

# Deuteronomy 20:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations.

## Analysis

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**Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations**—This verse distinguishes warfare categories: **very far off** (distant, non-Canaanite) versus **these nations** (the seven Canaanite peoples, Deuteronomy 7:1). Distant cities receive peace offers and mercy if they surrender; Canaanite cities face total herem (next verses) because their proximity threatens Israel's covenant fidelity through idolatrous influence.

Proximity determines danger—not ethnicity but spiritual contagion risk. Paul warns: **Evil communications corrupt good manners** (1 Corinthians 15:33). The principle applies spiritually: **Come out from among them, and be ye separate** (2 Corinthians 6:17). We engage distant culture (missions, evangelism) but guard against intimate spiritual compromise (close fellowship with unbelief). Jesus ate with sinners (evangelism) but didn't adopt their practices (sanctification).

## Historical Context

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Israel's geographical position between Egypt and Mesopotamia meant frequent interaction with distant empires (Assyria, Babylon, Persia). God's law permitted peaceful relations with distant nations while requiring complete separation from neighboring Canaanites whose religious practices posed immediate, daily temptation.

## Related Passages

## **Romans 2:1 – Judging others**

## **Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment**

## **Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth**

## Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

## Study Questions

1. How do you distinguish 'distant' engagement (missions, evangelism) from 'neighboring' compromise (intimate fellowship with unbelief)?
2. What modern 'Canaanite' influences (entertainment, relationships, philosophies) are dangerously 'near' and require radical separation?
3. How did Jesus model engaging sinners (distant) while maintaining holiness (separation from sin)?

## Interlinear Text

מִמֶּבֶן	תִּרְחַזֵּק	מִן	לְכָל	תַּעֲשֶׂה	תְּ	H3651
	far off	are not of the cities	are not of the cities	Thus shalt thou do	H3605	H4480

בְּאֶלְהָה הַגּוּיִם מִשְׁעָרֵי מִאָד אֲשֶׁר לֹא מִאָד

from thee which