Revelation 19 – is all about *worship* and *kingdom*.

I use the word “kingdom” – even though it’s not in our text –  
because this is the word that Jesus uses to describe the picture of the good life.  
“The Kingdom of heaven is like...”

Your *worship* will always be oriented towards the *kingdom* that you love.  
If your kingdom is all about your power, your pride, your pleasure –  
then your worship will focus around that vision of the kingdom.  
Because worship is supposed to help *orient* you to what *really matters*.

We’ll look at that topic more next week –  
as we look at Israel’s first corporate worship service (in chapter 24).

### **1. Why Worship Matters – the Rituals and Practices that Shape Us (v10-19)**

But here at the end of chapter 23,  
at the end of the Book of the Covenant,  
verses 10-19 talk about a number of rituals and practices  
that were supposed to shape Israel’s life together.

Your rituals and practices shape you.  
I’ve been watching a lot of Dodgers games over the last year –  
and it shapes me more than I would like to admit.  
I always know when Clayton Kershaw is pitching –  
and my schedule subtly gets adjusted accordingly...

But it’s not just sports.  
James K. A. Smith talks about how shopping malls  
have a liturgical shape to the way they guide our economic transactions.  
And I know that many of you have experienced the formative effect of social media.  
You start counting “likes” and “shares”  
and you are obsessed with getting a following...

What does God say to us?

#### **a. Practice Sabbath Rest – For the Sake of Others (v10-12)**

Listen to verse 12:

<sup>12</sup> “Six days you shall do your work, but on the seventh day you shall rest; that your ox and your donkey may have rest, and the son of your servant woman, and the alien, may be refreshed.

Some people say that the NT repeats every *other* of the Ten Commandments,  
but never the Sabbath command.

That is simply *not true*.  
In Matthew 12, Jesus is questioned about sabbath observance

and Jesus does not say that the Sabbath is now set aside.  
When challenged on food laws, he will declare all foods clean –  
but here he says that the Pharisees have *misunderstood* the Sabbath.  
When they object that Jesus' disciples are plucking grain in a field  
because they are hungry,  
Jesus appeals to the Old Testament,  
and points out that David even ate the bread of the Presence  
in the house of God –  
and how the priests do their work in the temple on the Sabbath.  
And he concludes by saying that the Sabbath commandment is still binding:  
“For the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath.” (12:8)  
And then they ask him if it is lawful to heal on the Sabbath,  
and he replies that it is “lawful to do good on the Sabbath.” (12:12)

Or as Jesus says it in Mark 2:27, “the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath.”

Jesus says that the Sabbath is made for man.

The Sabbath is a gift from God when you can set aside your burdens.

Imagine a whole day where you can set aside the cares of the week!

(I realize that for parents of small children,  
you are thinking, “Um, no I can't!”

I get it! – believe me!

But besides those works of necessity and mercy –  
you have a day to set aside the labors of the week)

But also notice that it is *not* a day to be selfish.

It is not a day focused on *yourself*.

It is a day for restoring harmony  
with God, with others, with yourself, and with all creation.

Why do I say it like that?

Because God created the world in six days – and rested on the seventh.

When we imitate God in our cycles of work and rest,  
we are restored to harmony with him.

And that is why verse 12 also speaks of others – and all creation.

Because when we imitate God in our rhythms and patterns  
we are functioning the way God made us to be.

A friend of mine posted some information about Americans and rest (from Andy Crouch).

Only one in seven adults set aside a day per week for rest.

Of that 14% of the population,

only one in five (in other words, about 3% of the US population)

say that they don't do any work on their day of rest

(my guess is that most of those are orthodox Jews and conservative Presbyterians!).

Likewise, only 12% of adults say that they intentionally  
set aside times when they don't use electronics.

Indeed, 60% of American adults say that they *never* take a break from social media!

As my friend puts it,

“Is it any wonder why Xanax, Benzodiazepines, Buspirone, Tricyclics, etc.  
are such big business?

Americans have inordinately anxious and restless souls.”

Why?

Because we have forgotten the Sabbath!

“The world simply won't work for you without Sabbaths.

We can't be fully human without attending to proper patterns of work/rest,  
a reality wired deep into the fabric of the moral universe (Exodus 20:9).

God has made us such that the restorative rest of worship is necessary.

This isn't legalism. It is for our good.” (ht: Mark Robinson)

The more I watch the craziness unfold in our society,  
the more convinced I am of my sabbatarianism!

We don't go shopping on Sunday – or even out to eat (unless we are traveling).

That's also why we turn off our devices on Sundays –

if we think that our 24/7 information and entertainment culture has gone nuts,  
then we need to unplug and detach for a day (at least!),

and then that can help us rethink the way that we spend the other six days.

It means that we can't do a lot of youth sports –

because most of that has taken over Sunday.

But honestly, why do youth sports matter so much?

They only matter because professional sport

has become one of the biggest religions of the modern age.

I grew up as a Golden State Warriors fan – back when the Warriors were *awful*.

So I do enjoy watching the NBA finals now.

And I confess to tweaking fans of LeBron James –

you might say, I know how to get their goat...

But what if professional sport is just a blip in the scope of human history,

and what really matters is denying yourself, taking up your cross, and following Jesus.

Well, you can do *that* in any walk of life –

and so you should choose a walk of life that will allow you

to walk in the way of wisdom – the way of discipleship.

In the early church, they refused to allow professional musicians to be baptized

unless they would first renounce their profession!

Why?

Because the only way you could make a living as a professional musician in the ancient world  
was by playing at orgies and pagan festivals.

As our society moves back towards paganism,

it may be that Christians will have to renounce more and more professions

in order to follow Jesus.

But having said that,

I also want us to think about how the Sabbath principle applies to *all of life*.

Because that's what makes verses 10-11 so fascinating.

The sabbatical principle of verses 10-11 provides an application of sabbath-thinking to other areas of life:

<sup>10</sup> “For six years you shall sow your land and gather in its yield, <sup>11</sup> but the seventh year you shall let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of your people may eat; and what they leave the beasts of the field may eat. You shall do likewise with your vineyard, and with your olive orchard.

At first, it might sound like this would result in no farm work at all every seven years – but the text doesn't say that.

It just says that every seventh year you should let the field lie fallow.

If you have seven fields (or if you divide your land into seven parts), then you could faithfully observe this law by farming six parts each year in rotation.

This happens to be good land management –

but God does not command it as a way to be more productive.

God commands it as a way to show mercy to the poor – and even to the beasts of the field.

In other words, God commands us to be good stewards of creation – this is what it looks like to “fill the earth and subdue it.”

Make it fruitful and productive in a sustainable way

that will continue to be fruitful for generations to come – and beneficial for all people, and indeed, for all creatures.

I do not begrudge the birds and the rabbits their proper share of our garden.

But I also keep cats in order to make sure that they do not take *more* than their share!

Universities have applied the sabbath principle in their “sabbaticals” –

where they allow their professors a semester off in order to focus on research and writing.

Churches have applied the sabbath principle as well.

My last sabbatical, seven years ago, was very fruitful in giving me an opportunity to research and write – and also spend time in other congregations, getting to know and see what God is doing in different parts of the world.

We also apply this principle to giving elders and deacons sabbaticals.

It would be interesting to apply this to other walks of life.

What would happen if a company gave its engineers a four-month sabbatical?

But the point that the LORD makes to Israel

is that you should remember that your land (like your time) belongs to him.

Therefore, slow down in your use of your land – and your time – so that you can serve him (and others).

**b. Whose Voice Do You Heed? Whose Name Do You Speak? (v13)**

<sup>13</sup> “Pay attention to all that I have said to you, and make no mention of the names of other gods, nor let it be heard on your lips.

Verse 13 then turns to *words*.

It’s not only the patterns and rhythms of life – but also the patterns and rhythms of what we say, and what we *pay attention* to.

The point here is *not* a fundamentalist sort of prohibition.

Scripture often uses the names of other gods –

Baal, Asherah, Molech –

there is nothing wrong with using these names in their proper context.

The point is that your ordinary conversation should not be peppered with the names of other gods.

Whose voice are you paying attention to?

God has placed *his name* on you in your baptism.

You were baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, your conversation should be characterized by the name and teaching of your God.

**c. Unleavened Bread, Harvest, and Ingathering: the Feasts of the LORD (v14-17)**

<sup>14</sup> “Three times in the year you shall keep a feast to me. <sup>15</sup> You shall keep the Feast of Unleavened Bread. As I commanded you, you shall eat unleavened bread for seven days at the appointed time in the month of Abib, for in it you came out of Egypt. None shall appear before me empty-handed. <sup>16</sup> You shall keep the Feast of Harvest, of the firstfruits of your labor, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labor. <sup>17</sup> Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord GOD.

Verses 14-17 then talk about the three feasts that Israel should keep each year.

Here they are called Unleavened Bread, Harvest, and Ingathering.

Elsewhere they are called Passover, Pentecost, and Booths (or Tabernacles).

It is worth noting that the Book of the Covenant was given on the day before Pentecost (the feast of the firstfruits).

Today is Pentecost Sunday.

(We’ll be looking particularly at the importance of Pentecost in tonight’s sermon).

What is the point of this?

Notice the two different ways this is stated:

Verse 14 – “Three times in the year you shall keep a feast to me.”

Verse 17 – “Three times in the year shall all your males appear before the Lord GOD.”

The feasts are designed to do two things:

First, they highlight the *corporate* nature of Israel’s worship.

All Israel was supposed to gather for these three feasts.

Think about that!

We are talking about *hundreds of thousands of people* gathering three times every year.

Your identity as an Israelite is bound up with this participation in the three feasts.

Corporate worship is at the heart of what it means to be the people of God.

And second, the feasts are designed to highlight the importance of joy and celebration.  
Think about the timing.

Passover came after the barley harvest in the spring.

Pentecost (Harvest) came 50 days later – after the first of the wheat.

Booths (Tabernacles) came in the fall at the end of the harvest.

In other words, the feasts came at down times during the year  
where the farm work is at a good point for a taking a break.

You would have to travel to the central sanctuary –  
eventually in Jerusalem –  
where all Israel would gather.

If you think about what Jesus has done,  
he has brought us *all* to the heavenly Zion.  
We are now gathered together with all the saints in all times and places  
as we gather at the heavenly Zion with Jesus.

Hebrews 12 says that you have not come to the earthly Mt Sinai (like in Exodus 19),  
but “You have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God...  
and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant...”

There is no way for all the Christians on earth to gather at one time and place *on earth* –  
but we do value opportunities to gather with our brothers and sisters  
wherever and whenever we can.

And God says that “no one shall appear before me empty handed” –  
in other words, everyone should bring *something* to give to the LORD.  
If we belong to the LORD – if he is our God –  
then we owe him all that we are and all that we have.

**d. Applying These Principles: Leaven, Fat, Firstfruits, and the Goat (v18-19)**

<sup>18</sup> “*You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with anything leavened, or let the fat of my feast remain until the morning.*”

<sup>19</sup> “*The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God.  
“You shall not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.*”

Verses 18-19 then apply these principles in particular ways:

“You shall not offer the blood of my sacrifice with anything leavened.”

It would be easy to think that God is making a big deal about leaven (or yeast),  
but that is not the point here.

The sacrifice is the offering that is *eaten* by the worshiper.

So this is saying that you shall not mix the blood with the yeast –  
in something that you *eat* in worship.

The life is in the blood.

That is why in the days of Noah, God forbids all people from eating or drinking blood.  
In Acts 15, the Jerusalem Council determines that this remains binding on Gentiles.

And this is why it is so shocking that Jesus would say,  
“Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant,  
which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.” (Mt 26:27-28)  
But all those OT sacrifices could not truly forgive sins.  
Only the blood of Jesus can truly bring life.  
Therefore we *must* drink his blood – or else we die.

Verse 18 continues:

“or let the fat of my feast remain until the morning.”  
*All* the fat belongs to God and is supposed to be burned in the fire.  
The only reason why you would let the fat remain until morning  
would be if you wanted it for yourself!

So verse 18 focuses on how you eat the sacrifices of the LORD.  
Do not eat the fat. Do not eat blood.

The first part of verse 19 then deals with grain offerings:

“The best of the firstfruits of your ground you shall bring into the house of the LORD your God”  
Don’t give God the leftovers.  
Give him the *best* of the firstfruits.  
What you give to God tells him what you think of him.

“You shall not boil a young goat in its mother’s milk”

We see here another way in which all creation is in view in God’s reconciling work.  
I preached on this a few weeks ago in the evening service (Dt 14:21).  
It was common in the ancient world to mingle life and death together in their sacrificial rituals.  
A mother’s milk is life-giving.  
So to boil a young goat in its mother’s milk  
is to mingle life and death together in one pot.  
And that’s just wrong.

## **2. Why Worship and Conquest Go Together – the Coming of the Kingdom (v20-33)**

Verses 20-33 then form the conclusion to the Book of the Covenant.  
These verses provide the motivation for *why* Israel should obey God’s law.  
Modern legal documents don’t bother with motivation.  
But the Book of the Covenant tells Israel,  
here is *why* you should obey God.

And the reason is because of what *God* has promised that *he* will do!

In each of the three sections of verses 20-33, there is the same pattern:  
First, God says “This is what I will do.”  
Second, God commands Israel, “Here is what you should do.”  
And third, God promises, “Here is what will happen, if you do what I command.”

### **a. “My Name Is in Him” – the Angel Who Goes Before You (v20-22)**

<sup>20</sup> *“Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. <sup>21</sup> Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him.*

<sup>22</sup> *“But if you carefully obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries.*

First, God says, I will send an angel before you to bring you to the place that I have prepared.

(You should hear echoes about now!

Jesus said, I am going to prepare a place for you –

and I will come again and will take you to myself – John 14:2-3)

Why should you think about Jesus when hearing verses 20-22?

Because the LORD says, “my name is in him.”

This is no ordinary angel.

When this angel speaks, it is the voice of the LORD –

“obey his voice and do all that I say”!

And if you do – then I will be an enemy to your enemies  
and an adversary to your adversaries.

What Jesus does in his ascension to the right hand of the Father  
is nothing less than enter the new creation – the promised land –  
and so when he pours out his Holy Spirit on his church,  
the Spirit is the presence of the exalted Christ with his people.

And as Hebrews 3 says, quoting Psalm 95,

“Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts as in the rebellion”

But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called ‘today,’

that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.”

So all of this here in Exodus is prefiguring what Jesus will do  
as the angel of the LORD who goes before his people to defeat their enemies  
and bring them into the promised land – the new creation.

**b. I Will Blot Out the Inhabitants of the Land/You Will Serve the LORD (v23-26)**

<sup>23</sup> *“When my angel goes before you and brings you to the Amorites and the Hittites and the Perizzites and the Canaanites, the Hivites and the Jebusites, and I blot them out, <sup>24</sup> you shall not bow down to their gods nor serve them, nor do as they do, but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their pillars in pieces. <sup>25</sup> You shall serve the LORD your God, and he<sup>[a]</sup> will bless your bread and your water, and I will take sickness away from among you. <sup>26</sup> None shall miscarry or be barren in your land; I will fulfill the number of your days.*

Then the second thing is found in verses 23-26.

God says here’s what I will do:

When my angel goes before you and brings you to the land –

I will blot out the Amorites and the Hittites, etc.

(Again, remember Revelation 19 – Jesus is the angel of the LORD who goes before us).

And when God does what he promises,

then he calls his people to obey:

“you shall not bow down to their gods nor serve them, nor do as they do,  
but you shall utterly overthrow them and break their pillars in pieces.”

When God establishes his kingdom,  
then you shall serve the LORD your God.

And then verses 25-26 describe the fruit of this kingdom:  
here is what God will do when his people obey:

“I will bless your bread and your water,  
and I will take sickness away from you.  
None shall miscarry or be barren in your land;  
I will fulfill the number of your days.”

I know that some of you are barren.  
And *many* of you have miscarried.  
So you *know* the pain and the sorrow that this brings.

All of you have known sickness to some degree –  
and maybe a few of you have experienced *real* hunger –  
a time when you weren’t sure whether you would ever eat again...

So imagine a world in which no one is barren – no one miscarries – no one is sick –  
everyone has enough to eat!

That is what happens when God’s people live according to God’s law.  
Of course, all you have to do is keep reading  
to discover that Israel *did not* live according to God’s law.  
So if we tried it now, would it work better?!

If we just try harder next time, maybe it will work?!!

No.

The wages of sin is death.

The result of sin is misery.

The purpose of the law was partly to give a picture – a vision – of the kingdom of God  
(the way things *should be*).

But mostly, the purpose of the law was to show us the futility of trying to be *good enough*.

Only our Lord Jesus Christ has been “good enough.”

Only *he* has been able to ascend up the heavenly Mt. Zion and sit down at the right hand of God

And that’s why the conquest of Canaan must be seen in the light of God’s covenant.

**c. I Will Drive Them Out/You Shall Not Make a Covenant with Them (v27-33)**

<sup>27</sup> *I will send my terror before you and will throw into confusion all the people against whom you shall come, and I will make all your enemies turn their backs to you.* <sup>28</sup> *And I will send hornets<sup>[b]</sup> before you, which shall drive out the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites from before you.* <sup>29</sup> *I will not drive*

*them out from before you in one year, lest the land become desolate and the wild beasts multiply against you. <sup>30</sup> Little by little I will drive them out from before you, until you have increased and possess the land. <sup>31</sup> And I will set your border from the Red Sea to the Sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness to the Euphrates,<sup>[c]</sup> for I will give the inhabitants of the land into your hand, and you shall drive them out before you. <sup>32</sup> You shall make no covenant with them and their gods. <sup>33</sup> They shall not dwell in your land, lest they make you sin against me; for if you serve their gods, it will surely be a snare to you.”*

Because the third thing that God says is that he will drive the nations out before them.

He uses the vivid image of hornets chasing the Hivites, the Canaanites, and the Hittites.

But then God says, “I will not drive them out before you in one year,  
lest the land become desolate and the wild beasts multiply against you.”

This is one of many reasons why I think that the Exodus was a fairly small band of people.

If we were supposed to take the number 600,000 men literally,

then the Israelites would have outnumbered all the peoples of Canaan put together.

But God says that Israel is too small and weak to conquer Canaan in one year.

So God says that he will drive them out little by little.

(By the way, this fits exactly what we see in the archeology of Palestine.

There is no widespread destruction.

But starting about this time there is a curious absence of pig bones  
in certain parts of the land.

Since pigs were unclean for Israel, that would make sense...)

But God says that Israel shall make no covenant with them and their gods.

When we get to the book of Joshua we will discover that *converts* to Israel were welcome.

But it really is a “convert or die” scenario.

God has said that Judgment Day has come for these nations.

The Final Judgment now comes upon the Canaanites, the Amorites, etc.

And there is a warning:

if you allow these nations to remain, then it will be a snare to you.

If Jesus is the one who ascends the heavenly Mountain and receives the Kingdom of God,  
then how should we understand this today?

Jesus – as the seed of Abraham – is the heir of all things.

And Jesus is not to make a covenant with the nations and their gods.

Rather, Jesus is to drive out the nations and their gods.

As the Father says to his Son,

“Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies your footstool.”

And we who seek to follow Jesus bring the message of Jesus to the nations:

“repent or die!”

*We* do not wield the sword – but *Jesus does*.

He is the one who is coming again to judge the living and the dead.