

# God's Book

'Wise answers to challenging questions.  
Hugely helpful!' Bear Grylls

An Honest Look at the  
Bible's 7 Toughest Topics

ANDREW OLLERTON



## Questions for Discussion or Reflection

### Session 4 - Conquest & Violence

#### Icebreaker

Have you ever visited a place where the history changed how you saw it? What stood out to you?

1. Andrew says that the Bible opens and ends with scenes of peace (Genesis 1–2 and Revelation 21–22). How does starting and ending the biblical story with peace shape the way you approach the violent passages in between?
2. When you read the conquest narratives, what do you find most troubling or hardest to understand? Andrew suggests that ancient battle accounts often used hyperbole and that cities functioned more like military garrisons. Does that historical context help at all, and if so, how?
3. Israel were former slaves who needed a land to live in, yet entering Canaan involved real conflict. How does holding those two realities together — a people receiving God's promise of land and the unsettling violence involved — shape the way you understand this moment in God's unfolding story?
4. When you come across violent Old Testament passages, what helps you stay engaged with them honestly rather than avoiding them? Isaiah imagines a future where nations 'beat their swords into ploughshares' (Isaiah 2:4). How does holding that long-term vision affect the way you sit with these difficult texts?
5. At the cross, Jesus does not retaliate but instead willingly allows violence to be done to him, calling his followers to love their enemies. How does this moment shape the way you think about biblical violence, divine justice, and the direction the whole story of Scripture is moving?
6. Looking at the whole sweep of Scripture, from conquest to cross, what's one thing from today's conversation that has helped you see God's heart more clearly?
7. What's one thing from today's conversation that has shifted, clarified, or enriched the way you think about the Old Testament law?