



**“The Holy War”**

**Deuteronomy 20:10-20**

## 2 Tim 3:16-17

**All Scripture** is God-breathed and is **useful** for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

DEUTERONOMY

**Deut 20:16-17**

**... do not leave alive  
anything that breathes.**

**Completely destroy them**

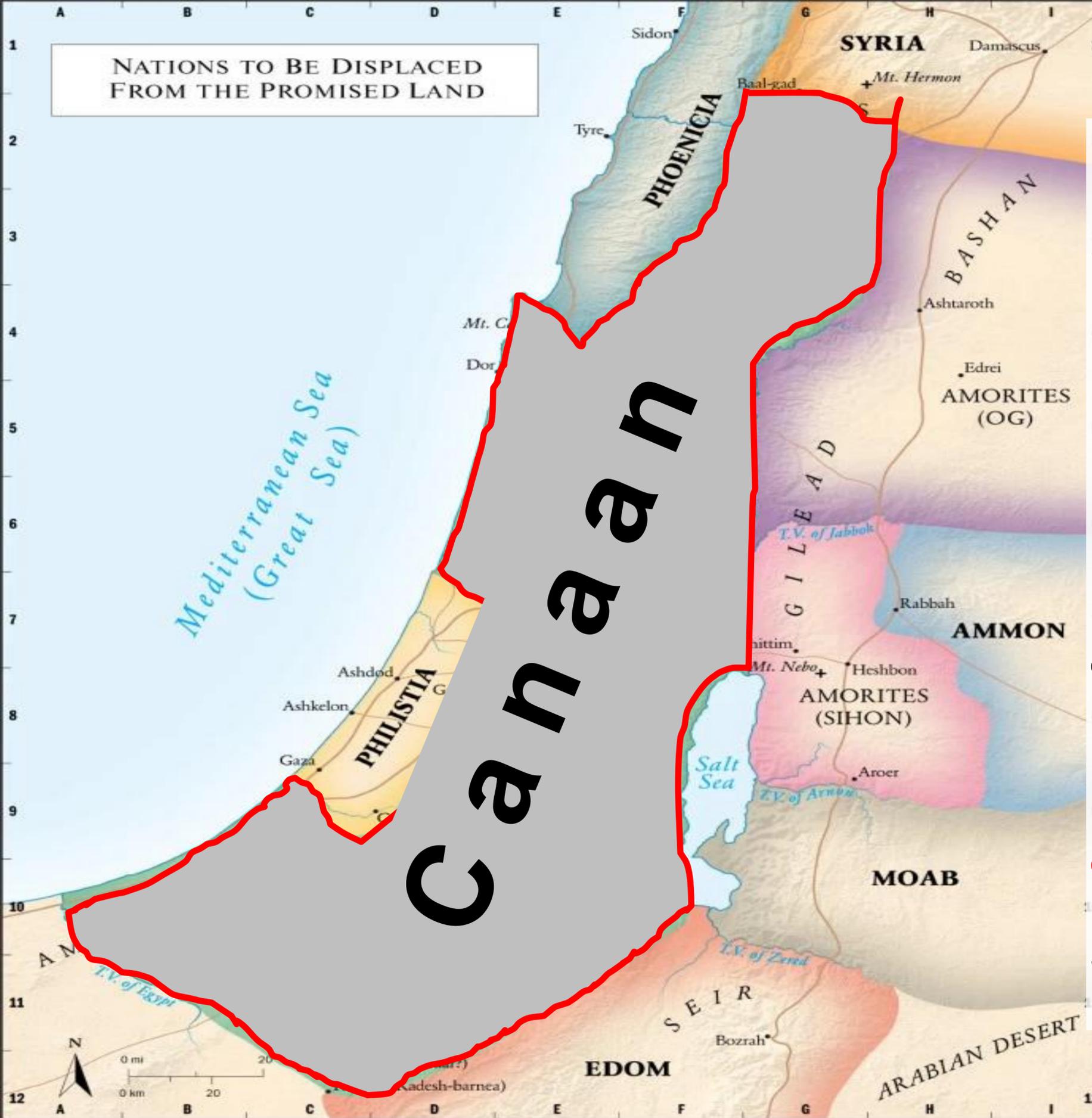
**- the Hittites, Amorites,**

**Canaanites, Perizzites,**

**Hivites and Jebusites ...**







## Deut 20:10-11

When you march up to attack a city, make its people an **offer of peace**. If they accept and open their gates, all the people in it shall be **subject to forced labor** and shall work for you.



## Deut 20:12-13

If they refuse to make peace and they engage you in battle, lay siege to that city. When the Lord your God delivers it into your hand, **put to the sword all the men in it.**

**“Evidently then holy war and “herem” in Deuteronomy are strictly corollaries of the cultic conception of a single people sharply separated in religious practice from all the nations. The witness of Deuteronomy about early Israelite war and the traditions of the conquest ... contain much valuable historical data but their basic cultic intention must be realized at all times by the exegete ... The Deuteronomists have preserved old pieces of legislation from previous centuries which were perhaps normative in the Shechemite amphictyony and were made a nominal part of the Josianic Reformation in Judah in 622.”**

**Holy War in Deuteronomy:  
Analysis and Critique (Norman K. Gottwald)**

# Was “Holy War” necessary for Israel?



## **Numbers 1:45-46**

So all who were numbered of the children of Israel, by their fathers' houses, from twenty years old and above, **all who were able to go to war** in Israel - all who were numbered were **603,550**.

DEUTERONOMY

## **Deut 20:5-8**

**The officers shall say to the army:**

**“Has anyone built a new house and not yet begun to live in it? Let him go home, or he may die in battle and someone else may begin to live in it.**

**Has anyone planted a vineyard and not begun to enjoy it? Let him go home, or he may die in battle and someone else enjoy it.”**

**“Has anyone become pledged to a woman and not married her? Let him go home, or he may die in battle and someone else marry her.”**

**Then the officers shall add, “Is anyone afraid or fainthearted? Let him go home so that his fellow soldiers will not become disheartened too.”**

DEUTERONOMY

## **Deut 23:12-13**

**Designate a place outside the camp where you can go to relieve yourself. As part of your equipment have something to dig with, and when you relieve yourself, dig a hole and cover up your excrement.**

DEUTERONOMY

## **Deut 20:1-4**

**When you go out to battle against your enemies ... do not be afraid of them; for the Lord your God is with you, who brought you up from the land of Egypt. ... Do not let your heart faint, do not be afraid, and do not tremble or be terrified because of them; for the Lord your God is He who goes with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.'**

**Canaan**

Jericho



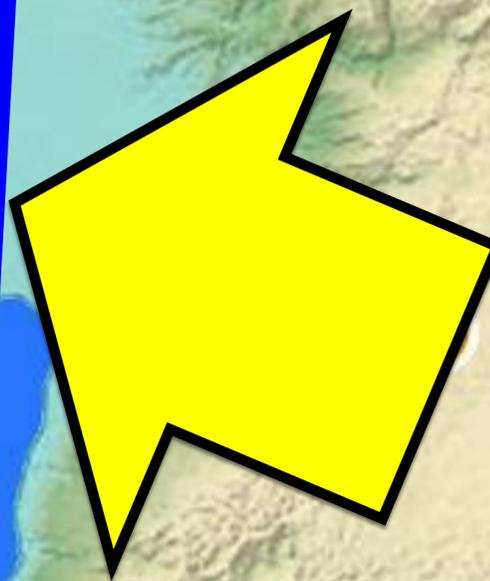
**Jordan River**

Mount Nebo

Moab

Dead Sea

0 10 miles  
0 10 km



# Was “Holy War” necessary for Israel?



## Deut 7:1-2

When the Lord your God brings you into the land you are entering to possess and **DRIVES OUT** before you many nations —the Hittites, Girgashites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites, seven nations larger and stronger than you - and when the Lord your God has delivered them over to you and you have defeated them, then **you must destroy them totally**. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy.

## **Deut 7:4-5**

**for they will turn your children away from following me to serve other gods ... This is what you are to do to them: Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones, cut down their Asherah poles and burn their idols in the fire.**

DEUTERONOMY

## **Lev 18:26-28**

**You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations, ... (for all these abominations the men of the land have done, who were before you, and thus the land is defiled), lest the land vomit you out also when you defile it, as it vomited out the nations that were before you.**

## Deut 9:4

“... it is because of the **wickedness** of these nations that the Lord is driving them out from before you.” (cf. Gen 15:16)

DEUTERONOMY

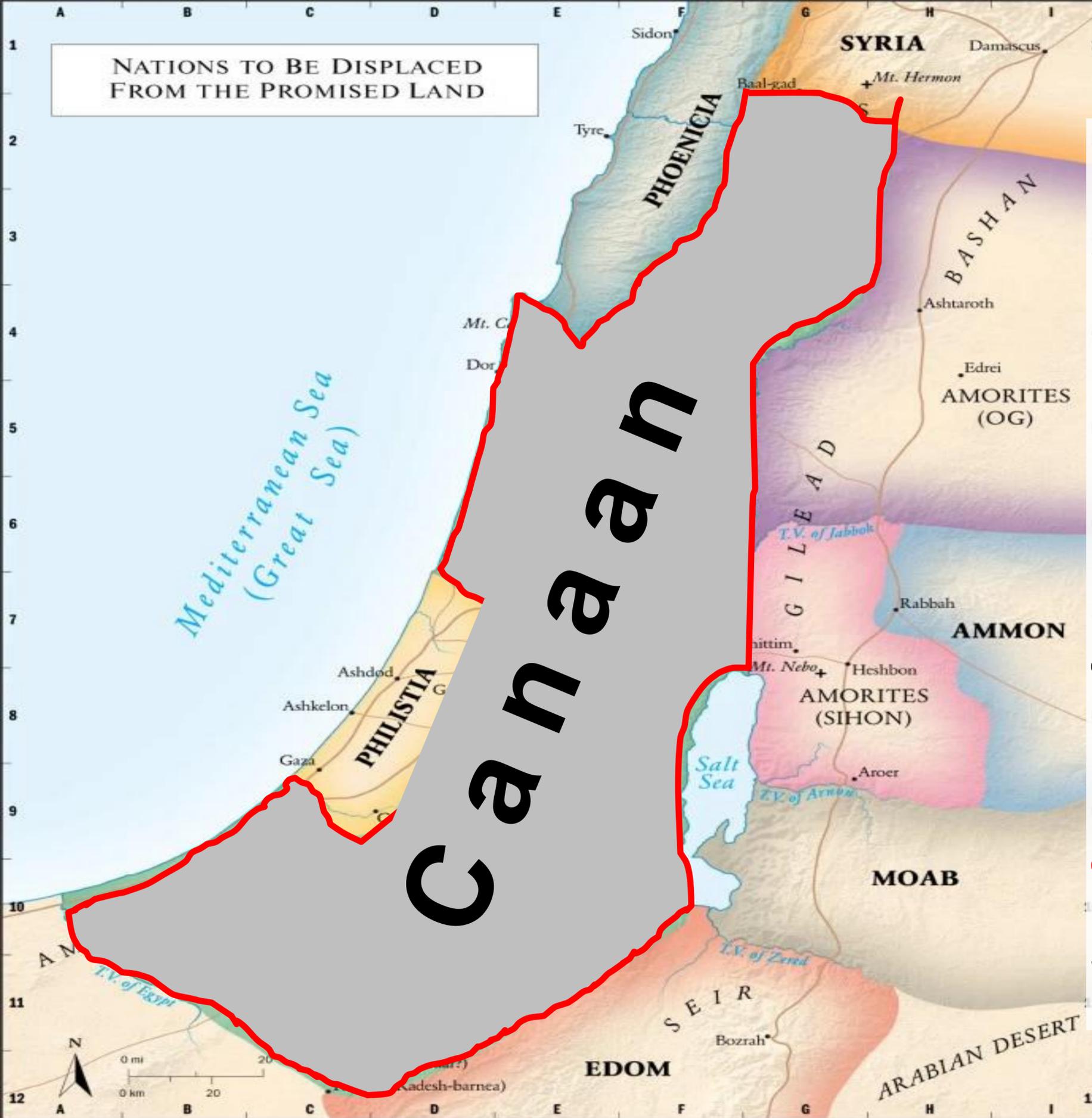
## **Deut 20:16-18**

**But of the cities of these peoples which the Lord your God gives you as an inheritance, you shall let nothing that breathes remain alive, but you shall utterly destroy them ... lest they teach you to do according to all their abominations which they have done for their gods, and you sin against the Lord your God.**

# Was “Holy War” necessary for Israel?

**It was necessary**

- **to judge the wickedness of the Canaanites and to purify the land.**
- **to protect Israel from being taught idolatry and other Canaanite “abominations”.**
- **to ensure Israel’s own security and survival.**



## Deut 20:10-11

When you march up to attack a city, make its people an **offer of peace**. If they accept and open their gates, all the people in it shall be **subject to forced labor** and shall work for you.

# The Mercy of God



## **Deut 10:18-19**

He administers justice for the **fatherless** and the **widow**, and loves the **stranger**, giving him food and clothing. Therefore love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.

DEUTERONOMY

## **Deut 21:10-14**

**When you go to war against your enemies and the Lord your God delivers them into your hands and you take captives, if you notice among the captives a beautiful woman and are attracted to her, you may take her as your wife ... After she has lived in your house and **mourned her father and mother for a full month**, then you may go to her and be her husband and she shall be your wife. If you are not pleased with her, let her go wherever she wishes. **You must not sell her or treat her as a slave, since you have dishonored her.****

# The Mercy of God



## **Deut 20:19-20**

**When you lay siege to a city for a long time, fighting against it to capture it, do not destroy its trees by putting an ax to them, **because you can eat their fruit.** Do not cut them down. **Are the trees people,** that you should besiege them? However, you may cut down trees that you know are not fruit trees and use them to build siege works until the city at war with you falls.**

# The Mercy of God

**Collateral Damage?**





Living Out God's Word  
in the Real World

**What has not changed  
since Deuteronomy 20?**

DEUTERONOMY

**What has changed  
since Deuteronomy 20?**

DEUTERONOMY

# What has changed since Deuteronomy 20?

The Holy War of human destruction and the conquest of enemy lands cannot apply to Christians today.

DEUTERONOMY

What has changed since Deuteronomy 20?

**Holy War:**

**From Without to Within**

DEUTERONOMY

# What has changed since Deuteronomy 20?

Today, the holy war  
must be fought  
in the promise land  
of our hearts and minds.

DEUTERONOMY

## **Romans 7:24-25**

**What a wretched man I am!**

**Who will rescue me** from this body  
that is subject to death?

**Thanks be to God,  
who delivers me through  
Jesus Christ our Lord!**

**To win the Holy War,  
we need the Holy Spirit.**

DEUTERONOMY

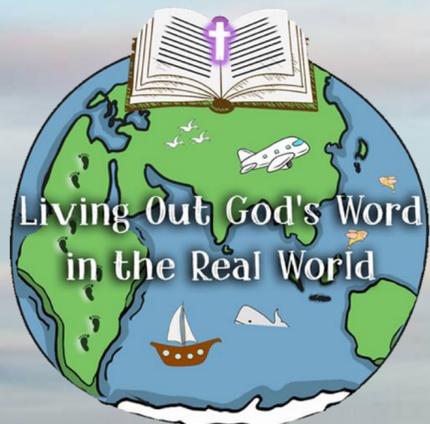
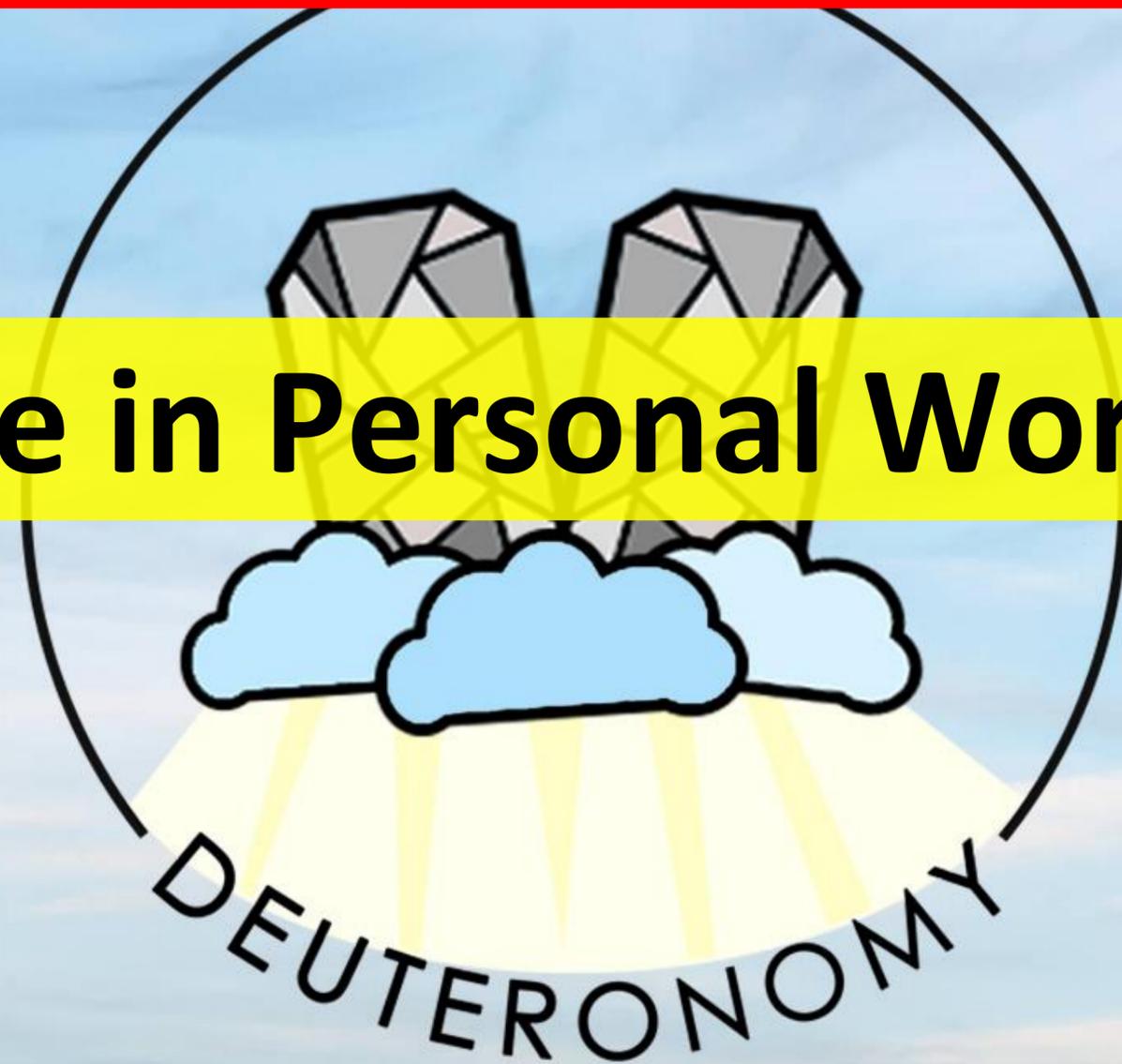
**Eph 6:17-18**

**And take the helmet of salvation,  
and the sword of the Spirit,  
which is the word of God;  
praying always with all prayer and supplication  
in the Spirit ...**

DEUTERONOMY

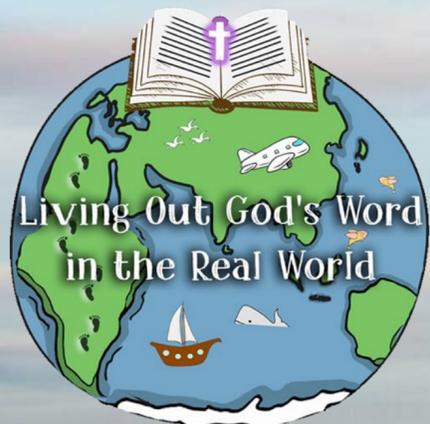
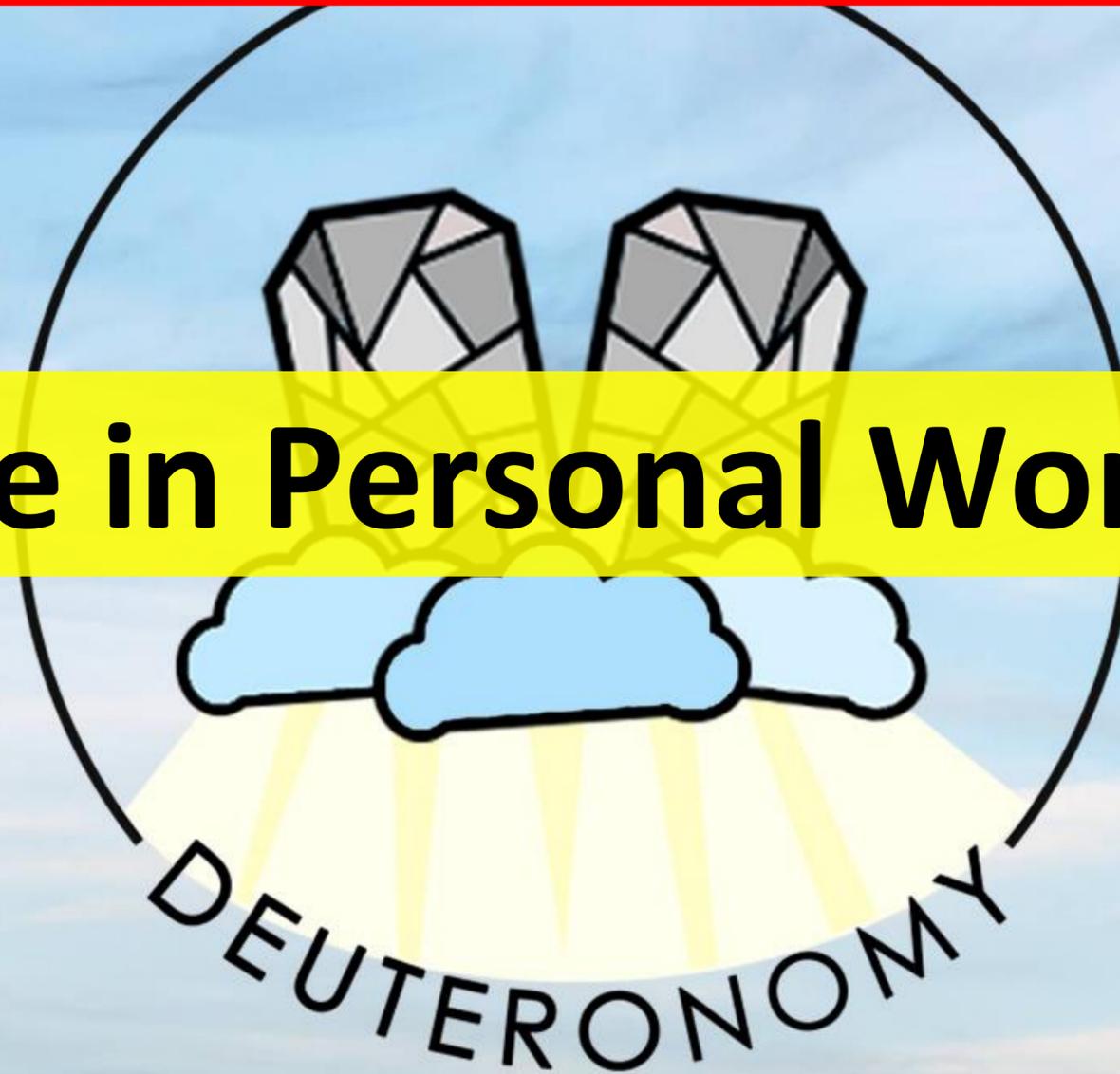
# Holy Warring in the Spirit

- Spend time in Personal Worship



# Holy Warring in the Spirit

- Spend time in Personal Worship



# **"The War Is Over"**

**The war is over, turn around  
Lay your weapons on the ground  
The smoke is fading, before the light  
The dead are coming back to life**

Music & Lyrics By Bobby Strand, Josh Baldwin  
Bethel Music  
CCLI No: 305950

**He has made a way for us  
Born for glory out of dust  
Children held within the arms of Peace  
He has made a way for all  
Mercy waits where sinners fall  
He is our Victory**

Music & Lyrics By Bobby Strand, Josh Baldwin  
Bethel Music  
CCLI No: 305950

**The war is over, His love has come  
To call us daughters and sons  
No longer orphans without a home  
We have found where we belong**

Music & Lyrics By Bobby Strand, Josh Baldwin  
Bethel Music  
CCLI No: 305950

**He has made a way for us  
Born for glory out of dust  
Children held within the arms of Peace  
He has made a way for all  
Mercy waits where sinners fall  
He is our Victory  
(x2)**

Music & Lyrics By Bobby Strand, Josh Baldwin  
Bethel Music  
CCLI No: 305950

**It is finished, it is done  
The blood of Jesus overcomes  
It is finished, He has won  
He has won  
(x3)**

Music & Lyrics By Bobby Strand, Josh Baldwin  
Bethel Music  
CCLI No: 305950

**He has made a way for us  
Born for glory out of dust  
Children held within the arms of Peace  
He has made a way for all  
Mercy waits where sinners fall**

Music & Lyrics By Bobby Strand, Josh Baldwin  
Bethel Music  
CCLI No: 305950

**He is our Victory**

**He is our Victory**

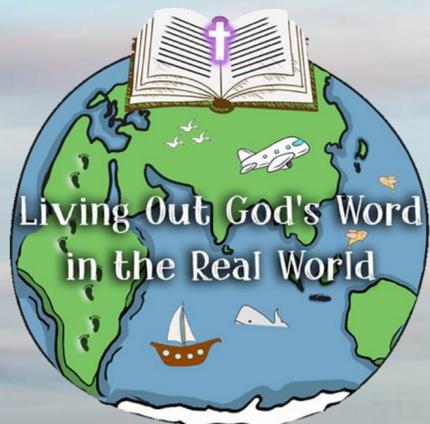
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# Holy Warring in the Spirit

- Spend time in Personal Worship
- Confess to one person your greatest enemy within

DEUTERONOMY



**James 5:16**

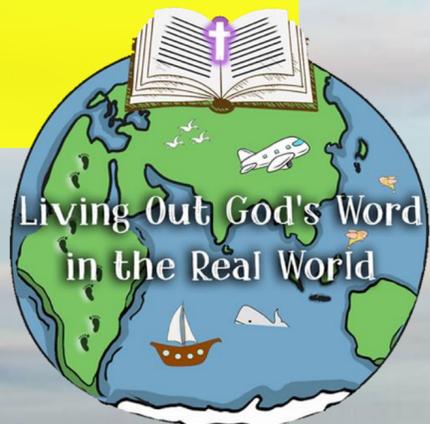
**Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed (i.e. made whole).**

DEUTERONOMY

**“Sin demands to have a man by himself. It withdraws him from ... [fellowship]. The more isolated a person is, the more destructive will be the power of sin over him ... Sin wants to remain unknown. It shuns the light. In the darkness of the unexpressed it poisons the whole being of a person. This can happen even in the midst of a pious community. [But] In confession the light of the [Spirit] breaks into the darkness and seclusion of the heart ... All that is secret and hidden is [exposed] ... sin had lost all its power.”** **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

# Holy Warring in the Spirit

- Spend time in Personal Worship
- Confess to one person your greatest enemy within
- Do something kind to someone who needs to experience kindness



## **Gal 5:22-23**

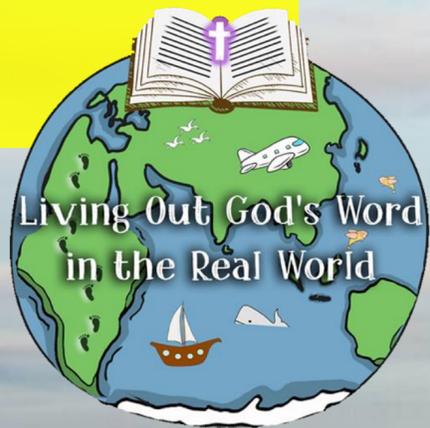
**But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.**

**Against such things there is no law.**

DEUTERONOMY

# Holy Warring in the Spirit

- Spend time in **Personal** Worship
- **Confess** to one person your greatest enemy within
- **Do something kind** to someone who needs to experience kindness





## **Deut 20:16-17**

However, in the cities of the nations the Lord your God is giving you as an inheritance, **do not leave alive anything that breathes**. Completely destroy them—the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites and Jebusites—as the Lord your God has commanded you.

