

The
Skeletons
in
God's
Closet

Why is the OT so violent?

Genesis 15

The Caricature

- How does the world see the God of the Old Testament?
 - Angry
 - Violent
 - Aggressive
- How do we portray God?
 - Loving
 - Forgiving



The Caricature

- What's the problem?
 - We say God never changes then we “see” and angry and aggressive OT God and an loving and forgiving NT God.
 - So which one is right? Or are we wrong and God does change?
- The problem is the caricature. God in the OT is not angry, violent, or aggressive.



God & Abram

- God calls Abram out of Ur
 - A capitol city
 - Commerce, political power, major Babylonian port
 - Full of sinfulness
 - Ur is named after the moon god



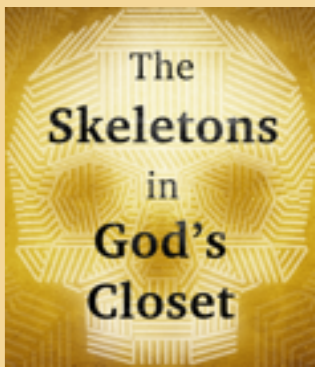
Abraham's Journey

From Ur to Haran to Egypt



God & Abraham

- Abram's name is changed
 - Abraham - father of many nations
 - Abraham is 99 years old and has no children
- The world is full of sinfulness
- Shortly after the flood men will the world with evil
 - greed, lust, idolatry



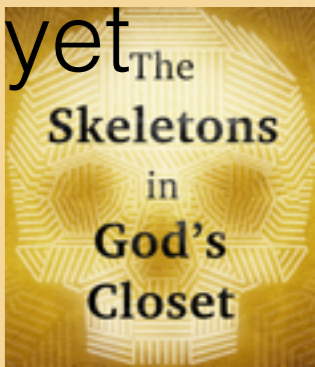
God & Abraham

- God's promise:
 - Leave your family and possessions and I will make you great
 - You will be as numerous as the stars in the sky
 - Those who bless you will be blessed
 - Those who curse you will be cursed
 - All people of the earth will be blessed through you



God & Abraham

- Abraham's vision:
 - Your descendants will be strangers in a strange land
 - They will be slaves - 400 years
 - I will punish that nation - your descendants will leave with great possessions
 - They will possess this land - Canaan
 - You will not see it - the evil of the Amorites has not yet come to completion



God's Mercy

- God is full of mercy and His patience is not like the patience of man
 - There is a limit to what He will allow
 - In this case it will be well over 400 years that evil has ruled in Canaan.
 - When Israel claims the promise land they are the benefactors of God's righteous judgment



Man's Holy War

- Humanity has committed massive atrocities in the name of the gods
- When many wages holy war:
 - A strong army
 - A strong culture
 - I am fighting for my God
 - With terrorists - civilians are the main target



God's War

- When God wages war it is VERY different
- God's judgment comes after great mercy and patience
- God uses the weak and powerless to overcome the abusive powerful
 - God is doing the fighting
- Israel is 1 million slaves with no military training or advanced weapons
- The "cities" that are attacked are actually military outposts - no civilian targets
 - Soldiers are killed, civilians are driven out of the land



Application

- How do I explain the violence in the OT to my unsaved friends?
 - Since Adam & Eve humans have filled the world with evil
 - God is patient and merciful but there is a limit to what He will allow
 - God stands against the oppressive powers of evil
 - God stands up for the weak and powerless
 - Righteous judgment is served

