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In thine enemies wilt thou smite?
Lo thou wilt vanquish thy foes ... ^20

Psalm 68:4 uses the same epithet for Yahweh (cf. NIV, JV, BECK).

Sing to God, sing praise to his
name!
Make a highway for the Rider
of the Clouds:
His name is Yahweh.

Both the poetic format involving an a-b-c//a'-b'-d pattern and the epithet "Rider of the clouds" are clearly common to both text.^21

There were then three ways in which the Old Testament handled its encounter with Canaanite religion. The first has to do with theology, the second with cultic practice and the third with language. It is in the areas of theology and cultic practice that the Hebrews came into head-on collision with Canaanite religion. Israel's God presents himself as the only Creator, the absolutely unique and exclusive deity, the Sovereign Ruler of the universe. That is why the Decalogue says, "I am Yahweh thy God, you shall have no other gods before me... You shall not bow down to them or serve them; for I Yahweh, your God, am a jealous God" (Exod 20:3-5 and Deut 5:6-9). The nature of Israel's God is revealed in this moral law -- the very expression of his character. In contrast to Canaanite deities Yahweh cannot be bribed so as to behave contrary to his moral nature (Deut 10:17).

In cultic practice Israel also came into head on collision with Canaanitic religion. The Israelites and the Canaanites shared certain features of religious worship such as some of the terms used for sacrifices and the shape and the nature of their temples. But they collided where Canaanite practice violated the moral character of Israel's faith. Often one cannot understand some of the ritual law of ancient Israel without realizing these rules are a reaction to the Canaanite cult. The worship that went on in these two religions was essentially different. As noted, there is no evidence that the sacrifices of the Canaanites were anything more than an attempt to appease the gods whereas the Israelite sacrifices were based on the concept of the blood atonement.^22 Leviticus 18:3 says, "You must not do as they do in the land of Canaan, where I am bringing you. Do not follow their practices." (NIV)

Some maintain that Yahweh's command to exterminate the Canaanites was immoral. But when seen in terms of anticipated eschatology, as M. G. Kline has shown, it was just the opposite.^23 The ethics of the world of common grace were suspended and the ethics of the final judgment of sinners ordered by God to save the nation. Deuteronomy 20:17,18 gives the reason why the Israelites were ordered by God to exterminate the Canaanites. The passage says,

Completely destroy (the verb used for sacred war where Israel is God's surrogate to carry out punishment for sin) ... as the LORD your God has commanded you. Otherwise, they will teach you to follow all the detestable things they do in