

The Military: The Need

Before we start on today's lesson, there are some other topics I want to cover.

The first is a notice that the audio files from the recent Pre-Trib Conference are now available. The video files are still being processed. They will eventually be available. But the heart of the conference was what was said, the audio.

Here is the internet link: <https://www.pre-trib.org/2023-ptsg-conference>

I recommended Dave Reagan's speech titled "My Pilgrimage to a Premillennial Viewpoint." At the beginning while still talking of recent books he has written, he says the following: "Then I wrote "Islam and Christianity are they two roads to the same God?" Because this is one of the worst apostasies sweeping the Church today, people say, "Well, the Muslims worship one God and we worship one God therefore it must be the same God. And most of our liberal denominations have bought into that. During my research into that I was astonished to discover that Pope Paul back during Vatican II insisted that a resolution be passed accepting Muslims as brothers in Christ. And that was then written into the revised Catholic Catechism in 1992."

I don't like to leave people hanging. If I provide some information that might seem controversial, I do my research and provide links to the source information so you can fact check me.

A copy of the Catholic Catechism can be found at:

<https://www.usccb.org/sites/default/files/flipbooks/catechism/>

I didn't quote the paragraph which might be subject to error. Instead I did a screen capture of the paragraph Dave Reagan was referring to:

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<https://www.usccb.org/sites/default/files/flipbooks/catechism/225/#zoom=z>

841 *The Church's relationship with the Muslims.* "The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims; these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind's judge on the last day."³³⁰

Don't be confused. The paragraph above is the screen capture which fits nicely into this handout, so much so that you might think I wrote it in. But I assure you, it is a screen capture inserted as a bit map.

And then there is the Abrahamic House in Abu Dhabi. From Wikipedia:

"The Abrahamic Family House (Arabic: بيت العائلة الإبراهيمية) is an interfaith complex on Saadiyat Island in Abu Dhabi. The undertaking was inspired by the Document on Human Fraternity signed by Pope Francis on behalf of the Catholic Church and Ahmed El-Tayeb on behalf of the al-Azhar Mosque on 4th February 2019 in Abu Dhabi. It houses the St. Francis Church, Imam Al-Tayeb Mosque and Moses Ben Maimon Synagogue in separate structures."

The world is being prepared for the one-world religion. The Rapture must be right around the corner.

Now, another point I need to revisit. Herman always emphasized faith and the love that resulted from that faith. That has been a great help for me in developing maturity in my Christian walk. As I have said before, I learned the importance of doctrine from R. B. Thieme Jr. and the importance of faith from Herman Mattox. Now, in my ministry, I find myself starting to emphasize the relationship with God the Father that results from the walk of faith that leads to love. It also leads to a more intimate relationship with God the Father. Remember. In faith-

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dependence on the Holy Spirit, He takes us to Jesus Christ who points the way to God the Father. That intimate relationship with God the Father is the goal.

As that relationship becomes more intimate, there are times when you will cry “tears of understanding.” God has done something in your life, something that may include suffering, but then all of a sudden you understand that what just happened has opened up a door, a path forward full of grace and blessing that you didn’t know existed before. A path in which you can take the doctrine you learned and applied in faith and can now point others to that path. I saw my wife cry tears of understanding when God answered a prayer of ours in a very unexpected way. We realized later that the prayer was being answered as we prayed. When my wife realized that, she cried. Tears of understanding.

OK, let’s see if we can make some progress on understanding the need for a military today.

Throughout the history of the United States, there have been calls to reduce the military or perhaps even abolish it. The thinking is, if the military was abolished, there would be no wars. In some cases, people use Bible passages to encourage nations to disarm. The Exodus 20 commandment which is translated as “Thou Shalt Not Kill” in the King James version has been used by pacifists to condemn war from a religious perspective. Yet, when translated correctly, the word is not “to kill” but “to murder.” It should be correctly translated as in the NASB Exodus 20:13 “Thou shall not murder.”

Of course, there is the quote used in the Ralph Bunche park which is across the street from the UN building in New York City. Quote from Wikipedia:

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“The park is across First Avenue from the United Nations headquarters. (This stretch of First Avenue is also known as "United Nations Plaza".) The granite staircase in the park's northwest corner leads to 43rd Street and the Tudor City apartments. It was built and dedicated in 1948 during construction of the U.N. headquarters and has the famous quotation from Isaiah 2:4: "They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" incised into its wall. Known as the Isaiah Wall, it was rededicated in 1975 and had the name "Isaiah" added under the final word. In 1981 the staircase was named the Sharansky Steps in honor of Soviet dissident Natan Sharansky.¹”

So much for an introduction. There is a need to understand what the Bible actually says about the military and war. Let us attempt to deal with the topic using numbered points.

I. Need for a Military is Dependent upon Dispensation

The first point takes into consideration the dispensational perspective of war.

A. There was no military in the Garden of Eden

When there was no one in the Garden of Eden except Adam and Eve there was no one to war against. That is, except the “Serpent.” That was the beginning of man’s involvement in the Angelic Conflict. But that is a war not against other men but against demons. Satan is involved in a conflict with God over God’s condemnation of Satan.

B. There was no mention of military prior to the flood.

After the fall and before the flood, there is no mention of military and wars between men. However, once again,

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ralph_Bunche_Park

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angelic beings involved man in the angelic conflict when the Sons of God took women for themselves.

- C. After the flood, starting with at least the time of Abraham and going through the Tribulation, there have been and continue to be armies and wars.

Let us read Genesis chapter 14 concerning war.

From this, we learn of the inevitability of war. Under the right conditions, which seem to be right all the time, man's sin nature manifests itself in wars.

- D. After the Tribulation, in the Millennium, there is specific mention of no longer needing weapons of war. Jesus Christ will be on earth as King and Righteous Judge. That is the true application of the Isaiah 2 verse on disarmament.

The need and authorization by God for a military is different in different dispensations! We live in a dispensation in which the military is authorized.

II. The Military is Authorized by God in the Dispensation of the Law

A. Numbers

According to the NIV Study Bible, "As the account of Numbers begins, the Lord organizes Israel into a military camp.²"

Constable focuses on this with his comment on Numbers chapter 1. "The purpose for counting the adult males 20 years of age and older was to identify those who would serve in battle when Israel entered the land (v. 3). This is clear from the fact that the phrase "from twenty years old

² Kenneth L. Barker (ed), Zondervan NIV Study Bible, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008, p187

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and upward, whoever is able to go to war," or its equivalent, appears 14 times in this chapter (vv. 3, 20, 22, 24, 26, 28, 30, 32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42, 45; cf. v. 18).

Numbers 1:2 “Take a census of all the congregation of the sons of Israel, by their families, by their fathers’ households, according to the number of names, every male, head by head

Numbers 1:3 from twenty years old and upward, whoever is able to go out to war in Israel, you and Aaron shall number (NIV: literally muster) them by their armies.

Something to keep in mind during the dispensation of the Law: Israel is a theocracy ruled by God, their king. God used human beings as kings starting with Saul. But God made it clear that He was their true king. Only they had rejected Him.

1 Samuel 8:7 The Lord said to Samuel, “Listen to the voice of the people in regard to all that they say to you, for they have not rejected you, but they have rejected Me from being king over them.

1 Samuel 8:8 Like all the deeds which they have done since the day that I brought them up from Egypt even to this day—in that they have forsaken Me and served other gods—so they are doing to you also.

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It goes on to explain that human kings will have a military serving the king.

1 Samuel 8:9 Now then, listen to their voice; however, you shall solemnly warn them and tell them of the procedure of the king who will reign over them.”

1 Samuel 8:10 So Samuel spoke all the words of the Lord to the people who had asked of him a king.

1 Samuel 8:11 He said, “This will be the procedure of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and place them for himself in his chariots and among his horsemen and they will run before his chariots.

1 Samuel 8:12 He will appoint for himself commanders of thousands and of fifties, and some to do his plowing and to reap his harvest and to make his weapons of war and equipment for his chariots.

Back to the book of Numbers. When attacked, Israel fought back.

Numbers 21:23 But Sihon would not permit Israel to pass through his border. So Sihon gathered all his people and went out against

Israel in the wilderness, and came to Jahaz and fought against Israel.

Numbers 21:24 Then Israel struck him with the edge of the sword, and took possession of his land from the Arnon to the Jabbok, as far as the sons of Ammon; for the border of the sons of Ammon was Jazer.

Numbers 21:25 Israel took all these cities and Israel lived in all the cities of the Amorites, in Heshbon, and in all her villages.

B. Judges

The book of Judges emphasizes certain aspects of warfare. One of them in particular that applied to the nation Israel is that it is God that permits success in warfare.

Judges 3:1 Now these are the nations which the Lord left, to test Israel by them (that is, all who had not experienced any of the wars of Canaan;

Judges 3:2 only in order (expresses purpose, God's purpose for Israel) that the generations of the sons of Israel might be taught war (Israeli men were to train for war), those who had not experienced it formerly).

Many countries like Greece, require universal military training.

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The judges were used to illustrate the cycle of blessing and discipline upon Israel. The first cycle is illustrated by Othniel, the first and best judge prior to Samuel.

Judges 3:7 The sons of Israel did what was evil in the sight of the Lord, and forgot the Lord their God and served the Baals and the Asheroth.

Judges 3:8 Then the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, so that He sold them into the hands of Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia; and the sons of Israel served Cushan-rishathaim eight years.

Judges 3:9 When the sons of Israel cried to the Lord, the Lord raised up a deliverer for the sons of Israel to deliver them, Othniel the son of Kenaz, Caleb's younger brother.

Judges 3:10 The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and he judged Israel. When he went out to war, the Lord gave Cushan-rishathaim king of Mesopotamia into his hand, so that he prevailed over Cushan-rishathaim.

Judges 3:11 Then the land had rest forty years. And Othniel the son of Kenaz died.

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C. Nehemiah

In Nehemiah, who wrote somewhere between 423 B.C. and 400 B.C.³, the people were attempting to rebuild the fortifications around Jerusalem. In 587 B.C. they had been torn down. In that era, walls around a city were a necessary defense against hostile forces.

Nehemiah 4:11 Our enemies said, “They will not know or see until we come among them, kill them and put a stop to the work.”

Nehemiah 4:12 When the Jews who lived near them came and told us ten times, “They will come up against us from every place where you may turn,”

Nehemiah 4:13 then I stationed men in the lowest parts of the space behind the wall, the exposed places, and I stationed the people in families with their swords, spears and bows.

Men will fight to protect their families. Even Hollywood knows this. A man fights for his family. And in their eyes, their husbands, their fathers are heroes.

Nehemiah 4:14 When I saw their fear, I rose and spoke to the nobles, the officials and the rest of the people: “Do not be afraid of them; remember the Lord who is great and awesome, and fight for your brothers, your

3 Thomas Constable, Nehemiah, 2023, p2

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sons, your daughters, your wives and your houses.”

Those who do not have a personal relationship with God, the creator of the universe, omniscient and omnipotent may have fear. Those that have that relationship, although not immune to fear, know where to go in times of trouble.

Psalm 23:4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I fear no evil, for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

When I was a kid in 1st grade, my family had two dogs: a beagle and a pointer. Next door was a boxer that the neighbors sometimes let run about in their fenced in yard. The beagle was always ready to bark at the boxer right up next to the fence, but only when the pointer was by his side. If the pointer got bored of the boxer, she would wander off. Once the beagle realized the pointer was not there by his side, he would sneak off and be out of sight of the boxer. If we walk by faith we should fear no evil. When we are dependent upon our sin nature apart from God, it is logical that we would fear something bigger and more ferocious than ourselves without God by our side.

Like David, we should claim that “the battle is the Lord’s.”

D. Jesus in the New Testament
Jesus told us:

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Matthew 24:6 You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end.

Matthew 24:7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.

Matthew 24:8 But all these things are merely the beginning of birth pangs.

II. What Happens when there is no military?

In the constant calls for a reduction in the military, there is a lack of understanding on what that can do to a country.

R.B. Thieme Jr. when talking about disarmament, mentioned Carthage. I don't have a good quote from him readily available, so I will just quote from Wikipedia:

“It was the long-standing Roman procedure to elect two men each year, known as consuls, to each lead an army. A large Roman army landed at Utica in 149 BC under both consuls for the year, Manius Manilius commanding the army and Lucius Censorius the fleet. The Carthaginians continued to attempt to appease Rome, and sent an embassy to Utica. The consuls demanded that they hand over all weaponry, and reluctantly the Carthaginians did so. Great convoys took enormous stocks of equipment from Carthage to Utica. Surviving records state that these included 200,000 sets of armour and 2,000 catapults. Their warships all sailed to Utica and were

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burnt in the harbour. Once Carthage was disarmed, the consuls made the further demand that the Carthaginians abandon their city and relocate 16 kilometres (10 mi) away from the sea; Carthage would then be destroyed. The Carthaginians abandoned negotiations and prepared to defend their city.⁴”

Now that Carthage was disarmed, now they want to fight?!!

Without quoting the gory parts, the Romans vanquished Carthage, killing many, selling into slavery many captured men and burning the city to the ground. A sad commentary on “disarmament.”

Once a people have been disarmed, the only real solution is to go to the Lord in prayer. Faith-Rest.

A. Revived Spiritual Populace: Jehoshaphat

Jehoshaphat along with Hezekiah are two great Israeli kings who found themselves in such a situation. The both responded by going to the Lord in prayer. Hezekiah did that through Isaiah. But Jehoshaphat’s prayer to God is recorded in 2 Chronicles chapter 20. Let us open our Bibles and read that chapter. You may never go by that chapter again. But now I want you to see the faith of a king who led his country in spiritual recovery. As a result, God blessed that nation in spite of not having a military that could defeat the enemy.

2 Chronicles 20:1 Now it came about after this that the sons of Moab and the sons of Ammon, together with some of the Meunites, came to make war against Jehoshaphat.

4 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Carthage_\(Third_Punic_War\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siege_of_Carthage_(Third_Punic_War))

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2 Chronicles 20:2 Then some came and reported to Jehoshaphat, saying, “A great multitude is coming against you from beyond the sea, out of Aram and behold, they are in Hazazon-tamar (that is Engedi).”

2 Chronicles 20:3 Jehoshaphat was afraid and turned his attention to seek the Lord, and proclaimed a fast throughout all Judah.

2 Chronicles 20:4 So Judah gathered together to seek help from the Lord; they even came from all the cities of Judah to seek the Lord.

B. Hezekiah

Hezekiah was another great king who used the prophet Isaiah as his conduit for prayer. If we have time, we should read Isaiah chapter 36.

Take special note of

Isaiah 36:8 Now therefore, come make a bargain with my master the king of Assyria, and I will give you two thousand horses, if you are able on your part to set riders on them.

The point of that statement was that the Israelites in Jerusalem did not have 2,000 riders for 2,000 horses. Some kind of disarmament had already taken place.

In recent years, there have been many terrible things happening. Yet, from time to time, there are unexpected outcomes.

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The lesson for us is

- 1) Bible class matters
- 2) Walking by faith matters (Hebrews 4:1-2)
- 3) Prayer matters
- 4) the divine institutions matter (A. Volition, B. Marriage, C. Family and D. Nation including a military)