Response to Giem:

To the editor: Giem suggests\(^1\) that our statement “the Bible reports the destruction of the Canaanite cities and the annihilation of its people”\(^2\) is inaccurate and not supported by references. The Bible reports “And Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities. And the Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities: and he called the name of the place Hormah”\(^3\). Within a longer account, it further reports “And the Lord delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them, and chased them unto great Zidon [i.e. Sidon], and unto Misrephoth-maim, and unto the valley of Mizpeh eastward; and they smote them, until they left them none remaining. .... And all the spoil of these cities, and the cattle, the children of Israel took for a prey unto themselves; but every man they smote with the edge of the sword, until they had destroyed them, neither left they any to breathe”. \(^4\)

Our work aimed to shed light on the relationships of Canaanites to ancient and present-day populations from a genetic point of view, rather than disputing the Bible or starting a Biblical discussion in the pages of a genetics journal.

References

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