

WHY CANAAN IS IMPORTANT



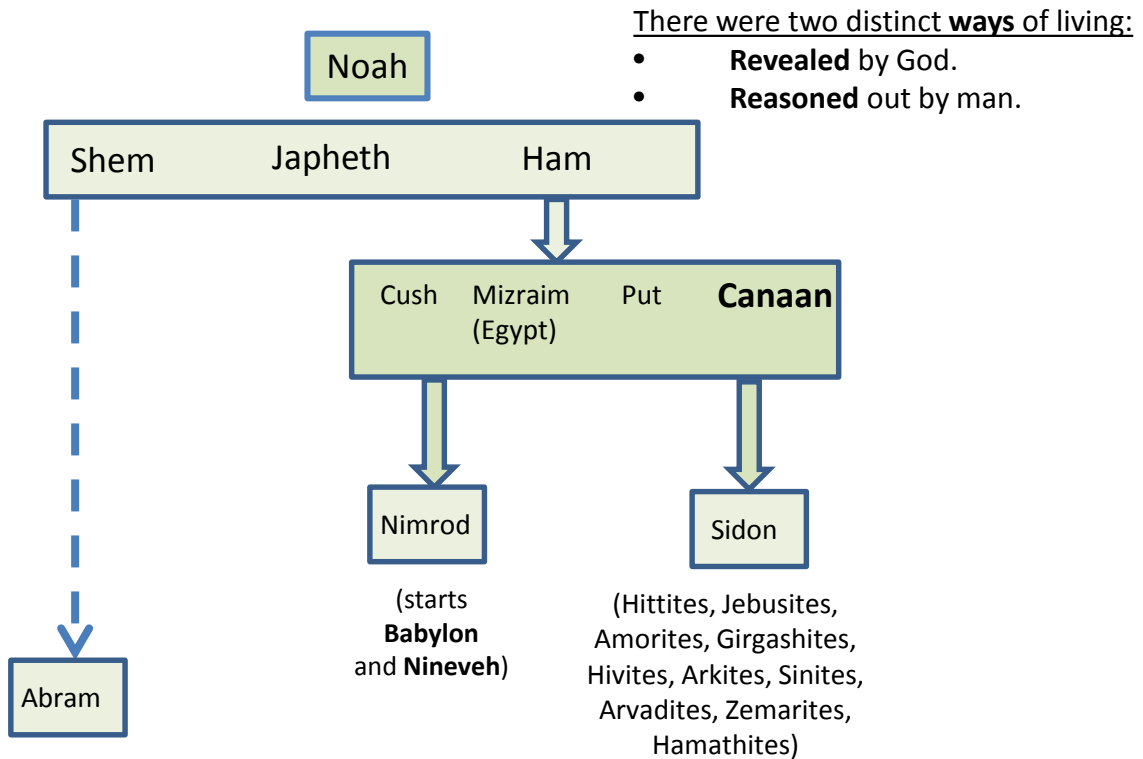
By Leiann Walther

Why Canaan is Important

A Strange Story: Genesis 9:18-27

Introduces us to Canaan--

The morally corrupt son of Ham, grandson of Noah, that becomes the father of the successful but morally corrupt nations that are opposed to God's people and God's WAY of LIVING.



Strange Names: Genesis 10:6-20

Tells us **WHO** the main players are and that there is a conflict going on--

- The people under God's Authority
- The people who (knowingly or unknowingly) are under Satan's lies.

The Israelites (from Abraham) were to be representatives of God's way of living and the Canaanites (from Canaan) were representative of man's reasoning.

Why Canaan is Important

Geography:

- It compares in land size to the state of New Jersey.
- Canaan is “the land between” the major civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia and had two major highways that went through the land.
- It was different from Egypt, which depended on the Nile River, because it depended on RAIN—the system of cisterns was developed.

Culture:

Baal was the god of rain and had to be appeased and provoked to send rain. Asherah, the wife of El, was also the consort of Baal, who provided fertility on the earth. The trees were her symbol and eventually even a pole was used to represent her presence. Shrines to Baal and Asherah started on the hills (“high places”) but eventually also were in the valleys and cities.

Canaanite religion was grossly sensual because it required the services of male and female prostitutes at the shrines to evoke Baal to send rain.

Combined with these practices was

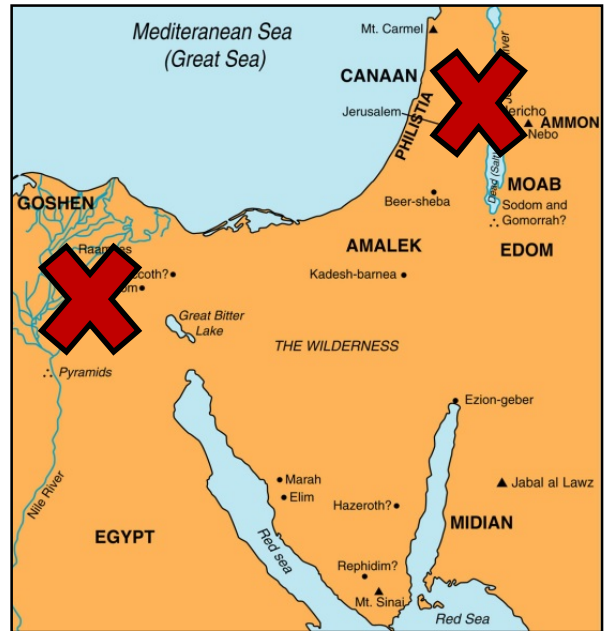
- ritual child sacrifice to appease the gods,
- sorcery,
- divination and
- witchcraft

to gain power over the forces of nature.

The Canaanites were to be destroyed not because of their ethnicity but because of their normalized corrupt way of life.

The Israelites were warned that if they adopted the same way of life from the Canaanites, they would be judged in a similar way. (Deuteronomy 9:4)

God was going to set up a RIGHTEOUS and HOLY way of living as a light to the nations.



“You are My Redeemed people.

I bought you and brought you out of Egypt. I paid for you with the blood (life) of the lamb.”

*You must not do as they do in **Egypt**, where you used to live, and you must not do as they do in the land of **Canaan**, where I am bringing you.*

Do not follow their practices.

Leviticus 18:3

What was God teaching His people about RAIN and WATER while they were in the Wilderness?

Why Canaan is Important

Strange Customs: Leviticus 11-18

Tells us **HOW** they are to live--

"You are a Kingdom of Priests to show the nations how to live holy."

(cr Exodus 19:6)

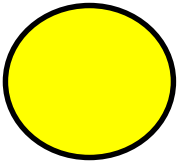
The priest



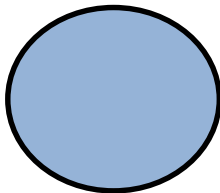
what the nation Israel



was to the
nation Israel



was to be to the
rest of the world.



The Priests' Job

1. Stay sober.
2. *Distinguish
unclean/clean.*
3. Teach God's ways.

This wasn't just in the Old Testament.
Peter wrote to the Believers—

WHO they are:

You are God's Redeemed people.

I Peter 1:18



HOW they are to live:

You are a Kingdom of priests to
show others how to live holy.

I Peter 2:9

Be alert and of sober mind.

In fact, though by this time you
ought to be teachers,

the mature, by constant use,
have trained themselves to
distinguish good from evil.

Hebrews 5:11-14

Why Canaan is Important

"UNCLEAN" 184 times in OT

116 are in Leviticus

Leviticus 11 Food Laws

Food = the ideas and teachings that I take into my mind and affections.

Where do I get my ideas?

- Who influences what I think?
- Are they living lives pleasing to God according to His revealed ways?
- Are they living lives according to man's understanding?

Leviticus 13 Leprosy Laws

Leprosy = the defiling beliefs that adhere to my thinking leading to numbness of conscience so that I am willing to engage in corrupt practices that damage my soul and bring judgment.

- What have I allowed to penetrate the barrier of my conscience so that it now no longer bothers me?
- What used to seem "so bad" that now seems "so tame"? Romans 1:18ff

Leviticus 13 Mildew Laws

Mildew = how evil spreads. It must be quickly removed and cleansed.

Who are my closest friends and how do they live? Do not be misled:

"Bad company corrupts good character." I Corinthians 15:33

Leviticus 18 Unclean Practices of Canaanites

- Incest vs. 6-16
- Multiple sex partners vs. 17
- Adultery vs. 20
- Homosexuality vs. 22
- Bestiality vs. 23
- Prostitution 19:29
- Child sacrifices 20:1-5
- Occult practices: "readers," spiritism, mediums, witchcraft, seances

Leviticus 19 "Don't Mix"

- Two kinds of cattle
- Two kinds of seed
- Two kinds of material

"I don't do any of those things!"

Uncleanness comes from inside of us:

(Jesus said) "What comes out of a person is what defiles them. For it is from within, out of a person's heart, that evil thoughts come—sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, greed, malice, deceit, envy, slander, arrogance, and folly. All these come from inside and defile a person." Mk. 7

- Through reading?
- Through watching?
- Through fantasizing?
- Through indifference?
- Through humor?
- Through close friendships?
- Through "light" versions?
- Through silence?

Why Canaan is Important

A Strange Command: Exodus 23:23, Deuteronomy 20:17

The Israelites were warned that if they adopted the same way of life from the Canaanites, they would be judged in a similar way.

(Deuteronomy 9:4)

There were serious consequences, even judgment, from living the lifestyle based on Satan's lies.

There are two distinct groups of people:

- The people of God.
- The people who (knowingly or unknowingly) are under Satan.

There are two distinct **ways** of living:

- **Revealed** by God.
- **Reasoned** out by man.

What happens if someone says they are the people of God but they live by the reasoning of man?

The Promises of God and Selective Hearing

| Abraham | Moses | Solomon | |
|---------|-------|---------|------------|
| 2000 BC | 1500 | 1000 | <u>586</u> |

The promise of the land to Abraham and his descendants was given to Abraham, but the living and enjoying the land was conditioned on their obedience to His law and way of living. This system may sound "harsh" until one realizes that from the time they agreed to these terms, until they were actually removed from the land was almost 900 years later.

The Warnings of God through Jeremiah

My people have committed two evils

1. Rejected the source of living waters.
2. Made broken cisterns for themselves that don't hold water.

Jeremiah 2

The Waistband:

- CLING to the owner
- Be buried in the ground
- Become worthless

Jeremiah 13

After the Babylonian Captivity, Baal worship was not re-established in Canaan when the Jews returned.

Babylon removed the inhabitants and killed the resistance movement of fighters, brutally taking over control of the land in 586 B.C.

(Note: there doesn't seem to be an outcry against what they did.)

Why Canaan is Important

How does someone live a clean life when they are the only one in their surroundings to do so? When everything around them is “unclean”?

Noah

Lot

Rahab

Jeremiah
Daniel
Ezekiel

Then the Lord knows how to rescue the godly from temptation, and to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment. II Peter 2:9

Both the Old and New Testaments end with themes from Canaan:

On that day there will no longer be a **Canaanite** in the house of the Lord Almighty. Zechariah 14:21

and **nothing unclean**, and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it, **but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.** Revelation 21:27

Be alert and of sober mind.

In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers,

the mature, by constant use, have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil.

Hebrews 5:11-14