

Canaanites

- Identity
- History
- Geography
- Cities
- Culture
- Religion



Descendants of Noah's Sons



Gomer

Ivan

Meshech

Lud

Togarmah

Asshur

Tubal

Aram

Caphtorites

Canaan

Put

Mizraim



The Table of Nations

(Gen. 10)

NOAH

Sino

HAM

SHEM

Japheth

Sin

Canaanites

Semites

Caucasians

Sinai

Africans & Asians

Jews & Arabs

Map 1
THE NATIONS OF GENESIS 10

Descendants of Japheth (Gen. 10:2-5)

Descendants of Ham (Gen. 10:6-20)

Descendants of Shem (Gen. 10:21-31)

Later Biblical name

JAVAN

LYDIA

LYDIA

JOKTAN

(Arabia)

LUD

(Lydia)

ARPHAXAD

ELAM

(Persia)

B

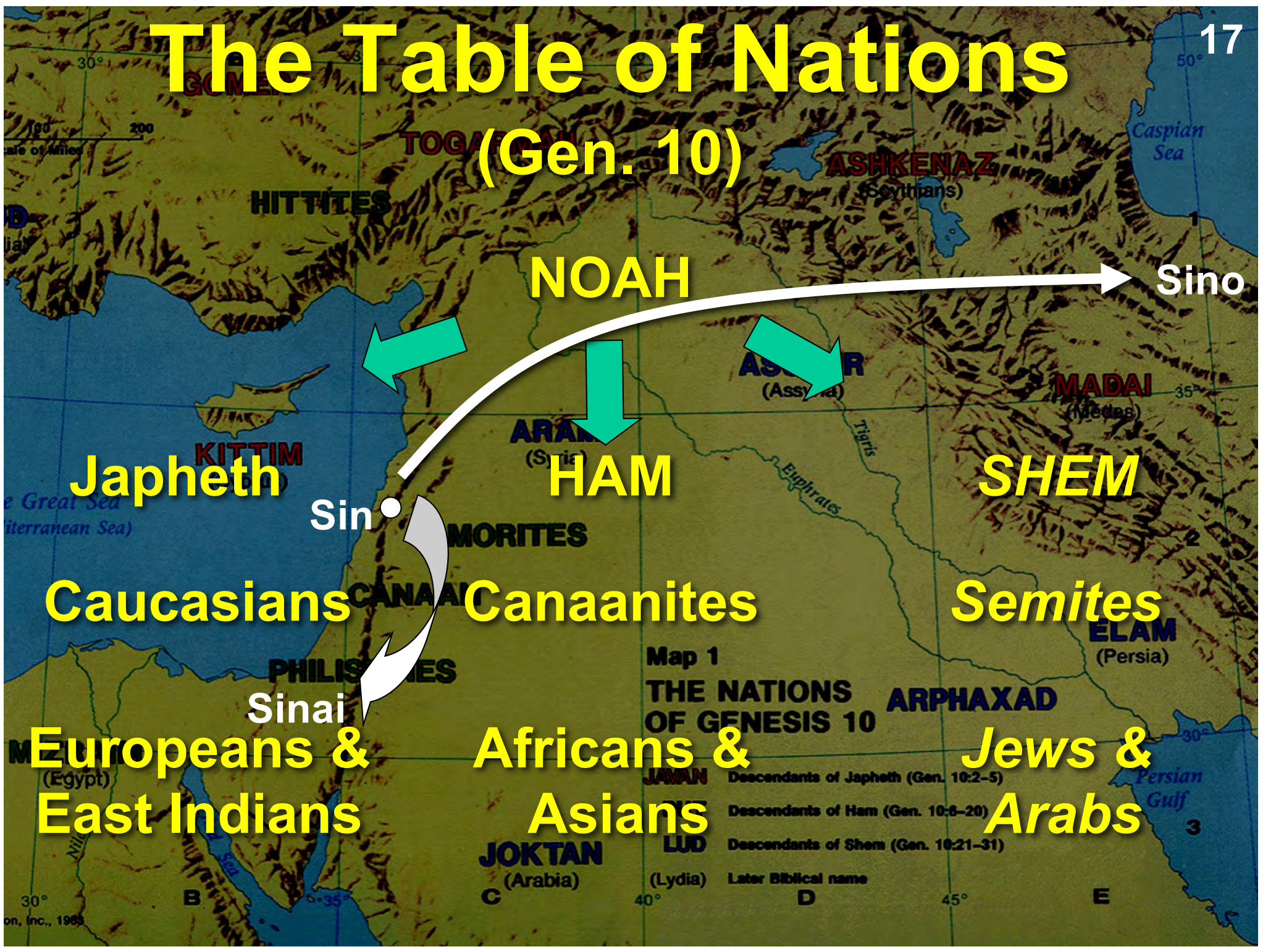
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Language of Canaanites

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Linguistically classified into two groups:

Eastern:

- o Akkadian (language of the Assyrians and Babylonians)
- o Tigris and Euphrates river valleys

Western:

- Northern (Levant)
- Southern (Arabia and Ethiopia)



1. Puzrish-Dagan
2. Umma

3. Girsu
4. Ur

History

- **3300 - 1950 BC (Early Bronze)**

First walled towns built

Populations seldom exceeded 2000

Development of urban societies - Arad

Wars and Egyptian interference (13th dynasty-2000 BC)



History

Middle Bronze (1950-1539 BC)

Hyksos were Canaanites who ruled over Northern Egypt for over 100 years (mid-17th century)

Mid-16th century BC (1539)

Pharaoh Ahmose drove out Hyksos and destroyed Canaanite cities



Hyksos Chariot



History

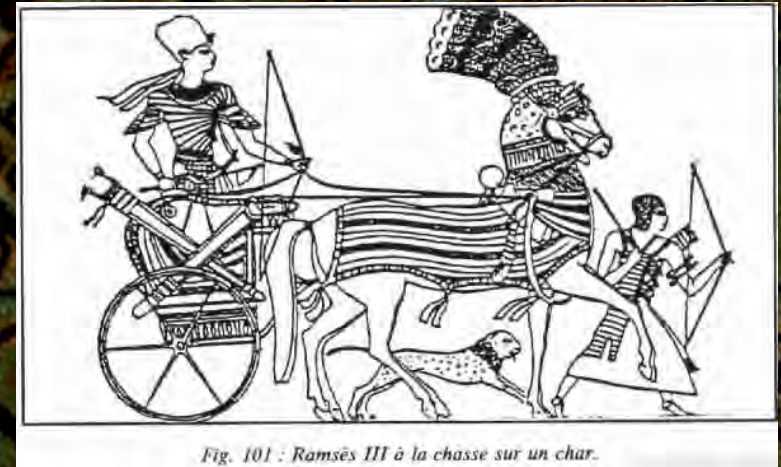


Fig. 101 : Ramsès III à la chasse sur un char.

- (Late Bronze) 1539 - 1200 BC Egyptian Domination

Battle of Megiddo

- Canaan Conquered
- Paid heavy tribute & taxes
- Supplied the resident Egyptian army with food and other supplies



History

Iron 1 (1200-950 BC)

1. Arrival of sea people (Philistines).
 - Destroyed the Hittite culture
 - Occupied northern and coastal regions
 - Led to collapse of Canaan city states
2. Establishment of settlements
3. Phoenician culture developed along Mediterranean coast as merchants.

History

Iron II Age (950-586 BC)

Best known "new states"
of the Iron II period

- kingdom under Solomon

Centralised Govt.

Large scale building
projects (water tunnel)



Geography

Overall

- the whole area "from the Brook of Egypt" (south of Gaza)
- Ammon, Moab and Edom not part of Canaan

Northward

- along the coast past Gebal/Byblos
- inland to the western edge of the Syrian Desert

Southward

- to incorporate eastern Bashan down to the Yarmuk River
- down the Jordan Valley to the southern end of the Dead Sea

Westward

- through the Wilderness of Zin, and back to the Brook of Egypt



Scope of Canaan by Egyptians of the Late Bronze Age (ca. 1550-1200)

Cities

Jericho

- Situated ten miles northwest of where the Jordan River enters the Dead Sea
- A major ford of the Jordan that accommodates travel from Transjordan through the river to the west.
- The name probably derives from the Hebrew word *yerah*, meaning moon or month or new moon.



Cities

- **Historical and Biblical Importance**

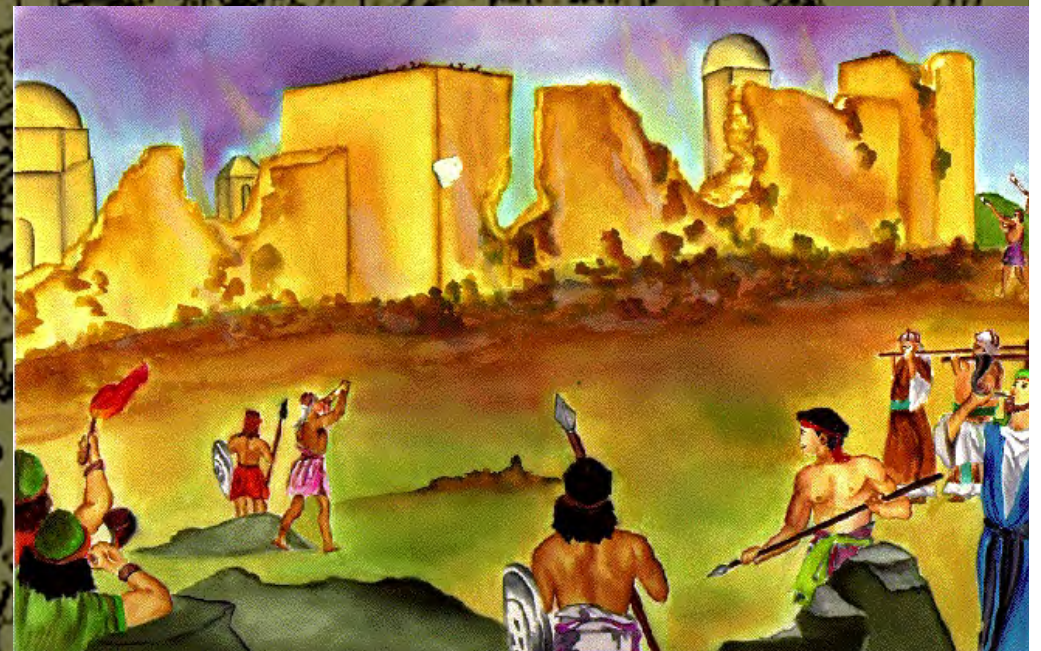
First city to conquer

Battle of Jericho

- **Significance?**

Faith in power of God

Salvation of Gentiles through faith



Gibeon

- Situated halfway between Jerusalem and Bethel
- In 3000 BC Gibeon served as a fortress city
- One of the most ancient Canaanite cities
- One of four Hivite cities in the Bible (Joshua 9:17)



Cities

- Gibeon tricked Israel
- Israelites had to fight the 5 Amorite kings (Josh. 10)
- Sun stood still

Some lessons?

- Consult the Lord!
- Don't be deceived
- Keep all treaties
- Faithfulness of God despite our weakness



I hope our
disguise works





• Culture-Writing

Will I keep
my job?

Alphabet

- the single most important and enduring contribution to later civilizations.
- enabled the spread of literacy to the masses rather than keeping it in the hands of the educated scribes.

Alphabet Origins

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The Phoenician alphabet actually originated from the proto-Canaanite alphabet of the 18th -17th centuries BC

The earliest known inscriptions in Phoenician come from Byblos and date back to the 1000 BC.

𐤀 hēt ḥ	𐤁 zayin z	𐤂 wāw w	𐤃 hē h	𐤄 dālet d	𐤅 gīmel g	𐤆 bēt b	𐤇 'ālef '
𐤈 sāmek s	𐤉 nun n	𐤊 mēm m		𐤋 lāmed l	𐤌 kaf k	𐤍 yōd y	𐤎 tēt ṭ
𐤏 tāw t	𐤐 śin/śin ś		𐤑 rēš r	𐤒 qōf q	𐤓 šādē š	𐤔 pē p	𐤕 'ayin '

Religion

Archaeological Discoveries: Baal & El (in Amarna Letters)

Baal

- the principal deity of the land
- means "lord" or "master"
- Canaanites depended upon for survival



The Baal Cycle



**Baal
Rises**

**Baal
Rises**

**Mot
kills
Baal**



**Mot
kills
Baal**



Winter

Spring

Summer

Fall

Winter

Spring



Religion

Baal fertility cycle (Baal Epic)



Mot (death) in winter defeated by Baal (life) in spring

Temple prostitution and sexual fertility rites in religious worship helped Baal resurrect in spring



Child Sacrifice to Baal

- During worship live babies were placed on the burning hot hands of the statue of Baal.
- After dying they were then pushed into a hole underneath.



Modern Child Sacrifice



"Contact among the many religions of the ancient Near East produced not only tension but also much syncretism or borrowing of concepts and practices. When Canaanite polytheism is compared with that of Mesopotamia, striking similarities appear that probably would not have occurred had the societies been totally isolated from each other. For example, some scholars suggest that in both cultures authority resided with the sky God. That was only the concept of authority, however. The implementation of authority needed some other deity. Although the sky god of Mesopotamia was Anu, the real power was exercised by Enlil, god of wind and storm. Likewise, El was the nominal head of the Canaanite gods, but the chief functions of deity were exemplified by the personification of storm, the god Hadad. He was the 'Baal,' or lord of gods and of humankind."

WALTER A. ELWELL

"The Aramaeans and Philistines who settled in Canaan adopted the practices of the Canaanites; similarly, the Amorites accepted much of the Sumerian religion as their own when they moved into Mesopotamia. Among all those peoples, however, the Hebrews took an independent course. Their God was the unique and cosmic deity who demanded exclusive allegiance. Such a concept ran against the grain of all the religions of the day."

WALTER A. ELWELL

The Worst Religion of All

"The brutality, lust and abandon of Canaanite mythology is far worse than elsewhere in the Near East at the time. And the astonishing characteristic of Canaanite deities, that they had no moral character whatever, must have brought out the worst traits in their devotees and entailed many of the most demoralizing practices of the time, such as sacred prostitution, child sacrifice and snake worship."

Merrill F. Unger, *Archaeology and the OT*, 175

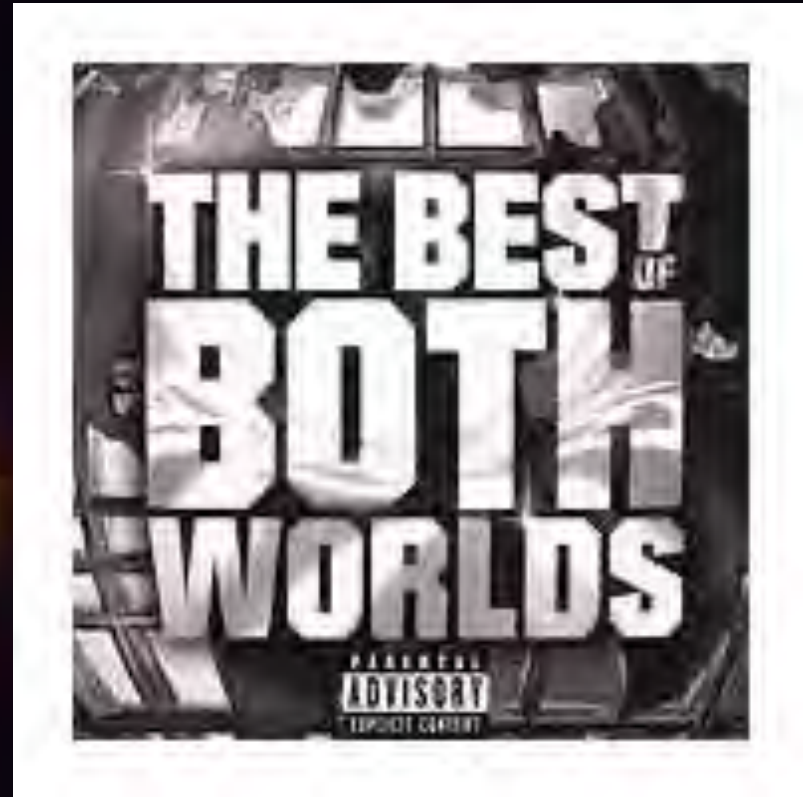
Religion

Influence on Israel

= **syncretism**

-Yahweh was God of power
while Ba'al was god of everyday life

Not until after the return from exile in Babylon
was monotheism maintained by Israelites.



Religion

Why was Israel so influenced?

1. **Similar dialect**
2. **Enlisted Canaanite help for superior weapons**
3. **Superficial resemblance to Hebrew religion (peace offerings, divine titles, etc.)**
4. **Appeal of syncretism—the best of both worlds with both Yahweh and Baal (Bratcher)**

Religion

How Israel fought against Canaanite influence

1. Good Theology

- Bible taught One God
- Genesis polemic (Bratcher)
- Character of God



Religion

2. Prophets taught against religious practices

- **Similarity in appearance**
- **Differences in morality:**
 - **human sacrifice**
 - **temple prostitutes**
 - **child sacrifice**
 - **mutilation**
 - **bestiality**



Religion



3. Language

- Here was Israel's most successful counterattack
- Emphasized the personal nature of God
- Used poetic imagery for celebrating God's sovereignty

Lessons

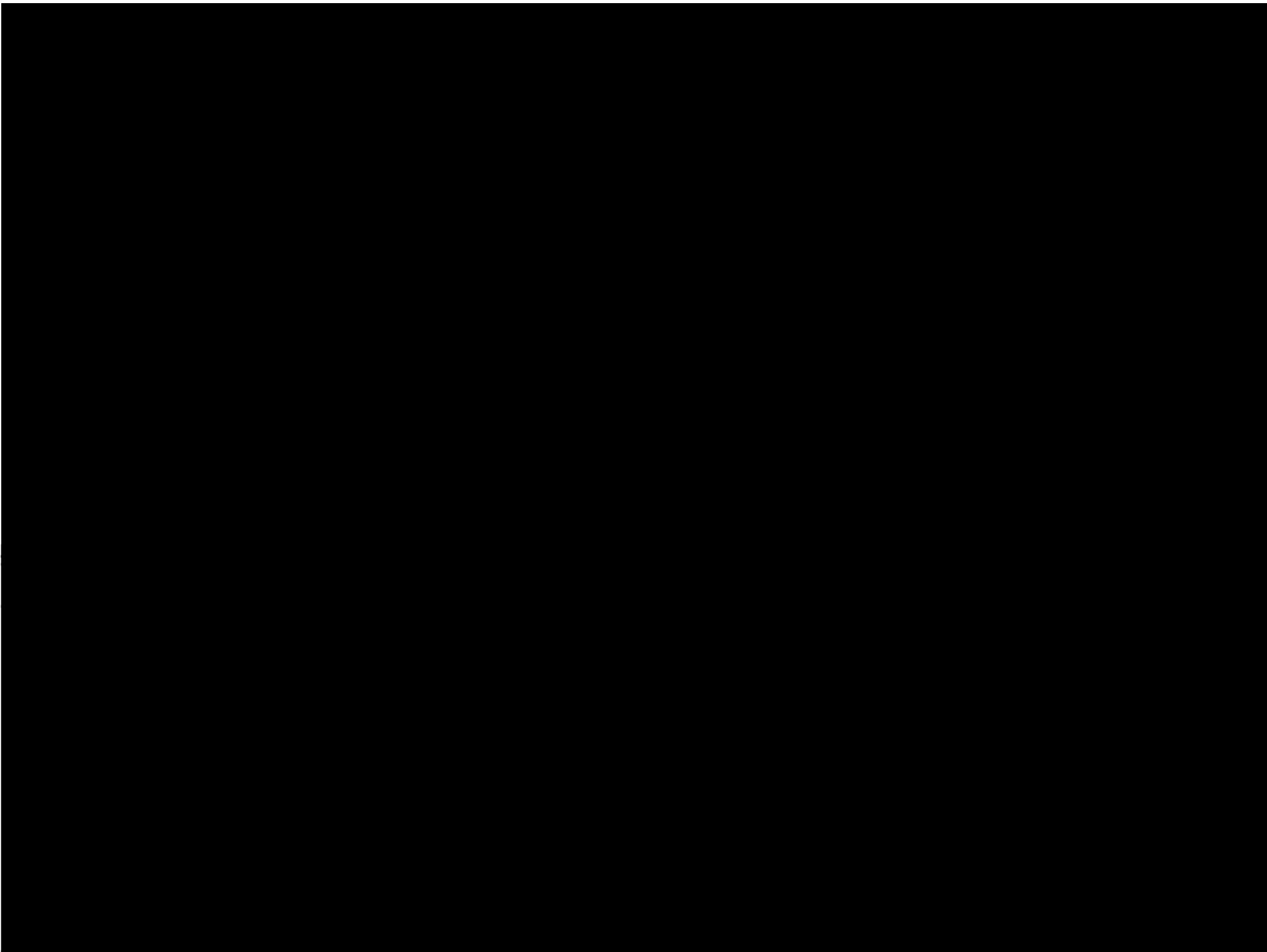
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- ◆ **Child sacrifice:** God hates it so much that it was the precipitating factor for judgment upon Israel. Do we practice it today? Why are abortions performed today?
- ◆ **Syncretism:** Do we worship other "gods" like career and fall back on God only when in trouble?
- ◆ **Evangelism:** How do we use today's culture and language to present God to this generation?

Small Group Discussion

- ◆ How do you preserve godly values amidst your "Canaanite age"?
- ◆ What is the most effective means you have found to be in the world but not of the world?

"I'm not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from the evil one" (John 17:15 NLT)



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