

SESSION #44 (8 February 2011); Deut 20:1-20 Protocol for Military Operations

I. INTRODUCTION & REVIEW

1:1-5	Introduction to God's spokesman, the 1 st Prophet Moses
1:6-4:40	1 st Exposition of the Torah = <u>motivation</u> to obey from (1) <u>past gracious actions</u> of Yahweh and (2) <u>sovereign destiny</u> of the nation (<u>future gracious actions</u> of Yahweh)
4:41-49	Editorial comment on context of 2 nd Exposition of the Torah
5:1-26:19	2 nd Exposition of the Torah = <u>proper response</u> to Yahweh in heart and soul
5:1-11:32	Loving Yahweh with <u>all the heart</u>
12:1-26:19	Loving Yahweh with <u>all the soul</u> (<i>nephesh</i> =life)
12:1-13:18	Theological unity of Israel's tribes and its Enforcement (esp 1 st , 2 nd , and by implication the corresponding 9 th , 10 th commandments)
14:1-21	Enforcement of Distinct Cultural Sustenance from Life to Death (a witness consistent with Yahweh's name, see 3rd commandment)
14:22-16:17	A Distinct Culture of Theocentric Faith in God's Economic Order (with emphasis upon the 4 th and by implication the corresponding 8 th commandment)
16:18-18:22	A Distinct Culture of Human Authority Under God's Justice (emphasis upon human authority starting in the home—the 5 th commandment and by implication the 7 th commandment)
16:18-17:13	Authority & Function of Israel's Judges
17:14-20	Authority & Nature of Israel's King
18:1-8	Authority & Nature of Israel's Priests
18:9-22	Authority & Nature of Israel's Prophets
19:1-21:23	Protocols for Implementing True "Social Justice" (emphasis upon dealing with deployment of civil authority's lethal force—6 th commandment)
19:1-21	Protocols for Judicial Proceedings
20:1-20 Military Policy	

We're in a 3-chapter section of protocols to what real "social justice" looks like: common denominator seems to be civil authority's use of [lethal force].

Remember Session #39 discussion of capital punishment

Divine Institution #4: Civil government

1. Creation did NOT include death; fallen world is abnormal.
2. Fall began capital punishment by God (we are all under sentence of capital punishment).
3. Flood & Covenant:
 - 1st civilization from Adam to Noah ended in [anarchy & violence]
 - 3 possibilities for God's post-flood policies: end history, no change with anarchy the result again, or limited force to restrain sin
 - Gen 9 placed the responsibility for limited temporal judgment upon man = civil government

Civil government IS lethal force (ultimately behind every law and regulation)

Classic arguments:

CP can't be administered perfectly (Didn't God know that? What about His Son's trials?)
CP is a "moral abomination" (Why—what is the moral authority invoked here? What about the significance of murder and treason resulting in destruction of men made in God's image?)

Three subsections:

- 20:1-9 Heart preparation for combat
- 20:10-15 Policy toward cities outside of the land
- 20:16-18 Policy toward cities inside the land
- 20:19-20 Policy toward the environment

I. HEART PREPARATION FOR COMBAT (20:1-9)

A. Review chapter 7 from sessions 21-22

7:1-5, 17-26 Procedures (operating doctrine):

- 7:1-2
- 7:3-4
- 7:5
- 7:17-21
- 7:22-24
- 7:25-26

7:6-16 Contractually-based relationship with Yahweh

- 7:6-8
- 7:9-10
- 7:11
- 7:12-16

B. Dealing with the mental attitude (20:1-4)

20:1 when you go out

Specific doctrine for the event (not "their" battle)

horses and chariots. . .Egypt

See Exod 15

20:2-4 priests shall say

Note presence of [ecclesiastical] authorities with the military [civil] authorities.

Four mental attitude states:

rakak = weak, soft = without conviction (need conscience-based faith in the Word)

yarah = stand in awe (used positively in OT often of Yahweh) = over-estimate the strength of the enemy relative to God

chafaz = being rushed by fear into doing something hastily and off-balance

ahratz = shake

He goes with you to fight for you

Ark was physically carried into battle KEY = battle is the Lord's

Exod 14:13-14; 1 Sam 17:47

C. Dismissals from military service (20:5-9)

These verses emphasize that war was a [faith] issue: numbers didn't count.

Though the national census (**Num 1:2-4**) measured the potential size of the army, there was no [“draft”] by the state of private citizens (North points out that this protected Israel from dictatorial rulers who would lust for power and empire).

Limitations on state power (remember Samuel's warning in **1 Sam 8**):

1. Priestly refusal to support with the Ark a war [out of the will of God]
2. Soldiers who would take advantage of these exemptions to leave muster

Contrast **vv5-9** with contemporary pagan directives:

[Kline quote p105]

“The chief whose forces are not turned out in full and who leaves one man behind will incur the disfavor of king” (Mari correspondence)

20:5 officers

house. . .dedicate. . .another dedicate it

Personal productivity (economic dominion) comes before military service; a family was to extend itself into the future.

20:6 planted a vineyard. . .another eat of it

See **Lev. 19:23-25**>> 5 years!

Same principle: should enjoy (reap return on labor) before fighting for it (“skin in the game”)

20:7 betrothed. . .not married. . . .another marry her

Marriage establishes the family to occupy the next generation.

PRINCIPLE:

In contrast to Islam where the jihadist fights for Allah and gets 72 virgins, Yahweh [gives first] to His people their “inheritance” (economic life) before He asks them to fight for Him.

[Josephus, Antiquities, IV, 8, 41]

“Do you give leave to those that have lately built them houses, and have not yet lived in them a year's time; and to those that have planted them vineyards, and have not yet been partakers of their fruits, . . .as well as those also who have betrothed, or lately married them wives, lest they have such affection for these things that they be too sparing of their lives. . . .”

20:8 fearful and fainthearted

yarah = stand in awe (used positively in OT often of Yahweh) = over-estimate the strength of the enemy relative to God

rakak = weak, soft = without conviction (need conscience-based faith in the Word)

lest the heart of his brethren melt

masas = once was hard, now it is softening

20:9 finished speaking. . .make captains. . .

Summary of heart preparation for combat:

1. It is Yahweh's war, not Israel's (**Exod 14:13-14: 1 Sam 17:47**)
2. Therefore it relies on God-directed, God-supplied [preparation] (inherent limits on civil rulers trying to build empires)
3. Army organization follows dismissals.

II. POLICY TOWARD CITIES OUTSIDE OF THE LAND (20:10-15)

This section is policy toward cities outside of the land and is NOT holy war.

20:10 proclaim peace

Offer to become a vassal nation supplying raw materials and labor in exchange for protection; had to accept Yahwehism as their national religion.

20:11 under tribute

See examples in **Josh 9:1-13**; and see **Judges 1:28, 30-35**.

20:12-13 besiege. . . every male. . .

Why? **Num 1:3** every adult male 20 years and above was held accountable for his choice of god. To reject vassalage to Yahweh was to reject Him.

See **Deut 1:35-39** for why 2nd generation below 20 survived and parents did not.

20:14 plunder which Yahweh your God gives you.

III. POLICY TOWARD CITIES INSIDE OF THE LAND (20:16-18)

This section depicts holy war.

20:16 nothing that breathes

Total destruction. No offer of peace. Booty is Yahweh's, not Israel's.

Total cultural break

20:17 utterly destroy Inf Abs + verb = intensification of mood (imperative)

20:18 teach you according to their abominations

[Kline p 105f]

“The identification of God’s kingdom with the earthly kingdom of Israel brought an Old Testament anticipation of the final judgment which is to overtake those who remain outside the redemptive kingdom of Christ. This Old Testament judgment, however, could not be executed universally. For then the age of grace for the nations would have been prematurely terminated, and the covenant promise that Israel should be a blessing to all the nations through the messianic seed of Abraham (Gen. 12:3) would have been nullified. Therefore, the typology of final judgment was strictly applied only in warfare against nations within the boundaries claimed by Yahweh in his typical kingdom.”

IV. POLICY TOWARD THE ENVIRONMENT (20:19-20)

Man is supposed to have been lord of nature, but when the fall occurred, nature was cursed and now rebels against man. BUT biblical environmentalism is vastly different than modern deep ecology, which is old pagan nature worship.

20:19-20 trees for food

Nature exists to be cultivated into production and beauty by man. Cultivated nature is to survive even holy war.

V. CONCLUSION

1. Military policy is connected with civil authority (DI #4) → necessarily involves the use of lethal force. Biblical symbol for civil authority = sword.
2. In the theocracy both ecclesiastical and civil authorities functioned in their respective spheres but they both were involved in the judicial and military processes because it took the priests to know absolute justice and it took civil leaders to carry out the judgments.
3. In the theocracy, however, military judgments were strictly limited to volunteer soldiers who were able to trust that they were joining Yahweh in His war.

