



**Lord Jesus, protect me from trouble
wherever I go, and keep evil far from me.**

**No matter where I am, I will look to You
as my Protector, the one who fights for
me every day.**

**Your love and faithfulness, along with
Your goodness and mercy,
surround me daily**

**So I will not fear whatever might come
against me.**

**Be with me, Lord. Jesus, I trust you.
Amen**

The Twelve Tribes

Tribal boundaries are approximations. The Tribe of Dan may have been forced to move to the north of the Sea of Galilee by the Philistines. The most populous and influential tribes seem to have been Manasseh, Ephraim, and Judah.





SUMMARY NOTES: Light on the Dark Passages of Scripture (Mark Giszczak)

Chapter 8: Killing the Canaanites: Genocide or Judgment?

Q: How could anyone kill in the name of God?

Q: How on earth could God actually *want* His people to do such things?

Process: 1. Examine literary and historical evidence to determine **IF** God actually did command this to happen and **HOW** it was or was not carried out

2. Imagine the imaginative scenes to determine IF the biblical portrayal is right

God's original command: **Herem¹ Warfare**: (Deut 20:16-18), "*kill everyone – in the cities* -...*) so "*they may not teach you to do according to all their abominable practices which they have done in the service of their gods, and so to sin against the LORD your God*". This was **NOT** an impatient move.

God's original plan: God with the Israelites would drive Canaanites from the land *gradually* so that the "*...fields would not lie fallow*". (Ex 23:27-33)

The ancient ***cities** (Hebrew: *ir*) were generally *small walled settlements* that may have housed emergency food supplies (like in time of Joseph in Egypt), government and religious centers (more like a *fort*); most people were farmers and lived outside the walls

God's original statement (to Abraham): (Gen 15:16), God tells Abraham the Promised Land covenant will not happen because He is giving the *Canaanites* 400 yrs. to turn from their ways and to worship Him alone; it was not an impatient move.

Why God's Wrath against Canaanites? Lev 18 exposes their strange practices: incest, bestiality, adultery, child sacrifice, male and female cult prostitution, and (Wis 12:3-10)-cannibalism? – God punished them *little by little* to try to change their hearts; this land was special to God and these were the wrong people to live there; God used human agents to punish their culture and destroy their religion.

Jericho (1st "city" of Herem warfare used): Fortlike outpost on edge of Canaanite settlement, only a few acres in size; if housed mainly soldiers, then most victims were soldiers and possibly the prostitutes who served them.

Rahab: Female prostitute who lived in Jericho and hide the Israelite spies; she and her family were spared from the death sentence; instructions given that only the gold, silver, vessels of bronze and iron were to be removed from Jericho for the *Treasury of the LORD*; everything else was to be destroyed

Ai (Hebrew=*heap of ruins*): possible fortified outpost of larger city Bethel; Jos 8:25 states twelve *thousand* men and women died -we do not know if both men/women or only men: *thousand*=Hebrew, *a clan or military unit*, possibly 12 squads of soldiers (don't know the size of each *squad*; **NOTE**: Evaluation of this event matches archaeological evidence AND fits the linguistically with the biblical text.

Joshua's success: (Joshua 10-17, Judges 1-3), Israelites failed to drive out many of the Canaanites; God's *Herem* command was not obeyed in the allotted time and the Israelites did *exactly* as God knew they would, they were seduced into idolatrous worship; God punishes Israelites by withdrawing from them.

Thou shalt not kill: permitted only for self-defense, societal defense, and defensive war. **NOTE**: All *permitted* killing is *defensive* in nature, where war against Canaan seems *offensive* (OR could be *defensive* since was *defending* God's promise to Abraham)

Conclusion: Israelites did not conquer like the vicious Vikings; they only took small areas/outposts/cities; God brought judgment on Canaanites because of evil practices; appoints Israelites as natural punishment as opposed to *supernatural* (God training Israelites to destroy all idolatry from their hearts by having them *actively* destroying idolatrous culture.

Q: Does God have the right to take human life and to appoint human beings to act in His name?

Yes. All death is punishment for sin, even death of holy people. All human beings are subject to death. It is our enemy, our mortal foe. But our sin, our rejection of God, brings death on all of us. When God appoints the Israelites to conquer Canaan, we expect death but tend to push out of our minds. Conquest of Canaan makes us aware of our own *mortality* and we realize God's all-encompassing authority. Our *right-to-life* is always subject to God's goodness, His justice and **His timing**.

"You are dust, and to dust you shall return." Gen 3:19

¹ ***Herem warfare: Hebrew verb (*charam*) meaning to "exterminate, utterly destroy".***

Dear **Lord**, please
Grant me the wisdom to know your will and the strength to do it
every day
Bless me, Oh Lord, **in DEED**¹ and enlarge my territory

Support me with your love and surround me with your people

Remind me NOT to worry but to *“Be Happy”* and to take time to
Make a Difference for even one today

Teach me how to use the gifts of your Spirit to change the world
around me

Help me recognize opportunities to
practice random kindness and senseless acts of beauty and to

*PAY IT FORWARD*² as you taught us to do
And at the hour of my death, let my *DASH*³ be pleasing to you.

