

August

7

Wednesday

THOU SHALT SMITE THEM

Bible Reading: Deuteronomy 7:1-11

And when the Lord thy God shall deliver them before thee; thou shalt smite them, and utterly destroy them; thou shalt make no covenant with them, nor shew mercy unto them. Deuteronomy 7:2.

There are many verses like this in the Old Testament. Nowadays it is quite common for people to declare that such verses represent a god of vengeance who is unrelated to the God of mercy of the New Testament and therefore to claim that they have no meaning for the Christian.

The true child of God, however, knows that this is utterly false. Every word of the Bible is a part of God's Word and represents His message to us. The Bible presents God as a God of love, but it also presents Him as a God of justice. God will never give success to efforts to harmonize nations of opposite ideologies. Some nations have an ideology that calls for respecting the rights of individuals and giving each man freedom to develop his own life. Other nations have an ideology that makes all individuals the slaves of the state and forgets all principles of justice and right. If we are really Christian, we can never say that as long as we are not injured we do not care what happens on another side of the world.

The Bible is a book of love, but it also is a book of justice. It has been well said that when nations make peace their aim and seek only to have peace regardless of honor, in the end they get neither honor nor peace. It is only as we make justice and fair dealing the primary purpose of the relations of our government with its own citizens and with other governments, that we can expect to be blessed with peace that is at all lasting. God never approves of compromise with wickedness and oppression.

—Prof. A. A. MacRae, Hatfield, Pa.