

# Bethany Bible Study & Discussion



## Deuteronomy Part 22 (chapter 20) KJV

6.21.2023

## Chapter 20 The Battle Plan

Why shouldn't Israelites be afraid in battles? What is the role of priests during war times (1-4)

Why are some warriors not selected? Is the army weakened by reduced size? What are some battle rules? (5-18)

Why must trees be protected? (19-20)

**Why shouldn't  
Israelites be afraid?  
What is the role of Priests?  
(1-4)**

## 20:1-4

<sup>1</sup>When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies, and seest horses, and chariots, and a people more than thou, be not afraid of them: for the Lord thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.

<sup>2</sup>And it shall be, when ye are come nigh unto the battle, that the priest shall approach and speak unto the people,

<sup>3</sup>And shall say unto them, Hear, O Israel, ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies: let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them;

<sup>4</sup>For the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.

# Do not Fear

## **Yes, war causes anxiety and fear**

- Fear can lead to discouragement, paralysis, hopelessness, questions about God's care, and defeat before battle is fought

**Yes, enemy is formidable** ... more men, horses and chariots

**BUT, we should NOT be afraid**

Why should we not fear?

# Why should we not Fear?

**Because God is with us** (1,4)

Proof: Deliverance from Egypt through Red Sea (Exodus 15)

If we believe in the presence of God, it should take away all fear

If God be for us, who can be against us? (Romans 8:31)

# When afraid, Reflect on the past victories

God did it in the past ... He can do it again!

**Exodus 15:1** Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.

**Malachi 3: 6** For I am the Lord, I change not;

Do not doubt God .... Trust in Him and His ways!

# Role of Priests during war

## To encourage the troops

- By reminding of God's promises and assuring of God's presence
- During tough times, we need encouragers and comforters
- We should not be 'miserable comforters' (Job 16:2)
- We should encourage others to put on the armor of God and fight the spiritual enemies (Satan, sin, and the world)

Other functions of Priests (seen before)

## Role of Priests (as seen in chapter 18)

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Carry the ark (10:8)

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Stand and Minister to the Lord (10:8, 18:3)

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Bless his name (10:8)

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Intercessor, and Offer sacrifices (33:10)

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Judge (17:9)

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Encourager during battle (20:2-4)

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Teach (33:10)



# Selecting the winning team of warriors (5-18)

Why are some warriors not selected? Is the army weakened by reduced size? What are some battle rules?

# The Battle and the Strategy

**GOAL:** To screen and select the best team

**Belief:** It is God who fights the Battle.

so actual numbers do not matter, be it an army of 1 or army of thousands!

**Strategy:** God forms the winning team

# Selecting the final team ... who is removed from the team?

<sup>5</sup>And the officers shall speak unto the people, saying, What man is there that hath built a new house, and hath not dedicated it? let him go and return to his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man dedicate it.

<sup>6</sup> And what man is he that hath planted a vineyard, and hath not yet eaten of it? let him also go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man eat of it.

<sup>7</sup> And what man is there that hath betrothed a wife, and hath not taken her? let him go and return unto his house, lest he die in the battle, and another man take her.

<sup>8</sup> And the officers shall speak further unto the people, and they shall say, What man is there that is fearful and fainthearted? let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart.

# Selecting the final team

## 4 groups eliminated

Those with household/family responsibilities

Home constructed but not dedicated (5)

Vineyard planted, but not eaten the fruit (6)

Engaged but not yet married (7)

The coward (8)

## Selecting the final team

God is mindful of personal pleasure/responsibilities

God is seeking 100% commitment and focus in war

A weak link/soldier can weaken the entire army

Unity important for winning wars

Battle belongs to the Lord (numbers don't matter!) (Gideon's army reduced from 32,000 to 300 to fight 135,000 Midianites; Judges 7)

**We can also  
be victorious  
in our battles  
of life**

### **We must Believe in the Promises of God**

Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts (Zechariah 4:6)

My grace is sufficient for thee (II Corinthians 12:9)

Cast all your cares upon Him for He careth for you (I Peter 5:7)

### **We must Believe in the Power of God**

With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles (II Chronicles 32:8)

Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle (Psalms 24:8)

Be strong and courageous, be not afraid nor dismayed for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him: for there be more with us than with him: With him is an arm of flesh; but with us is the Lord our God to help us, and to fight our battles (II Chronicles 32:7-8)

# Battle Strategy

<sup>9</sup> And it shall be, when the officers have made an end of speaking unto the people that they shall make captains of the armies to lead the people. <sup>10</sup> When thou comest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto it.

<sup>11</sup> And it shall be, if it make thee answer of peace, and open unto thee, then it shall be, that all the people that is found therein shall be tributaries unto thee, and they shall serve thee. <sup>12</sup> And if it will make no peace with thee, but will make war against thee, then thou shalt besiege it:

<sup>13</sup> And when the Lord thy God hath delivered it into thine hands, thou shalt smite every male thereof with the edge of the sword: <sup>14</sup> But the women, and the little ones, and the cattle, and all that is in the city, even all the spoil thereof, shalt thou take unto thyself; and thou shalt eat the spoil of thine enemies, which the Lord thy God hath given thee. <sup>15</sup> Thus shalt thou do unto all the cities which are very far off from thee, which are not of the cities of these nations.

# Battle Strategy ... for war against nations other than 6 (v.17)

From the reduced army, leaders appointed (9)

## Negotiate peace first (10)

If agreed, the city will be tributaries (pay taxes) and be subject to Israel (11)  
(peace avoids the harmful effects of violent war)

**II Samuel 8:2** Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts (similarly Syrians and Edomites) **II KINGS 3:4** And Mesha king of Moab was a sheepmaster, and rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool.

## If not agreeable to peace

besiege the city (12)

- Smite every male (13)
- Women, children, and cattle spared but taken (14)
- Eat the spoil (14) or enjoy the loot!
- Rule applies to cities from afar (15)



# Battle Strategy ... for war against nations other than 6 (v.17)

Peace preferred to being an angry warrior:

**Proverbs 16:32** *He who is slow to anger is better than the mighty, And he who rules his spirit than he who takes a city*

**Proverbs 25:28** *He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down, and without walls*

# Ten commandments and War

**Exodus 20:13** “Thou shalt not kill”

Any war that is directed by God is permissible.

Shedding blood without God’s approval is not acceptable.

**I CHRONICLES 28:3** But God said unto me, Thou shalt not build an house for my name, because thou hast been a man of war, and hast shed blood.

## Dealing with enemies in cities of Canaan (16-18)

<sup>16</sup> But of the cities of these people, which the Lord thy God doth give thee for an inheritance, thou shalt save alive nothing that breatheth:

<sup>17</sup> But thou shalt utterly destroy them; namely, the Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites; as the Lord thy God hath commanded thee:

<sup>18</sup> That they teach you not to do after all their abominations, which they have done unto their gods; so should ye sin against the Lord your God.

# Dealing with enemies in cities of Canaan (16-18)

There were 7 nations before Israel arrived in Canaan (and God told them to go to war against them):

**Deuteronomy 7:1** When the Lord thy God shall bring thee into the land whither thou goest to possess it, and hath cast out many nations before thee, the Hittites, and the Girgashites, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, and the Hivites, and the Jebusites, seven nations greater and mightier than thou;

6 listed here ... The Hittites, and the Amorites, the Canaanites, and the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites (17)

**EXODUS 23: 23** For mine Angel shall go before thee, and bring thee in unto the Amorites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Canaanites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites: and I will cut them off.

Complete destruction ... kill anything that breathes (16)

## Why destroy completely?

- ... God's judgement on their wickedness of the past (idolatry, etc.)
- ... to wipe out their influence on Israelites

# Conserve Trees

<sup>19</sup> When thou shalt besiege a city a long time, in making war against it to take it, thou shalt not destroy the trees thereof by forcing an axe against them: for thou mayest eat of them, and thou shalt not cut them down (for the tree of the field is man's life) to employ them in the siege:

<sup>20</sup> Only the trees which thou knowest that they be not trees for meat, thou shalt destroy and cut them down; and thou shalt build bulwarks against the city that maketh war with thee, until it be subdued.

# Conserve Trees

Even in times of war, must think long-term about environment

Conserve trees, don't cut trees arbitrarily

trees important for sustenance of humans and animals

trees important for soil and overall environment

we are stewards of God's creation

Genesis 1:29

And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat.

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