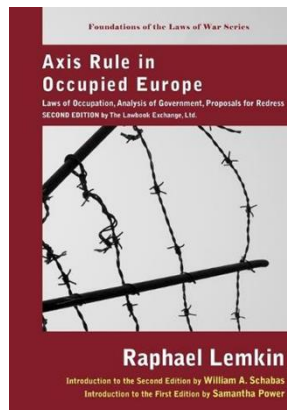


Genocide and the Bible

The Bible does not say anything about Genocide specifically, as since the term was not invented until... 1944 by the Polish-Jewish lawyer Raphael Lemkin in his book *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe*. Lemkin, who had witnessed the atrocities of the Holocaust and other mass killings, combined the Greek word "genos" (meaning race or tribe) with the Latin word "cide" (meaning killing) to create the term.



There is much reporting on Genocide in the news today: The persecution of the Uyghurs in China is considered by many to be genocide in action, same as the Rohingya ethnic cleansing in Myanmar, Russia stands accused of the same in the Ukraine. There was the Yazidi genocide carried out by Daesh or so called Islamic State in Iraq, in 2003 -2005, the first genocide of the century took place in Darfur where up to half a million perished. In 2003, 40% of the Pygmy tribes of Eastern Congo were wiped out, the genocide in Rwanda where up to 800,000 Tutsis were massacred, Bosnian genocide of 1992, the Pol Pot in Cambodia, the list goes on but all of this is dwarfed of course by the greatest genocide in history –the systematic obliteration of the Jews of Europe, where 6 million were slaughtered. Holocaust remembrance day is kept on the 27th January every year, so that such a tragedy does not occur again. Well, it obviously has made not the slightest difference.

Israel was taken to court last year. South Africa has brought its case accusing Israel of genocide in Gaza at the International

Court of Justice. But since then the UN has held its own investigation. Whether or not Israel is committing genocide or not, is not a debate we are engaging here.



However it must be stated, that we the Apostolic Ecclesia do not justify or defend the modern State of Israel for its political

decisions, equally we are not supporting the majority of nations who wish to see the humiliation of Israel, and ultimately it's demise, and to be swallowed up by a greater Palestine. "From the River to the Sea..." a much-quoted maxim sums up the wished for genocide of Israel by many deluded on the left of the political spectrum.

However, we would draw your attention to an episode in the Old Testament, where a member of the family of Jacob was humiliated and possibly taken advantage of. It was Dinah, the only daughter of Jacob. This is described in Genesis 34:25-27: In revenge, two of the sons of Jacob because their sister had been dishonoured tricked the city of Shechem, and when they were vulnerable slaughtered every male in the city. It was entirely disproportionate, and no justification whatsoever for their behaviour. As a result, their father, Jacob was furious with them and condemned their actions saying that they had made his name to stink in the whole neighbourhood, and that it would cause them all to attack him and the family.

We submit that this is a similar situation. That the nation of Israel is indeed behaving badly after being provoked, and their actions will also turn all nations against them is exactly what is happening, and exactly what the Bible has predicted. But as with the incident early in the days of their founding as a nation, what came of the incident was the establishment of Israel as a nation. The nations around Jacob back then were evil, as they are today. However, Israel today has returned in unbelief, and is behaving like all the other nations, and even worse in some respects. But when all nations come against Israel to battle, the time will come when the Kingdom will be established.

Israel being accused of genocide has caused much glee among those who wish to see an end of Israel, shouldn't those who suffered the worst genocide in history have more sympathy towards others? Therefore the argument goes, Israel is no different, and just as bad as the Nazis. It has indeed given *occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully*. (1 Tim 5:14) and caused antisemitism to increase around the world, for their name to become a stink – but also given occasion for the name of God to be blasphemed. Justification for the mockers and scoffers of the Bible, to see – look how the people of the book behave - so much for their God!

And some of us have had personal accusations about the God we believe in. How can God exist, if He allows all this? More – God Himself has committed genocide! “It is not surprising the Jews are committing genocide, when the God of their Bible has done exactly the same!” “The New Testament is all about love and compassion, but the Old Testament is all kill kill kill!!” The Bible isn't consistent, is their claim, or that there is a different God in the Old Testament to the one in the New!

Richard Dawkins in his book *The God Delusion* which has sold over half a million copies to his faithful followers had this to say: *The God of the Old Testament is arguably the most unpleasant character in all fiction: jealous and proud of it; a petty, unjust, unforgiving control-freak; a ... infanticidal, genocidal, filicidal, pestilential, megalomaniacal, sadomasochistic, capriciously malevolent bully.*

Similarly Christopher Hitchens who sold 300,000 of his book *God is not Great* to his faithful followers, had this to say: *The Bible may, indeed does, contain a warrant for trafficking in humans, for ethnic cleansing, for slavery, for bride-price, and for indiscriminate massacre, but we are not bound by any of it because it was put together by crude, uncultured human mammals. It goes without saying that none of the gruesome, disordered events in Exodus ever took place.*

Well let's have a look at these accusations.

What is the definition of genocide, and has God done this? Are these accusations true? Let's try and make sense of these accusations. They come about because of a lack of knowledge and ignorance of what the Bible actually says, and lack of ignorance of God Himself.

Definition of genocide: The legal definition is codified in the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, and refers to *certain acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group.*



There are indeed examples in the Old Testament where God commanded the destruction of whole sectors of the population on the earth. Let's list some of these: The Flood, the cities of the plain, including Sodom and Gomorrah, the Egyptian firstborn

sons during the Passover, the Canaanites under Moses and Joshua, the Amalekites annihilated by Saul, Nineveh at the time of Jonah, and the destruction of Babylon.

On the face of it, it doesn't look very nice at all, does it? The New Testament is much nicer, I mean, Jesus is all about love and forgiveness. Well this is shallow thinking, and borne from ignorance. In Jesus own words, in the New Testament he had this to say about himself:

Matthew 25:31- 33: When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. He goes onto say about those on his left: verse 46: these shall go away into everlasting punishment: verse 30: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

Furthermore in this New Testament of love and forgiveness, it is said of Jesus by the Apostles:

Acts 17:31: Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained;

Romans 2:16 *In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.*

Romans 2:5 *But after your hardness and impenitent heart you treasure up to yourself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God;*

2 Peter 3:7 *But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.*

Moreover, Jesus prophesied of himself in the last book of the Bible, which he personally authored, the Revelation: Speaking of the nations: 17: 14: *These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them:* Turning onto Revelation 19:15-21: *And out of his mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.*

Before we look at the specific accusations of God permitting acts of genocide in the Bible, it would be useful to consider that these accusations are coming from people who do not appreciate the nature of God Himself. They are selective in their reading as their intention is to debunk and neutralise any moral obligation the Bible teaches, so that they are free to do as they please. As we saw with the Lord Jesus earlier, people like to sum up the New Testament as warm and cosy love and forgiveness, but deliberately ignore passages such as we have just quoted. The New Testament does not preach unconditional love and forgiveness. It is conditional upon repentance. What if there is no repentance? - then the New Testament as we have shown reveals a just punishment. There – that is the word – just- people

do not like justice. All people go to the grave at the end of their lives. Apart from being taxed, death is the one other certainty.

Yet this imposition of death, this cutting off of life, people accept, but fail to see that death is the just punishment for sin, as we can read in the New Testament – Romans 5: 12.

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: Death is actually the just end for all

There are two sides to the story. We have seen the two aspects of the Lord Jesus - so it is with God. Jesus was sent to manifest his Father. *If you have seen me – you have seen the Father* said Jesus to Thomas, - not literally of course, but their character was the same. So we can expect to see two sides of God as well. As we can read in the Romans 11:22: *Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.*

Critics focus on the terrible and fearful side of the God of justice, and say – ah! there you are - no love!

But let us turn to Exodus 34, this is the balanced God, that described himself to the nation He chose to represent Himself: 5-7: *And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.*

Here God presents this balance of personality. There is the love and forgiveness – and there is the judgment and justice – it **is** the same God of the New Testament. How can there be love and forgiveness unconditionally? Is that justice? Is that what the courts do in this country? Is that what people do, when they are robbed raped and massacred? Its ok, we love you! We will let you off! Is that equity? By no means. The only way to control human nature is through justice. Good is rewarded, and evil is censored – both for the definition of right and wrong, and of course for the very survival of the human race, and more importantly for the purpose of God to be fulfilled.

The purpose of God is for the whole earth to be full of His glory, and for His power and wisdom, and goodness to be shared and appreciated. To fulfil that purpose necessarily involves justice and control of fallen man.

Let us take the first example of so-called genocide of this so-called *malevolent* God. The universal flood, which as the scripture records, and archaeology attests, and which took place three millennia ago. God had been keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, the record reveals for a thousand years, and where men and women lived exceeding long lives, much longer than we do today. Did they use that merciful and gracious, longsuffering tolerance to their advantage, and create a just and fair society? Not at all. We read there were ‘giants’ in the land – Hebrew is *Nephilim* – which roughly translates as thugs, who were ‘mighty’ men, Hebrew is *haggivorim* which means warriors; building a reputation on violence where we can read in chapter 4 of accepted murder and revenge. God was disappointed that so few appreciated goodness, mercy, and forgiveness, and we can read: *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.

Continually... it was a process which continued, year after year, century after century getting progressively worse, and the Creator tolerated it, whilst the population didn't tolerate each other, fighting and killing. So what would Dawkins and Hitchens think, that a just God should not be just, and allow man to destroy himself? In fact what God did was give an opportunity to all to repent. We can read this as Peter describes 1 Peter 3:20 *when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing*

In fact, God gave the inhabited world a further 120 years to repent, whilst Noah was preparing and building the ark. This long and public witness is described by Peter in 2 Peter 2:5: *a preacher of righteousness*, and in continuing in faith to construct this way of salvation, Noah *condemned the world*.

The result was not genocide as defined in modern terms, but was worldwide justice. There was no destruction of a specific race or nation, no prejudice or bias, no destruction of a national, ethnic, racial, or religious group, all were treated equally. In fact, no difference with what the Lord Jesus will do when he returns to judge the nations.

Unlike the genocidal maniacs which Dawkins and Hitchens think are the very optimum of the survival of the fittest evolutionary product, God warned and invited repentance every step of the way.

The God of the Bible is not malevolent and unforgiving control freak, but loves righteousness and hates wickedness.



It is exactly the same with Sodom and Gomorrah. These were two cities in the south of Canaan as Israel was called before God's chosen people migrated there.

The Bible records a terrible event whereby the two cities were destroyed by God in fire and brimstone, probably a natural disaster which God permitted to take place. These cities had obtained a reputation for depraved and perverted sexual corruption, and every imaginable vice, where their idea of hospitality was homosexual rape. Again according to Hitchens and Dawkins et al, a fine example of survival of the fittest, whereby their behaviour would have killed them all off anyway.

The cause of this moral decline into wickedness is explained in Ezekiel:16:49 *Behold, this was the iniquity of ... Sodom, pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness. A society comfortable and tolerated, free to do as it pleased, but did they take advantage of the goodness of God, and devote their good quality of life to others – no, rather, their malign influence was corrupting the whole area. Did God destroy them without warning, as one would expect from a cruel and unloving God. No. Lot, who is described as a just man, the nephew of Abraham lived there for many years, and rose to a position of a judge and tried in vain to preach to the cities of the righteousness of God. But they would not hear.*

What we see in the Bible is the history of man, which because of his nature, and natural selfish instincts always sinks to the lowest common denominator, and self-destruction. God intercedes, to prevent this self-destruction, but it involves a punishment which is clearly explained at every juncture. Good versus evil. The preservation of Godly principles, versus the unrestrained vile manifestations of human nature.

Having established these principles, we can move onto some more difficult passages in the Bible and deal with these accusations head on.

The Bible describes how God elected a people to teach the nations how they should behave according to these godly principles. The lofty idea is seen in their very name – Israel - which means a Prince with God. God promised Abraham that his descendants – Israel would inherit land, which was already inhabited by another people.

Genesis 15: 18-21 *In the same day the Lord made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites.*

Yes these were the tribes already living there. But God warned that these tribes would be evicted 400 years in advance. As we can read in verse 13 *And he said unto Abram, Know of a surety that thy seed shall be a stranger in a land that is not theirs, and shall serve them, talking about the Egyptians; and they shall afflict them four hundred years; 16 But in the fourth generation they shall return here again: for the iniquity of the Amorites is not*

yet full. In other words, God would not act against them, until their evil got to a level He could not tolerate.

God knew in advance that these particular nations tended to mass moral decline, they included the Sodomites of course, but despite that 400 years of notice was here served. The Amorites should have known better. Abraham himself was an Amorite – see Ezekiel 16:3,45 *And say, Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem; Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother an Hittite.* Canaan, himself after which one of the tribes was named was the grandson of Noah, and he grew up in the only family that survived the flood, he knew the consequences of disobedience to God. Additionally, we can read how the King of the Jebusites was a priest of God, and preached the Gospel as we can read in Genesis 14.

However these tribes rejected the goodness of God, and like Dawkins pretended that God did not exist. We can read in Romans 1:18-20 *For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;... For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:*

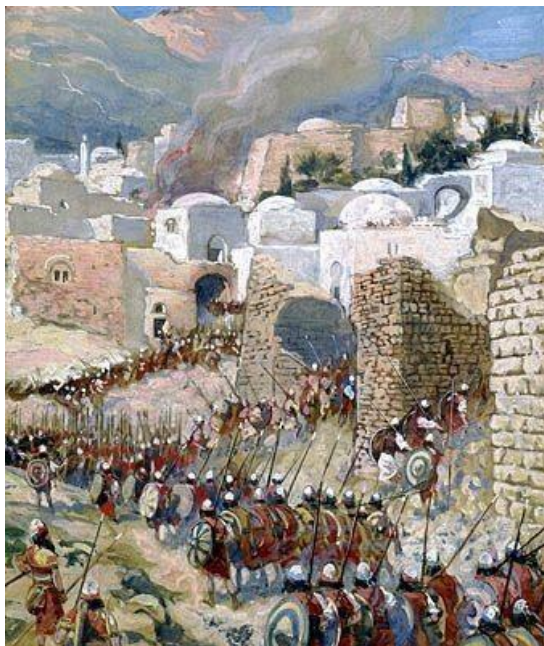
While Israel, as a new nation of rescued slaves who had been oppressed for 400 years, they needed a code of law so that they could coalesce as a nation - the code of law was very different to the laws of the nations around – who practised torture, mutilation, slavery, infanticide, class distinctions, witchcraft, no respect for women. The law given to Israel, became known as the Mosaic law, as it was given through the agency of Moses, and

it was designed to regulate against bad human behaviour, but teach the nation of the lofty, heavenly yes, godly ideal they should reach to.

Part of that law, Israel was commanded to fight against wickedness and evil. The list of evils practised by the nations is shown in Leviticus 18, where there is a long list of sexual practices and perversions which they were commanded not to even think about, in the middle of this horrible list we can read:

24-25: Defile not ye yourselves in any of these things: for in all these the nations are defiled which I cast out before you: And the land is defiled: therefore I do visit the iniquity thereof upon it, and the land itself vomits out her inhabitants.

God created the earth in the first place to be full of His glory, but instead it was becoming evil as it was before the universal flood.
– Indeed just as much of the world is today.



So then Israel was commanded:
Deuteronomy 20: 16-18
But of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God gives you for an inheritance, you shall save alive nothing that breaths: even the little children!
There was to be no opportunity for the next generation to exact revenge, or carry on the culture. For those who

throw their hands up in horror, maybe they have not seen the indoctrination and radicalisation of Hamas school children, or child soldiers in the DRC, human beings are so cruel they invest in the next generation to continue the hate, as soon as they can begin even to say their first words.

17-18: But you shall utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the Lord thy God has commanded you: That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so should ye sin against the Lord your God. So here, finally, Israel were commanded to eradicate these people – in a method which in modern parlance can be described as genocide. In fact, as it turned out, Israel didn't do it.

The reason for this annihilation of a people is explained in Deuteronomy 9: 5-6 *Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart, do you go to possess their land: but for the wickedness of these nations the Lord thy God does drive them out from before you, and that he may perform the word which the Lord swore unto thy fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Understand therefore, that the Lord thy God gives you not this good land to possess it for your righteousness; for you art a stiff-necked people.*

When Joshua went into the land, they destroyed Jericho and other cities, but there was no a wholesale clearance of the land, as the book of Judges go to such pains to explain. And these nations and tribes that remained intact, tried to integrate with Israel, and in some cases were successful, and became thorns in the side of Israel.

There was a later occasion where God commanded Saul to utterly exterminate the tribe called the Amalekites 1 Samuel 15:3 *Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass.*

This was the first tribe to attack Israel in their history, when they were travelling through the desert, and they had inherited a hatred of Israel. In the event Saul did not extinguish the tribe, later King David also attempted to destroy them but 400 of them escaped. Later, it was a Amalekite top politician, hundreds of years later in the Persian court, who brought about the near reversal annihilation and genocide of the nation of the Jews, in the person of Haman, and if it was not for the intervention of faithful Queen Esther, the Jewish nation would have been wiped out, and God's purpose with mankind extinguished – the birth of Jesus Christ would not have happened.

What we have seen so far, is that in every instance of a so-called genocide, God has given advance warning for a long period of time. An opportunity for repentance and a change of behaviour. It sometimes worked. Jonah was sent to Nineveh, we recall the story of Jonah, and how he didn't want to warn that powerful

	Judgement (agent)	Time to repent	God's witness	Salvation through faith
Flood	Genesis 6:5-7 (the Flood)	While the ark was being built (1 Peter 3:20)	Noah	Noah and family built and entered the ark (Genesis 6:9; 7:8)
Sodom & Gomorrah	Genesis 18:20-21 (fire from heaven)	Abraham pleads with God (Genesis 18)	Righteous Lot (2 Peter 2:7) and Abraham	Lot and family fled Sodom (Genesis 19:12-13)
Egyptian firstborn	Exodus 12:12 (angel)	Previous plagues, Moses speaking to Pharaoh (Exodus 7-10)	Moses and Aaron	Israelites marked by the lamb's blood (Exodus 12:12-13)
Canaanites	Deuteronomy 9:4-6, 18:12; Leviticus 18:24-25 (Israelite armies under Joshua)	Israel's 40 years in the desert (news reached Canaanites – Joshua 2:10)	Israel led by Moses and Joshua	Rahab and family – she tied a scarlet thread outside window (Joshua 2)
Amalekites	1 Samuel 15:2-3 (Saul's armies)	c.350 years since their sin against Israel (Exodus 17)	Nation of Israel	None recorded

Assyrian city, as he knew that sometime in the future they would attack his own people, so he tried to escape the mission, but got thrown overboard, ended up in a big fish, got coughed up on the seashore, right where he had to continue his journey to Nineveh. He went and warned the city of the pending judgements of God and the whole city, everyone, listened and changed their ways, and on that occasion there was no destruction.

It is interesting also, that in all of these so-called genocides, there is no ethnic cleansing. It is important to realise that out of most of these nations that were warned, individuals did repent, and came out of those perverted nations and wanted to identify with the principles of good - truth and righteousness.

For example, Lot and his daughters from Sodom, Rahab and her whole family who were Canaanites in Jericho were saved because they chose to believe the gospel, a whole sub tribe of the Canaanites, called the Gibeonites were saved, and joined Israel, as they recognised the righteousness of God. David even had Philistines, the arch enemy of Israel as his personal bodyguard. One of his bravest soldiers was a Hittite. The temple mount where David built the temple was purchased from Ornan the Jebusite, another family who switched sides and gave allegiance to the God of heaven. So it can be seen that on the right basis, Israel were allowed to absorb and integrate people from corrupt and alien tribes, so it was not an act of vindictive hatred of God against people, but it was against behaviour and actions that God took such a judgment to.

The conquest of the land of Canaan was not about genocide or the ethnic cleansing of a people, or about race against another race, but it was about good versus evil. It is the same Old Testament where God, commanded His nation not to have a

standing army, or horses and chariots, and instead he taught His people to care and protect the foreigner who came in amongst them: Leviticus 19: 34: *But the foreigner that dwells with you shall be unto you as one born among you, and you shall love him as yourself; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God.* The nation was given sophisticated and precise laws forbidding them to oppress nations and tribes who were not censured by God, but Israel was to be at peace with them, though not to mix with them. The nation was not allowed to initiate attacks or battles. Only when God commanded them to carry out the punishment as His agency after long warning those evil tribes.

Since then, various Popes and religious leaders have incited crusades and Holy wars in the name of God, and carried out their own unjustified genocides, without any command from God, or any such authorisation. Instead, they like Israel of old have caused the name of God to stink and given opportunity for shrill critics like Dawkins, Hitchens and co. to criticise the Bible. God did command so-called genocides, but only during a short part of Israel's history, as part of His fight against the evil nations, and to forward His purpose that all nations would have the opportunity to see the goodness of God, and not just the severity, but could learn to worship the God of truth, equity, and justice, and not pagan perversions which glorified human sacrifice.

The God of the Bible has never had any truck or issue with any nation or ethnicity, but instead hates wickedness, and cannot abide sin. Such is the justice of God, that when Israel became a wicked nation, and rejoiced to do evil, they also suffered the same way, and genocide was committed against them. Several times – by the Assyrians, by the Babylonians, the Seleucids, the

Romans, pogroms in Europe by hundreds of years, until finally the Final Solution of the Nazis. It is humans that left uncontrolled wipe each other out. It is God who by controlling populations has sustained the human race.

One thing that is sure, is that God does not change. He is the same in the Old Testament as He is in the New. Likewise, His son. *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today and for ever.*

As much as He is indeed a God of mercy, compassion, love and forgiveness, the warning against sin, and wickedness has been given out since the time of the Lord Jesus in the form of the Gospel, - not using the Nation of Israel as an example, but the example of Jesus Christ, and delivered by his disciples. Part of the Gospel message, is that the world which seems to rejoice in sin, and iniquity, violence, bloodshed, and every vice imaginable, will not be allowed to continue for much longer.

The Time will come when Jesus Christ will return and be accused of genocide again: as says the Old Testament:

God has promised as declared in the Psalms: 37:9-10: *For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the Lord, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.*

Proverbs 2:21,22: *21 For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it. But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.*

And in the New Testament:

2 Thessalonians 1: 6 -12 *Seeing it is a righteous thing with God to recompense tribulation to them that trouble you; This is the*

justice of God, the goodness and severity of God and of course it is impossible to have the one without the other, *and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; When he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe (because our testimony among you was believed) in that day. Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

28th September 2025