



# War—Coming to Grips With a Difficult Subject

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L'Amable Bible Chapel

[Lamablebiblechapel.com](http://Lamablebiblechapel.com)

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# Introduction

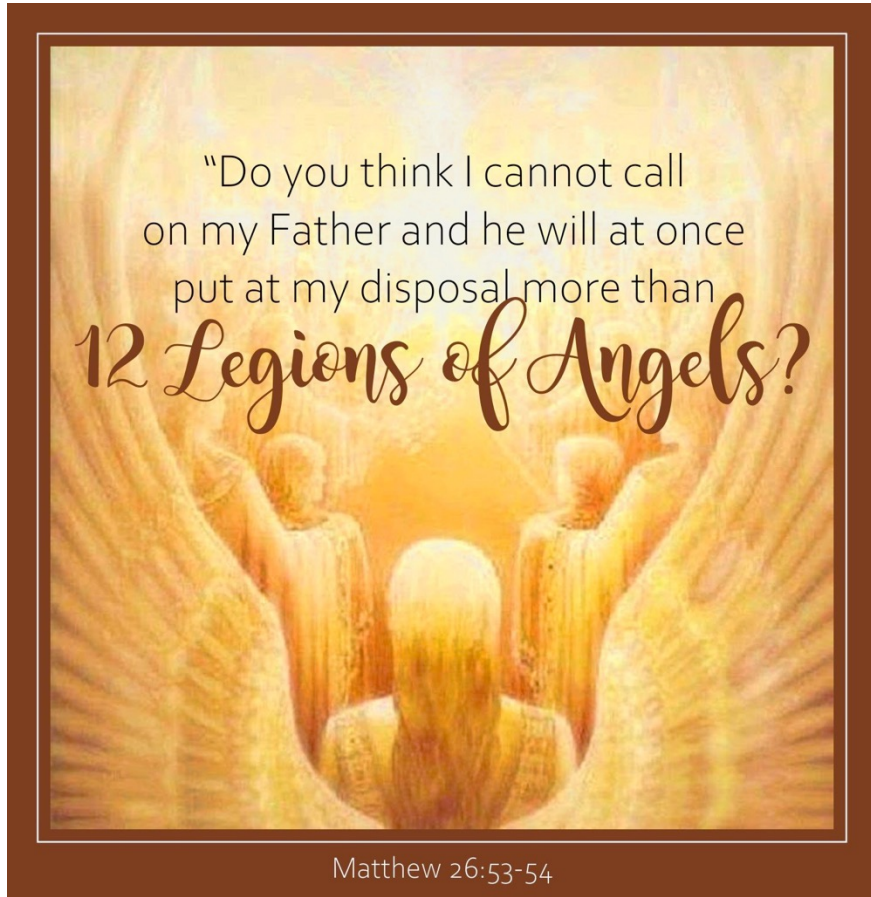
- Many family histories
- Controversial
- Relevant to us?
- *Bible's view...*
- Jesus' words
- Old Testament
- *Any other views?*



# 1. Does Jesus Address War?



...Then the men stepped forward, seized Jesus and arrested him. <sup>51</sup> With that, one of Jesus' companions reached for his sword, drew it out and struck the servant of the high priest, cutting off his ear.



<sup>52</sup> “Put your sword back in its place,” Jesus said to him, “for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. <sup>53</sup> Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? <sup>54</sup> But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?” (Matthew 26:50-54)

- Conflict not impossible, but not essential...
- God’s fulfilled plan is key

- **In Jesus' trial...**

<sup>35</sup> “Am I a Jew?” Pilate replied. “Your own people and chief priests handed you over to me. What is it you have done?”

<sup>36</sup> Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jewish leaders. But now my kingdom is from another place.” (John 18:35-36)

- **Conflict not impossible, but not essential...**
- **God's fulfilled plan is key**
- **A future Kingdom**
- *What else do we know about the future?*

<sup>4</sup> Jesus answered: “Watch out that no one deceives you. <sup>5</sup> For many will come in my name, claiming, ‘I am the Messiah,’ and will deceive many. <sup>6</sup> You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come. <sup>7</sup> Nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. There will be famines and earthquakes in various places. <sup>8</sup> All these are the beginning of birth pains.  
(Matthew 24:4-8)

- Future focus
- War is not good, but part of end times
- Jesus does not promote this, but predicts it

- **Jesus in Heaven...**

<sup>11</sup> I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. <sup>14</sup> The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses... <sup>19</sup> Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army. <sup>20</sup> But the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who had performed the signs on its behalf. (Revelation 19)

- **Clearly, war is sanctioned and Jesus is victorious**
- **But this war has a *supernatural scope*...**

- **Jesus on Earth:**

<sup>43</sup> “You have heard that it was said, ‘Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ <sup>44</sup> But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup> that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. (Matthew 5:43-45)

- We should pray for all, but...
- Is this a war context?
- What about Police, Game Wardens, Customs Officers, etc.?



# Summary so far...



- Jesus is focused on a Future Kingdom
- War—only Good vs. Evil
- On Earth, benevolence reflects God
- *What about the Old Testament?*

## 2. Old Testament Precedent or Problem?

- Numerous wars, but...
- Three Categories in the O.T.:
  - A. God leads his people in war against evil nations (ex. Leave Egypt, Conquest of Canaan)
  - B. God uses other nations to punish his people when they go astray (ex. Assyrian & Babylonian exiles)
  - C. Various regional wars & conflicts – human factors

## A. God Leads the Nation in Conquest:

- A God-centered government, not a secular one.
- Law & Prophets given to guide them
- First revealed to Abraham in Genesis 15...

<sup>12</sup> As the sun was setting, Abram fell into a deep sleep, and a thick and dreadful darkness came over him. <sup>13</sup> Then the LORD said to him, “Know for certain that for four hundred years your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own and that they will be enslaved and mistreated there.

God's Covenant With  
Abram

Genesis 15:1-6, 17-21

<sup>14</sup> But I will punish the nation they serve as slaves, and afterward they will come out with great possessions. <sup>15</sup> You, however, will go to your ancestors in peace and be buried at a good old age. <sup>16</sup> In the fourth generation your descendants will come back here, for the sin of the Amorites has not yet reached its full measure.”

- Clearly a future event...not for Abraham
- The sin of the Amorites is a factor
- *When does this happen?*

As I was with Moses, so I will be with you; I will never leave you nor forsake you. <sup>6</sup> Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.

<sup>7</sup> “Be strong and very courageous. Be careful to obey all the law my servant Moses gave you; do not turn from it to the right or to the left, that you may be successful wherever you go. (Joshua 1)

- Their success does not depend on the military (cf. AI)
- *They had to remain faithful generation after generation*

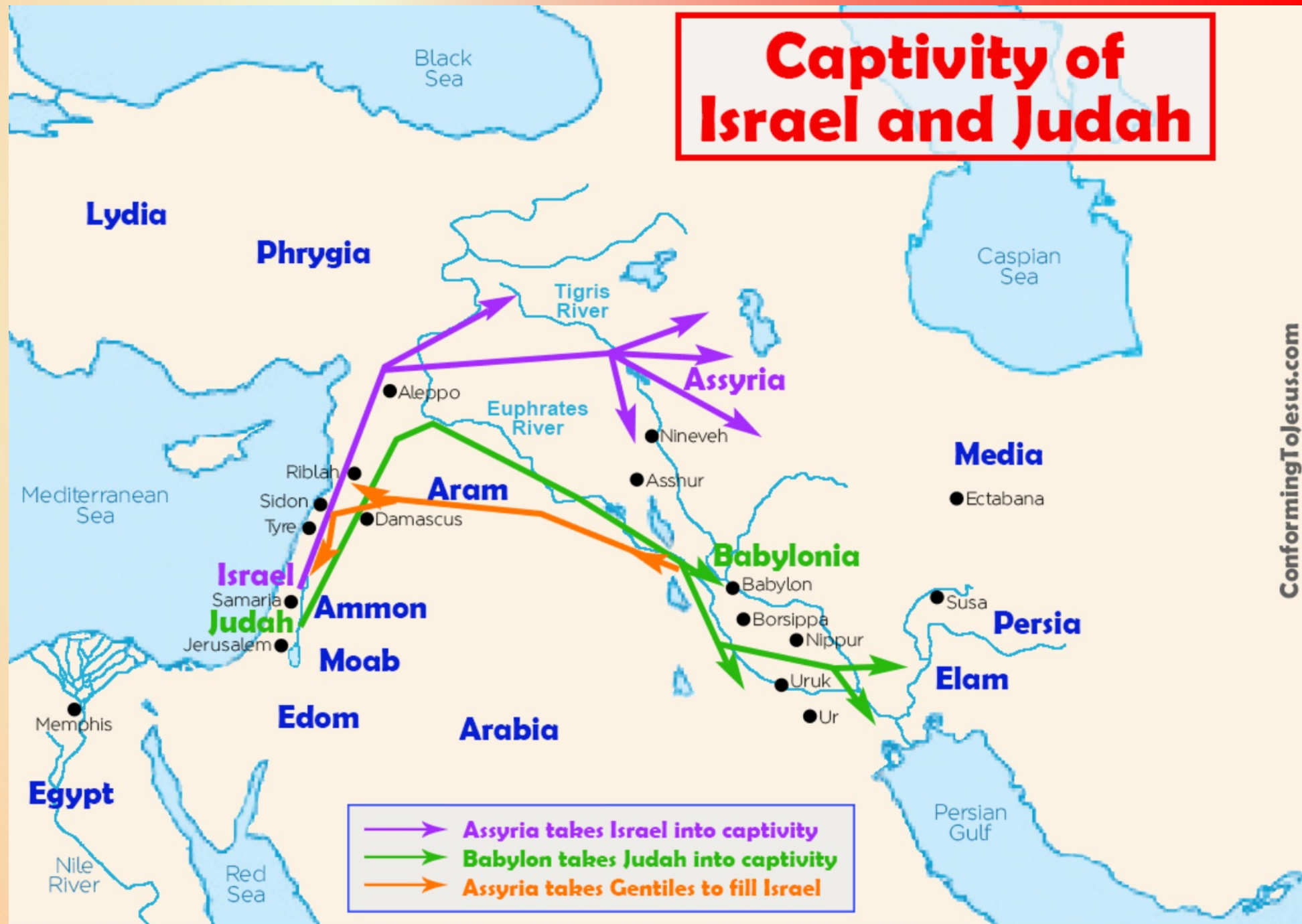
- Joshua is obedient and successful
- He warns the people at the end of his life:

<sup>16</sup> If you violate the covenant of the LORD your God, which he commanded you, and go and serve other gods and bow down to them, the LORD's anger will burn against you, and you will quickly perish from the good land he has given you." (Joshua 23)

- There is exile after repeated warnings from God's prophets

721 b.c.-  
Israel  
exiled to  
Assyria

586 b.c.-  
Judah  
exiled to  
Babylon



## B. God Sends the Nation into Exile:

- Israel's sin brought its exile
- *After repentance*, the people return
- Ezra sums this up... (Ezra 9)

Because of our sins, we and our kings and our priests have been subjected to the sword and captivity, to pillage and humiliation at the hand of foreign kings, as it is today.

<sup>8</sup>“But now, for a brief moment, the LORD our God has been gracious in leaving us a remnant and giving us a firm place in his sanctuary, and so our God gives light to our eyes and a little relief in our bondage.

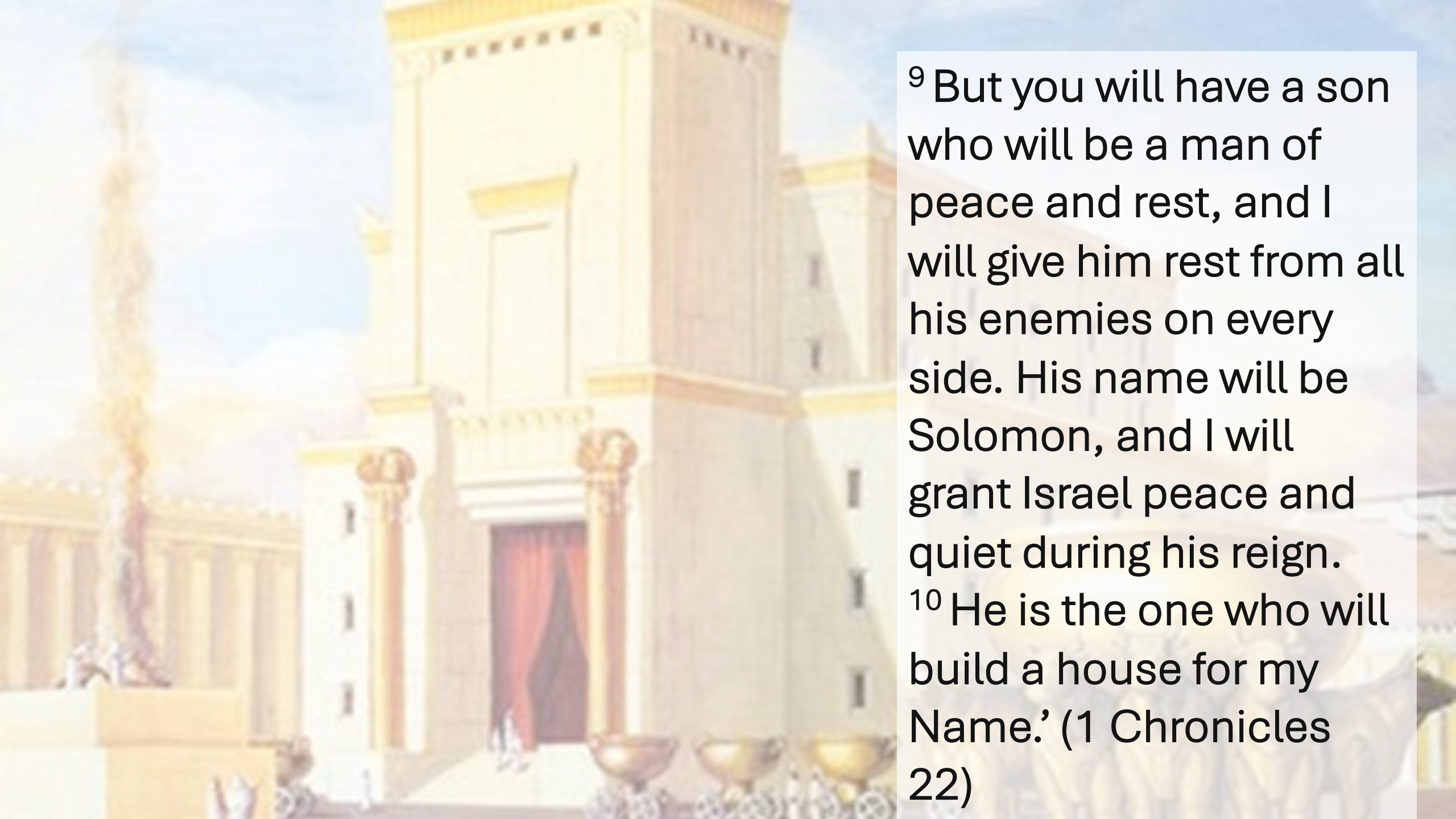
<sup>9</sup> Though we are slaves, our God has not forsaken us in our bondage. He has shown us kindness in the sight of the kings of Persia: He has granted us new life to rebuild the house of our God and repair its ruins, and he has given us a wall of protection in Judah and Jerusalem.

- O.T. concept—faithfulness to God brought victory, sin brought defeat
- If the people repent, they are restored
- War was not the goal, but a factor in relationship

## C. Other wars in the O.T.?:

- A common reality...
- Raiding bands, territorial disputes, family wars
- Is this good, sanctioned, allowed? (2 Sam. 21)
- God did not allow David to build the Temple...

<sup>7</sup> David said to Solomon: “My son, I had it in my heart to build a house for the Name of the LORD my God. <sup>8</sup> But this word of the LORD came to me: ‘You have shed much blood and have fought many wars. You are not to build a house for my Name, because you have shed much blood on the earth in my sight.’”

A golden temple with a red curtain entrance and golden vessels in the foreground.

<sup>9</sup> But you will have a son who will be a man of peace and rest, and I will give him rest from all his enemies on every side. His name will be Solomon, and I will grant Israel peace and quiet during his reign.

<sup>10</sup> He is the one who will build a house for my Name.’ (1 Chronicles 22)

# Summary So Far?

- In the N.T., war is only about *a future Kingdom*
  - Jesus does *not* advocate war on Earth
  - “pray for those who mistreat you” “love your enemies”
- In the O.T., war *is part of Theocracy and relates to sin*
  - We cannot take O.T. principles into today’s context
  - Do countries try to bring God into their war?
- **Final Question...** *What about a “Just War”?*

### 3. Is There 'Just War'?

- What if an aggressive neighbor attacks you? Police
- What if an aggressive country attacks? A 'Just War'...
- Ambrose & Augustine proposed this in the 4<sup>th</sup> century:
  - War is a result of sin and relates to intention
  - It is defensive, and an act of a legitimate government: Rom. 13
  - It cannot be a first choice, and a goal is for it to end
  - *“no war is undertaken by a good state except on behalf of good faith or for safety”* (The City of God-Augustine)
- Like to research further? [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Just\\_war\\_theory](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Just_war_theory)

# There are issues with 'Just Wars'!

- Problems originate with humans...
- Countries seek to justify their cause
- Wars for resources...land...protect minorities
- Wars of religion and between Christians!
- Attempts to limit cruelty
- Geneva Convention & War Crimes
- Who enforces such rules and how?
- *This has led to a rise of pacifism and Christian teaching of non-violence as a strategy*

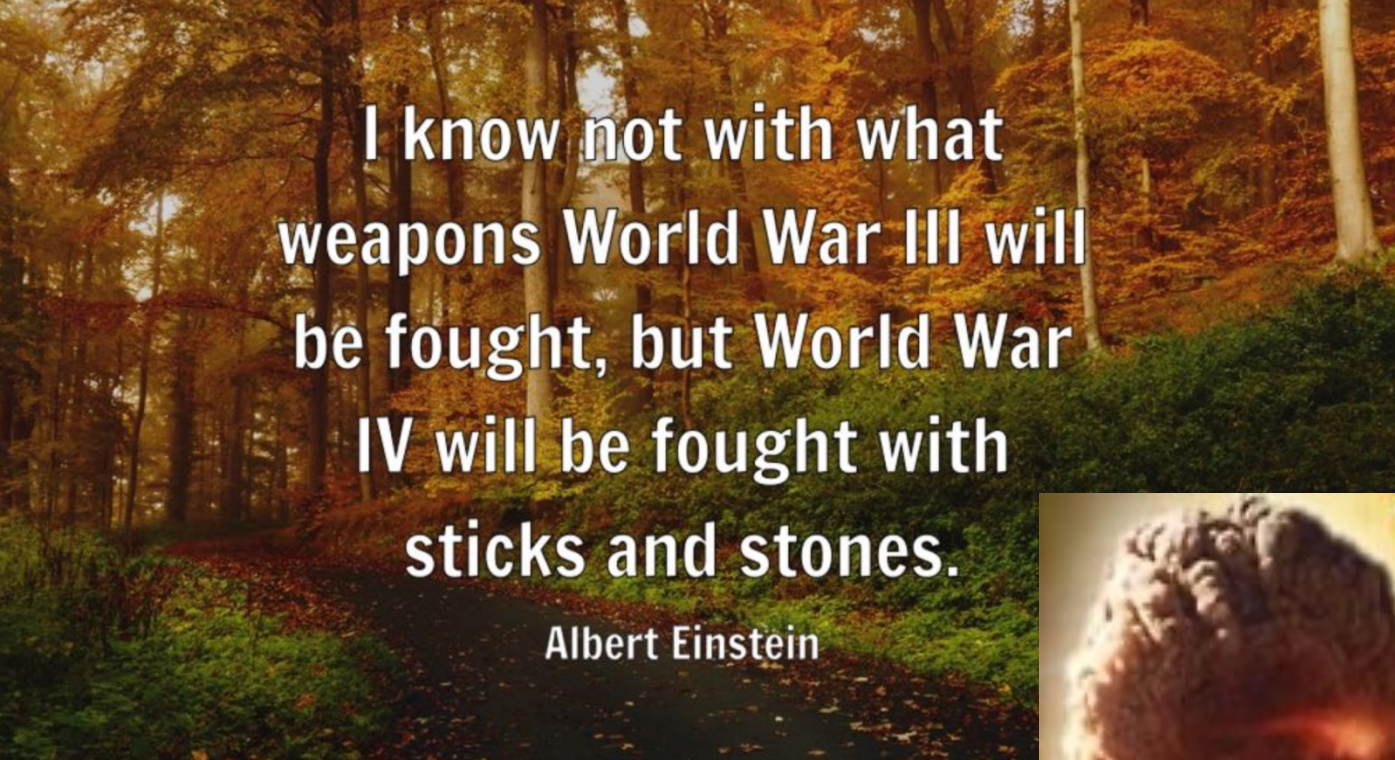


- ‘Just Wars’ don’t remain just for long
- Technology is advancing more than morality (what’s next?)
- Who will enforce ‘rules of war’?
- Everyone thinks God backs them!
- But Jesus, while being nailed to a cross, says, “*Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing*”... (Luke 23:34)
- Wars are much easier to begin than conclude




# Conclusion

- In N.T., war is only about *a future Kingdom*
  - Jesus does *not* advocate war on Earth
  - “pray for those who mistreat you” “love your enemies”
- In O.T., war *is part of Theocracy and relates to sin*
  - We cannot take O.T. principles into today’s context
- **What about a “Just War”?**
  - A very slippery slope... are there better ways?
  - What is the history of humanity?
- To conclude...some quotes...

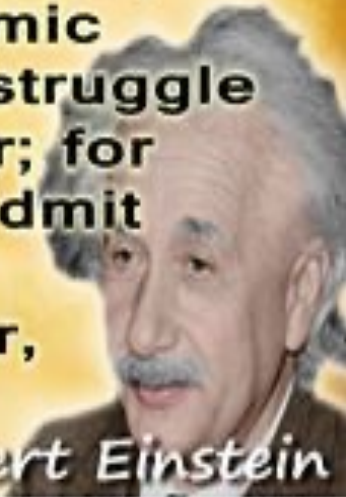


I know not with what  
weapons World War III will  
be fought, but World War  
IV will be fought with  
sticks and stones.

Albert Einstein

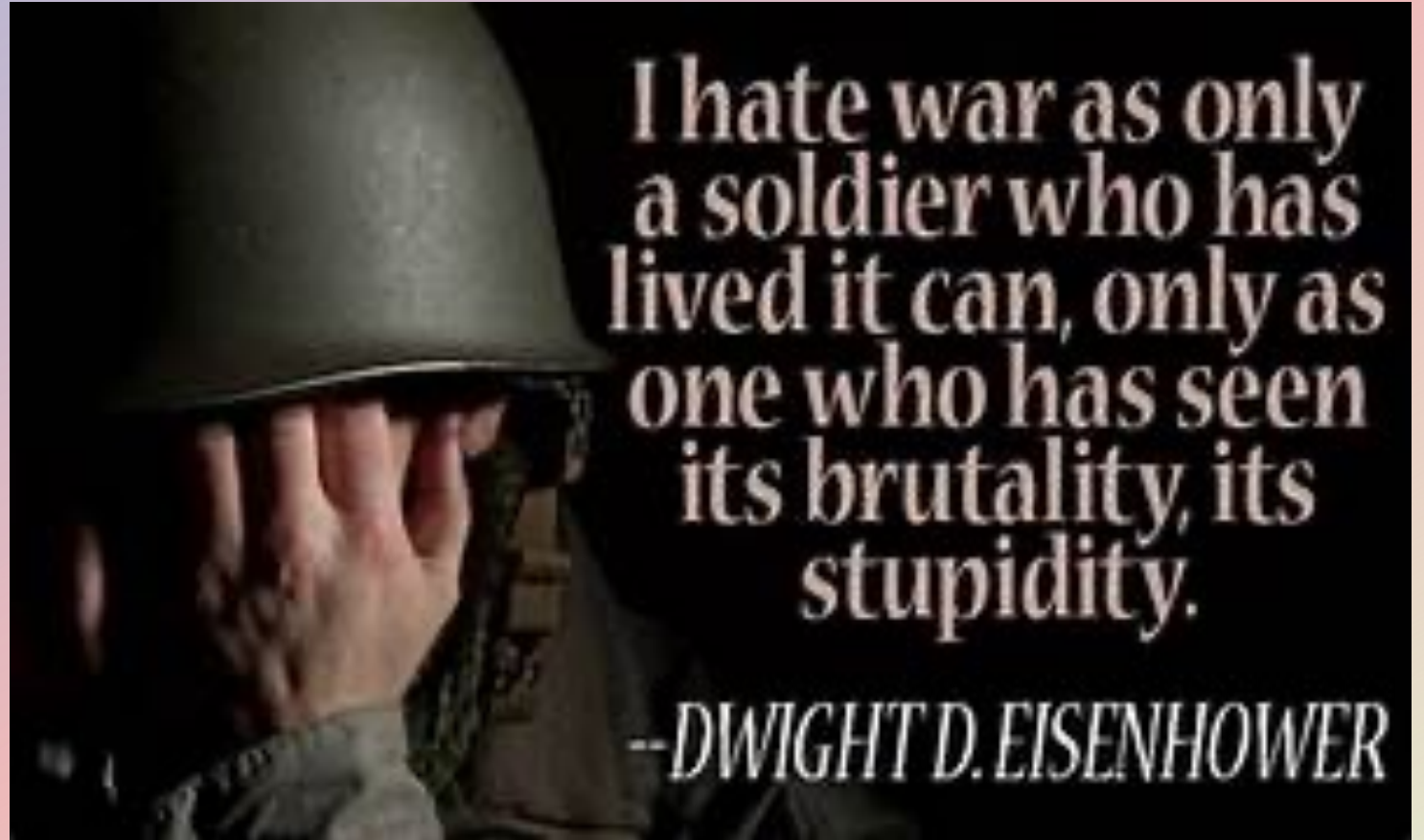


The conflict that exists today  
is no more than an old-style  
struggle for power, once again  
presented to mankind in  
semireligious trappings. The  
difference is that, this time,  
the development of atomic  
power has imbued the struggle  
with a ghostly character; for  
both parties know and admit  
that, should the quarrel  
deteriorate into actual war,  
mankind is doomed.



Albert Einstein

Before we are swayed to think war is glorious, righteous, essential, or inevitable, it would be wise to talk with someone who has actually lived through it...

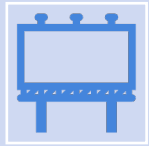




Graphics from Yahoo Images



Scriptures from NIV



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(No written AI content)



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